

C67 1973 5-16

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

The School of Music and the Office of Lectures and Concerts

present

The Contemporary Group

William O. Smith and Robert Suderburg, *Directors*

PARIS 1913

De Falla
Stravinsky

Ravel
Schoenberg

Wednesday,
May 16, 1973

8:00 P.M.
Room 210, Kane Hall

PROGRAM

Tape No. 1-7008

6:11

IGOR STRAVINSKY
(1882-1971)

Two poems of Balmont, Three Japanese lyrics
for high voice and chamber orchestra

Balmont Songs (1911, instr. 1954)

1. *The Flower*
2. *The Dove*

Japanese Lyrics (1913)

1. *Akahito*
2. *Mazatsumi*
3. *Tsaraiuki*

(sung in English)

MAURICE RAVEL
(1875-1937)

Trois Poèmes de Stéphane Mallarmé (1913)
for voice and chamber orchestra

10:48

1. *Soupir (Sigh)*
2. *Placet futile (Futile Supplication)*
3. *Surgi de la croupe et du bond*
(Rising from the curve and the leap)

Elizabeth Suderburg, *Singer*

Veda Reynolds, *Violin*

Jeff Cohen, *Flute*

Irwin Eisenberg, *Violin*

Debbie Shorrock, *Flute*

Alan Iglitzin, *Viola*

William O. Smith, *Clarinet*

Charles Brennand, *Violoncello*

Jerome Kohl, *Clarinet*

Bern Herbolsheimer, *Piano*

MANUEL DE FALLA
(1876-1946)

1409
Siete Canciones populares españolas (1922)
transcribed with accompaniment for
two harps by Carlos Salzedo (1931)

1. *El paño moruno*
(The Moorish cloth)
2. *Seguidilla murciana*
(Seguidilla from Murcia)
3. *Asturiana*
(from Asturias)
4. *Jota*
5. *Nana*
(Lullaby)
6. *Canción*
(Song)
7. *Polo*

Elizabeth Suderburg, *Singer*
Pamela Vokolek, *Harp* Joyce Birchman, *Harp*

INTERMISSION

Tape No. 2-7009

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG
(1874-1951)

38:02
Pierrot lunaire, Opus 21 (1912)
*Dreimal sieben Gedichte aus Albert
Girauds for Sprechstimme, piano,
flute (piccolo), clarinet (bass
clarinet), violin (viola), violoncello*

Part I

1. *Mondestrunken*
(Moondrunk)
2. *Columbine*
3. *Der Dandy*
4. *Eine Blasse Wascherin*
(A pale washerwoman)
5. *Valse de Chopin*
6. *Madonna*
7. *Der Kranke Mond*
(The sick moon)

Part II

8. *Nacht*
(*Night*)
9. *Gebet an Pierrot*
(*Prayer to Pierrot*)
10. *Raub*
(*Theft*)
11. *Rote Messe*
(*Red Mass*)
12. *Galgenlied*
(*Gallows Song*)
13. *Enthauptung*
(*Beheading*)
14. *Die Kreuze*
(*The Crosses*)

Part III

15. *Heimweh*
(*Homesickness*)
16. *Gemeinheit!*
(*Vulgarity*)
17. *Parodie*
18. *Der Mondfleck*
(*The Moonspot*)
19. *Serenade*
20. *Heimfahrt*
(*Homeward bound*)
21. *A Alter Duft*
(*A Fragrance old*)

Elizabeth Suderburg, *Sprechstimme*

Jane Beale, *Piano*

Felix Skowronek, *Flute and Piccolo*

William McColl, *Clarinet and Bass-Clarinet*

Irwin Eisenberg, *Violin and Viola*

Charles Brennand, *Violoncello*

Unluckily the year 1913 marked the end of a peaceful Western world. But that was not the fault of the musicians. To be sure Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* caused a riot. But no one suggests it contributed to the global conflagration that broke out the following August. Indeed the new musical luminaries of Austria, Russia, France, and Spain were bound together by affinity and affection. Schoenberg inspired Stravinsky, who inspired Ravel, who inspired Manuel de Falla.

In 1913 Diaghilev's Russian ballet presented Debussy's *Jeux* in addition to Stravinsky's *Rite*. At Nice the opera gave Falla's *La Vida Breve* its premiere. And for the first time the Prix de Rome was awarded to a woman, Nadia Boulanger's beloved younger sister Lili. Still the City of Light, Paris, tried to make the most of the year. But all France was full of foreboding, and for those with work to do it must have been a relief to get away from it all and settle down near the shores of Lake Geneva. There Stravinsky played Ravel his *Three Japanese Lyrics* and told him about hearing the rehearsal of *Pierrot Lunaire* during his visit to Schoenberg and Webern in Berlin the year before. Soon after this Ravel composed his *Trois Poèmes de Stéphane Mallarmé*.

The three principal works on the present program, therefore, are closely linked together. Most uncompromising is *Pierrot Lunaire*. At first blush it was hard to understand. But so were contemporary works in the other arts, Gertrude Stein's *Tender Buttons*, for example, or Duchamp's *Nude Descending the Staircase*, which sent its viewers at the New York Armory show of 1913 into a frenzy. Between 1907 when Schoenberg and his colleagues abandoned tonality and 1923 when they took up twelve-tone writing in full force, they wandered through a wilderness of atonality in which *Pierrot* stands out as a major landmark. Unforgettable is its use of Sprechstimme. To be sure Schoenberg did not invent half-singing. For example, Engelbert Humperdinck's incidental music to *Königskinder* (1897) calls for similar "speech-notes." But whenever anyone, with a certain anxious angularity, sings through the pitches rather than on pitch, the listener inevitably recalls *Pierrot Lunaire*. Not mentioned at all by Schoenberg himself in his last comprehensive autobiographical lecture at UCLA, this work, according to Stravinsky, is "not only the mind but the solar plexus of early 20th century music."

Stravinsky's own *Japanese Lyrics* pay tribute to Schoenberg, the third one especially, which reflects not only the delicate instrumentation, but the penchant for jagged skips of the seventh that give *Pierrot* its silhouette.

Comparing himself perceptively to the Austrian master, Ravel writes, "I myself followed Schoenberg's footsteps to write my *Poèmes de Mallarmé* and especially the *Chansons Madécasses*, which, like *Pierrot Lunaire*, have a very strict counterpoint underlying the atmosphere. If (the *Chansons*) are not totally Schoenbergian, it's because in music I am not so afraid of the element of charm which he avoided to a point of asceticism, even martyrdom. Possibly just because he is Viennese, in reaction against the musical sensuality of his surroundings, which moreover does impregnate his early works."

* * *

Stravinsky's setting of Konstantin Balmont's two poems had already been composed in 1911, the year in which he dedicated to Debussy *The King of the Stars*, a cantata also on a text by Balmont. Not until 1954 was it assigned to the instruments that make it a fitting introduction to his *Japanese Lyrics*.

The devoted disciple of both Debussy and Ravel, Manuel de Falla spent seven fruitful years in Paris, until the war drove him back to his native neutral Spain. Just before he left Paris he made the seven folksong settings, as William Austin says, "with a fine economy worthy of Ravel, quite new for Falla." He preserves the integrity and verve of the original songs, while adding to their elegance. So does Carlos Salzedo in the further step of transcribing them to be sung accompanied by two harps. Paul Collaer's words still apply, "The songs are more true than true."