

University of Washington
THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC

C657
1998

presents the

11-30



COMPOSERS' WORKSHOP

with music by

Linda Antas

Sarah Louise Bassingthwaighte

Bret Battey

Donald Craig

Eric Flesher

Michael Rook

Christopher Shainin

8:00 PM
November 30, 1998
Meany Theater

School
of
Music
University
of
Washington

DAF 13,339
CD 13,340

PROGRAM

- CD DAF
- [1] THE DA-TRANG CRABS.....11'..... Christopher Shainin 107
Hope Wechkin, *soprano*
Roger Nelson, *piano and narration*
- [2] BEFORE THE DARK.....10'..... Linda Antas 102
Pamela Vokolek, *harp*
- [3] PORTRAIT and BERCEUSE.....7'..... Michael Rook 103
Sarah Bassingthwaighte, *flute*
Ming Tsu, *piano*
- [4] ON THE PRESENCE OF WATER.....9'..... Bret Battey 104
video

INTERMISSION

- [5] STILL, YET, AGAIN.....13'..... Linda Antas 105
for computer realized sound
Shannon Hobbs, *choreography*
- [6] COMPOSITION C FOR TWO PIANOS.....7'..... Eric Flesher 106
Ming Tsu, *piano*
Yuka Sasaki, *piano*
- [7] SOMEWHERE I HAVE NEVER TRAVELLED.....6'..... Sarah Louise Bassingthwaighte 107
Brenna Wells, *soprano* Linda Antas, *conductor*
Lisa Killinger, *viola* Paige Stockley, *'cello*
Christopher Shainin, *'bass* Sarah Bassingthwaighte, *flute*
Brad Sherman, *clarinet* Eric Rynes, *violin*
- [8] MIDNIGHT AT LOCH NESS.....8'..... Donald Craig 108
for computer realized sound

The Da-Trang Crabs

"The Da-Trang Crabs" (1997), by Christopher Shainin, is the setting of a Vietnamese folktale for soprano and piano. The pianist narrates the story of Da-Trang, a hunter, who finds a pearl granting him understanding of the language of animals. Tonight is the world premier.

Hope Wechkin, as a soprano and a violinist, has performed contemporary music with a variety of ensembles and choirs, such as the Esoterics, the Seattle Creative Orchestra, and as a conductor of the Yale Slavic Chorus. She has performed the music of Northwest composers in solo recitals and recently commissioned a cycle of songs by Tom Baker.

Roger Nelson has been commissioning, performing, recording, and promoting new music for more than 30 years as a member of such groups as the Port Costa Players, the New Performance Group, and now Sonora. As a specialist in new music he has worked closely with many composers, including John Cage, Paul Dresher, William Duckworth, Janice Giteck, Malcolm Goldstein, Alan Hovhaness, Bun-Ching Lam, James Tenney, and Christian Wolff. He can be heard on a half dozen recordings in the various roles of conductor, pianist, and arranger. He has taught at Cornish College of the Arts since 1979, conducts the Seattle Creative Orchestra and the Bainbridge Orchestra, and is a highly sought after accompanist for singers and instrumentalists.

Christopher Shainin (b. 1968) has composed music for theater, film, dance, jugglers, and Indian shadow puppetry, as well as for chamber orchestra, choir, and small ensembles. He is currently involved in writing music for trans-ethnic instrumentation. He has studied composition with Richard Karpen, Ken Benshoof, William O. Smith, Jarrad Powell, Bern Herbolzheimer, David Mahler, and Janice Giteck, conducting with Peter Erös, James Savage, and Roger Nelson, contrabass with Ron Simon, piano with Peter Mack, and voice with Thomas Eckert. A Brechemin Scholar, Shainin is conductor of the Seattle Mandolin Orchestra and the Frohsinn Männerchor, a member of the Contemporary Chamber Composers and Players, and co-founder and manager of the Seattle Creative Orchestra.

Before the Dark

About seven months after this composition was completed, I finally discovered the title in a novel called *The Summer Before the Dark* by Dorris Lessing. *Before the Dark* is NOT a programmatic work in any way, yet I was struck by the parallels between the philosophies of the novel and the piece.

In the novel, two characters struggle with life's weighty decisions and consider the consequences--or lack thereof--of these decisions. The answers to their questions do not lie in realizing some inherent "meaning of life," but rather in creating a meaning in life. Through the protagonist, the reader realizes (or at

least I did) that we may arrive at the same point through a variety of paths. In *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, Kundera discusses the impossibility of knowing if we have made the wisest life decisions--having only one life leaves us with no basis for comparison.

There is no one event that determines the course of things to come, nor (with one brief and somewhat nebulous exception) is there a reliance on previous events. There are only two defining moments--a beginning and an end--and either of these could have been replaced or even connected by another network of midpoints.

Before the Dark is the result of the generosity of Bernice Mosafer Rind and Pamela Vokolek, for whom the piece was written. My sincerest thanks to them for their encouragement and especially to Pamela for her advice, support, and dedication.

