

The Smithsonian Resident Associate Program Presents

21st CENTURY CONSORT

November 5, 2005

Marion and Gustave Ring Auditorium,
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

The Smithsonian Resident Associate Program
presents

21st Century Consort

Christopher Kendall, Artistic Director
Christopher Patton, Managing Director

Elisabeth Adkins, Violin
Rick Barber, Contrabass
Paul Cigan, Clarinet
Lisa Emenheiser, Piano
Gabrielle Finck, Horn
David Hardy, Cello
Tom Jones, Percussion
Tsunami Sakamoto, Viola
William Sharp, Baritone
Sara Stern, Flute
Milagro Vargas, Mezzo-soprano
Rudolf Vrbsky, Oboe
Rachel Young, Cello

Curt Wittig, Electronics
Kevin McKee, Stage Manager

Saturday, November 5, 2005
Pre-Concert Discussion 4:00 p.m.
Concert 5:00 p.m.

Marion and Gustave Ring Auditorium
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden



The 21st Century Consort's 2005-2006 Season is sponsored by
The Smithsonian Resident Associate Program and funded in part by generous
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Arts, the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, and the Board and Friends of
the 21st Century Consort. Piano courtesy of Yamaha Artist Services and The
Piano Place of Fairfax, Virginia



Smithsonian
Resident Associate Program
Pre-Concert Discussion

Christopher Kendall with composer Stephen Jaffe

Program "Homage"

Personae #VI Nicholas Maw

Ms. Emenheiser

Camp Songs Paul Schoenfield

Texts by Alexander Kulisiewicz

1. Black Boehm
2. The Corpse Carrier's Tango
3. Heil, Sachsenhausen!
4. Mister C
5. Adolf's Farewell to the World

Ms. Adkins, Mr. Barber, Mr. Cigan, Ms. Emenheiser, Mr. Sharp,
Ms. Vargas, Ms. Young

INTERMISSION

Le Tombeau de Ravel Arthur Benjamin

Valse-Caprice (played without pauses)

Introduzione. Allegro Molto

1. Poco lento
2. Presto, volante
3. Andante, semplice
4. Allegro vigoroso
5. Allegretto, preciso
6. Lento, intimo

Finale, Non troppo allegro

Mr. Cigan, Ms. Emenheiser

Homage to the Breath Stephen Jaffe

I. Running Pulse

II. Ostinato Elegiaco

III. Homage to the Breath (Thich Nhat Hanh)

Ms. Adkins, Mr. Barber, Mr. Cigan, Ms. Emenheiser, Ms. Finck, Mr. Hardy,
Mr. Jones, Mr. Kendall, Ms. Sakamoto, Ms. Vargas, Mr. Vrbsky

The audience is invited to join the artists in the Plaza Lobby for an informal post-concert reception, sponsored by the Friends of the 21st Century Consort, catered by World Cuisine.



Program Notes

NICHOLAS MAW

Personae #VI for solo piano

Composer Nicholas Maw was born in Grantham, England, and now resides in Washington, DC. His long relationship with the Consort is being celebrated this season, as 2005 marks the occasion of his 70th birthday. He studied with Lennox Berkeley at the Royal Academy of Music in London and later with Nadia Boulanger and Max Deutsch in Paris. His music is infused with passion, combining a strong, lyrical melodic line with a highly personal style of harmony that utilizes both serial and tonal elements, often exploiting the tension between the two. His vocal music ranges from the song-cycle *The Voice of Love* (1966), for mezzo-soprano and piano, to his opera *Sophie's Choice*, which had its premiere at Covent Garden in 2002, and is slated to be performed by the Washington Opera. His instrumental music runs a similar gamut, from solo pieces like *Night thoughts* to the mammoth 96-minute symphonic epic *Odyssey*, recorded by Simon Rattle and the City of Birmingham Symphony in 1992 to international acclaim.

