School of Music
University of Washington - Seattle, Washington

presents

THE
CONTEMPORARY
GROUP

7:30 PM
November 21, 2005
MEANY THEATER
PROGRAM

1. **IN THE MIRROR LAND (2003)** 
   JOËL-FRANÇOIS DURAND (b. 1954)
   Version for flute and clarinet
   Felix Skowronek, flute / William McColl, clarinet

2. **LA MESURE DES CHOSES** 
   J. DURAND
   I. La mesure de l'air for clarinet (1992) 9:22
   Matthew Nelson, clarinet
   II. La mesure de la mer for piano (1994) 9:00
   Regina Yeh, piano
   III. La mesure de la terre et du feu for oboe and viola (1999) 13:15
   Nathan Hughes, oboe / Melia Watras, viola

INTERMISSION

3. **MUSICA 66, for piano** (1966) 8:21
   FRANCISCO KÖPPFL (b. 1931)
   Ann Cumings, piano

4. **PILLAR-SPEAK-AWAKE** 
   for soprano and ensemble (2004) 12:33
   TOM BAKER (b. 1965)
   Emily Greenleaf, soprano
   Dale Speicher, percussion
   Tom Swafford, violin
   Dylan Rieck, cello
   Jesse Canterbury, clarinet
   Jerrod Wendland, piano

5. **CONCERTO, op. 24, for nine instruments** 7:17
   ANTON WEBERN
   I. Etwas lebhaft (1883-1945)
   II. Sehr langsam
   III. Sehr rasch
   Lana Abramova, flute
   Bruce Carpenter, oboe
   Dmitri Pavlyuk, clarinet
   Josiah Boothby, French horn
   Shelly Devlin, trumpet
   Colby Wiley, trombone
   Matthew Wu, violin
   Brianna Atwell, viola
   Akiko Iguchi, piano
   Juyong Kwon, conductor

PROGRAM NOTES

**IN THE MIRROR LAND (2003)**

JOËL-FRANÇOIS DURAND

The work is laid out as a set of variations. During the first section, the initial gesture provides the impetus for constantly changing presentations of phrases built around ascending intervals. The first instrument (the flute, in this version) has here a leading role, while the second (the clarinet) acts as its shadow, either by simply altering timbrally the pitches of the other one, or by distorting its lines more actively.

As the two instruments become more equal in the slower middle section, what is then varied is not so much what appeared at the beginning like a motivic statement: the relationships between the two instruments become now the main focus of variation, as the lines of the polyphony are constantly spread between which results in a timbral variation of similar pitches, or parts of lines. Now the melodic aspect, instead of being the sole focus of variation, acts as support for the timbral aspect, which comes to the foreground. In the last section, the fastest one, elements of the first section return, with now the clarinet in the leading role. The two instruments end as completely equal partners, in a texture similar to the slow middle section, only much faster.

**In the Mirror Land** exists in 3 versions, for flute/oboe, flute/clarinet or oboe/clarinet. The original version, for flute and oboe was written for Helen Bledsoe and Peter Veale who premiered it in 2003 in Brechemin Auditorium, during a concert given by the German group musikFabrik in celebration of Ferneyhough's 60th birthday.


J. DURAND

These three works belong to a group of four pieces for solo instruments and duo, to be played either in succession in the same concert, or separately. *La mesure de l'air* is for solo clarinet, *La mesure de la mer* for piano. *La mesure de la terre et du feu* for oboe and viola. The last work, *La mesure du temps*, will be for percussion. The original conception for this set is based on Heraclitus' cosmogony which includes transformations of one element (earth-sea-air-fire, with my addition of time) into each other. My reflection on these transformations led me to interpret these natural elements in their relation to human experience: the air as the representation of the present, barely perceptible yet always in changing motion, like the immediate passage of time: it is the present in the human consciousness. In contrast, the "sea" is not experienced here in its materiality, its occasional fury, its "désespoir" (excess), but in its capacity to make us perceive an image of eternity, to suggest a time beyond human measure. It is a "conceptualized," idealized sea; the sea as a vast mass with large and periodic motions; the flux of its deep, powerful and contradictory currents, with independent, non synchronized periodicities whose influences express themselves in the continuous motion of the surface. In the clarinet piece, a number of melodic models -archetypes- are constantly transformed,
their shapes being altered every time they come back, in length as well as in
intervallic content. This provides the basis for the organization of musical
phrases of constantly varying lengths, beyond the apparent repetition of small
units; the texture is often changing, giving the sense of a creative activity
renewing itself all the time. This same process of small constant transforma-
tions is applied to the predominantly harmonic texture in _La mesure de la mer._
But here, there unfolds progressively a sensation of larger rhythms, of global
accelerations or slowing down. What was affected of a light, ethereal and play-
ful character in _La mesure de l’air_ becomes in _La mesure de la mer_ an object of
contemplation, serene and visionary.