Linda Antas received her Bachelor of Music (1994) and Master of Music (1996) degrees in composition from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her primary composition teachers there were Salvatore Martirano and Morgan Powell. During her graduate work at the University of Illinois, she was a teaching assistant, course instructor, the president of The Group for New Music, and was formally commended for her teaching abilities. She worked as a lab assistant in CAMIL (Computer-Assisted Music Instruction Lab), and began her studies of computer music in the Experimental Music Studios and the Computer Music Project with James Beauchamp and Sever Tipei. Linda is currently a Graduate Staff Assistant at the University of Washington's CARTAH (Center for Advanced Research Technology in the Arts and Humanities). She has studied composition with Richard Karpen and Diane Thome. Linda's work has been recognized by the Sante Fe International Festival of Electro-Acoustic Music, the International Computer Music Association, and the Second International Music Contest Citta' di Udine. Linda is a flutist who especially enjoys playing her colleagues' music. She has studied flute with Janet Scott and Alex Murray, and is currently Vice President of the Seattle Flute Society.

Pamela Vokolek traces her ongoing interest in new music to teachers who were also composers championing new works as well as playing an instrument with a limited repertoire. She has performed with new music groups at the University of Chicago, University of Iowa, Portland State University, in Vancouver, B.C., and with the School of Music Contemporary Group. In 1996 she presented a workshop on contemporary harp music at the National American Harp Society Conference. As a tribute to the UW harp program, David Kechley wrote a work for twenty harps, which was premiered in Meany Hall at a 1989 harp celebration.

Portrait and Berceuse

The two short pieces you will hear tonight, are the result of different events—events that inspired me to write, but not to write about. These pieces do not tell a story, they just 'are'. Feel free to "build your own story" while listening.

1. Portrait- for Fabian Weinecke, painter

I've known Fabian for 20 years now. Due to his interest in modern art, and mine in modern music, we have had a lot of opportunities to cross-reference concepts and ideas. Prior to my departure to America he painted his vision of me in the U.S.: standing across from a Texaco station in the middle of nowhere, a lonely truck just having passed me by. I returned the favor by composing a portrait of him, consisting of two parts: the first "desounds" him at work, painting, and the second is a musical portrait of his personality. Tonight, these two parts will be separated by a piano interlude (second piece). I built this piece using his telephone number as source material, which the flute presents immediately. Keep in mind they use rotary phones in Europe.

2. Berceuse (for a murdered child)

"Berceuse" stands for cradle song. This piece was triggered by a horrible event. A 6 year old girl was missing for days, and discovered under a pile of leaves by her peers. The girl's father had apparently passed out after a drinking binge with his buddy, who proceeded to end this girl's life. On the news they showed a picture of this girl, alive, and in her eyes I saw a spark that convinced me she could have transcended the redneck misery she was born into, but was tragically not allowed to.

After seeing this picture, I started to write the piece, and finished it in record time, almost in a trance. This is one of my simplest pieces, and probably the most accessible, "tonal", or "melodic" one, in a conventional sense. It does, however, fit into one of the "themes" I always return to, compulsively: the waltz, a dance form that still fascinates me, partly because of my roots, partly because of its continuously changing role in society and partly because of the current predominance of dance music in 2/4.

This piece is dedicated to this little girl and to my friend Matt Smith, who died in a motorcycle accident shortly after I wrote this piece.

Michael Rook was born 1968 in Düsseldorf, Germany and came to the States in 1988, where he studied composition at Oberlin Conservatory of Music, before attending the University of Washington School of Music, where he currently is in the doctoral program. His interest in classical music started at age seven, and from age eleven on he received formal music lessons. Aside from "Avant garde" music, his interests include "underground" pop and industrial music, history, politics, good food and beer. He has won several prizes and participated in numerous international music festivals. His music has been broadcast and performed in the U.S., Germany and the Ukraine. His career plans

include a quasi-Germanic (cultural) global domination scheme, and the implementation of a personalized dictatorship of the proletariat, thereby effectively destroying the concept of the "starving artist". Mr. Rook likes money to be where it belongs: in his pocket. He has complete disdain for culturally imperialistic grave robbers like Yanni and cohorts, who shall remain nameless here. He has studied here at the University of Washington with Joël-François Durand and Richard Karpen.

On the Presence of Water

On the Presence of Water is a sound and image meditation on water as a spiritual and psychological archetype. Computer manipulations of found sound and imagery knit tightly together to express a narrative of the subconscious. The video and computer music were developed in parallel, with creative insights in each medium influencing work in the other. The music was created in the U.W. School of Music Computing Center. The video was created in the Center for Advanced Research Technologies in the Arts and Humanities (CARTAH).

