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SCHOOL OF MUSIC
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

UW MODERN MUSIC ENSEMBLE

Cristina L. Valdés, Director

7:30 PM
December 5, 2017
Brechemin Auditorium

UW MUSIC
2017-18 SEASON

CDI-#17,939

PROGRAM

- 1 remarks - Valdes
- 2 remarks - Qiao

3 Tierkreis (1974-75).....23:00.....Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928-2007)

- 1. Schütze - Sagittarius
- 2. Steinbock - Capricorn
- 3. Wassermann - Aquarius
- 4. Fische - Pisces
- 5. Widder - Aries
- 6. Stier - Taurus
- 7. Zwillinge - Gemini
- 8. Kerbs - Cancer
- 9. Löwe - Leo
- 10. Jungfrau - Virgo
- 11. Waage - Libra
- 12. Skorpion - Scorpio
- 13. Schütze - Sagittarius

Caitlin Beare, clarinet
 Emily Acri, violin
~~Alessandra Barrett, viola~~
 Chris Young, cello
 Abbey Blackwell, double bass
 Hexin Qiao, piano
 Edward Cunneen, percussion

4 remarks - Young

5 Music in Similar Motion (1973).....11:49.....Phillip Glass (b. 1937)

Caitlin Beare, clarinet
 Emily Acri, violin
~~Alessandra Barrett, viola~~
 Chris Young, cello
 Hexin Qiao, piano
 Edward Cunneen, percussion

INTERMISSION

CDZ-#17,940

1 remarks - Beare

2 Quartet for the End of Time (1940-41) 46:42 Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)

- I. Liturgie de cristal
- II. Vocalise, pour l'Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps
- III. Abîme des oiseaux
- IV. Intermède
- V. Louange à l'Éternité de Jésus
- VI. Danse de la fureur, pour les sept trompettes
- VII. Fouillis d'arcs-en-ciel, pour l'Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps
- VIII. Louange à l'Immortalité de Jésus

Caitlin Beare, clarinet
Emily Acri, violin
Chris Young, cello
Hexin Qiao, piano

Program Notes

KARLHEINZ STOCKHAUSEN (1928-2007), a German composer, is considered one of the most dominant figures in the history of avant-garde music. As a pioneer in electronic music and a master of serial composition, his works have remained popular with contemporary music performers today.

The son of a village schoolteacher and an amateur singer, Stockhausen worked in a military hospital in Bedburg until the end of World War II. He started formally studying music at the Cologne Musikhochschule in 1947 and graduated in music education in 1951. During this period, Stockhausen studied piano with Hans-Otto Schmidt-Neuhau and composition with Frank Martin. After studying with Messiaen in Paris during January 1952 – March 1953, he returned to Cologne and was offered a position in Studio für Elektronische Musik at Northwestdeutscher Rundfunk. From then on, Stockhausen's influence kept expanding until the 1970s. In 1956, he started teaching at the Darmstadt summer courses, which represented the European avant-garde by the late 1950s. The composer's first breakthrough of his impact outside Europe took place in 1958 when he gave a lecture tour in USA. In the early 1960s, his work was performed frequently and by the end of the 1960s, he became the second best-selling 20-century classical composer for Deutsche Grammophon. From the late 1970s, Stockhausen's life was centered in his house in Kürten and the composition of his seven-part operatic cycle *Licht*. The composer's music returned to prevail in Germany from the mid-1990s and on.

Tierkreis (Zodiac) is one of Stockhausen's most popular compositions. The piece consists of 12 melodies, each representing one of the astrological star signs. The composer specified the origin and inspiration of the melodies in his program notes of the version for chamber orchestra that *"In 1975, I composed MUSIC IN THE BELLY for 6 percussionists, a scenic piece which I heard and saw in 1974 one morning as I awoke. Near the end of the piece, 3 music boxes are taken out of the stomach of a bird man, who is suspended above the stage. There is a total of 12 music boxes, from which 3 are chosen for a performance. I composed and named the 12 melodies according to the characteristics of the signs of the zodiac... In inventing each melody, I thought of the characters of children, friends, and acquaintances, who were born under the various star signs, and I studied the human personalities of the star signs more thoroughly. Each melody is now composed with all its measures and proportions in keeping with the characteristics of its respective star sign, and one will discover many legitimacies when one hears a melody many times, and exactly contemplates its construction."*

The performance tonight is based on the piano version of the piece, which has the melody on the top and the accompaniment on the lower part. Stockhausen was very specific about rhythm, tempo (assigned metronome markings for each movement) and pedaling.

