

DAT #12,164
CLASS #12,165

C67
1993
4-26

University of Washington
THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC

presents

THE CONTEMPORARY GROUP

Stuart Dempster and William O. Smith,
Co-Directors

8:00 PM, April 26, 1993

Meany Theater

*Special thanks to Richard Karpen
for organizing the sound system.*

PROGRAM

DAT
ID

2 SEA OF SOULS (1993) 11:30 John Rahn
for computer generated tape (b. 1944)

John Rahn, *technician*

3 LEAH (1984) 8:06 Joan Franks Williams
for voice and chamber ensemble (b. 1930)
Text by Shirley Kaufman

Emilie Berendsen, *voice*; Libby Gray, *flute, alto flute*;
Kevin Johnson, *piano*; Jonathan Graber, *violin / viola*;
Loren Dempster, *'cello*

4 THE SILENCE OF TIME (1993) ... 17:59 Richard Karpen
for percussion and computer-realized sound (b. 1957)

Gunnar Folsom, Stuart McLeod, Patrick Roulet, *percussion*;
Richard Karpen, *technician*; Tom Collier, *conductor*

CLASS SIDE A

INTERMISSION

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5 WOODWIND QUINTET, Op. 48 (1990).....17'20.....James Beale
Allegro (b. 1924)
Adagio
Allegro Scherzando
EPILOGUE: Molto adagio

Andrea Mogil, *flute*; Taina Karr, *oboe*; Joel Barbosa, *clarinet*;
 Lorraine Fader, *horn*; Francine Peterson, *bassoon*

6 THE PALACES OF MEMORY (1993).....14'17.....Diane Thome
 for chamber orchestra and tape (b. 1942)

Sabra Weber, *flute*; Taina Karr, *oboe*; Joel Barbosa, *clarinet*;
 Francine Peterson, *bassoon*; Lorraine Fader, *horn*; Karl Seeley, *trumpet*;
 Chad Kirby, *trombone*; Melissa Walsh, *harp*; Tina Lee, *piano*;
 Stuart McLeod and Mark Wilbert, *percussion*; Donna Fogle, *viola*;
 Dan Perry and Geoff Johnson, *violins*; Nora Engebretsen, *cello*;
 Mark Jasper, *contrabass*; Ron Averill, *technician*; David Kappy, *conductor*

SEA OF SOULS is named after the title of an exhibition of sculpture by my sister Cherry Rahn, an exhibition which it is meant to accompany. Her work consists of "face fragments" to be hung on the walls, portraits and partly stylized likenesses of people in her home town of Geneva, New York, which convey to me a sense of great lyricism and intimacy with an almost disturbing intensity. I am trying to combine these qualities with a counterpoint of aesthetic independence, and to mix the Jungian connotations of her title with a more literal saltiness inspired by my love of sailing, the rhythms and state of mind induced by prolonged contact with the surface of the ocean, and heightened awareness of the winds and of the contours of the earth around and below the sea.

This is approximately the first quarter of a longer work in progress, whose later parts will work with sonic materials recorded by Cherry in her home community. For this first and most abstract part of Sea of Souls, the sounds have been generated on a computer, using my Lisp Kernel software to control massive additive synthesis. Each component sine tone is controlled by 22 parameters, and there may be hundreds or thousands of these partials at any moment of the piece. To handle control information of this magnitude, I am using a graphics interface to the Lisp Kernel to which I can hand-draw figures that become sound. The Lisp software also generates graphics algorithmically, using an algorithm for the compression of video information called "iterative function systems," but running this algorithm in reverse—that is, directly specifying the coefficients of the affine transformations and probabilities comprising the iterative function system, and decompressing this device into a complex graphical figure. Both the hand-drawn and generated figures are then subjected to variations by a second layer of affine transformations. These various figures are then expanded again and re-transformed within Lisp as they turn into audio control information for digital sound synthesis. All this seems necessary to achieve the kind of complexity and control that make interesting sounds.

JOHN RAHN

LEAH ...but Rachel was beautiful...(Genesis 29:17)

I do what I have to
like an obedient daughter
or a dog. Not for your fingers
in my flesh. I watch you
every day as you watch her.
Since I'm the ugly one,
the one pushed into your bed
at night when you can't
tell the difference.

