

BENNINGTON COLLEGE MUSIC DIVISION

Presents

A

FACULTY CONCERT

Wednesday
December 8, 1976

8:15 PM
Carriage Barn

Neun Ecossaisen
Wiener Damen- Landler, op. 67
Lionel Nowak, piano

Franz Schubert

Sojourner Truth Speaks (1976)
from the Cantata, MEETING FOR EQUAL RIGHTS (1866)

Vivian Fine

Mary Lee Farris, soprano
String Orchestra, conducted by Vivian Fine
Wind Ensemble, conducted by Louis Calabro
Organ, Henry Brqnt
Timpani, Marta Ptaszynska

Two Neruda Poems (1971)
I. La Tortuga
II. Oda Al Piano

Vivian Fine

Mary Lee Farris, soprano
Vivan Fine, piano

- INTERMISSION -

Memoirs: Part I (1974)

Louis Calabro

Maurice Pachman, bassoon
Louis Calabro, percussion

Sojourner Truth Speaks is an excerpt from the cantata Meeting for Equal Rights 1866, commissioned by Cooper Union, with the assistance of the National Endowment for the Arts, for its Bicentennial concert in the Great Hall of Cooper Union.

The cantata is concerned with the struggle, immediately after the Civil War, to obtain the right to vote for women as well as men. In the end, it took five decades for this to be achieved. In this excerpt Sojourner Truth, one of the remarkable women of the 19th century, speaks to the issue as a former slave.

I come from another field - the country of the slave. They have got their liberty - so much good luck to have slavery partly destroyed; not entirely. I want it root and branch destroyed. Then we will all be free indeed. I feel that if I have to answer for the deeds done in my body just as much as man, I have a right to have just as much as a man. There is a great stir about coloured men getting their rights, but not a word about the colored women; and if the colored men got their rights, and not the colored women theirs, you see the colored men will be masters over the women, and it will be just as bad as it was before.

I am above eighty years old; it is about time for me to be going. I have been forty years a slave, and forty years free, and would be forty years here to have equal rights for all. I suppose I am kept here because something remains for me to do; I suppose I am yet to help break the chain. I have done a great deal of work, as much as a man. - We do as much, we eat as much, we want as much.

- Sojourner Truth

La tortuga que
 anduvo
 tanto tiempo
 y tanto vio
 con
 sus
 antiguos
 ojos
 la tortuga
 que comió
 aceitunas
 del mas profundo
 mar,
 la tortuga que nadó
 siete siglos
 y conoció
 siete
 mil
 primaveras,
 la tortuga
 blindada
 contra
 el calor
 y el frío,
 contra
 las rayas y las olas,
 la tortuga
 amarilla
 y plateada
 con severos
 lunares
 ambarinos
 y pies de sapina,
 la tortuga
 se quedó
 aquí
 durmiendo,
 y no lo sabe.
 De tan vieja
 se fué
 poniendo dura,
 dejó
 de amar las olas
 y fue rígida
 como una plancha de planchar.
 Cerró
 los ojos que
 tanto
 mar, cielo, tiempo y tierra
 se afiaron
 y se durmió
 entre las otras
 piedras.

The turtle
 toiling for a'd
 so long,
 having seen so much
 with
 his
 old dilu lan
 eyes:
 the turtle,
 munching
 olives
 where the ocean is
 deepest:
 the turtle that swan
 seven centuries
 and knew
 seven
 millennial
 springs:
 the turtle
 hooded
 against
 hot
 and cold,
 against
 shark and glitter:
 the yellowing
 turtle,
 plated
 with hard
 moonmarks
 of amber
 and the feet of a predator:
 the turtle
 sleeps
 now, having
 come to a halt,
 hardly aware of it.
 Patriarch, long
 hardening
 into his time,
 he grew
 weary of waves
 and stiffened himself
 like a flatiron.
 Having dared
 so much
 of sea and sky, time and terrain,
 his feeble eyes droop
 and then slept
 a shoulder
 among other shoulders.

ODA AL PIANO

Estaba triste el piano
en el concierto,
olvidado en su frac sepulturero,
y luego abrió la boca,
su boca de ballena:
entro el pianista al piano
volando como un cuervo,
algo pasó como si cayera
una piedra
de plata
o una mano
a un estanque
escondido:
resbaló la dulzura
como la lluvia
sobre una campana,
cayó la luz al fondo
de una casa cerrada,
una esmeralda recorrió el abismo
y sonó el mar,
la noche,
las praderas,
la gota del rocío
el altísimo trueno,
cantó la arquitectura de la rosa
rodó el silencio al lecho de la aurora.

Así nació la música
del piano que moría
subió la vestidura
de la náyade
del catafalco
y de su dentadura
hasta que en el olvido
cayó el piano, el pianista
y el concierto,
y todo fue sonido
torrencial elemento,
sistema puro, claro companario.

Entonces volvió el hombre
del árbol de la música.
Bajó volando como
cuervo perdido
o caballero loco;
cerró su boca de ballena el piano
y él anduvo hacia atrás,
hacia el silencio.

ODE TO THE PIANO

Midway in the concert,
the piano grew pensive,
ignored in its gravedigger's frock coat;
but later it opened its mouth
--the jaws of leviathan;
the pianist then entered his piano
and departed like a crow;
something happened, like a silvery
downfall
of pebbles
or a hand
in a pond,
unobserved:
a trickle of sweetness
like rain
on the smooth of a bell,
light fell
through the padlocks and bolts of
a house,
to the depths,
an emerald crossed the abysses,
the sea gave its sound
the night
and the dews
and the meadows,
the steepest ascents of the thunderbolt,
the symmetrical rose sang aloud
and quietness circled the milk of the
morning.

So melody grew
in a dying piano,
the naiad's
investiture
rose on the catafalque
from a margin of teeth,
piano, pianist,
and concerto plunged downward, oblivious,
till all was sonority,
torrential beginnings,
consummate gradation, a bell's tower's
clarities.

Then the man in the tree
of his music came back to us.
He came down like
a blundering crow on its course
or a lunatic dandy:
the whale-mouth closed up
and the man walked away
to a silence.

— Pablo Neruda
translation by For. Slitt