

About the Composer...

ELLIOTT SCHWARTZ (1936-) was born in New York city, and studied music with Otto Luening and Jack Beeson at Columbia University. Since 1964 he has taught at Bowdoin College (Maine), and served for a number of years as department chairman. Performances of his work include the Cincinnati and Indianapolis Symphonies, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Monday Evening Concerts (Los Angeles), Berkshire Music Festival at Tanglewood, and Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. He has been a visiting fellow at the Center for Music Experiment (University of California, San Diego), and has held guest residencies at many colleges, universities and festivals throughout the United States and Europe, including the University of Cologne, De Ijsbreker (Amsterdam, Netherlands), University of Copenhagen Musikinstitut, the Chopin Academy (Warsaw), and the Leningrad Spring Festival (USSR). In 1993 he will be in residence at Robinson College, Cambridge University (England) on a Bye Fellowship.

Elliott Schwartz has held positions as national chair of the Society of Composers, Inc. (SCI), vice-president of the American Music Center, and President of The College Music Society. He is the author of four books on music, and has recently completed (with Daniel Godfrey) *Music since 1945: Issues, Materials, Literature*, to be published in 1992. Compact disc recordings of his music are available on the CRI, Capstone and Neuman labels.

BENNINGTON COLLEGE MUSIC DIVISION

PRESENTS

A CONCERT OF MUSIC

By

VISITING COMPOSER:

ELLIOTT SCHWARTZ

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 1992

8:15 p.m.

GREENWALL MUSIC WORKSHOP

PROGRAM

Suite for Viola and Piano (1962-63)

- I. Very Slowly
- II. Very Spritely
- III. Very Slowly
- IV. Very Slowly

Jacob Glick, viola
Elliott Schwartz, piano

Three Short Scenes for Two Cellos (1966-67)

- I. As Slowly As Possible, With No Motion
- II. Very Rapidly And Lightly
- III. With Great Contrasts Of Mood

Maxine Neuman, Nathaniel Parke

Divertimento No. 4 for flute, contrabass, and piano (1980)

Scherzo
Aria
Soliloquy
Fixation
Accompanied Cadenza
Rondo: Scherzo

Sue Ann Kahn, flute
Jeffrey Levine, contrabass
Elliott Schwartz, piano

INTERMISSION

Four Maine Haiku (1984)

1. Dreamy, Quiet
2. Aggressive, Angry
3. Graceful, Dance-Like
4. Solemn, Stately

Elliott Schwartz, piano

Bellagio Variations for String Quartet (1980)

Masako Yanagita, violin
Joseph Schor, violin
Jacob Glick, viola
Michael Finckel, 'cello

NOTES

The composer writes:

My ***Suite for Viola and Piano*** was composed in 1962-63, and first performed by Louise Rood at Smith College. It has also been performed by Jacob Glick (at Carnegie Recital Hall, New York City) Julia Adams, Scott Woolweaver and George Grossman, among others.

The Suite's four brief movements are all derived from a single twelve-note row (often used, however, in very tonal, non-Viennese ways). The last two movements are joined together, and, in fact, all four movements are cyclically "linked" by motivic similarities (the most obvious being the recapitulation of the work's opening at the very end).

The ***Divertimento No. 4*** (flute, contrabass and piano) was composed in 1980 for bassist Lucas Drew and the Contemporary Baroque Trio, who first performed the work in Miami, Florida, and also gave the New York premiere at Carnegie Recital Hall, later that year. Subsequent performances have included the University of Kansas Symposium, International Society of Bassists conference, and the Koln Hochschule fur Musik.

The *Divertimento* takes the surface form of a "suite" of contrasting movements, but is actually a series of variations on the catchy tonal phrase heard in the concluding "Rondo" section.

I composed the ***Four Maine Haiku*** during the summer of 1984, for the pianist Kazuko Tanosaki, who was planning a program of American music for a concert tour of her native Japan. The ideal of creating four short pieces based on the model of Japanese Haiku poetry appealed to me. Accordingly, I devised a plan whereby each of the four pieces undergoes the same evolving pitch and density processes over the brief span of 17 measures. I hope that I was able to capture some of the esthetic qualities of Haiku poetry -- suggestive, atmospheric, and vividly contrasted -- as well.

My ***Bellagio Variations*** was composed for the Portland String Quartet, and has been performed by that group on a number of occasions, most notably on their 1981-82 New York series, and at the 1982 American Music Festival (National Gallery, Washington, D.C.). It has also been performed by the Composers Quartet, Blair Quartet and the Tremont Quartet, among others.

There are two sources for the title of the piece. It was composed at the Rockefeller Foundation Study Center (Bellagio, Italy) during the summer of 1980; secondly, its source "theme" -- which is not stated until the very end of the quartet -- is a composition by Otto Luening entitled "The Bells of Bellagio". Fragments of other previously composed music -- all sharing the most prominent intervals of the Luening motive -- enter the fabric of the quartet from time to time; these include Mahler, Beethoven, a Bowdoin College football fight song, and a very early flute sonata of my own.

The work can be heard as a series of many relatively brief variations, or -- by grouping these into larger units -- as three extended movements: the second movement beginning after the viola solo, and the last large movement (after the tonal variation in E-flat major) beginning with a passage almost identical to the quartet's very opening.