Nicholas Maw composed the first set of *Personae*, Nos. I - III, in 1973. The second set, Nos. IV - VI, was composed in 1985 in response to a commission from the 1986 Bath International Festival, with funds provided by South West Arts. Peter Donohue gave its first performance at the Guildhall, Bath on June 7th 1986.

About *Personae* #VI, the composer writes:

These pieces were intended to bypass the writing of a great deal of contemporary piano music of the time, and take up where the 'old' pianism left off. In general, they take the piano not as the purveyor of virtually a single timbre—as is frequently the case in mid-twentieth century piano writing—but as a kind of drawing room orchestra at the disposal of a virtuoso player. They are written with the physical characteristics of playing the instrument very much in mind: the act of touch, how the hands move on the keyboard, the shape and feel of a chord or note-cluster under the fingers, the archetypes of keyboard accompaniment figures, the control of a *legato* line—or, to put it another way, the metamorphosis of song—on an instrument that functions through a percussive mechanical action.

The main substance of #VI is fluid in both feeling and texture; it is a kind of lyrical continuum of placid motion. A first contrasting episode consists of a simple song-like idea that returns at the end in juxtaposition with the opening material. A second episode—*piu scherzando*—perhaps suggests the rather nervous life that might exist under the surface calm, a restlessness that eventually propels the music into a fast moving cadenza.

PAUL SCHOENFIELD

Camp Songs for baritone, mezzo-soprano, clarinet, violin, cello, contrabass, and piano

Paul Schoenfield is a composer, a celebrated pianist, and also an avid scholar of Hebrew and of mathematics. He began playing the piano at the age of six and his first composition was completed in the following year. He received his Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Arizona. Prior to that, he was assistant to Nikolai Lapatnikoff at Carnegie-Mellon University. He has had a distinguished career as a pianist, having studied with Rudolph Serkin among others, and has recorded the complete violin and

piano works of Bartok with Sergiu Luca. Mr. Schoenfield has received commissions and grants from the NEA, the Ohio Arts Commission, Chamber Music America, the Rockefeller Fund, the Minnesota Commissioning Club, American Composers Forum, Soli Deo Gloria of Chicago, and many other organizations. His music has been recorded on EMI, Angel, BMG, Koch, *Innova*, New World, and Nonesuch.

Camp Songs was commissioned in 2001 by Music of Remembrance, an organization founded by Mina Miller dedicated to remembering Holocaust musicians and their art through performance, educational activities, recordings, and commissions of new works. It is a setting of five poems written at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp during World War II. Aleksander Kulisiewicz, a non-Jewish Polish survivor of the camp who was imprisoned because of his politics, devoted his life upon his release to collecting the music, art, and poetry of camp prisoners. While doing research at the Holocaust Museum here in Washington, Mina Miller discovered this extraordinary collection. She immediately determined to commission Paul Schoenfield to set some of the poems.

In 2000, Miller, Schoenfield, and musicologist Bret Werb met at the Holocaust Museum to begin sifting through this trove of material. Five poems were chosen, all of which were written by Kulisiewicz himself. The composer was drawn to the mocking and sarcastic humor that the poet uses to expose the seething fury that lay beneath the terror of the camps. "The poems I am setting," he wrote, "are caricatures which (in Joseph Conrad's words) 'put the face of a joke upon the body of truth.' They are an affirmation of dignity; a declaration of man's superiority to all that befalls him."

Texts by Aleksander Kulisiewicz
Translation by Barbara Milewski

Black Boehm (1942)

Whether it's by night or day,
I burn corpses—jump for joy!
I make a black black smoky smoke—
'Cause I am black black Boehm!

I'd like to burn some chicks or hags,
I'd like some kiddies, too.
I wish I had a hundred chimneys,
Like they have in Birkenau!

Oh, happy soul! Sending Ruskies to hell!
Still, there aren't really quite enough Jews here;
I could use more Jews in '43—
Else they might send some SS-guys to me!
Hah, hah, hah, hah!

