

University of Washington
THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC

presents

E 54

1999

4-21

ENSEMBLE
INTERCONTEMPORAIN

DAVID ROBERTSON
Music Director

FLORENT BOFFARD
Piano

6:30 PM, Pre-Concert Talk

8:00 PM, Concert

- NO COPIES PERMITTED -

Meany Theater
21 April 1999



School
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DAT 13,456

CD 13,457 - 13,458

ENSEMBLE INTERCONTEMPORAIN

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Music Director

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- PROGRAM -

CD-13,457

1 SUITE: L'HISTOIRE DU SOLDAT.....IGOR STRAVINSKY (1882-1971)
(The Soldier's Tale) (1918) (29:00)

The Soldier's March
Music for the First Scene (The Soldier's Violin)
Music for the Second Scene
Royal March
Little March
Little Concert
Three Dances
Tango
Waltz
Ragtime
The Devil's Dance
Grand Chorale
Triumphal March of the Devil

2 LICHTUNG (1987).....(13:08) JOËL-FRANÇOIS DURAND (b. 1954) (+6dB)

- INTERMISSION -

CD 13,458

1 THALLEÏN (1984).....(16:35) IANNIS XENAKIS (b. 1922)

2 CONCERTO FOR PIANO (1985-1988).....(23:16) GYÖRGY LIGETI (b. 1923)

Vivace molto ritmico e preciso
Lento e deserto
Vivace cantabile
Allegro risoluto
Presto luminoso

The ENSEMBLE INTERCONTEMPORAIN gratefully acknowledges the support of the AFAA (Association Française d'Action Artistique) and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the United States.

PROGRAM NOTES

Suite: L'Histoire du Soldat (The Soldier's Tale) Igor Stravinsky

Scored for clarinet in B-flat, clarinet in A, bassoon, cornet in B-flat, cornet in A, trombone, percussion, violin, double bass.

L'Histoire du Soldat (The Soldier's Tale), was written in 1918 as a frugal wartime entertainment to be read, played, and danced by a small band of actors and musicians. Based on the play by C. F. Ramuz, it is the Faustian tale of a soldier who sells his violin (symbolically, his soul) to the Devil, then tricks Old Nick but is finally led off to Hell. Stravinsky composed for the work eleven numbers which are much more than "incidental" to the action, since they are dramatically essential and often linked to the text by rhythmic proximities. The importance of the violin predates its use as a solo instrument, though Stravinsky also uses the other instruments independently, exploiting pungent misfits of color, rhythm, and tonality in a score where themes are often re-assorted from movement to movement as in a kaleidoscope.

Lichtung (1987) Joël-François Durand

Scored for flute/alto flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, piano, vibraphone/marimba, violin, viola, cello, double bass.

Lichtung belongs to a group of instrumental works which share a similar formal conception: in each piece of the group, the basic elements on which the music is elaborated do not appear until the very end of the work. The first three pieces of the cycle are: *So er* for twenty instruments (1985), *Lichtung* for ten instruments (1987), and *Die Innere Grenze* for string sextet (1988). A second group of two works following the same formal idea was written a few years later: *l'exil du feu* for sixteen instruments and electronics (1989-91), and *un feu distinct* for five instruments (1991).

Lichtung is based on a melody which emerges softly at the end of the piece: its first half is played by horn and flute in unison, then viola and clarinet. Each section of the work is controlled by motives derived from parts of the melody. When these fragments are finally assembled at the end, they form the center of the work. Everything else has by then been eliminated, as peripheral, less essential. In that sense the formal conception is one of progressive unveiling, of progressive "revelation" of the origin of the work. Because its origin appears just before the final silence, the work opens itself to the outside, offers itself to the world when its center is finally exposed.

Here lies the relation to the title: *Lichtung* (clearing, in English). The powerful image of the dense forest and the various paths leading to the clearing was present in my mind at the time of the composition. In fact, it has been a favorite and ever recurrent poetic impetus in my music. I often remember the

DAVID ROBERTSON, Conductor

Since his 1992 appointment as Music Director of the Ensemble Intercontemporain in Paris, David Robertson has gained international recognition for his exceptional affinity with both twentieth-century music and a broad operatic repertoire. In addition to his ongoing work with the Ensemble Intercontemporain, he is now a regular guest of the leading orchestras and opera houses in Europe and North America. With the start of the 2000-2001 season, he becomes Music Director of the Orchestre National de Lyon.

