



School

of

Music

University

of

Washington

# William Bolcom's PIANO ETUDES

CASS  
# 12,381

5:00 PM

Brechemin Auditorium

May 11, 1994

## PROGRAM (From Twelve New Etudes)

- INTRO by W. Bolcom (7')

The composer provides the following descriptions in the score:

**Book I** (7') ..... Matthew Goodrich, *piano*

1. Fast, furious, headlong, but controlled. Sweeping gestures of hands, forearms; the body. Freedom of movement. 14 October 1977.
2. Récitatif. Recitative style, rubato; finger-changes for smoothness' sake; smooth passage of line between hands. 2 May 1977.
3. Mirrors. Very light, rhythmic, Leaps, distorted mirrors, lateral stretches between fingers. 6 December 1977.

**Book II** (10') ..... Kevin Johnson, *piano*

4. Scène d'opéra. A steady, rhythmic ostinato versus varied irrational rhythms. 25 August 1980, revised 25 November 1982.
5. Butterflies, hummingbirds. The lateral tremolo. Mercurial changes in color, attacks and rhythm. 31 April 1980, revised 31 August 1986.
6. Nocturne. Absolute contrast in dynamics and tone. 1 April 1981.

**Book III** ..... Joseph Adam and Soo Kwon, *piano*

7. Premonitions. "Free-falls" into piano keys; size of tone without banging. (3')  
Inside-piano plucking. 29 September 1982. (Joseph Adam)  
[NOTE: Etude 8 is not being performed tonight.]
9. Invention. Controlled legato lines with minimal pedal. Clear delineation of voices. 28 April 1983. (Soo Kwon) (4')

**Book IV** (16') ..... Erin Chung, *piano*

10. Vers le silence. Use of the pedals. Wide leaps and dynamic contrast. Trills. 1983-28 August 1986.
11. Hi-jinks. Lively, with a strange and ghostly humor. Dynamic contrast (in the piano section least naturally apt.) 1983-29 August 1986.
12. Hymne à l'amour. Contrast of timbres, mostly by means of pedal. Orchestral sonorities. 1983-2 September 1986. -concludes side B

WILLIAM BOLCOM is the 1993-94 Hans and Thelma Lehmann

Distinguished Professor

Encore: William Bolcom + Joan Morris

1- Someone to Watch over me

2- Black Max

3- I Love a Piano

TWELVE NEW ETUDES is the second of two volumes of twelve etudes, the first of which was composed between 1959 and 1966. The Twelve New Etudes were originally written for Paul Jacobs, whose untimely death in 1983 brought the project to a halt. Bolcom has completed the set and extended the dedication to include the pianists John Musto and Marc-André Hamelin.

These etudes reveal Bolcom's extraordinarily wide musical interests, synthesizing a diversity of style: Bolcom is at home with popular music, jazz, and the classical tradition. In the preface to the score, Bolcom writes: "I now embark on a stylistic and harmonic synthesis no longer involved with any local style—that of fusion of tonality into non-centered sound (often miscalled 'atonal'), as a planet in space draws gravity toward itself. Within this spatial (yet tonal) universe one can attempt to calibrate one's distance from a strong tonal center with greater accuracy."

WILLIAM BOLCOM, born in Seattle in 1938, joined the University of Michigan School of Music faculty in 1973 and has served as professor of composition since 1983. At age eleven he entered the University of Washington to study composition privately with John Verrall. Later he studied extensively with Darius Milhaud, both in California and Paris. Among many honors, he has received two Guggenheim fellowships, a Koussevitzky Foundation grant, and an award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 1988, he received the Pulitzer Prize in music for his "Twelve New Etudes" for piano, and he was commissioned to compose a song cycle to texts by American women, performed by mezzo-soprano Marilyn Horne during Carnegie Hall's 1990-91 centennial season. As a solo pianist and concert artist with his wife, soprano Joan Morris, Bolcom has recorded and performed widely. His music, from ragtime to the theater and from chamber music to symphonic works, has gained worldwide prominence.