

THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND THE OFFICE OF LECTURES AND CONCERTS

Present

THE CONTEMPORARY GROUP
WILLIAM BERGSMA AND WILLIAM O. SMITH, *director*

IN

THE GRAND UNIVERSAL CIRCUS (1956)

ANTIPHONAL THEATER PIECE

Libretto by Patricia Brant

Music by Henry Brant

ACT I -- Paradise

Wednesday, April 21, 1976

Studio Theater, 8:00 PM

PROGRAM

Tape No. 1 - 8109

Prologue *Lucifer* William Wood

Scene 1 The Grand Universal Circus

Man I Dave Grout

Man II Mark Francis

Eve Carol Sams

Angel Phyllis Moore

Devil William Wood

Scene 2 Prelude to Creation

Oracle Mary Malloy

Echoes chorus

Father Bones Fred Morey

Mother Egg Margaret Russell

Scene 3 Creation of the Universe

Shouters and Gods chorus

Scene 4 From Lucretius

Lucretius Polly Detels

Speaker Don André

Scene 5

Cafe

Devil William Wood

Eve Carol Sams

Three Fat Fates Harriet Martin

Mary Kay Long

Jo Evans

Three Foolish Virgins Eileen Marra

Alison Newland

Joyce McOmber

Scene 6 The Bone Thief

Jim Faris

Scene 7 Rites

Eve Carol Sams

Landlord Steve Moll

Criers Judy Kohn

Don André

REEL 2 of 2

No. 63
Betty
1619

Scene 8 Expulsion
Children of Paradise
Announcers
Travellers

Mary Malloy
Mike Connally
chorus

Roupen Shakarian, *conductor*
Ruthanna Boris, *choreographer*
William Bergsma, *producer*
G. Patrick Campbell, *lighting*
John Poulson, *technician*
Colleen Barrett, *assistant to the producer*

THE UNIVERSITY CHORALE

Rodney Eichenberger, *director*
Mark Francis, *assistant conductor*
Don André, *assistant conductor*
Richard Clark, *assistant conductor*
Robert Harris, *assistant conductor*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

Flutes

Deborah Shorrock
Linda Mortarotti
Terri Skjei
Ann Thomas Brown

Trumpets

Gary Buchanan
Robert Greenlund

Trombones

Stuart Dempster
Alan Dorsey

Harps

Kathy Duffy
Karen Gottlieb

Percussion

Dan Dunbar
Susan Gilbreath
Mike Clark
Tam Sivertson

Keyboard

Robert Nell
Nancy Megenity

CHORUS LEADERS

Soprano

Lori Colvig
Phyllis Morrge
Judy Kuhn
Mary McConnell

Alto

Mimi McLeod
Jan Jones
Harriet Martin
Mary Malloy

Bass

Bob Harris
Richard Clark
Mike Connelly
Jim Stallacker

Tenor

Mark Francis
Jim Morgan
George Spelvin
Neil Johnson

Notes for Brant: The Grand Universal Circus

"*The Grand Universal Circus* is an 'antiphonal theater piece,' here defined as a work for the stage conceived from the outset in terms of *separated* groups of singers, musicians and actors...

"Antiphonal procedures have been observed in religious ceremonies where the details are a tradition handed down (rather than a specified pre-requisite). Antiphonal effects of a kind are likewise something of a tradition in the circus."

Henry and Patricia Brant

(from the prefatory notes in the
libretto)

This, the first act of a projected three, was first performed at the McMillin Theater, Columbia University on May 19, 1956. This act, titled "paradise," deals with *The Creation*, up to and including the expulsion from the garden. The text by Patricia Brant utilizes a complex mixture of language (Biblical, legal, journalistic, poetic, scientific, officialese) in order to approach the subject matter from several levels (mythological, anthropological, sociological) simultaneously. The composer has similarly utilized a wide variety of materials, such as marching-band music, children's songs, declamation, recitative, incantations.

Following a brief prologue (Lucifer), the eight scenes are:

Scene 1 "The Grand Universal Circus."

Part 1 Entrance of all the performers, each reciting a different mythological account of the Creation.

Part 2 Five soloists present contrasting aspects of man's nature.

Scene 2 "Prelude to Creation." (A "scientific" view.)

Scene 3 "Creation of the Universe." In the manner of a religious ritual.

Scene 4 "From Lucretius." Song in Latin (*On the Nature of Things*) with a spoken English translation.

Scene 5 "Cafe." The devil as a travelling salesman calls for food and drink for Eve, "to thaw this galacial ice which ill becomes her temperament

Scene 6 "The Bone-Thief." The Creator as thief is arrested for grand larceny, and the "intricate monster" of his creation seized as evidence of his crime.

Scene 7 "Rites." God as landlord evicts Eve as an undesirable tenant.

Scene 8 "Expulsion." Two announcers direct the chorus of departing travellers in multi-lingual officialese.