David Robertson opened his 1997-98 season leading a new production of *Rigoletto* by Mark Lamos with the San Francisco Opera company and later returned to that city for two weeks of subscription concerts with the San Francisco Symphony. 1997-98 also included his Hamburg Opera debut (a new production of *La Cenerentola*); concerts with the Orchestre National de Lyon, the Berlin Staatskapelle, the Finnish Radio Orchestra and the Orchestra della Toscana (including a Maggio Musicale appearance in Florence); and his Cleveland Orchestra debut at the Blossom Festival. This season, his American schedule has included a return to the Metropolitan Opera for *Carmen*; debuts with the Chicago Symphony and the Philadelphia Orchestra; and the current tour with the Ensemble Intercontemporain. In Europe, his guest conducting is highlighted by concerts with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and a return to the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. Among his engagements for 1999-2000 are debuts with the Bavarian State Opera in Munich and the NHK Symphony in Tokyo, as well as a return engagement with the Cleveland Orchestra for subscription concerts.

In the 1996-97 season Mr. Robertson led two operatic world premieres, Luciano Berio's *Outis* in a Graham Vick production at La Scala in Milan and Philippe Manoury's *60th Parallel* at the Chatelet Theatre in Paris, in addition to productions of *The Magic Flute* at the Theatre de la Monnaie in Brussels and *La Boheme* at the Opera de Lyon. His orchestral activities included concerts with the London Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Symphony, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the RAI Orchestra of Torino and the Orchestre de Paris. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut in the 1995-96 season conducting its first production of Janacek's *The Makropulos Case* with Jessye Norman. In the same season he also appeared with the London Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and the Orchestre de Paris.

Born in Santa Monica, California, Mr. Robertson was educated at London's Royal Academy of Music, where he studied French horn and composition before turning to orchestral conducting. From 1985-87, he was resident conductor of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, where he gained experience in a wide-ranging repertoire, including many contemporary works. He subsequently maintained a very active schedule in Europe, both in the concert hall and in the opera house.

In 1997 Mr. Robertson was named a recipient of the Seaver/National Endowment for the Arts Conductors Award, the premier prize of its kind, given to exceptionally gifted American conductors for career development.

FLORENT BOFFARD, Piano

Born in 1964, Florent Boffard began his musical studies at the Lyon Conservatory. At age 12 he was admitted to Yvonne Loriod's class at the Paris Conservatory, where he was awarded a first prize in piano. He then took a first prize in chamber music

under Geneviève Joy and pursued further piano studies with Geneviève Mounier. He also studied harmony and counterpoint, and trained as an accompanist—all at the highest level of distinction. In 1982 he won the Claude Kahn International Piano Competition in Paris and the International Vianna Da Motta Piano Competition in Lisbon.

Mr. Boffard joined the Ensemble Intercontemporain in 1988, enabling him to meet the foremost composers of our time. He has premiered works by Franco Donatoni, György Ligeti, Klaus Huber, Philippe Fénelon and Michael Jarrell. He has also recorded numerous works from the contemporary repertoire, including the two books of *Structures pour deux pianos* by Pierre Boulez. He has performed at the leading festivals—Salzburg, Berlin, Bath, Brussels, La Roque d'Anthéon—and under the direction of Simon Rattle, Leon Fleisher, Pierre Boulez and Heinz Holliger. His activities as a soloist, chamber and ensemble player have allowed him to build a highly varied repertoire. In 1997 Florent Boffard was appointed Professor of Piano at the Paris Conservatory.

ENSEMBLE INTERCONTEMPORAIN

Founded in Paris in 1976 at the initiative of Pierre Boulez, the Ensemble Intercontemporain was conceived as an organization uniquely dedicated to the service of twentieth-century music. Comprising thirty-one soloists under its current Music Director, David Robertson, the Ensemble endeavors to promote the music of our time, giving an average of 70 concerts each season, both in France and abroad. Its repertoire is naturally influenced by its core mission of performing new works. At the same time, the Ensemble performs the modern "classics" of the first half of the twentieth century and a wide range of the major compositions written since 1950—in all, a repertoire of 1600 works. It is also active in the creation of new pieces that combine traditional instruments with advanced technology as a result of its privileged relationship with IRCAM (Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique Musique), with which it promotes a joint concert season in Paris.

Since taking up residence at the Cité de la Musique in 1995, the Ensemble Intercontemporain has increasingly devoted itself to initiatives aimed at supporting the public's discovery of and research into contemporary music. These activities are concentrated in two areas: education programs and community-outreach programs. The former are exemplified by youth workshops that introduce secondary-school students to the music of our time by means of creative, hands-on approaches (for instance, through the performance of works written collectively by the students under the guidance of soloists from the Ensemble). For a wider audience, the Ensemble gives concert workshops and open rehearsals, offering commentary on the works to be performed and enabling the public to meet both composers and performers.