Bret Battey's electronic, acoustic, and multimedia concert works and installations have been presented in diverse venues in the United States, Europe, and Asia, including the Korean Electroacoustic Music Society Festival, the Bourges, France Synthèse Festival, the Hungarian Radio Summer Electroacoustic Music Festival, the International Computer Music Conference, MTV Europe, Sonic Circuits V, Seattle Experimental Opera, and the Microsoft Advanced Technology Group. His work has received recognition from SEAMUS (the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States) and Prix Ars Electronica (Austria). He is currently a DMA student in music composition at the University of Washington, where he also completed his Masters work. He received a Bachelors of Music in Electronic and Computer Music from Oberlin Conservatory and has worked in Manhattan at the Philip Glass production studio and Studio PASS, a non-profit studio for sound artists. Teachers in music composition and technology include Conrad Cummings, Joël-François Durand, Richard Karpen, Gary Nelson, and Diane Thome.
<http://weber.u.washington.edu/~bbattey/>

Still, Yet, Again

Still, Yet, Again was realized at the University of Washington's School of Music Computer Center using Csound and Common Music. Both synthetic sounds and sampled sounds--including a struck PVC pipe, a piano, a propeller-driven bomber plane, a cymbal, canon fire, and a short orchestral chord--are used in the piece. These samples were processed using techniques including Phase Vocoding, Linear Predictive Coding, band-pass filters, comb filters, and the soundwarp unit generator, which enables the stretching of sounds in time without necessarily changing the pitch.

Shannon Hobbs is a MFA candidate in the University of Washington Dance Program. Currently, she performs with D-9 Dance Collective and the Chamber Dance Company. "Falling Unconscious" was choreographed in collaboration with the dancers who range from beginning dance students to undergraduate dance majors.

Composition C for Two Pianos (1997-8)

Composition C is the second work of a series of three pieces. Here, the concentration is upon the expansion and contraction of chords over time: The harmonic material was drawn from a series of thirteen pitches, from which a chord progression was created. This was processed through Patchwork, a computer-assisted composition program, to produce proportional expansions and contractions of the original chords. This chord progression serves as the structural basis of the entire work, resurfacing at various points throughout the piece in various degrees of clarity. The two pianos have been individual characteristics: the first piano plays *legato*, with almost continuous pedaling, while the second piano plays *secco*, with virtually no pedaling at all. As the work progresses, the action in each piano gradually begin to affect and infiltrate one another.

Eric Flesher was born in 1968 in Princeton, New Jersey. He earned his Bachelor of Music degree in Composition from California State University, Northridge, where his teachers were Aurelio de la Vega and Daniel Kessner. In 1995, he received a Master of Philosophy degree in Musical Composition from Cambridge University, where he studied Composition with Alexander Goehr and Counterpoint with Hugh Wood. He has additionally studied with Gerhard Stäbler and Paul-Heinz Dittrich at the Internationaler Meisterkurs für Komposition in Rheinsberg, Germany. His recent work for vocal ensemble, "To Sleep, Perchance... (Composition D, 1998)" was premiered as part of the International Competition for New Vocal Music of the 1998 Brandenburgisches Colloquium für Neue Musik. He is currently a doctoral composition student of Joël-François Durand at the University of Washington.

Ming Tsu has studied at the New England Conservatory of Music and Indiana University where she received her Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degree in piano performance. Ms. Tsu is currently working towards the Doctor of Musical Arts at the University of Washington. Ms. Tsu has performed with the "Aurage" New Music Ensemble in Calgary and has recently performed in Berlin, Rheinsberg, and at the Darmstadt Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik, Germany. Ms. Tsu is also the founder and the director of the "Young Internationals" Chamber Music Society at the University of Washington.

Yuka Sasaki studied with Bela Siki at the University of Washington where she received the Doctor of Musical Arts degree. She has received First prize from the Northwest Young Artist Piano Competition, Bushell Competition, Ladies Musical Competition, and has received the Finalist award from Trani

International Piano Competition in Italy and NHK Piano Competition in Japan. She has performed in Europe, Asia, Canada and has been reviewed as "masterly job" (Seattle Times), "Sasaki's playing possesses colorful lyricism and fantasy with brilliant virtuosic technique" (Ongakuno Tomo-Japan).

somewhere I have never travelled (based on the poem by e. e. cummings)

somewhere i have never travelled
gladly beyond any experience
your eyes have their silence
in your most frail gesture are things which enclose me
or which i cannot touch because they are too near

or if your wish be to close me
i and my life will shut!
very beautifully
ah! suddenly
as when the heart of the flower imagines
snow carefully everywhere descending!

nothing which we are to perceive
in this world equals the power
of your intense fragility
nobody
not even the rain
has such small hands

Sarah Bassingthwaight is pursuing a doctorate in flute performance and a masters in composition at the UW. She performs and teaches extensively, and is the President of the Seattle Flute Society, her fourth year with that organization.

Midnight at Loch Ness

Midnight at Loch Ness has no overt programmatic intent and so the music can be heard any number of ways. The tune featured at the end is a traditional Scottish folksong called "Ye Banks and Braes" and was chosen simply because I had that week been playing an arrangement of it for guitar. This piece is my first composition for computer realized sound and was created while I was taking the computer music course series at the UW.

Donald Craig is an undergraduate student of composition at the UW. He has studied composition with Joël-François Durand and is presently studying with Ken Benschopf. He is also studying classical guitar with Steven Novacek and computer music with Richard Karpen.