

*Mt. Pleasant Concert Association
presents*

The University of Iowa School of Music
The Center for New Music
David K. Gompper, Music Director

Iowa Wesleyan College
Chapel Auditorium

April 21, 1992
7:30 pm

Program

Pentagram

Maurita Mead - clarinet*

Michael Eckert

From the Other Side (1988)

*"A Divertimento in five movements
for flute, cello, piano and percussion"*

Donald Martino

*Karen Bergquist - flutes
Joseph Rovine - violoncello
Michael Geary - percussion
Robert Fuller - piano*

intermission

Mosaic and In(ter)ferences (1992)

*Laura Koenig, piccolo
Robert Fuller, piano*

Robert Fuller

**Chamber Concerto
for 13 instrumentalists (1970)**

György Ligeti

*Laura Koenig - flutes
Peggy Marco - oboe/english horn/oboe d'amore
Maria Feeney - clarinet
Janis Brown - clarinet/bass clarinet
Rachel Paulos - horn
Michael Mazko - trombone
Sven Hansell* - harpsichord/organ
Robert Fuller - piano/celesta
Donald Haines* - violin I
Wonran Kim - violin II
Mark Hervig - viola
Joseph Rovine - violoncello
Gary Palmer - double bass*

David K. Gompper - conductor*

* indicated University of Iowa School of Music faculty
sponsored by the University of Iowa School of Music, and the University of Iowa Arts Education/Outreach program

Program Notes

Michael Eckert (b.1950) joined the faculty of the UI School of Music in 1985; he has also taught at Colorado State University, the University of North Carolina, Tulane, and Antioch College. He began composing as an undergraduate at Antioch under John Richard Ronsheim (whose music figured on a number of early CNM concerts), and then studied with Ralph Shapey at the University of Chicago, where he received graduate degrees in composition and musicology. In 1975 Eckert received the Berns Prize from Columbia University for his String Quartet, and in 1983 he won the Music Teachers National Association "Composer of the Year" award. Other awards include an NEA Fellowship in composition and the Charles Ives Scholarship of the National Institute of Arts and Letters. He is a member of American Composers Alliance and the Iowa Composers Forum. *M. Eckert*

Donald Martino (b. 1931 New Jersey), studied the clarinet, oboe and saxophone at an early age. Martino studied composition Roger Sessions and is currently a Professor of Music at Harvard University. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and has received many grants and awards: three Guggenheim awards, National Endowment for the Arts and a Pulitzer in 1974 for his chamber work *Nocturno*.

From the Other Side

- I. Introduction and Slow Dance
(pause)
- II. Tango dei Grulli
- III. Dance of the Reluctant Flamapoo
(pause)
- IV. Ballad for a Blue Bill
- V. Das magische Kabarett des Doktor Schönberg

While I was composing *Introduction-Slow Dance*, I was reminded of those slow jazz ballades that I use to play as a teenager. I am thinking of tunes like "I waited for you" which I first heard with the Billy Eckstein band, and "Lover Man", performed by Sarah Vaughan and Charlie Parker. I started to write a concert piece, and all of these echoes of the pop world kept popping into my head...so I thought about cowboys, about cakewalks, T.V. commercials and about *Nocturno*. In the *Tango of the Fools*, I am reminiscing about my dance band days, when with music memorized, peeping out from the band stands at pretty young things, I so often noted with disbelief, how many dances were grossly out of step. About mid-way, I roused from my reminiscence to go back to the composing of art music, now tainted by earlier images, that I am powerless to produce more than a parody, and hence I'm irresistibly drawn back to the Tango-infested waltz of the Roseland Ballroom. My childhood friend, the great Bill Evans is the Blue Bill of Movement Four. The opening theme attempts to invoke Bill in his typically introspective mode, and the choruses that follow are produced by using tetrachordal combinatoriality. The interesting thing about this piece is that it is a twelve-tone work from beginning to end, no matter what you think you hear. This led me to the last movement, Dr. Schönberg's magic cabaret. Here I conjure the cabaret quartet of Arnold, Anton, Alban and perhaps Egon (Wellesz). They are madly playing away at the Überbrunnen. As my fantasy intensifies, I imagine them condemned for all time to the pit band of the inferno, where each of their musical ideas must find realization via the twelve-tone system, but take on the likeness of a commercial pop tune. Much to Arnold's irritation, there are cameo appearances by Bartok and Stravinsky, and Arnold stubbornly refuses the well intentioned help of more than a dozen highly successful Tin Pan Alley tune steps. Instead, Arnold and his boys from Vienna convert what we have come to appreciate as their great masterpieces, into a medley of sixteen ethnic, jazz and waltz tunes. These appear, in their real live pitch levels as completely chromatic melodies, chromatic bass lines and totally chromatic harmonies. The last movement might be best described as a re-composition or an arrangement, because it is everyone else's work but my own. After the introduction, the first medley appears, which is the Webern op. 23, No. 1 song. The entire medley ends with the Schoenberg 4th String Quartet, played as an impassioned waltz. The coda contains cameo appearances by Beethoven, Chopin and all the previous melodies, and the final chord of the work, is the same chord Webern used to end his second cantata. If you move it around in the proper way, it makes a very nice jazz pyramid chord.

