



20TH CENTURY CONSORT

1983-84 SERIES

**The Smithsonian Resident Associate Program
presents**

THE 20th CENTURY CONSORT

DECEMBER 10,
Saturday, ~~October 29~~, 1983
Informal Lecture-Discussion: 4:30 p.m.
Concert: 5:30 p.m.
Auditorium
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

It has been the shared view of the 20th Century Consort, since its inception in 1975, that performances of new music can be challenging, enjoyable and affecting. Our efforts toward this end have included our Hirshhorn residency (now in its sixth season), our recordings (now available commercially on the Pro Arte label), and our radio and television performances (last spring's Library of Congress simulcast on WETA will be seen nationally this fall). In all of these, we have presented first performances of works by recognized composers, introduced new works, and offered interpretations of 20th century classics. Recent engagements have taken us to the Spoleto Festival U.S.A., Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center, and appearances on the Harvard University-Fromm Foundation and Baltimore Chamber Music Society series; we are glad to return again this season to the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden where both art and architecture combine to create an environment uniquely congenial to our music-making. As we embark on a season which celebrates the remarkable range of this century's music, we dedicate ourselves anew to exploring the everchanging yet timeless ways that, in music, sound becomes meaning. Thank you for coming to share that adventure with us this evening in music spanning the fifty years from the 1920s to the 1970s.

Christopher Kendall
Artistic Director

F. Anthony Ames
Executive Director

THE PROGRAM

INFORMAL LECTURE-DISCUSSION

Edward P. Lawson, Chief, Department of Education, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden
Richard Wernick, composer, *Kaddish-Requiem*

CONCERT

Trio for oboe, bassoon and piano (1926)

Lento-Presto
Andante; andante con moto
Rondo, très vif

Kathleen Golding, oboe
Truman Harris, bassoon
Lambert Orkis, piano

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)

Kaddish-Requiem (1971-1973)

Dana Krueger, mezzo-soprano
Ramon Gilbert, cantor (taped)
Sara Stern, flute and piccolo
Loren Kitt, clarinet and bass clarinet
Elizabeth Adkins, violin
Barbara Haffner, cello and sitar
Lambert Orkis, piano
Randall Eyles, Albert Merz, percussion
Christopher Kendall, conductor

Richard Wernick
(b. 1934)

INTERMISSION

A Little Suite for Christmas A.D. 1979 (1980)

in seven movements after Giotto's Nativity
frescoes in the Arena Chapel at Padua

The Visitation
Berceuse for infant Jesu
Shepherd's Noel
Adoration of the Magi
Nativity Dance
Canticle of Holy Night
Carol of the Bells

Lambert Orkis, piano

George Crumb
(b. 1929)

Lauda per la Natività del Signore (1929)

Donna Gullstrand, soprano
Dana Krueger, mezzo-soprano
James McDonald, tenor
Shenandoah Conservatory Choir
Robert Shafer, director
Sara Stern, flute
Joan Voorhees, flute and piccolo
Kathleen Golding, oboe
Janet Piez, English horn
Truman Harris, James Bolyard, bassoons
Andrew Litton, Lambert Orkis, piano
Christopher Kendall, conductor

Ottorino Respighi
(1879-1936)

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

This evening's program is designed with two very different objects in mind. The first is to suggest a musical parallel to the special exhibition on view at the Hirshhorn from December 8th to February 12th, *Utopian Visions in Modern Art: Dreams and Nightmares*. The "Dream" aspect of the exhibition--the utopian euphoria which pervaded avant-garde art in Europe from about 1910 to 1935--is reflected in Poulenc's 1926 *Trio*. The "Nightmare" part of the exhibition consists of images of what "perfect" societies, such as earlier utopians believed they could help create with their art, could become if they went awry. Richard Wernick's *Kaddish-Requiem* is such an image.

The second object, to which the program after intermission is devoted, is a celebration of Christmas. The Respighi and Crumb works, like those on the first half of the program, were written about half a century apart, in the '20s and '70s respectively. They are strikingly different evocations of the beauty and wonder of the Christian nativity.

