

gritty of Chicago city is stifling me. How I long to be in Paris, London, or Florence. **Ul:** Stop pretending to be D.H. Lawrence. **Ul:** Good news I sold a Cantata. **Boris:** Errata! errata! **Boris:** Life as pure theory is proving too hard. **Both:** Let's get a very, very friendly divorce. **Ul:** I can't go forward with the avant garde.

Scene 9 (on stage **Gustav Mahler** and **Alma Mahler** with Gustav's male **Secretary**. The Secretary jammers away at Alma who is distraughtly trying to listen to the secretary while, at the same time having an important conversation with her husband. Gustav is oblivious to the Secretary — doesn't see him or hear him.)

Secretary: Maestro breakfasts at 6, composes till 9, then to the Opera ; be sure he's on time.

No moment lost; no interruption.
Or what a cost, what an eruption!

When rehearsals are done,
he'll lunch home at one.
(If he's postponed I'll advise you by phone.)

No moment lost.....eruption!

After lunch, a long walk, tea at 5;
time for some talk.
Back to the Opera to rehearse or perform.
Home for late supper. Be sure that it's warm...

Duet:

Gustav: Alma, what is this obsession that has fixed itself in your adorable little head? **Alma:** Gustav dear, I only said that I long to be working on my beloved songs.

Gustav: Almsch! This is incomprehensible to me. Who can picture married life between two composers! **Alma:** A husband and wife! **Gustav:** What a peculiar competitive relationship! Ridiculous! Degrading! Indeed. You must be what I need! **Alma:** Your wife, not your colleague. **Gustav:** Give up your music to possess mine instead. Accept my music as yours, **Both:** or our marriage is dead! **Alma:** I must give up my work? Myself? My personality!

Gustav: You are the sublime object of my life, — My peace, my heav'n, my escape from strife. But Almschi, I am the only personality, Me! Me! Me! Me!

BENNINGTON COLLEGE MUSIC DIVISION

PRESENTS

A CONCERT

with works by

François Couperin

Benjamin Britten

Charles Ives

Vivian Fine

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1993

8:15 P.M.

GREENWALL MUSIC WORKSHOP

PROGRAM

Pièces en Concert

FRANÇOIS COUPERIN
(1668-1733)

- I. Prélude -- II. Sicilienne -- III. Air de Diable
IV. Plainte -- V. La Tromba

Nathaniel Parke, 'cello
Marianne Finckel, harpsichord

Troisième Leçon de Ténèbre (1714) Text from Lamentations of Jeremiah

FRANÇOIS COUPERIN

Kerry Ryer, Celia Twomey, voices
Marianne Finckel, harpsichord
Nathaniel Parke, continuo

Sonata in C for cello and piano, Op. 65 (1961)

BENJAMIN BRITTEN
(1913-1976)

- I. Dialogo -- II. Scherzo-pizzicato -- III. Elegia
IV. Marcia -- V. Moto Perpetuo

