

Compact disc

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SCHOOL OF MUSIC
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

SOURCED

A Faculty Recital with Cristina Valdés, piano

7:30 PM
February 8, 2017
Meany Theater

UW MUSIC
2016-17 SEASON

CD1-#17,649

PROGRAM

- 1 - remarks, Valdes
- 2 Le Tombeau de Rameau II 25:45 Joel-Francois Durand (b. 1954)
I. injections
II. cicatrices
III. proliférations
IV. murs
V. cicatrices II
- 3 Petites Esquisses d'Oiseaux 14:23 Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)
I. Le rouge-gorge (Robin)
II. Le merle-noir (Blackbird)
III. Le rouge-gorge (Robin)
IV. La grive musicienne (Song Thrush)
V. Le rouge-gorge (Robin)
VI. L'alouette des champs (Skylark)

INTERMISSION

CD2-# 17,650

- 1 Shimmer, Tree 7:14 Kotoka Suzuki (b. 1971)
II. I count the fleeing hours
in memoriam Jonathan Harvey, for piano and electronics
- 2 Program Notes* 28:36 Richard Karpen (b. 1957)
I.
II.
III.
IV.

*World Premiere

PROGRAM NOTES

Joël-François Durand, *Le Tombeau de Rameau II, for piano (2013)*

When he published in 1741 the five suites of *Pièces de Clavecin en concerts*, "avec un violon ou une flûte, et une viole ou un deuxième violon," Jean-Philippe Rameau added to four of the movements of the suites (*La Livri*, *L'Agaçante*, *La Timide*, and *L'Indiscrète*) a transcription for solo harpsichord. These are the four pieces, in that order (to which I added at the end a modified reprise of the second one), that I chose as the basis for my *Tombeau de Rameau*, originally written for flute, viola and harp in the fall 2008. In this work I had attempted to bring into an uneasy coexistence the original 18th century French baroque musical idiom—somewhat deformed through its transcription for the quintessentially Debussy instrumental combination of flute, viola and harp—with a completely independent, indeed antithetical, musical space composed of fragments from my own work for flute and ensemble *Ombre/Miroir*, here transcribed for the same trio of instruments.

My mental image had been one in which the original Rameau set was like a building that had been damaged through the war of history, through the destructions done by others in the past (vandalism, re-appropriation, deconstruction, etc.—history as a destroyer of the original affect, of the original *impression*), and needed re-building, adaption to our times. But I didn't want to "re-appropriate" it in a cruel and savage way (modernism or post-modernism), or re-construct to make it look like it once did (restoration); it was rebuilt so that its scars were clearly visible; the ruptures between past and present were often unhidden, as if to show the inherent tension of the project, rather than mask it skillfully. In that way, the whole was made relevant again through the attempt to bring out a new authenticity, as was the case when it was first heard. It was indeed, simply, an *interpretation*.

Over the years since the composition of the trio, I progressively imagined that there were more versions possible of this first reading. I realized that it was possible to expand on my past idea and adapt the interpretation of the original text to other contexts, thus making new connections between the old and the new. Of the five movements, I and IV were the most transformed ones, in part because it was on those that the "foreign" fragments from *Ombre/Miroir* had been used more extensively. In the piano version, these were almost completely erased, and became another "ruin" to build upon, so that a new order could be established. In the process of these transformations, it became necessary to alter the other movements as well, to different degrees.

I. *injections*. The injections were originally deformations of the quotes from my flute concerto *Ombre/Miroir*. In the piano piece, I created new layers of materials that are partly derived from the other movements, or are independent. The most obvious example of the latter is a slow chromatic ascent in minor thirds, starting in the lowest register and ending at the opposite end of the keyboard. The minor third, the most pervasive sound of this movement (the c minor tonality of the Rameau original), becomes elevated to another structural level and transcended because of its multiple interactions with the contexts in which it is present.

II. *cicatrices* (scars). Foreign bodies are adapted in order to be integrated into the context. It is perhaps the most "organic" piece of this set, where the foreign bodies are almost integrated in the Rameau

piece in a seamless way. One could say that there is almost no aesthetic crisis, although it is clear the Rameau original is not exposed in its traditional form. Discontinuity is still present throughout, and that the piece is suddenly stopped, as if it had lost its way.