No doubt it is the resonance of such sobering images as the "Nightmares" of later 20th Century art that darken Crumb's exquisite vision in his *Suite*. Certainly, it is not intended here that the warmth, hope and joy of the end of the program should wholly sweep away the grim realities of the *Kaddish-Requiem*, which although written a decade ago is more timely today than any of us could wish it. Perhaps an awareness of these same images adds a special poignancy to our experience of the joy and simple faith of Respighi's beautiful *Laud to the Nativity*.

The four works on this evening's program, each in its own way, conscientiously refer to music of the relatively distant past, the two works from the 1920s in a general stylistic way and the two from the '70s in the form of actual quotations of specific pieces.

Francis Poulenc

Francis Poulenc's *Trio for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano* comes from his first period of chamber composition, in which much of the music, with the correction of a few "wrong" notes, very nearly conforms with 18th century harmonic practice--"Pergolesi with his wig awry" in the words of English musicologist Roger Nichols.

These pieces are short and acidly witty, using simple triadic and scalar tunes generously spiced with dissonance.

The '20s saw the continuing involvement of Poulenc in Les Six, a group of French composers who espoused aesthetic principles closely allied with those of utopian movements in general from the period. For instance, the machine, both in the form of musical instruments and as a source for the imagination, was championed by Les Six and also by the "French Purism" of Le Corbusier and others, who were convinced that artists could lead the average man to the better world that was soon to evolve. Leger's paintings of mechanistic "new man" in idealized urban settings seem in certain respects akin to the light and optimistic music of Poulenc during this time, which often depicts popular French scenes in utterly charming, clear-cut and simple forms. The *Trio* itself--delightful, amusing and to the point--is in three movements, following the traditional fast-slow-fast arrangement after a brief slow introduction.

Richard Wernick

Kaddish-Requiem

A Secular Service for the Victims of Indochina

Richard Wernick writes:

In the late '60s and early '70s, protest, frustration, dismay, and anger at the United States' military involvement in Indochina was being expressed in countless ways. My *Kaddish-Requiem* was written during this period. The work is divided into three movements, played without pause. The first, "Alles Fleisch. . .", although entirely instrumental, draws upon the line of scripture, "Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras," ("For all flesh is as the grass"), which Brahms set in the second movement of his German Requiem. In a time when flesh and grass can be recklessly devastated by napalm and defoliants, the simplicity and beauty of the biblical image becomes tinged with a cruel and bizarre cynicism. This is reflected musically in the use of brief and disjointedly recomposed portions of the Brahms as an ironic and nagging commentary throughout the first movement.

The second movement consists of a tape collage of several revisions of the Hebrew

(actually Aramaic) Kaddish. Although traditionally used as the Jewish prayer for the dead, this curious doxology contains no reference to death whatever, but extols with its lilting rhythms and cadences the power and glory of the Almighty. The Kaddish sections are set off by two instrumental interludes based on portions of Lassus' two-voiced motet, *Sancti Miei* ("My holy people, who in this world have known only toil and strife, I shall grant you the reward for all your labors.")

The third movement is a setting for mezzo-soprano of the traditional Latin *requiem aeternam*. Here, too, instrumental interludes based on older sources are used--in this movement Palestrina's setting of Veni Sanctus Spiritus ("Come Holy Spirit"), the moving medieval poem with its entreaty to "grant a death of hope and peace."

George Crumb

George Crumb completed his *A Little Suite for Christmas AD 1979* in February of 1980. It was composed as a Christmas present for Lambert Orkis, and was premiered by him in December of that year. A recording of the work is included on the 20th Century Consort's third album, due to be released by Pro Arte this spring. The Suite was inspired by Giotto's famous Nativity Frescoes in the Arena Chapel at Padua, and Lambert Orkis provides the following comments:

In the first movement *The Visitation*, a solemn atmosphere is established through the use of mysterious block chords. Suddenly, bell sounds of great portent ring out. Later, however, the initial mood is recaptured, and the piece concludes as it began.

