

From Dewy Dreams

From dewy dreams, my soul, arise,
From love's deep slumber and from death,
For lo! the trees are full of sighs
Whose leaves the morn admonisheth.

Eastward the gradual dawn prevails
Where softly burning fires appear,
Making to tremble all those veils
Of grey and golden gossamer.

While sweetly, gently, secretly,
The flowery bells of morn are stirred
And the wise choirs of faery
Begin (innumerable!) to be heard.

Because Your Voice Was at My side

Because your voice was at my side
I gave him pain,
Because within my hand I held
Your hand again.

There is no word nor any sign
Can make amend—
He is a stranger to me now
Who was my friend.

Sleep Now

Sleep now, O sleep now,
O you unquiet heart!
A voice crying 'Sleep now'
Is heard in my heart.

The Voice of the winter
Is heard at the door.
O sleep for the winter
Is crying "Sleep no more!"

My kiss will give you peace now
And quiet to your heart—
Sleep on in peace now,
O you unquiet heart!

BENNINGTON COLLEGE MUSIC DIVISION
PRESENTS

OTTO LUENING
A 94th BIRTHDAY TRIBUTE



WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1, 1994
8:15 p.m.
GREENWALL MUSIC WORKSHOP

Program

"Grave" and "Presto" from Short Sonata No. 1 (1940)

Marianne Finckel, piano

Short Sonata No. 3 for Flute and Piano (1966)

Sue Ann Kahn, flute
Elizabeth Wright, piano

Sonata for Violoncello and Piano (1992)

Allegro Moderato
Fast
Allegro Vivace
Andante
Fast Dance

Michael Finckel, 'cello
Peter Golub, piano

Fantasia for Viola* (1994)
(dedicated to Jacob Glick)

Fantasia for Flute* (1992)
(dedicated to Sue Ann Kahn)

Duo for Flute and Viola (1985)

Sue Ann Kahn, flute
Jacob Glick, viola

*world premiere

Lean Out of the Window

Lean out of the window,
 Goldenhair,
I heard you singing
 A merry air.

My book is closed,
 I read no more,
Watching the fire dance
 On the floor.

I have left my book:
 I have left my room:
For I heard you singing
 Through the gloom,

Singing and singing
 A merry air.
Lean out of the window,
 Goldenhair.

My Love is in a Light Attire

My love is in a light attire
 Among the appletrees
Where the gay winds do most desire
 To run in companies.

There, where the gay winds stay to woo
 The young leaves as they pass,
My love goes slowly, bending to
 Her shadow on the grass;

And where the sky's a pale blue cup
 Over the laughing land,
My love goes lightly, holding up
 Her dress with dainty hand.

INTERMISSION

At That Hour When All Things Have Repose

At that hour when all things have repose,
O lonely watcher of the skies,
Do you hear the night wind and the sighs
Of harps playing unto Love to uncloset
The pale gates of sunrise?

When all things repose do you alone
Awake to hear the sweet harps play
To Love before him on his way,
And the night wind answering in antiphon
Till night is overgone?

Play on, invisible harps, unto Love
Whose way in heaven is aglow
At that hour when soft lights come and go,
Soft sweet music in the air above
And in the earth below.

When The Shy Star Goes Forth

When the shy star goes forth in heaven
All maidenly, disconsolate,
Hear you amid the drowsy even
One who is singing by your gate.
His song is softer than the dew
And he is come to visit you.

O bend no more in revery
When he at eventide is calling
Nor muse: Who may this singer be
Whose song about my heart is falling?
Know you by this, the lover's chant,
'Tis I that am your visitant.

Joyce Cycle* (1993)

text from James Joyce's "Chamber Music"
(dedicated to Barbara Ann Martin and Judith Olson)

1. Strings in the Earth and Air
2. The Twilight Turns From Amethyst
3. At That Hour When All Things Have Repose
4. When The Shy Star Goes Forth
5. Lean Out of the Window
6. My Love is in a Light Attire
7. From Dewy Dreams
8. Because Your Voice Was at My Side
9. Sleep Now

Barbara Ann Martin, soprano
Judith Olson, piano

Sonority Canon for Flutes (1962)

Bennington Flute Ensemble

Dimos Dimitriadis	Rachel Lewis
Melinda Fulljames	Bliss White McIntosh
Christine Graham	Margaret Meachem
Rebecca Johnson	Lisa Paul
Mandy Kent	Gail Schonbeck

Sue Ann Kahn, conductor

Coal-Scuttle Blues (1922-33)

(In collaboration with Ernst Bacon)

Allen Shawn, piano
Elizabeth Wright, piano

*world premiere

About the Composer...