Nevertheless, he didn't give any dynamic markings throughout the piece. As we made our own arrangements, we took the characteristics of the twelve signs into consideration, corresponding to Stockhausen's intention. We associated the timbre of an instrument or a combination of various instruments with traits of each sign. The melodies are so simple, yet distinct, that they provided us infinite space to vary our interpretations, and gave us a most rewarding experience in arranging them for this evening's performance.

Hexin Qiao

PHILLIP GLASS, who celebrated his eightieth birthday earlier this year, led a particularly adventurous and varied life during the 1960s. After a stint at Juilliard, he spent time teaching in Pittsburgh, studying in Paris with Nadia Boulanger on a Fulbright Scholarship, and travelling through northern India. In 1967, at age 30, he returned to New York and immersed in the city's rich artistic scene. Glass filled the 1960s-70s juncture years with explorations into a style that he called "music with repetitive structures", through a number of creatively named compositions such as *Music in Fifths*, *Music in Contrary Motion*, *Music with Changing Parts*, and *Music in Twelve Parts*.

Music in Similar Motion, composed in 1969, is a product of this colorful period in the young composer's life. In these works, Glass established his signature sound: small fragments that loop together, change subtly over time, and combine with one another through additive rhythms. Usually, these pieces were written for and performed by the composer's band/chamber group, The Phillip Glass Ensemble. The improvisatory and experimental style of the Glass Ensemble (which still performs today) relates directly to the nature of the music; in the score for *Music in Similar Motion*, Glass writes "Any combination of instruments whose range suits the material is acceptable... It is possible for the piece to be played through without any optional repeats to last for about 6 minutes. On the other hand, in theory, the leader of the ensemble could indicate sufficient repeats by the nod of a head that the work would last all night - even eternally."

Chris Young

Written during a time when many were grappling with the idea of the *Deus Absconditis* (the hidden God), OLIVIER MESSIAEN's *Quatuor pour la fin du Temps* stands as an extraordinary example of reaffirmation in a world ostensibly facing apocalyptic destruction. Drafted into the French military in 1939 and captured the following year, Messiaen formed friendships in the German prisoner-of-war camp Stalag VIII A with three other musicians who became an integral part of the *Quatuor's* genesis: violinist Jean Le Boulaire, cellist Étienne Pasquier, and clarinetist

Henri Akoka. While Messiaen's ardent Catholicism informed the foundation of the composition, these musicians, with the composer on piano, brought the work to life in a crowded prison hall on January 15, 1941. "Never have I been heard with as much attention and understanding," Messiaen recalled.

The *Quatuor's* title has a dual meaning: one refers to the Book of Revelations, the other has to do with musical duration. Messiaen dedicated the work to Angel of the Apocalypse who announces the end of time in the Revelation of St. John, and quotes the following passage in the preface to the score:

"And I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow on his head; his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire... Setting his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land...and, standing on the sea and on the land, he raised his right hand toward Heaven and swore by He who lives forever and ever...saying: 'There will be no more Time; but in the days when the seventh angel is to blow his trumpet, the mystery of God will be fulfilled.'" (Revelation of St. John, Chapter 10)

"There will be no more Time" guides not only the *Quatuor's* spiritual concepts, it also manifests itself in the form of certain musical elements that typify Messiaen's musical language. His use of additive rhythm (irregular lengthening or shortening of rhythmic values), the talas of Hindustani music, astonishingly slow tempos, and the absence of time signatures all contribute to the suspension of time the work evokes. Therefore, the phrase "There will be no more Time" has a literal meaning throughout.

It is no coincidence that such a work was written by a man held in captivity during the height of World War II, yet Messiaen asserted that the *Quatuor* was not written as a response to what was happening around him. Rather, he wrote the work "to escape from the snow, from the war, from captivity, and from myself...in the midst of 30,000 prisoners, I was probably the only man who was not one." The work is in eight movements, because, according to the composer, "Seven is the perfect number, the Creation in six days sanctified by the divine Sabbath; the seventh day of this repose extends into eternity and becomes the eighth day of eternal light, of unalterable peace." These eight movements offer exceptional insight into one man's soul in the midst of powerful spiritual and emotional contemplations, yet as Messiaen himself points out, "Given the awesomeness of the subject, all of the above serves merely as inarticulate and tentative explanation!" Notwithstanding the vast amount of scholarship on the work, *Quatuor pour la fin du Temps* simply has to be experienced to be understood, and its sheer power and sublime beauty has captivated its audiences since its premiere that winter night in 1941.