The *Berceuse for Infant Jesus* which follows occupies only two systems on the page. A treble tune is set above an Alberti-type bass. The tune is interrupted by low harmonics, but remains a simple and tranquil evocation of a rustic nativity scene.

The third movement, *Shepherd's Noel*, is appropriately pastoral in nature. Sudden sonic flashes are heard like shooting stars jutting out of the heavens. Crumb usually employs a good deal of pedal, but in this movement there are several passages explicitly marked "senza pedal," creating a pointed and highly articulate

effect as the right and left hands chase each other in quasi-canonic imitations.

Adoration of the Magi begins with an unaccompanied tune played directly on the muted strings of the piano. The damper pedal is depressed throughout this section, lending a luminosity of sympathetic vibrations to the melody. In this movement, Crumb quotes himself, borrowing material from "Music for a Summer Evening," part of his *Makrokosmos III*.

The *Nativity Dance* is a relatively "un-Crumbian" work; exuberant, quick movements of this type are rare in Crumb's music prior to "Celestial Mechanics," the fourth work in the *Makrokosmos* series. Here, the entire cosmos dances in celebration of Christ's birth. Shifts of metrical pulses (groups of 3, 5 and 7) and syncopation provide a lively rhythmic interplay.

The *Canticle of the Holy Night* makes use of the 1591 Coventry Carol in a very quiet, mysterious, and quite slow setting. The strings of the piano are strummed while the carol is played silently on the keyboard. In another section of the piece, the performer is instructed to pluck the notes of the melody with the right hand while the left provides open octave, fourth and fifth harmonics, resulting in a medieval flavor. Here, two thoughts are separated in space and in tonal area, yet remain unified, often with the assistance of a descant which serves to bind the whole together.

Crumb marks the *Carol of the Bells* "giocoso, jubilant, mechanical-sounding." Through the use of a variety of musical techniques, the piano creates a rhythmic clangor of gongs, cymbals and bell suggestive of the Eastern Church, forming a musical icon celebrating the nativity and rounding out the entire Suite.

Ottorino Respighi

From the beginning of his career, Ottorino Respighi showed a fascination with Italian music of earlier periods. In the years following his great symphonic poem "Fontane di Roma" in 1916, Respighi introduced more and more deliberately archaic elements into his music. The *Lauda per la Natività del Signore* is a culmination of this tendency, in effect an extended Christmas carol, revealing suggestions of Monteverdi, 16th century

madrigals, and even earlier music. The lauda form itself is a 13th century monophonic devotional song, with later 16th and 17th century versions in polyphonic style.

Respighi is revered for the sheer brilliance of orchestral color in his tone poems. Emotional depth is not generally regarded to be one of

his qualities. Still, there is a child-like radiance in the feelings expressed in the Lauda that, in addition to the luminous vocal and instrumental colors and beautifully wrought form, distinguishes this as one of Respighi's finest works.

NOTES ON THE ARTISTS

Elizabeth Adkins, violin, joined the National Symphony this season as Associate Concertmaster. She holds the degree of Master of Music Arts from Yale and is a member of the Broadwood Piano Trio.

James G. Bolyard, bassoon, studied at the Peabody Institute and has performed with the Washington Opera, the Washington Chamber Orchestra, and the National Gallery Orchestra.

Randall Eyles, percussion, is a member of the faculty at Catholic University. He is a member of the Air Force Band and the Contemporary Music Forum, and a graduate of the University of Illinois and Catholic University.

Kathleen Golding, oboe, studied with Ray Still at Northwestern University and has been a member of the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra and the Marlboro Music Festival.

Donna Gullstrand, soprano, is a soloist with the Washington Oratorio Society and the Paul Hill Chorale. She is a member of the faculty at the Shenandoah College and Conservatory of Music.

Barbara Haffner, violoncello, studied with Gabor Rejto and Janos Starker. In Chicago, she is principal cellist with the Music of the Baroque and the Contemporary Chamber Players.

Truman Harris, bassoon, attended North Texas State University and Catholic University; he has appeared with the National Symphony and the Capitol Woodwind Quintet.