Soon, healthy, happy and jumping for joy,
We'll smoke by night and we'll smoke by day;
We'll send up a real fat smoky smoke—
We'll send up black black Boehm.
Hah, hah, hah, hah!

The Corpse Carrier's Tango (1943)

Germany, that dog from hell,
Has tortured us four years already.
The crematorium corpse-carrier sweats,
It's warm where he works, but very pleasant.
After all, he's burning people in there—
You can see he's no butcher or baker!
So, dear boy, be off to the oven and don't delay!
Ever slow, ever steady—and full of joy!

After the first poke, you'll feel better.
A second punch in the face—but you're laughing still!
The third kick you'll really remember—
And after the fourth, you'll wet your pants!
When five dirty dogs kick you in the kidneys,
Brother, you'll spit out six broken teeth!
A seventh dog digs his heels into your belly—
That'll certainly make you feel great!

Oh, beautiful, lovely Lady Death! Okay!—
Poor thing, she's looking for a partner, a date!
And you, dear fellow, are the guy that she's ogling—
She'll eat you right up with her hungry eyes!
You ask her to rendezvous at the corpse-cellar,
And there you allow her to gaze at your festering wound,
Soon its stink will give way
To a tender, decadent, tete a tete!

One minute later, brother, you'll find yourself in heaven,
With two warm doughnuts in your hand,
Three little angels scrub your butt clean,
And cry out in German, "My! What a lovely ass!"
A fourth angel—darling little Anna—
Pours five shots of whisky down her throat,
While ten sweet angels lull you off to sleep:
So, rest peacefully in heaven, now. C'est la vie!

Heil, Sachsenhausen! (1941)

I'm a half-wild savage, you know,
One dumb prisoner, an uncultured clod—
Why then sail off to Africa?
We have a colony right here!
They bought you like a slave, man,
Bought you—lock, stock and barrel.
Blood drips from your mug, right here,
'Cause everywhere, all crap's the same!

Heil, Sachsenhausen!
Hot, stinking colony.
Germany, it's the real thing!
Heil, Sachsenhausen!

Our legs are thin as bamboo shoots,
The corpses stink—whew!—they're naked, too!
Heil! And long live Kulturkampf!

I'll buy myself a nice German girl,
Poor Pole that I am.
But what do you give me, you uniformed beasts?
Well... she does have beautiful eyes.
She, the sweet young girl and mommy,
Me, the drooling, stupid daddy,
Our kids will wear checkered clothing—
Black and white and red.

Heil, Sachsenhausen!
Heavenly paradise you are,
All humanity adores you—
Heil, Sachsenhausen!

And if, tomorrow, I should die like a dog,
Today, I'll kick up my feet and dance!
Heil! And long live Kulturkampf!

Mister C (1940)

It's the second year, dear God,
And the swastika's still frolicking;
There is no power that can exhaust it,
So we'd all better get down on our knees!

Such a terrible, great, ferocious Fuehrer,
Such a robber-goy—with paint brush, yet!
And his head's filled up with dirty dishwater,
While his stupid people shriek out: "Heil!"

Meanwhile, Mister C puffs his big cigar,
Mister C blows out some smoke;
Europe crumbles all around us,
And he's as cool as cool can be!

But, Mister C will snuff out his smoke,
And he'll spit on Adolf's "Sieg!",
He'll pay for Adolf's funeral on the Isle of Rugia—
Maybe as early as '43!

Maybe, oh, maybe, maybe we'll see—
Maybe... but who can really know for sure?
Maybe, poor devil, we'll see—the deep sea,
Maybe, especially, the English sea...

Yoom pom tiu di di di yoom pah,
Yoom pom tiu di di di yoo—
Maybe, maybe...but who can really know for sure?
Maybe the "eastern wind" can help.

