

THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND THE OFFICE OF LECTURES AND CONCERTS

No. 116
Betty

Present

THE CONTEMPORARY GROUP

William O. Smith and Stuart Dempster

Co-Directors

Wednesday, November 1, 1978

Studio Theater, 8:00 PM

Tape No. 1 - 9154

PROGRAM

MILTON BABBITT 13:43
(b. 1916)

Woodwind Quintet (in one movement) (1953) CH 11-19-78.

Introduction
Canons for Clarinet
Trios for Flute
Duets for Bassoon
Cadenza and Recitative for Oboe
Finale

Felix Skowronek, flute Laila Storch, oboe
William McColl, clarinet Arthur Grossman, bassoon

JOHN RAIN 4:25
(b. 1944)

Improvisation on a Synclavier of Corn
(electronic tape) (1973)*

ZOLTAN KADALY 29:39
(1882-1967)

Sonata for Unaccompanied 'Cello, Op. 3 (1915)
Allegro maestoso ma appassionata
Adagio (con gran espressione)
Allegro molto vivace

Toby Saks, 'cello

Tape No. 2 - 9155

INTERMISSION

JEAN-CLAUDE RISSET 14:33

Inharmonique for Voice and Tape (1977)

Carol Sams, soprano

SAMUEL BARBER 22:19
(b. 1910)

Sonata for Piano, Op. 26 (1949) CH 11-26-78.

Allegro energico
Allegro vivace e leggero
Adagio mesto
Allegro con spirito

LeAnn Plank, piano

*Premiere

BABBITT

Milton Babbitt's early compositions -- Du (1951), this Woodwind Quartet (1953), the String Quartet No. 2 (1954) -- are kindergartens of musical sophistications for those of us who are interested in pursuing Babbittian serialism (so hyper-gravid with unborn compositions) yet who lag behind the supersonic pace of Babbitt's compositional development since the 1960's. The Woodwind Quartet proposes remarkable ad hoc solutions to those perennial and essential problems of serial composition, namely, counterpoint (the play of the lines with the simultaneities) and form (the creation of audible large scale structure audibly related to audible local serial structures). For example, the first three measures (previous to the "Introduction") give us, at the most local level, a flow of three-note motifs ("trichords") successively among the four instruments. When each instrument has had its first 3 note ("013" trichord) lick, all twelve pitch-classes have been heard. This process is repeated with a different motif ("014" trichord) twice, each time in a different "firing order" of instruments. The large scale "harmonic rhythm" accelerates (in best Piston's Harmony style) to its momentary conclusion, where the last and fourth presentation of all 12 pitch-classes returns to the first motif ("013" trichord) in a "large" scale A B B' A' form (for the first 3 measures), upon which we realize also that each of the four instrumental lines has individually led us through an A B B' A' motivic process using all 12 pitch-classes, and that the clarinet line was an inversion of the bassoon's and the flute line an inversion of the oboe's, and (10 minutes later) that these motifs in these orderings in these lines will lead us (and have led us) to and through the large-scale structure of the whole Woodwind Quartet.

John Rahn

RAHN

Improvisations on a Synclavier of Corn is the first composition to be realized on the School of Music's recently acquired Synclavier, a device (including a digital computer) for digital synthesis of sound. It is literally an improvisation, in real time, on a musical object of great presence (like Marcel Duchamp's urinal) supplied by the manufacturers of the Synclavier.

KODALY

Zoltan Kodaly was a contemporary and fellow student of Bartok and Dohnanyi, but while Dohnanyi hewed close to traditional patterns, he and Bartok in 1905 tapped a new and revitalizing source of inspiration. They plugged into the serious study and compilation of authentic Hungarian folk material and thereafter the creation of music which, filtered through the two men's different personalities, environment, and experiences, nevertheless spoke in a distinct and national idiom.

The Sonata for Unaccompanied Cello is the work of a cello virtuoso, and it was dedicated to Kerpely, a noted performer on the instrument. The work conveys symphonic concepts in three fairly lengthy movements, and those who are thrilled with works that bristle with technical difficulties will find this sonata a dazzling snowpiece. But Kodaly did not write with this aim in mind. Bartok, commenting on this work in 1920, said: "This aim of this composition was to fulfil the demands of the music of today with the simplest possible means -- a single melodic instrument."

RISSET

"Inharmonique" for soprano and tape is dedicated to Irene Jarsky and was first performed in April 1977 in the IRCAM Passage du XXe Siecle series. The sounds of Inharmonique were all computed at IRCAM with the Music V Program. Some sections were digitally mixed with Stanford University's program MIXSND, but there is no analog sound processing involved. Except in one section, all sounds are made up of inharmonic frequency components, which generally is not the case in sustained instrumental tones. These inharmonic components can, depending upon their temporal envelope, fuse into imaginary bells (composed just as chords), or split into fluid textures.

Jean-Claude Risset is currently head of the computer department of Institute de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique (IRCAM) Paris. He studied piano with Robert Trimaille and composition with Suzanne Demarquez and Andre Jolivet. His scientific studies were done at Ecole Normale Supérieure, where he earned the Doctorates Sciences Physiques in 1967.

He spent three years with Max Mathews at Bell Laboratories to develop the resources of computer sound synthesis such as imitation of real timbres, synthesis of new timbres, fine timbre and pitch control, and pitch paradoxes. He published a catalog of computer-synthesized sounds in 1969, and set up a computer sound synthesis system in Orsay, France in 1971.

BARBER

The Samuel Barber Piano Sonata was first played before an invited audience of friends in a room in G. Schirmer's music shop, in 1950, by Vladimir Horowitz. He played it publicly at a Carnegie Hall recital a few days later.

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