Otto Luening was born in 1900 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. From 1915 to 1917 he studied flute, piano, harmony and orchestration at the Royal Academy of Music in Munich, Germany. At the outbreak of the First World War he left Munich, and studied composition in Zurich with Ferruccio Busoni. Back in America, Luening taught at the University of Arizona and Bennington College before joining the Columbia University Music Department as full professor and chairman of the Barnard College Music Department. Also known as a flutist and an opera conductor, Luening has been influential in American funding organizations such as the Rockefeller Foundation, the Guggenheim Foundation and the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. Luening is the author of an anecdotal autobiographical account of his life in music, *The Odyssey of an American Composer*.

The refinement of the tape recorder during World War II had at last made electronic manipulation of sound feasible, and during the Columbia years, Luening and colleague Vladimir Ussachevsky experimented with the new medium using a borrowed Ampex tape recorder and their own instruments — flute and piano — as sound sources, they created a set of short pieces to introduce to the public at the request of BMI's Oliver Daniel. These works, among them Luening's *Fantasy in Space*, *Low Speed*, and *Invention in Twelve Notes*, were first heard on October 28, 1952 at the Museum of Modern Art on a program of works conducted by Leopold Stokowski and sponsored by BMI and the American Composers Alliance.

The publicity that ensued thrust the "tapesichordists" into the international public eye, where they were alternately commended for their pioneering achievement and denounced as annihilators of all music. With the assistance of the Rockefeller Foundation, a flurry of speaking engagements before musicians and various other professional organizations followed both in the United States and abroad. These efforts and an additional \$175,000 grant from the foundation led to the establishment of the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center at Columbia University in 1959, with Luening, Ussachevsky, Milton Babbitt, and Roger Sessions as co-directors. Since that time, many distinguished composers from the United States and abroad have visited and worked at the center. Among them was Dmitri Shostakovich to whom Luening had extended an invitation at the American Academy in Rome 1958; when an American-Soviet

Text

Joyce Cycle (text from James Joyce's "Chamber Music")

Strings in the Earth and Air

Strings in the earth and air
Make music sweet;
Strings by the river where
The willows meet.

There's music along the river
For Love wanders there,
Pale flowers on his mantle,
Dark leaves on his hair..

All softly playing,
With head to the music bent,
And fingers straying
Upon an instrument.

The Twilight Turns From Amethyst

The twilight turns from amethyst
To deep and deeper blue,
The lamp fills with a pale green glow
The trees of the avenue.

The old piano plays an air,
Sedate and slow and gay;
She bends upon the yellow keys,
Her head inclines this way.

Shy thoughts and grave wide eyes and hands
That wander as they list—
The twilight turns to darker blue
With lights of amethyst.

Program Notes

"Short Sonata No. 1" (1940): This is one of a series of short sonatas for various combinations of instruments. The usage of the term "Sonata" is here an extension of the sonatas of the late Baroque and early Classical periods by composers like Alessandro and Domenico Scarlatti. They consist of varying numbers of movements contrasting in character. In "Short Sonata No. 1", the 'grave' evokes memories of the solemn movements of that type, including those by Handel. The 20th century materials are developed harmonically and contrapuntally, and brought into atonal and polytonal passages in the transitions. The third movement is 'vivace', but there are a number of tempo shifts for contrast, and these bring the work to a brilliant ending.

"Short Sonata for Flute and Piano No. 3" (1966) New York University's American New Music Consortium featured a performance of this piece by Sue Kahn and Andrew Willis, who have also recorded the work for CRI. The first movement is a brilliant fantasia, tightly constructed. The interlude that follows is more improvisational. The last movement, after a quiet opening, ends the piece with a display of the flute's capabilities.

"Sonata for Violoncello and Piano" (1992): This piece was commissioned by the duo of Krosnick and Kalish, but none of my works for cello could have been written without my association with the cello-playing Finckel family: George, Michael, Chris, and David. My long list of works for cello includes many dedications to them, and pay tribute to their musicianship and support. The present "Sonata", more developed in a classical sense than the short sonatas, develops by means of contrasting varied themes. The first movement is introductory; the second movement is in a fast three; the third movement is a rather brilliant, scherzo-like section with the necessary contrasts. The fourth movement is a meditative interlude followed by a brief and dance-like "Finale".