Adolf's Farewell to the World (1943)

By River Volga, chasing after the Russkies,
The noble troop-p-ps, in fact, were bugging off!
"And ever forward, and ever further"—
Now Mother Russia was chasing the Krauts!
"And ever forward, and ever further"—
Now Mother Russia was chasing the Krauts!

Farewell to Moscow, farewell to Samara,
My distant Leningrad, farewell!
Ah, the party will be over, when soon in Crimea,
They take the crap out of my pants—forever!
Ja, ja—it's really true....

Farewell to your mountains, your fair Ural Mountains,
And your armada, I bid it farewell.
You are the man Stalin, man-of-steel Stalin,
And I'm only an impotent Adolf.

Forgive me, hospitable Europe!
Forgive my "Arbeit und Freude"
Perhaps, in the seventh heaven, beneath the seventh fence—
I shall take you as my bride.

Adieu to you, my lovely Kraut virgins,
Now who will spread the tarot cards for me?
As a boy I was always proud and saintly—
I never stuck it where it didn't belong!

Sieg-heil, my General-Gouvernexcement!
You great and magnificent province!
You'll receive a grand pension to compensate
For the loss of, as Goebbels would say, my Bromberg.

A guitar plinks, Germania sighs;
Victory was frozen on the tundra!
Adolf's axis is broke as a poet—
And he remains, an orphan again.
Adolf's axis is broke as a poet—
And he remains, an orphan again.

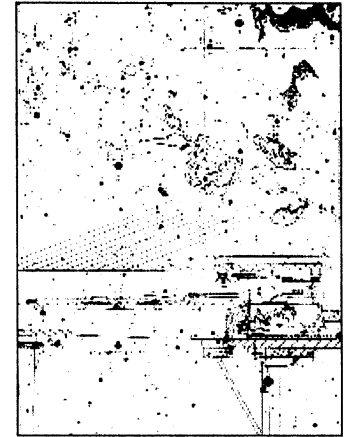
ARTHUR BENJAMIN

Le Tombeau de Ravel, for clarinet and piano

Australian-born composer Arthur Benjamin (1893-1960) spent most of his life away from his native continent, in England and, during World War Two, in Vancouver, British Columbia and at Reed College in Portland, Oregon. He received the bulk of his musical training at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he later taught for many years. His two greatest claims to fame are rather disparate: he was one of Benjamin Britten's piano teachers, and he composed "Jamaican Rhumba," a pop sensation in the late 1930's that was based on a folk melody he brought back from an examining tour to the West Indies where he was auditioning potential students for the Royal Schools of Music. He composed a number of operas, including *A Tale of Two Cities* (1949-50) and

Mañana (1956), one of the first operas ever commissioned specifically for television broadcast. He was a pioneer of British film composing, completing his first film score in 1934 and contributing the scores to such British classics as *An Ideal Husband* and *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, and continued composing film scores throughout his long career.

Le Tombeau de Ravel was written in homage to one of Benjamin's favorite composers, and the title playfully makes reference to Ravel's own *Le Tombeau de Couperin*. The music, however, is clearly indebted to his dedicatee's more famous *Valse Noble et sentimentales*. The work was written for "either viola or clarinet with piano." Although the composer in his notes insists that "it cannot be said that either is a transcription of the other," the two versions are very nearly identical. Benjamin's music remained firmly grounded in tonality and he resisted the powerful forces of serialism and atonality that characterized much of the music of his contemporaries. This piece utilizes enough chromaticism to make it recognizably modern in character, but has an audibly tonal formal structure. The Finale reiterates some of the material of the Introduction in a way that brings the piece to a satisfying conclusion.



STEPHEN JAFFE

Homage to the Breath for flute, oboe (doubling on harmonica), clarinet, horn, percussion, piano, violin, viola, cello, contrabass, and mezzo-soprano.