D. Martino - transcribed from a pre-concert talk 11/16/91

Robert Fuller was born in Tampere, Finland, grew up in upstate New York near Albany, and has studied music on both the East and West coasts. He is currently contemplating work on his Ph. D. thesis in Composition at the University of Iowa, where his studies with Kenneth Gaburo, Robert Paredes and Kirk Corey have, fortunately, raised more questions than they have answered. He has experimented in a number of different art forms, such as photography, poetry, oil pastels, bicycling (through Ireland—in the rain!), writing, meeting interesting people, translating Spanish poetry, teaching and perhaps even living.

Mosaic and Interferences was written especially for Laura Koenig, and grew in part out of the musical relationship that evolved when we were working out the intensely involved and intricate *Piece in Two Parts* (1960), by Stephan Wolpe (for flute and piano). As in that work, in which the characters, the theater, the dynamic presence of both the musical lines and musicians alike, are vital to the work, in *Mosaic and Interferences* the exuberance, playfulness, introspection, intenseness—both in the individual roles and in the players' interactions—are central to the work's unfolding. It is of immense concern to me, not just that we occupy a particular space, but how we occupy it (and how we relate to that particular space as opposed to some other space). *Mosaic and Interferences* also raises the issue of the oppression of systems (whether my "system" of composing (do I have "a" system?), or whether large-scale socio-political structures—there is an element of oppression, or non-freedom, inherent in systems) and how, possibly, they may be transcended. (There is an inside musical joke in this work, a catalogue of sorts, which refers to such-and-such a theoretical system. It provides the first major interference in the work, in direct opposition to the cellular "mosaic" type of structure that precedes it. From these two types of events there emerges another mosaic consisting of a sometimes-alternation of both types, a quixotic interplay interspersed with silences, out of which the piccolo, nearly mute at first, ostensibly resigned to the (such-and-such) system, works through it, understanding, in some sense, by (nearly) exhausting all the possibilities, some new sense of freedom). *R. Fuller*

Yörgo Ligeti - Chamber Concerto (1969-70). A type of form with which Ligeti particularly likes to work, the one he labels "like a precision mechanism". He has always been fascinated by machines that do not work properly and by the world of technology and automation "which engenders and puts people at the mercy of bureaucracies". The ticking or periodic mechanical noises of not-quite-reliable machinery occurs in many of his works. By the time he came to write the third movement of the *Chamber Concerto*, he had elevated such clockwork fantasies to the level of a sophisticated mode of expression. Here, the crazy chattering of regular but disconnected rhythms produces a kind of acoustic illusion through which we are made aware of another world of events and musical connections, moving on a different plane. Things are not always what they seem.

The *Chamber Concerto* reflects Ligeti's continuing interest in composing with layers of material in different meters and even in different tempi, and in polyrhythm in general. As in the *Summer Scene* of *Don Giovanni*, several layers, processes and kinds of movement can take place on different planes simultaneously. The aim is not to produce complication for complication's sake: in the *Chamber Concerto* it is probably suggested itself by the requirement to write a brilliant piece for Friedrich Cerha's ensemble *Die Reihe*, in which the 13 players were soloists and in which ensemble playing could also be treated with virtuosity. The problem Ligeti set himself was how to exploit this collective virtuosity and to realize his multilayered structures in such a context. In spite of frequent markings of "senza tempo", the instrumentalists are not given as much linear freedom as, for example, Lutoslawski gives in comparable pieces: Ligeti insists on keeping his texture under strict control at any given moment. Like so many of Ligeti's works, the four movements of the *Chamber Concerto* begin and end in such a way as to suggest that each of them is only an audible extract of a much larger span of music, the rest of which we are unable to hear. His general idea for the first, he has said, was the surface of a stretch of water, where everything takes place below the surface. "The musical events you hear are blurred: suddenly a tune emerges and then sinks back again. For a moment the outlines seem quite clear, then everything gets blurred again." *Stephen Plaistow*

The Center for New Music

D. Martin Jenni, Director
David K. Gompper, Musical Director

The Center for New Music at the University of Iowa, was founded in 1966 with a grant from The Rockefeller Foundation. Since then, it has served the School of Music, the University and the state of Iowa with performances of contemporary music. The Center performs and commissions newly written works by composers of national and international stature, and functions to provide musicians the opportunity to learn 20th century chamber repertoire.

The CNM was the recipient of the prestigious *BMI commendation of excellence award* in 1986, and has produced a CRI recording of music by Iowa composers. A CD recording is being planned for release next year, including music from the 25th year concert series. The CNM has toured throughout the country, even performing at the Guggenheim Museum, New York, in 1970. Future plans are being made to form a midwest tour next Spring, 1993, and to host African troupe from Nigeria.

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