III. *proliférations* takes the idea of ruin to its extreme. The only gesture borrowed from the Rameau piece (*La Timide*) is the initial 8-note ascending-descending figure that appears at the very beginning in the right hand. The path then quickly diverges from the original through the use of proliferating figurations that eventually destroys the germ, like invading weeds.

IV. *murs* (Walls). As seen by the American architect Lebbeus Woods, whose body of work stands as a major influence for the conception of these two pieces, walls are forms of peripheries and edges. In this movement, various forms of edges are put in conflictual juxtapositions.

Fundamentally, one could say that the idea of edge, boundary, limit is the central subject of these four pieces: in each of the first three, boundaries have various degrees of smoothness. The highest roughness is exposed in *murs*: here there is little attempt to facilitate the communication between the different textures—they are simply juxtaposed. This state of crisis, which lies dormant at the core of the formal concept for all four pieces, reaches here its highest point in that the conflict between tradition and disturbance is exposed with little mediation. What is explored then are different possible presentations of the zones of conflicts themselves, of the boundaries, as it were. "Crises arise from the confrontation of different realities, when things of different orders meet and contend." (Lebbeus Woods. *Radical Reconstruction*. P.13)

V. *cicatrices II* attempts to recover the lost way from the end of the 2nd movement. However, such a continuation is not possible anymore because there is a sense that the chaotic presentation of materials in the 4th movement permeates the memory of the 2nd and prevents any return to a "normal" form of communication. Abrupt repeats, changes of registers, holes in the middle of phrases point toward a loss of reason, a loss of logic that is irreparable. The tone of this coda is fleeting, dismembered, ghostly.

Olivier Messiaen, *Petites Esquisses d'Oiseaux* (1985)

These are six very short pieces. They are at the same time very similar and very different. Very similar in their harmonic style, made up of sound complexes with always changing colors. There are blues, reds, oranges, violets, "inverted transposed chords," which dominate. The "chords of contracted resonance" and the "chords of chromatic aggregate" add their more violent and more subtle colors. On the other hand, each bird having its own specific aesthetics, the melodic and rhythmic movements are different from one piece to the next. The three pieces devoted to the Red Robin are composed of pearled, descending chords, almost like glissandos, followed by slow notes, and more refined figures. The Black Bird sings a few sunny, somewhat victorious strophes. The Song Thrush is noticeable by its incantation-like repetitions. Finally, the Skylark, which concludes the work, has a sizzling volubility, turning around a high-pitched dominant, interrupted from time to time by low, slow and loud notes, the whole thing corresponding to the phases of the bird's flight. Pianistically, the writing is very elaborate. The work, written in 1985, is dedicated to Yvonne Loriod.

Kotoka Suzuki, *Shimmer, Tree* | *In Memoriam Jonathan Harvey for piano and electronics (2014)*

II. I count the fleeing hours

This work is written in memory of the British composer, Jonathan Harvey. He was a deeply spiritual man and beautifully sensitive to the details that surrounded him. I vividly recall a particular moment as we sat together by a window one sunny afternoon in California discussing music. In the middle of his sentence, he paused and looked outside the window, mesmerized by a tree as its leaves gently swayed in the wind. He then softly said, "Do you see how beautifully that tree is moving?". This piece depicts the image of this moving tree.

The second movement is loosely based on his work, "Bhakti." A more direct quotation of this work, particularly from the seventh movement where the same tenor bell from his other work "Mortuos Plango" appears, is presented in the tape section of "Shimmer, Tree."

Richard Karpen, *Program Notes* (2015)

PROGRAM NOTES is a work for solo piano composed for and dedicated to the superb pianist, Cristina Valdes. The journey of Byron's heroic fictional character Manfred is told in music by Tchaikovsky in his great Manfred Symphony. Why not depict the rugged journey of a work of music, say Chopin's Piano Sonata #2 in B^b minor, through another work of music? This is the "program" in Program Notes, in which each movement embraces the apprehension, the joy, the desolation, and the arrival at the end of Chopin's great work. The "notes" in the Chopin work are the code (as in computer language code) from which the landscape of Program Notes was drawn.

