

Bennington College Music Division Presents

WEDNESDAY
OCTOBER 11, 1989

8:15 p.m.
GREENWALL MUSIC
WORKSHOP



SUE ANN KAHN, flute

with

MARIANNE FINCKEL, piano

ALLEN SHAWN, piano

MICHAEL FINCKEL, cello

Syrinx (1913)

CLAUDE DEBUSSY

~~From~~ Histoires (1922)

JACQUES IBERT (1890-1962)

arr. for flute and piano by
MARCEL MOYSE (1933)

La meneuse de tortues d'or

Le petit âne blanc

Dans la maison triste

La marchande d'eau fraîche

Le cortège de Balkis

Emily's Images (1987)

VIVIAN FINE

A Spider sewed at Night

A Clock stopped--Not the Mantel's

Exultation is the going

The Robin is a Gabriel

After great pain, a formal feeling comes

The Leaves like Women interchange

A Day! Help! Help! another Day

Summations (1989)

ANTHONY WILSON

a John Hendrick Memorial Commission
First Performance

***** INTERMISSION *****

Vox Balaenae (Voice of the Whale)
for Three Masked Players (1971)

GEORGE CRUMB

Vocalise (...for the beginning of time)

Variations on Sea-Time

Sea Theme

Archeozoic (Var. I)

Proterozoic (Var. II)

Sea-Nocturne (...for the end of time)

Paleozoic (Var. III)

Mesozoic (Var. IV)

Cenozoic (Var. V)

-a cage de cristal

Sue Ann Kahn, flute
Marianne Finckel, piano

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Claude Debussy wrote Syrinx in 1913 as music for a mime on the death of Pan, the legendary inventor of the first flute. Built on the whole tone scale, with a modicum of means, this piece has become a classic of the flute literature.

Tonight's performance of four scenes from Ibert's Histoires is dedicated to the great flutist and teacher, Marcel Moyse, who arranged six of the Histoires for flute and piano with Ibert's permission. Wind players all over the world are celebrating the 100th anniversary of Moyse's birth this month.

Emily's Images was inspired by reading through an index of first lines of poems by Emily Dickinson. Each short movement is based on the first line of a poem. The musical form is a series of free variations with no overtly stated musical theme. Rather, the musical ideas are themselves the subject of variation processes. (V.F.)

I began Summations in December of last year and finished it in May of this year. It was an honor to receive the John Hendrick Memorial Commission: a great act of faith on the part of Bennington's music faculty and a welcome challenge for me. I benefited from the criticism and encouragement that both Sue Ann Kahn and Allen Shawn gave me from the time my first draft was completed in late January to its final stages in May and to its premiere performance. About my music I don't have much to say: I'd like it to contain spontaneity and exuberance as well as a formal clarity and unity. I hope I have achieved it. (A.W.)

Tonight's performance of Vox Balaenae is in celebration of the composer's 60th birthday. Voice of the Whale is composed for amplified flute, cello, and piano. The work was inspired by the singing of the humpback whale. Each of the three performers is required to wear a black half-mask (or visor-mask). The masks, by effacing the sense of human projection, are intended to represent, symbolically, the powerful impersonal forces of nature (i.e. nature dehumanized). I have also suggested that the work be performed under a deep-blue stage lighting.

The form of Voice of the Whale is a simple three-part design consisting of a prologue, a set of variations named after the geological eras, and an epilogue.

The opening vocalise (marked: "wildly fantastic, grotesque")... is a kind of cadenza for the flutist, who simultaneously plays his instrument and sings into it. This combination of instrumental and vocal sound produces an eerie, surreal timbre, not unlike the sounds of the humpback whale.

The Sea-Theme ("solemn, with calm majesty") is presented by the cello (in harmonics), accompanied by dark, fateful chords of strummed piano strings...

The concluding Sea-Nocturne ("serene, pure, transfigured") is an elaboration of the Sea-Theme...I wanted to suggest "a larger rhythm of nature" and a sense of suspension in time. The concluding gesture of the work is a gradually dying series of repetitions of a 10-note figure. In concert performance, the last figure is to be played "in pantomime" (to suggest a diminuendo beyond the threshold of hearing). (G.C.)

Special thanks to David Groupe, Suzanne Jones, Michael Downs, Evan Sornstein, Patrick O'Connor, Caitlin Clancy, and Joshua Kosoy.