Maxine Neuman 'cello
Elizabeth Wright, piano

~~~~~INTERMISSION ~~~~~

to his betrothed on the eve of their wedding. It states that she should give up her composing and "make my music yours." The words are ironically set to song of Alma's.

The libretto was written by Sonya Friedman who also created the film portions. The Opera was developed under a grant from the Lila Wallace Fund and will be premiered in March of 1994.

Excerpts from Memoirs of Uliana Rooney 1993

Scene 1 Uliana: The music of my childhood was the fierce Kansas wind as it twisted and blew — And songs of the old world and the new. God sent a plague of locusts and the Pharaoh let my people go. **Narrator:** They crossed the Red sea toward the Promised Land, **Both:** but the going was slow. Somehow they landed in Russia where the Pharaoh became the Czar. Their past was all pain, their future the same. Why had they wandered so far? **Uliana:** Suddenly a great storm wind called Emigration swept my young parents across the Atlantic Ocean into America, the Promised Land. **Narr.:** A tornado twirled them down into Kansas to farm new free Earth, and dust and sand. **Ul:** Papa said the Messiah had come at last. **Narr.:** To save us all from doom. The Messiah was Papa's Socialist farming Commune. **Ul:** Mama planted, **Narr.:** Papa rejoiced, **Both:** but those old locusts made another raid. **Narr.:** Ate the bark right off the fence posts, **Both:** ate each last green Kansas blade. Papa pored over Marx and Engels and the Farmer's Almanac. Mama planted once again; the locusts didn't come back.

Scene 5 Boris: Uliana, with thee do I fully agree. Convention rarely nourishes invention. Since we are cut from one cloth, let us plight our troth, Defying all standards of decency in this, my latest manifesto, I declare you my wife! **Both:** No house in the suburbs, no front lawn or back yard, Not for us artists of the avant garde. No pies cooling on the window sill, no gas driven car. Just an intense theoretical argument at our neighborhood bar. Down with banks, assembly lines, washing machines. **Boris:** Give us automatic writing and erotic dreams. **Both:** Ask Artaud, ask Picasso, ask Sigmund Freud: "A pair of silk stockings, Madame, is not a leap into the void." **Boris:** The nitty

## PROGRAM NOTES & TRANSLATIONS

### 1 & 2

a) At the age of 25, François Couperin composer, harpsichordist and organist became Royal Organist to Louis XIV King of France and later court harpsichordist. The largest body of his work was composed for harpsichord. He also wrote works under the titles Concerts Royaux for larger instrumental groups and Trio Sonatas for small ensembles. It is likely that these cello pieces come from this latter group.

b) The published religious works include only 3 sets of Versets written in 1703 and one set of the Leçons de Ténèbres. Couperin himself refers to 3 sets 2 of which have been lost. The piece was to be performed for the ritual of the "dark hours" on Wednesday through Friday before Easter. The service is marked by the extinguishing of candles.

Text: From Lamentations of Jeremiah, a set of five poems lamenting the fall of Jerusalem at the hands of the Babylonians in 586 BC.

### Third Lesson:

Jod: (J): The enemy has spread out his hands upon all her desirable things: for she had seen the Gentiles entered into her sanctuary whom you did command should not enter into your church.

Caph (K): All her people sigh and seek bread: their treasures have been given for food to relieve the Spirit. See, O Lord, and consider, for I have become vile.

Lamed (L): O, all of you that pass by, behold and see if there be any sorrow equal to mine, which is done unto me, with which the Lord has afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.

Mem (M): From the heavens he has sent fire into my bones and chastised me; He has spread a net for my feet; He has turned me back: He has made me desolate and sorrowful all day.

Nun (N): The yoke of my transgressions is bound by His hand: they are intertwined and come upon my neck: my strength he has destroyed: the Lord has delivered me into the hands of those against whom I cannot rise.

Jerusalem, turn back to your Lord God!

3. Benjamin Britten, English composer, conductor and pianist, formed a collaboration in 1961 with Mstislav Rostropovitch, the famed Russian cellist, presently conductor of the National Symphony in Washington, D.C. This association over the next decade produced this cello sonata '61, a symphony for cello and orchestra '63 and three unaccompanied cello suites in '64, '67 and '71.
4. One of some 200 songs written by Ives, the complete title is Memories A. Very Pleasant B. Rather Sad. We present only the first half for reasons that will become apparent.
5. The Opera Women in the Garden, originally scored for nine instruments, concerns the lives and thoughts of 4 eminent women: Gertrude Stein (1874-1946), Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), Emily Dickinson (1830 - 81) and Isadora Duncan (1878-1927). The text consists of excerpts from their journals and writings. There is one other character in the work, the Tenor, who supplies various crucial male figures in the lives of these women.

### Text of Women in the Garden

- Virginia: My aunt, Mary Beaton, I must tell you, died by a fall from her horse, when she was riding out to take the air in Bombay. A Solicitors letter fell into the post box; I found she had left me five hundred pounds a year forever. Before that I had made my living by cadging odd jobs from newspapers, by reporting a donkey show here or a wedding there; I had earned a few pounds addressing envelopes, reading to old ladies, making artificial flowers, teaching the alphabet to small children in a Kindergarten.
- Gertrude: Money one. Romanticism one. Scenery one. Human nature not one. Masterpieces. Human nature never knows anything about one and one. Yes money, money has something to do with the human mind.
- V.W.: Such were the chief occupations open to women before nineteen eighteen.
- G.S.: I cannot begin too often begin to wonder what money is.
- V.W.: The woman composer stands where the actress stood in the time of Shakespeare.
- G.S.: Has it to do with nature or the human mind.

V.W.: And here we have the very words used again in this year of grace nineteen twenty eight.

G.S.: Human nature can use it but cannot refuse it.

V. W.: Doctor Johnson's dictum repeated in nineteen twenty eight.

Together: A woman composing is like a dog walking on his hind legs. It is not done well but you are surprised to find it done at all.

G.S.: I am not confused in mind because I have a human mind.

V. W.: The woman composer stands where the actress stood in the time of Shakespeare.

G. S.: Yes which is.

V. W.: So does history accurately repeat itself.

G. S.: Romance and money one by one.

V. W.: So accurately does history repeat itself.

G. S.: Romance has nothing to do with human nature. Neither has money. She says he says what is done is not done.

Quotes from A Room of Ones Own (1929) Virginia Woolf and The Geographical History of America or The Relations of Human Nature to the Human Mind (1936) Gertrude Stein.

6. Memoirs of Uliana Rooney, originally scored for 7 instruments is here heard in piano reduction form. The Opera also includes film that projects salient political and cultural images of each decade. The text concerns the memoirs of a fictive woman composer who changes husbands as often as she changes musical styles, while passing through the decades of the twentieth century.

Scene 1 takes Uliana from Czarist Russia to a socialist commune in Kansas where we hear echoes of Copland's vision of America.

Scene 5, set in the twenties, concerns her marriage to Boris, a Dada painter. We witness the breakup of their relationship due to his lack of interest in Uliana's work. Their conflict is expressed through a tango which was the rage at the time.

Scene 9 presents the central characters Gustav Mahler and his fiancée Alma Schindler, a highly regarded young composer. She is 22, he 40. The text is an actual quote of a letter sent by Mahler

Memories: (A) Very Pleasant (1897)

CHARLES IVES  
(1874-1954)

Gertrude and Virginia

VIVIAN FINE

A dialogue between Gertrude Stein and Virginia Woolf, using their own words.  
Excerpt from the opera "Women in the Garden" (1977)

Celia Twomey, Virginia Woolf  
Anne Riesenfeld, Gertrude Stein  
Peter Golub, David Brandt, percussion  
Marianne Finckel, piano

Excerpts from "Memoirs of Uliana Rooney" (1993) VIVIAN FINE

Scene #1. Uliana and Narrator

Scene #5. Uliana and Boris

Scene #9. Gustav and Alma Mahler

Kerry Ryer, Uliana Rooney  
Michael Downs, Narrator, Boris, Gustav Mahler  
Celia Twomey, Alma Mahler  
Nathaniel Parke, Secretary  
Marianne Finckel, piano



Vivian Fine