PERFORMER BIOGRAPHY

Considered one of today's foremost interpreters of contemporary music, CRISTINA VALDÉS is known for presenting innovative concerts with repertoire ranging from Bach to Xenakis. She has performed across four continents and in venues such as Lincoln Center, Le Poisson Rouge, Miller Theatre, Jordan Hall, and the Kennedy Center. Ms. Valdés has appeared both as a soloist and chamber musician at festivals worldwide including New Music in Miami, the Foro Internacional de Musica Nueva in Mexico City, Brisbane Arts Festival, the Festival of Contemporary Music in El Salvador, Havana Contemporary Music Festival, and the Singapore Arts Festival.

An avid chamber musician and collaborator, Ms. Valdés 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 concerto soloist with the Johns Hopkins Symphony Orchestra, the Binghamton Philharmonic, the Seattle Philharmonic, NOCCO, Philharmonia Northwest, the Eastman BroadBand, and the Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra. Recently, she performed the piano solo part of

the Ives 4th Symphony with the Seattle Symphony, which was released on CD earlier this year to critical acclaim. Cristina can also be heard on the Albany, Newport Classics, and Urtext labels.

Ms. Valdés received a Bachelor of Music from the New England Conservatory, and a Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts from SUNY Stony Brook. She is currently an Artist-in-Residence at the University of Washington.

COMPOSER BIOGRAPHIES

Composing, writing, teaching, inventing extraordinary new ways of hearing – all are linked in the work of JOËL-FRANÇOIS DURAND. As a composer, his career was launched in Europe with important prizes: a Third Prize at in the 1983 Stockhausen Competition for the piano piece "...d'asiles déchirés...", the Kranichsteiner Preis from the Darmstadt Summer Courses for New Music in 1990. Commissions and performances from many of today's most significant ensembles followed – Ensemble Intercontemporain, London Sinfonietta, Arditti Quartet, Jack Quartet, Quatuor Diotima, ASKO, Ensemble Recherche, musikFabrik, Talea Ensemble, Dal Niente Ensemble, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin, Seattle Symphony Orchestra. Durand's works are singular and powerful, combining rigorous and innovative structures with an increasingly prominent lyric impulse. Durand's music and personality received attention in the 2005 book *Joël-François Durand in the Mirror Land* (University of Washington Press and *Perspectives of New Music*) edited by his School of Music colleague Jonathan Bernard, which features in addition to analyses by Bernard and several of the School's students, an innovative self-interview authored by Durand himself. He has taught composition at the UW since 1991, where he is currently also the Associate Director of the School of Music.

Commercial recordings of his music are available on the Auvidis-Naïve, Mode Records, Wergo and Albany Records labels.

In 2010, Durand embarked on a new path: he designed and started commercial production of a new tonearm for record players. The Talea, as it was called, took the audio world by storm and was soon followed by two further models, the Telos and the Kairos, also aimed at the most refined audio reproduction systems.

Current projects for Durand include works for solo piano, and for solo viola, as well as work on a DAC (digital-analog converter), which promises to be of the same highest quality as his tonearms.

OLIVIER MESSIAEN was a French composer, organist, and ornithologist. He entered the Paris Conservatoire at the age of 11, and numbered Paul Dukas, Maurice Emmanuel, Charles-Marie Widor and Marcel Dupré among his teachers. He was appointed organist at the church of La Trinité in Paris in 1931, a post he held until his death. On the fall of France in 1940 Messiaen was made a prisoner of war, and while incarcerated he composed his *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* ("Quartet for the end of time") for the four available instruments, piano, violin, cello, and clarinet. The piece was first

performed by Messiaen and fellow prisoners to an audience of inmates and prison guards. Messiaen was appointed professor of harmony soon after his release in 1941, and professor of composition in 1966 at the Paris Conservatoire, positions he held until his retirement in 1978. His many distinguished pupils included Pierre Boulez, Yvonne Loriod (who later became Messiaen's second wife), Karlheinz Stockhausen, Iannis Xenakis and George Benjamin.