Stephen Jaffe is a native of Washington, DC. He studied at the University of Pennsylvania, with such luminaries as George Crumb, George Rochberg, and Richard Wernick. The 2004 concert season marked two milestones in his career: the world premiere of the *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra* by the National Symphony Orchestra, David Hardy, soloist, and Leonard Slatkin conducting; and the premiere recording of the *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* with the Odense Symphony of Denmark. In 1979 he was a Fellow in composition at the Tanglewood

Music Center. He received the Premiere Medaille from the Conservatoire de Musique in Geneva, the Rome Prize from the American Academy in Rome, and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Guggenheim foundation. Stephen currently lives with his family in Durham, North Carolina, where he is Mary and James H. Semans Professor of Composition.

Homage to the Breath was commissioned by the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition at Brigham Young University for the 25th Anniversary the 20th Century Consort, and was premiered here at the Hirshhorn Museum on November 10, 2001. Subtitled "Instrumental and Vocal Meditations," the first two movements are instrumental, and the third features a part for mezzo-soprano. The three movements are entitled "Running Pulse," *Ostinato Elegaic*o," and "Homage to the Breath." Regarding this work, the composer writes:

As I composed the first movement, "Running Pulse," besides musical images, a few metaphorical ones also occurred to me: getting into a groove, coming out into a clearing, equilibrium and disequilibrium; the pulse that runs and running pulse. The ensemble music is by turns exuberant, rhythmically driven, reflective, and exalted, and features the full group, with extended roles for solo instruments as well.

"*Ostinato Elegaic*o" was written in memory of my mother, Elizabeth B. Jaffe. The theme of breath in this movement signifies both vigil and elegy. In the outer sections of the movement, the piano and the percussion (particularly a recurring rattle played on *vibraslap*, the modern version of the Latin "*Quijada del asino*" (Jawbone of an Ass)) are featured. Later in the piece, the more plaintive voices of the oboe, flute, horn and strings are heard more prominently, until the music at last evaporates into its quiet conclusion, again featuring the percussion, this time in bent tones of the vibraphone, like the sound of mourning doves.

The final movement, "Homage to the Breath," draws its text from the Buddhist master Thich Nhat Hanh. The text is an actual meditation exercise from his *The Blooming of the Lotus*, entitled "Looking Inward, Healing." I was inspired to set the text as a kind of vocalize, if not as an exercise in meditation (for which use the written text still exists separately). In doing so, I was able to honor the 20th Century Consort's request that I

include a part for mezzo-soprano Milagro Vargas. More fundamentally, there is an affirmation in this text that strikes a tone I was striving for, as if in response to the previous two movements. The mezzo-soprano's lyrical vocalize is accompanied by the full ensemble, whose music is invented out of motives heard earlier in the piece.

Looking Deeply, Healing

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Knowing I will get old, I breathe in. Knowing I can't escape old age, I breathe out. | Getting old No escape |
| 2. Knowing I will get sick, I breathe in. Knowing I can't escape sickness, I breathe out. | Getting sick No escape |
| 3. Knowing I will die, I breathe in. Knowing I can't escape death, I breathe out. | Dying. No escape |
| 4. Knowing one day I will have to abandon all that I cherish today, I breathe in. Knowing I can't escape having to abandon all that I cherish today, I breathe out. | Abandoning what I cherish No escape |
| 5. Knowing that my actions are my only belongings, I breathe in. Knowing that I can't escape the consequences of my actions, I breathe out. | Actions true belongings. No escape from consequences |
| 6. Determined to live my days deeply in mindfulness, I breathe in. Seeing the joy and benefit of living mindfully, I breathe out. | Living mindfully Seeing joy |
| 7. Vowing to offer joy each day to my beloved, I breathe in. Vowing to ease the pain of my beloved, I breathe out. | Offering joy Easing pain |

From Thich Nhat Hanh "The Blooming of a Lotus." © 1993 by Thich Nhat Hanh. English translation by Annabel Laity. Text and translation used with permission of Thich Nhat Hanh and Unified Buddhist Church, Inc.

Program notes by Christopher Patton

