

BENNINGTON COLLEGE

presents

a

CONCERT OF CHAMBER MUSIC

Wednesday
October 8, 1969 8:15 p.m. Carriage Barn

PROGRAMME

I NIGHT PIECE (1964) Louis Calabro

Cunnar Schonbeck, clarinet

II SUITE #1 Louis Caix d'Hervelois

Jacob Glick, viola
Marianne Finckel, piano

La Milanese
Sarabande
Tambourin
Menuett
L'Agreable
Gavotte

INTERMISSION

III ELDERS TO THE SEA

An opera by Ralph Vaughn-Williams
Play by E.M. Synge

Conductor - Michael Finckel

Scene: A fishing cottage in the Aran Islands off
the coast of Ireland.

Nora Elizabeth Swados

Cathleen Shelley White

Maurya Nancy Hirsche

Bartley Timothy Baker

Keening Women:

Charlotte Albright
Pamela Downs
Kane Glick
Tordis Isselhardt
Pamela Moore
Catherine Satterlee
Lynne Salomon
Elissa Weitz
Anne Wheeler
Maria Williams

Cellists: George Finckel
Gael Alcock
Christopher Finckel
Martha Siegel
Constance Wallace

Bass: Marianne Finckel

RIDERS TO THE SEA

The story takes place in the primitive surroundings of the Aran Islands off the coast of Ireland.

Nora comes into her poor cottage with a bundle of clothes and whispers to her sister, Cathleen. The clothes have been taken off a drowned man in Donegal and given to Nora by a young priest who cautions her not to open the bundle with her sister while her mother is present, for fear the clothes belong to Michael, a son who has been missing at sea for nine or ten days. Maurya (the mother) enters just after the girls have hidden the clothes in the turf loft.

Another son, Bartley, enters, after the girls have told their mother that he will be taking a grey pony to the fair in Connemara. She is reluctant for him to go because the wind is rising from the south and west and the sea will be bad. Bartley enters, announces his need for a rope to make a halter with which to lead the pony down to the boat. He is scolded by his mother for leaving, but goes, nevertheless. Maurya stubbornly refuses to give him her blessing, but when he has gone, she laments and predicts that they will not see him again.

It is a bad omen not to give someone your blessing, so Cathleen entreats Maurya to go down to the spring well and give him some bread that has been baking in the fire and give him her blessing then. The old lady is hesitant to go, since it is hard for her to walk, but Nora gives her a cane and she leaves. In the meantime, the two sisters open the bundle of clothes they have hidden and discover that, indeed, they are Michael's, but resolve not to tell their mother, while Bartley is on the sea.

When the mother returns, she still has the bread, and she begins to keene. Cathlees tries to find out what is wrong. The old lady has had a vision down at the spring of her son riding on his red mare and leading the grey pony with the ghost of Michael on it. Michael is wearing fine clothes and new shoes on his feet. This was a bad omen and it confirmed Maurya's foreboding that Bartley would be lost at sea.

She frightens the girls with a recotatopm pf her vision. Then, coming out of her trance, she enumerates the various ways her sons have been lost at sea. Tragically, at this moment, Bartley's body is carried in, completing the group of six sons who have died at sea. He is blessed, along with the other sons, to the accompaniment of keening women, who have come in with the body.

The final benediction, as the scene come to a close:

"What more can we want than that - no man at all can be living forever, and we must be satisfied."