Messiaen's music is rhythmically complex (he was interested in rhythms from ancient Greek and from Hindu sources), and is harmonically and melodically based on modes of limited transposition, which were Messiaen's own innovation. Many of his compositions depict what he termed "the marvellous aspects of the faith", drawing on his unshakeable Roman Catholicism. He travelled widely, and he wrote works inspired by such diverse influences as Japanese music, the landscape of Bryce Canyon in Utah, and the life of St. Francis of Assisi. Messiaen experienced a mild form of synaesthesia manifested as a perception of colours when he heard certain harmonies, particularly harmonies built from his modes, and he used combinations of these colours in his compositions. For a short period Messiaen experimented with the parametrization associated with "total serialism", in which field he is often cited as an innovator. His style absorbed many exotic musical influences such as Indonesian gamelan, and he also championed the ondes Martenot.

Messiaen found birdsong fascinating; he believed birds to be the greatest musicians and considered himself as much an ornithologist as a composer. He notated birdsongs worldwide, and he incorporated birdsong transcriptions into a majority of his music. His innovative use of colour, his personal conception of the relationship between time and music, his use of birdsong, and his intent to express profound religious ideas, all combine to make it almost impossible to mistake a composition by Messiaen for the work of any other western composer.

KOTOKA SUZUKI is a composer focusing on both multimedia and instrumental practices. She has produced several large-scale multimedia works, including spatial interactive audio-visual work for both concert and installation settings, often in collaboration with artists and scholars from other disciplines. Her work reflects on life, breath and wind, and often conceives of sounds as physical form to be manipulated through the sculptural practice of composition.

Suzuki's work has been featured internationally by performers such as Arditti String Quartet, Pacifica String Quartet, eighth blackbird, Continuum, Nouvel Ensemble Moderne (NEM), Mendelssohn Chamber Orchestra (Germany), and Earplay Ensemble, at numerous venues and festivals such as Ultraschall, ISCM World Music Days, ZKM Media Museum, Inventionen, The Stone, ICMC and Music at the Anthology (MATA). Among the awards she has received include DAAD Artist in Resident Berlin (Germany), Bourges Prize in Multimedia, Norton Stevens and North Shore fellowships from the MacDowell Colony, Howard Foundation Fellowship, Gerald Oshita Fellowship from Djerassi, Musica Nova International Electroacoustic Music Competition Honor Prize (Czech) and Robert Fleming Prize from Canada Council for the Arts. She has held residencies at MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, Djerassi, Ucross and Center for Arts and Media (ZKM).

She received a B.Mus. degree in composition from Indiana University and a D.M.A. degree in composition at Stanford University. She taught at the University of Chicago and is currently an Assistant

Professor of Music at Arizona State University Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts. Her work is published on Edition RZ, EMF Media, IMEB records and Signpost Music. She is an associate composer at the Canadian Music Centre since 2001.

RICHARD KARPEN is a composer and researcher in multiple areas music and the arts. His compositions for both electronic media and live performance are widely recorded, and performed internationally. Karpen is currently Director of the School of Music at the University of Washington where he is also a Professor of Music Composition. He previously served at the UW as Director of the Center for Digital Arts and Experimental Media (DXARTS). He has been the recipient of many awards, grants, and prizes including those from the National Endowment for the Arts, the ASCAP Foundation, the Bourges Contest in France, and the Luigi Russolo Foundation in Italy. Fellowships and grants for work outside of the United States include a Fulbright to Italy, a residency at IRCAM in France, and a Leverhulme Visiting Fellowship to the United Kingdom. He received his doctorate in composition from Stanford University, where he also worked at the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA). Karpen is a native of New York, where he studied composition with Charles Dodge and Gheorghe Costinescu. Along with many concert and radio performances, his works have been set to dance by groups such as the Royal Danish Ballet and the Guandong Dance Company of China. Karpen's compositions have been recorded on a variety of labels including Wergo, Centaur, Neuma, Le Chant du Monde, DIFFUSION i MeDIA, Fleur du Son, Capstone, and Son Luminus.

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