"Fantasia for Viola" (1994) (World Premiere): This monologue for Viola is dedicated to Jack Glick. The expressive content works around different tone centers with variations of the motivic content. Dynamics and articulation are an integral part of the form, and bring the piece to a brilliant ending. While there is no set program, the piece is like a letter between two friends.

"Fantasia for Flute": (1992) (World Premiere): This work is dedicated to Sue Kahn, and in composing it, I kept in mind the variation and brilliance of Ms. Kahn's mastery. There are numerous tempo changes, and the technique of variation is applied to motives and shorter linear passages than in most pieces of this kind. Formal contrasts are again brought out with articulation and dynamics, and exact repetition helps give the piece stability.

"Duo for Flute and Viola" (1985): This piece emerged as a result of hearing the two splendid artists on many programs and deciding that here was a new expressive palette for them to explore. In the opening 'Allegro', motivic development is apparent as are the linear statements, and the overall effect is a brilliant display of both instruments. The second movement is more contemplative. The last movement is dance-like, but it is really a fantasy of a dance, not a real one.

"Joyce Cycle" (1993) (World Premiere): Dedicated to Barbara Martin and Judith Olson, who introduced a group of early songs of mine to New York and a larger public a decade ago. The "Joyce Cycle" came about because of my connection and friendship with James Joyce in my teens. From this contact, I gained the impression that in his early work "Chamber Music", he made lyric statements that were a salute to the Romantic poets of the nineteenth century, and to poets from William Blake's time. From Joyce's own singing of tunes I recognized, a desire for clarity in music, and an almost folk-like concept of musical accompaniment at times. The poems tell their own story, but I felt that a musical frame could help bring Joyce's message into focus.

"Sonority Canon" (1962): The full contingent is 37 flutes. As they enter successively, the sonority builds up until all 37 are playing the total resonance of the C-flute with a B-foot. The canon can be done with fewer flutes, and the result is less intense.

"Coal Scuttle Blues" (1922-33) (in collaboration with Ernst Bacon): When I returned to the United States after eight years of study in Europe, and having already begun a professional career there, I landed in Chicago in a silent movie orchestra, and played for Vaudeville, where I first heard Chicago jazz. I made a study of it, but before I finished, my friend Ernst Bacon, having also spent several years in Europe as a virtuoso pianist-composer, returned to Chicago as well. I composed "Coal Scuttle Blues" in 1921-22. It attracted little attention at first. But I was later asked to play my "Blues" often at the Eastman School, where Ernst Bacon heard it and made a single piano concert virtuoso arrangement. We corrected each others' versions until we finally agreed on the two piano version which you will hear tonight.

--Otto Luening

cultural exchange mission brought the composer to New York the following year, he was intrigued by what he heard.

The first of many commissions for works for tape recorder came from the Louisville Orchestra, for which Luening and Ussachevsky composed *Rhapsodic Variations* in 1954. This was the first work to combine the new tape music with the symphony orchestra, and following its premiere and recording in Louisville, *Rhapsodic Variations* was heard in many American and European cities.

Although he may be best known as a composer of electronic music, Luening has also composed a large body of work in many genres and encompassing a variety of styles. An innate lyricism — with a dash of wry humor — pervades his work, and he has drawn on many sources for inspiration: German songs from his childhood, the works of J.S. Bach and William Billings, the poetry of William Blake, Walt Whitman, and Emily Dickinson, ragtime and jazz. His early compositions have their roots in the German Romanticism of his upbringing and European musical studies, and they are frequently both atonal and polytonal, with abundant use of linear counterpoint. Other works are "compressed" statements, where formal balance becomes a means of poetic as well as musical expression. Following his study of the theories of Bernhard Ziehn in Chicago in the late 1920's, Luening's harmonic language evolved into what the composer calls "acoustic harmony" — harmonies are created through careful spacing of overtones and the reinterpretation of their relationships; this approach also contributes to the characteristic textural clarity and brilliant resonance in Luening's music.

Excerpts from CRI American Masters Pioneers of Electronic Music CD 611 Notes -©1991; and from Emily Good Otto Luening BMI Catalogue ©1991

Introduction

"I was brought to Bennington in 1934. It soon became apparent that if students and faculty wanted anything to happen on the hill, we would have to do it ourselves. Thankfully, Martha Graham, Louis Horst, and Francis Ferguson were personal friends, so cooperation was easy to achieve in all departments. This cooperation turned out to be my post-graduate education, for it soon crossed divisions and reached the community and the state. The cooperation between Bennington and myself continues to this day, and from my side I can only thank my colleagues for how much I have learned here."