The Ensemble Intercontemporain also collaborates extensively with the institutions charged with the training of future professional musicians, working with them to familiarize young musicians with the specifics of contemporary-music language. Whether instrumentalists or composers, the students are offered a broad range of activities, from score-reading sessions to the biennial Academy of 20th Century Music, which is co-produced in Paris with the Cité de la Musique and the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique.

variety of densities and textures in the Black Forest in Germany, where I lived during my studies in composition. At that time, I probably spent more hours in this extraordinary forest than at my work table! These many textures and densities along the paths seemed to me like as many moments of a musical work, shifting from the darkest to the brightest lights, from the most dense to the thinnest textures. Inevitably there was somewhere a clearing, at the same time goal of the journey and beginning of a new path, a new "work."

[Joël-François Durand]

Joël-François Durand was born in Orléans, France. He studied musicology in Paris and then composition with Brian Ferneyhough in Freiburg, Germany, subsequently obtaining his Ph.D. in composition at the State University of New York, Stony Brook, NY. He has received scholarships (DAAD, Fulbright), and international prizes, including the "Kranichsteiner Musikpreis" (from the Summer Courses in Darmstadt, Germany) in 1990. Since Fall 1991 he has been teaching at the University of Washington in Seattle where he is now Associate Professor of Composition and Theory.

Durand is regularly invited to lecture on his music and give Masterclasses in composition in major music schools and festivals throughout Europe, including at the "Centre de la Voix" in Royaumont, France, where he was co-director of the composition course in September 1993, at the Royal Academy for Music in London, UK, at the "Civica Scuola di Musica" in Milan, Italy, at the Brandenburg Colloquium for New Music in Rheinsberg, Germany, and at the Summer Courses in Darmstadt, Germany. In the Fall 1994, he was Visiting Assistant Professor in Composition at the UCSD in San Diego. His music has been performed throughout Europe as well as in the US and in South Korea. He has received numerous commissions from European institutions, including the "Ensemble Intercontemporain" for the piece we are hearing tonight, "Lichtung" (Paris), the French Ministry of Culture, the "I.R.C.A.M." (Paris), the "Ensemble Contrechamps" (Geneva), the "European Community Youth Orchestra" (London), the Strasbourg Festival "Musica." A CD of his music (Concerto for piano and orchestra, String Trio, "Die innere Grenze") was released in September 1998 under the label Auvidis-Montaigne. His current projects include a work for oboe and ensemble for the Ensemble Intercontemporain and a work for large orchestra commissioned by "Radio France."

Thallein (1984)

Iannis Xenakis

Scored for flute/piccolo, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet/piccolo trumpet, trombone, percussion, piano, 2 violins, viola, cello, double bass.

Thallein was commissioned by the London Sinfonietta, and is dedicated to its musicians and to Michaël Vyner. It was premiered on 14 February 1984 under Elgar Howarth. The Greek word "thallein" means "germination," and refers to a natural phenomenon of growing and the slow initiation of organic life. The

small orchestra (14 instruments) gives the composer the same sound possibilities as large orchestra, and simultaneously allows him to avoid the effect of fusion. Every instrument is included singly (4 woodwinds, 3 brass, a large scope of percussion played by one performer, piano, and string quintet). The instruments are to avoid vibrato; this requirement is the composer's credo: "vibrato has been abolished!—he declares on the first page of the score. The human aspect, the aspect of living, breathing is removed by the anonymous sound statement.

The motion, which emanates from the piece, is as if unintentional. It brings to one's mind the slow growing of plants with their almost imperceptible transformations and more rapid forms of motion can be associated with the wind or seismic quakes. The instruments very often encircle *glissandos* with an imprecise outline; quarter-tones are one more measure to destroy all references to the system of twelve identifiable sounds. Moreover, "chords" and clusters are arranged in such a way that they do not create reference points, but are hidden behind *tremolos*. String instruments, a traditional "humanizing" factor of musical structure are subject here to a rhythmic regime with extreme complications, which gives the opposite effect: reticence, coolness, machine-like virtuosity. *Thallein* germinates without meter and without what we could recognize as rhythmic figures. A slow pulsation comes from the conductor, who indicates reference points to the instrumentalists—the most modest of time measures.

The philosophy of this piece is manifested by the exclusion of any musical rhetorical gesture. This music is not meant to persuade us—perhaps it says nothing to us. Placed outside the warm human world, it does not refer to human values. The purity of its style calls for spiritual purification. The meaning we look for will not be in what, we believe, we have already understood.