I've got another son
inside me, and still
you watch her. She doesn't
sag as I do after each birth
until you fill me again.

Why can't you look at me
in daylight, or take
my hand and press it
against your mouth?
I'm not a stone, a shell
your foot rolls over
in the sand. The life
gone out of it.
Maybe I am.
Your sons have sucked me
empty and dull.

LEAH was written in 1984. The text uses a poem by the American-Israeli poet, Shirley Kaufman. The poem, based on Genesis: 29:17, describes the feelings of Leah when Jacob exploits her. The piece opens with a violin solo which is gradually augmented by the sounds of the cello, piano, voice and flute. This first section ends with the piano solo which leads to a very soft tutti. Leah urges Jacob to take her hand, "I am not a stone." The violin and cello play on the wood of their bows (*col legno battuti*) while the flute rattles the keys and the piano plays on the strings. Leah complains that Jacob's sons have sucked her empty and dull. An alto flute cadenza leads to a dramatic section in which Leah swims "...raging against the stream."

JOAN FRANKS WILLIAMS

"Why is it so difficult—so degradingly difficult—to bring the notion of Time into mental focus and keep it there for inspection? What an effort, what fumbling, what irritating fatigue! It is like rummaging with one hand in the glove compartment for the road map—fishing out Montenegro, the Dolomites, paper money, a telegram—everything except the stretch of chaotic country between Ardez and Somethingsoprano, in the dark, in the rain, while trying to take advantage of a red light in the coal black, with

I leave your tent at dawn
and walk to the river where I
throw my clothes off,
and the water shows me
my body floating
on the surface. It shivers
when I touch the blue dome
of your unborn child.
I touch my unwanted self
where the smooth skin
stretches over my breasts,
the silver veins. I'm cold.

I enter the water
as you enter me. Quick.
Like insects doing it while
they fly. The shock of it
lifts me,
and I swim raging against the stream.

Texts by Shirley Kaufman

the wipers functioning metronomically, chronometrically: the blind finger of space poking and tearing the texture of time."

From "Ada," by Vladimir Nabokov

I spent six months in Scotland in 1992, six luxurious months simply to compose, think, and travel the country. I visited the isolated northwest area of Scotland, wind- and water-swept Wester Ross, where the silence of time weighs heavily on the hills and around the lochs.

THE SILENCE OF TIME was composed for the University of Washington Percussion Ensemble during 1992-1993. The group is directed by Tom Collier, to whom I give many thanks for asking that I compose this work for them. The computer-realized part was composed mainly at the studios of the University of Glasgow in Scotland and completed in the School of Music Computer Center at the University of Washington using new computer software for sound processing which I developed in 1992 while in residence at the Music Department of the University of Glasgow as a Leverhulme Trust Fellow.

RICHARD KARPEN

In the 16th century a Jesuit priest, Matteo Ricci, brought to China a wonderful memory system that had been used in the West since the days of ancient Greece. To improve their powers of retention, people would build memory palaces, huge imaginary buildings they kept inside their heads. "To everything that we wish to remember," wrote Ricci, "we should give an image; and to every one of these images we should assign a position where it can repose peacefully until we are ready to claim it by an act of memory."

What intrigued me about this story was the recognition that one of the powers which music possesses for me is the capacity to evoke and capture images of feeling, being, and knowing and to crystallize these images into sonorous forms. As we move through the world of a musical work, our experience is transformed into memory.

The form of **THE PALACES OF MEMORY** is unfolded through polarities of sections and interludes. Initially it is the synthesized music which functions as accompaniment to or interlude between sections of live music. Increasingly, however, this role is reversed as the instrumental music becomes more and more the delineator of temporal space between solo sections of tape music. As the work proceeds, the boundaries between the two domains are gradually dissolved as they are intermeshed in a complex net of sonorous images created through the counterpoint of distinct textural and temporal strands.

Equipment used in the creation of the tape music included a Kurzweil 2000 digital synthesizer and a Peavy SX-stereo 16 bit sampler. The sections were digitally mixed, using the MTU Microsound Digital/Audio System. I wish to thank Robert Austin who was my collaborator in the production of the tape.

THE PALACES OF MEMORY was commissioned by the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble and premiered on March 29, 1993.

DIANE THOME