_La mesure des choses III_ was written immediately after the work for oboe
and ensemble _La terre et le feu,_ premiered in Paris by the Ensemble Intercon-
temporain in 2000. Although this work revisits the same two poles of temporal
experience outlined above, this time by combining them within a more sequen-
tial form, one of the main ideas behind its composition was to write a smaller
version of the oboe/ensemble piece, using almost all of its solo oboe part. But,
far from being a simple transcription of the larger piece, the duo received a new
dramatic shape through the re-arrangement of the musical elements of the con-
certo, now in a different order. Through this reorganization, the “narrative”
content of the concerto was transformed into a new dramatic entity. Moreover,
the momentum created by the musical material in the concerto was signifi-
cantly altered because of the new contexts in which its elements were placed in
the duo; the act of composing the duo became a constant re-assessment of their
potential to generate a new dramatic shape. The technical challenge consisted
then in the discovery of new formal strategies through the sacrifice of the
essential organicity of the original work. In so far as this organicity existed in
the concerto, the duo had to demonstrate that the apparent immanence of the
original form was only one of the possible solutions, not the only and definitive
one.

_MUSICA’66_  

FRANCISCO KRÖPFL

Argentinian composer and professor of composition, Kröpfl was born in
Hungary in 1931 and has been living in Argentina since 1932. Disciple of Juan
Carlos Paz, Kröpfl was the pioneer of electronic music in Argentina, where he
founded in 1958 the Studio of Music and Phonology at the University of Bue-
nos Aires, the first laboratory for electroacoustic music in Latin America.
Kröpfl is one of the most prominent composers of the musical avant-garde in
Argentina. His production includes electronic as well as instrumental music
and audiovisual works. In 1977 he received a Guggenheim grant. In 1989 he
was awarded a “Magistère” at the International Competition for Electroacoustic
Music in Bourges (France). He is president of the Argentinian Federation of
Electroacoustic Music (FARME), and music director of the Agrupación Nueva
Música of the Department of Music Sonido and Image of the Centro Cultural
Recoleta (Buenos Aires).

_PILLAR—SPEAK—AWAKE_  

TOM BAKER

**PILLAR**

There are ways I could escape.

In raptor dreams
my flesh is torn in scavenging haste
and the shreds of me travel
beak-caught, into the sky blue.

In thoughts
my body disintegrates into its
infinitesimal self,
all skin cells and eyelashes
carried away like windswept seeds.

**SPEAK**

Teach me your tongues.
Drop your words, like diamonds,
around my strangled throat
a gleaming lover’s necklace.

Cast your alphabet
into the clamp of my oyster heart
and harvest each iridescent word
from my still, submerged body.

Collect my ashes
and press them into paper
each thin, smoky sheet
another page in a waiting tome.

**AWAKE**

Night’s moons have descended
into the horizon’s early blue
withdrawing their milky cloaks
behind the day’s first burning.

In the squares of gold morning
Cupped deep in the sleeping folds of
each other,
we entwine, unwilling to disentangle
our many-limbed dreams

Cups of sunlight rest rimful
awaiting our long, yawning throats
now open to the hour breaking,
open to the stretch of day.

Leaving starshine fields,
we lean into the stroke of sun,
rising, lightened at once
by the shapes of our beginning.
This Concerto (1931-34) is a supreme example of Webern's strictly musical application of disciplined procedures and of his continued striving for the perfection of "comprehensibility...the ultimate principle in the presentation of musical thought." This clarity of presentation is achieved by an absolute 'rightness' of internal balance... "by relating everything to what is already present in the principle part: by repeating in various combinations, by introducing the course of thematic events not only horizontally but also vertically; by aspiring towards an all-embracing unity, deriving as much as possible from one principal idea." In the first movement, tiny, three-note motifs are rhythmically defined in notes of varying lengths, and articulated with every conceivable differentiation of attack by the single-line instruments – as well as being formed into chords on the piano. A continual ebbing and flowing of the tempo punctuates the phrase-endings – characterizing the movement with a restless energy.

In the subdued Adagio of the second movement, the same melodic material is so organized that the slow-moving piano chords form a background entirely built from intervals of thirds and sevenths. These chords provide the central thread around which the other instruments trace a widely-spaced melody of contrasting colours. As in the first movement, shapes, pitches and melodic figurations return in a quasi recapitulatory manner but only with the purpose of placing themselves in yet other contexts.

The third movement is an abrupt reversal of mood: its springing staccato attacks and syncopated rhythms approach a brash abandon – especially in the insistently misplaced accents of the fortissimo coda – which is unique in Webern's output. The three-note motifs and chords are as evident here as in the previous movements, so that the work as a whole has the unity of a set of variations – being three different characterizations of the same threefold idea.

[after Susan Bradshaw]