

Spring Composers' Workshop Concerts

Sunday, February 8, 1997
8:00 p.m. Clapp Recital Hall

Sunday, April 19, 1997
8:00 p.m. Clapp Recital Hall

Composers' Workshop Concert



**Sunday, November 23, 1997
Harper Recital Hall, 8:00 p.m.**

The University of Iowa
Composers' Workshop Concert

Sunday, November 23, 1997
8:00 p.m. Clapp Recital Hall

program

Question
Jonathan SOUTHWOOD
James Ellis - violoncello

Elision
Edgar CROCKETT
Lynn Hart - clarinet

Praxilla
Jessica WISKUS
Judy Campen - soprano
Nathalie Cruden - viola
Alice Park - flute
Kevin Peto - bass clarinet
Michael Geary - percussion
Lyda Cruden - violin
James Ellis - violoncello
Annette Machetta - clarinet
Alex Lunsqui - piano
Jessica Wiskus - conductor

notes

Question was composed as an engagement gift for my wife. The pitch material for the opening gesture was generated by taking the Tristan motive and exploding it to cover multiple octaves. The remaining pitch materials are based on both the Tristan motive and adjacent or interlocking thirds.

elision, n. 1. the omission of a vowel in pronunciation. 2. (in verse) the omission of a vowel at the end of one word when the next word begins with a vowel.

Praxilla is the last song of a four movement setting of lyric poems from Ancient Greece. Written by Praxilla, a poetess of Sicyon in the fifth century BCE, the poem is the reply of a youth who, having died and passed to the Underworld, is asked what he misses most about life on Earth:

Loveliest of what I leave behind is the sunlight,
And loveliest after that the shining stars and the moon's face,
But also cucumbers that are ripe, and pears, and apples.
(trans. Richmond Lattimore)

A soft bass drum solo opens the movement, foreshadowing the rhythms of the Greek text, and is quietly joined by a transparent ensemble texture, thickening as the instruments find their individual voices and grow into complex counterpoint. This dissipates to a lyrical violin solo that brings the ensemble to rest before the first entrance of the soprano, who states a fragment of the text before moving into the full verse. The ensemble, alternately developing and contrasting the vocal line, increases in rhythmic and melodic intensity, then returns to the opening mood of unsettled quiet as the soprano closes the piece.