[Klaus Stichweh]

Concerto for Piano (1985-1988)

György Ligeti

Scored for solo piano, flute/piccolo, oboe, clarinet in B-flat, clarinet in A, ocarina, bassoon, horn, trumpet, trombone, percussion, 2 violins, viola, cello, double bass.

I composed this concerto in two states: the first three movements in 1985-1986 and the last two in 1987 (the final copy of the fifth movement was finished in January 1988). The concerto is dedicated to the American conductor Mario di Bonaventura.

The work, in its version in three movements, was premiered on 23 October 1986 in Graz, Austria. Mario di Bonaventura conducted, and his brother, Anthony di Bonaventura, was the soloist. Two days later, a second performance was given in the Konzerthaus in Vienna. In hearing it for the second time, it struck me that the third movement did not form a satisfactory ending; my sense of form required an extension and a perfection. So I composed the last two

movements. The work, in its definitive form, was performed for the first time in 1988 at the Konzerthaus in Vienna, with the same conductor and the same pianist.

When the first movement is played well, i.e., at the proper tempo and with the correct accentuation in each "stratum of tempo," after a certain time it ends up "taking off" like an airplane: the rhythmic complexity prevents one from distinguishing each basic structure and creates a universe of sound that ought to soar. This dissolution of several basic structures into an overall structure, which is of a completely different nature, is one of the fundamental postulates of my compositions. Since the end of the 1950's, i.e., since the orchestral works *Apparitions* and *Atmosphères*, I have been exploring this basic idea, trying to make the most of it each time in a renewed way.

The second movement (the only one of the five that should be slow) has a rigorous rhythmic construction that is, however, simpler than that of the first movement. From a melodic standpoint, it is based on the use of a strictly controlled mode, alternating two minor seconds and a major second through nine notes per octave (cf. the Mode 3 by Messiaen). This mode is transposed to different pitches and determines the harmonies of the movement, with the exception of the final section. In this movement I also used timbres that are almost never used, as well as extreme registers: a very low piccolo, a very high-pitched bassoon; sliding whistles, an alto ocarina, and brass instruments with mutes; sharp sound combinations of the piccolo, clarinet, and oboe in the most high-pitched register; an alternation between the whistle-siren and the xylophone.

The third movement has a special, complex rhythm. Illusory melodic and rhythmic configurations appear, superimposed on the basic beat, rapid and constant.

I devised the fourth movement as the central movement of the concerto. Its melodic and rhythmic elements (germinal cells or fragments of motives) are rudimentary in themselves. The movement begins simply, through a succession and then a superimposition of these elements, forming harmonic blendings. This gives a kaleidoscopic structure, because there are only a limited number of elements that keep reappearing in different increased and decreased forms. Mysteriously, then, there emerges a complex rhythmic order of secret *talea*, at first in an abstract form, then, very progressively, as in the first movement, composed in two tempos, shifted from one another. Gradually, the long initial pauses fill up with fragments of motifs, and one finds oneself in a rhythmic-melodic maelstrom. Without changing the tempo, a rotation of successive and superimposed elements generates a growth of density that suggests, in itself, acceleration.

The fifth movement, a very brief *presto*, is the most complex with regard to rhythmic structure. It is based on a development of the idea of illusory configuration in the third movement. This final movement is characterized by an alternation of harmonic fields, made up, on the one hand, of the combination of diatonic and pentatonic scales, and, on the other hand, of a "diagonal equidistance" resulting from the combinations of the two scales by tones, shifted by a semitone.

My evolution, in the 1980's, has been influenced by the rhythmic concepts of sub-Saharan African music, the metric and rhythmic concepts of the proportional music of the 14th century, and the new science of dynamic systems and fractal geometry. I have not, however, tried to find these acoustical and musical illusions which are so important to me as an end in themselves; rather, they form the basis of my esthetic considerations. I love musical forms that are less processes than objects: music like suspended time, like an object in an imaginary space, music as a construction that, in spite of its development in the real flow of time and its simultaneity in our imagination, is present in all its moments. To do away with time, to suspend it, to confine it to the present moment—this is my highest intent as a composer.

[György Ligeti]

ENSEMBLE INTERCONTEMPORAIN

FLUTE
Sophie Cherrier

OBOE
László Hadady

CLARINET
Alain Damiens

BASSOON
Pascal Gallois

HORN
Jens McManama

TRUMPET
Antoine Curé

TROMBONE
Benny Sluchin

PERCUSSION
Vincent Bauer
Michel Cerutti
Daniel Ciampolini

PIANO
Florent Boffard

VIOLIN
Jeanne-Marie Conquer
Maryvonne Le Dizès

VIOLA
Odile Duhamel

CELLO
Jean-Guihen Queyras

DOUBLE BASS
Marc Marder