Caitlin Beare

Composer's note (translated from the original French by Rebecca Rischin):

- I. "Crystal Liturgy." Between 3 and 4 o'clock in the morning, the birds awaken: a solo blackbird or nightingale improvises, surrounded by dustwhirls of sound, by a halo of harmonics lost high up in the trees. Transpose this onto a religious plane: you have the harmonious silence of heaven.
- II. "Vocalise, for the Angel Who Announces the End of Time." The first and third sections (both very brief) evoke the power of this mighty angel, crowned with a rainbow and clothed in a cloud, who places one foot on the sea and one foot on the land. The "middle" section evokes the impalpable harmonies of heaven. In the piano: gentle cascades of blue-orange chords, encircling with their distant carillon the plainchant-like song of the violin and cello.
- III. "Abyss of the Birds." Unaccompanied clarinet. The abyss is Time, with its weariness and gloom. The birds are the opposite of Time; they represent our longing for light, for stars, for rainbows, and for jubilant song!
- IV. "Interlude." Scherzo, in a more outgoing character than the other movements, yet related to them, nevertheless by melodic "recalls."
- V. "Praise to the Eternity of Jesus." Here, Jesus is considered the Word of God. A long phrase in the cello, inexorably slow, glorifies, with adoration and reverence, the eternity of this mighty yet gentle Word, "of which the ages never tire." The melody unfolds majestically, as if from a regal yet soft-colored horizon. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."
- VI. "Dance of Fury, for the Seven Trumpets." Rhythmically, the most characteristic movement of this series. The four instruments in unison create the effect of gongs and trumpets (the first six trumpets of the Apocalypse followed by various calamities, the trumpet of the seventh angel announcing the fulfillment of the mystery of God). Use of added values, augmentation and diminution, and nonretrogradable rhythms. Music of stone, tremendous ringing granite; perpetual motion of steel, of enormous blocks of purple fury, of frozen intoxication. Listen, above all, to the terrifying fortissimo of the theme in augmentation and register alteration toward the end of the movement.

VII. "Tangle of Rainbows, for the Angel Who Announces the End of Time." Certain passages here recall the second movement. The Angel full of might appears, and in particular the rainbow that crowns him (the rainbow, symbol of peace, of wisdom, and of every luminous sound and vibration). In my dreams, I hear and see classified chords and melodies, common colors and forms; then, after this transitory stage I pass into unreality and lose myself in a rapture to a whirling, a gyrating fusion of superhuman sound and color. These swords of fire, these pools of blue-orange lava, these shooting stars: this is the tangled skein, these are the rainbows!

VIII. "Praise to the Immortality of Jesus." Long solo for violin, the counterpart to the cello solo in the fifth movement. Why this second eulogy? It addresses more specifically the second aspect of Jesus: Jesus the Man, the Word made flesh, immortally resurrected, to impart us his life. This movement is pure love. The progressive ascent toward the extremely high register represents the ascension of man toward his Lord, of the son of God toward his Father, of deified Man toward Paradise.

--And I repeat again what I said earlier: "Given the awesomeness of the subject, all of the above serves merely as inarticulate and tentative explanation!"

Director Biography:

Considered one of today's foremost interpreters of contemporary music, pianist CRISTINA VALDÉS is known for presenting innovative concerts. She has performed across four continents and in venues such as Lincoln Center, Le Poisson Rouge, Miller Theatre, Jordan Hall, and the Kennedy Center. An avid chamber musician and collaborator, Cristina has toured extensively with the Bang On a Can "All Stars", and has performed with the Seattle Chamber Players, the Mabou Mines Theater Company, the Parsons Dance Company, and Antares. She has also been a featured performer on both the Seattle Symphony's Chamber Series and [UNTITLED] concerts. Cristina has appeared as a soloist with the Seattle Symphony, Johns Hopkins Symphony Orchestra, the Binghamton Philharmonic, the Seattle Philharmonic, the Eastman BroadBand, and the Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra. Valdés holds degrees from the New England Conservatory and SUNY Stony Brook, and is currently an Artist-in Residence at the University of Washington.