Christopher Kendall, conductor, completed musical studies at Antioch College and the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. Founder and lutenist of the Folger Consort, he is also artistic director of Millenium Ensemble, Inc.

Loren Kitt, clarinet, is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music where he studied with David Phillips, Earl Bates, and Marcel Moyse. He is principal clarinetist of the National Symphony Orchestra.

Dana Krueger, mezzo-soprano, completed graduate studies at the University of Michigan and studied with Todd Duncan. She has appeared as soloist with Houston Opera, New York City Opera, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Andrew Litton, piano, studied with Nadia Reisenberg at the Juilliard School. He is Exxon/Arts Endowment conductor with the National Symphony, as well as conductor of the Virginia Chamber Orchestra.

James McDonald, tenor, was a Fulbright scholar in Germany. A member of the Theatre Chamber Players at Kennedy Center, he is a faculty member at the University of Maryland and the American Institute for Musical Studies in Graz, Austria.

Albert Merz, percussion, is a graduate of the Eastman School and Catholic University. An active free lance artist, he often performs with the National Symphony and is a member of the Theater Chamber Players.

Lambert Orkis, piano, is a member of the faculty at Temple University. A graduate of the Curtis Institute, he is principal keyboardist with the National Symphony Orchestra.

Janet Piez, English horn, is a graduate of the Hartt College of Music, and a student of Joseph Ladone. She is an active free-lance soloist in the Washington area.

Sara Stern, flute, studied with Richard Townsend and Marcel Moyse. She is principal flutist of the Kennedy Center Terrace Theater Orchestra and the Virginia Beach Pops Orchestra.

Shenandoah Conservatory Choir, Robert Shafer, director, is one of seven choral ensembles at the Shenandoah College and Conservatory of Music in Winchester, Virginia. The Choir has appeared at the National Gallery and the Kennedy Center. Robert Shafer is Music Director of the Oratorio Society of Washington and was appointed Associate Professor of Music at Shenandoah in September, 1983.

Joan Voorhees, flute, attended the University of Maryland and studied with William Montgomery and William Bennett. She is principal flutist with the Fairfax Symphony.

THE 20th CENTURY CONSORT 1983-84 SERIES

Remaining Concerts:

Saturday, March 17, and Saturday, April 21, 5:30 p.m.

All concerts are preceded by an informal lecture at 4:30 p.m.;
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

The 20th Century Consort wishes to acknowledge the generous support of The National Endowment for the Arts, the Alvord Foundation, the Sidney L. Hechinger Foundation, IBM, Lloyd Symington and the Philip L. Graham Foundation.

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COMING EVENTS

Sponsored by the Resident Associate Program December - February

December 16/7:30 p.m. "A Victorian Christmas" Soprano Emily Romney in a concert of nineteenth-century holiday music	Great Hall National Portrait Gallery 8th and F Sts., NW
January 17-18/8:00 p.m. Smithsonian Chamber Players Piano trios by Smetana and Brahms	Hall of Musical Instruments National Museum of American History 12th St. & Constitution Ave., NW
January 27-28/7:30 p.m. Thai National Dance Troupe Only U.S. Appearance in 1984	Baird Auditorium National Museum of Natural History 10th St. & Constitution Ave., NW
February 18/7:30 p.m. Rod Rodgers Dance Company Dance/Music/Poetry Tribute to Langston Hughes	Baird Auditorium National Museum of Natural History 10th St. & Constitution Ave., NW
February 21-22/8:00 p.m. Smithsonian Chamber Players Virtuoso Music of 17th Century Austria	Hall of Musical Instruments National Museum of American History 12th St. & Constitution Ave., NW
February 23/7:30 p.m. Gewandhaus Bach Orchestra of Leipzig First N. American Tour	Baird Auditorium National Museum of Natural History 10th St. & Constitution Ave., NW

For further information telephone 357-3030

S. Dillon Ripley, *Secretary*, The Smithsonian Institution
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Please note:

The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are strictly prohibited.
Rest rooms are located at either side of the cloakroom in the lower lobby.