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Robert Aitken
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presents

DUO PIANISTS
URSULA OPPENS
&
AKI TAKAHASHI

performing works by composers;

- Norma Beecroft
- Elliott Carter
- Frederick Rzewski
- Yuji Takahashi
- Christian Wolff

MARCH 19, 1982
8:30 p.m.

Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto

P R O G R A M

EXERCISES 19 & 21
(1980-81) for two
pianos

CHRISTIAN WOLFF
(France/U.S.A.)

URSULA OPPENS
AKI TAKAHASHI

KWANJU, MAY 1980
(1980-81) for solo
piano

YUJI TAKAHASHI
(Japan)

AKI TAKAHASHI

WINNSBORO COTTON
MILL BLUES
(1980) for two pianos

FREDERICK RZEWSKI
(U.S.A.)

URSULA OPPENS
AKI TAKAHASHI

I N T E R M I S S I O N

NIGHT FANTASIES
(1980) for solo piano

ELLIOTT CARTER
(U.S.A.)

URSULA OPPENS

CANTORUM VITAE
(1981)

NORMA BEECROFT
(Canada)

URSULA OPPENS, PIANO
AKI TAKAHASHI, PIANO
ROBERT AITKEN, FLUTE
PETER SCHENKMAN, CELLO
RUSSELL HARTENBERGER, PERCUSSION
JAMES MONTGOMERY, ELECTRONICS



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Constellations

MAY 16

IANNIS XENAKIS

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Theraps

MAY 30

STEVE REICH
TIMOTHY SULLIVAN
GREGORY LEVIN
ROBERT ROSEN

Octet
Pro Tempore
Cross Roads
Meditation

JUNE 13

NORMA BEECROFT
FREDERICK RZEWSKI
ELLIOTT CARTER

Cantorum Vitae
Winnsboro Cotton
Mill Blues
Night Fantasies



YUJI TAKAHASHI

Born in Tokyo, YUJI TAKAHASHI participated in the Ford Foundation's Artist-in-Residence program in West Berlin from 1963 until 1966. During the summers of 1966 and 1967, he was a Fromm Foundation Fellow, participating in the Berkshire Music Center's Contemporary Music program at Tanglewood; and, in the fall of 1966 he received a Fellowship from the John D. Rockefeller III Fund for research in the use of computers in composition. As a concert pianist, Mr. Takahashi has been a soloist on numerous programs and in festivals in Europe, Scandinavia, America and Japan and has made several recordings. He has worked with Lukas Foss at the Center of the Creative and Performing Arts at Buffalo and has been heard with the New York Philharmonic, the Boston, Chicago, San Francisco orchestras, and London Symphonies, as well as all the major orchestras in Japan.

He has used stochastic procedures - a probabilistic compositional method, in which the overall contours of sound are specified but the inner details are left to random or chance selection - in his music since 1971, and has worked with the TENET 210 computer.

CHRISTIAN WOLFF

CHRISTIAN WOLFF was born March, 1934 in France. He came to the United States to study classic and comparative literature at Harvard University. He then taught classics at Harvard since 1962 and participated in avant-garde music performances in the United States and Europe.

Mr. Wolff associated with and was greatly influenced by John Cage, David Tudor and Morton Feldman. He is, however, basically a self-taught composer. Other influences on his development have included the study of Webern's music and exposure to the music of Varèse and Boulez.

The music Wolff has been composing since 1957 is intricately structured in composition, but it allows the performers varying kinds of choices. Cueing (reactions to specified aspects in the sounds made by another performer) is used as a principal means of coordination. With Wolff the use of indeterminacy in performance opens the work to external influences genuinely beyond the composer's intentions; it would be suitable for the performer to become the composer to the extent that he, too, would leave his decisions open and allow them to be governed by chance rather than some rigid system or by the expressive inclinations of his own ego. The variety of rhythmic effects caused by the unexpectedness of cues is noteworthy. Wolff has developed notational devices to facilitate this kind of performance (e.g. special uses of beams, differently shaped noteheads).

C O M P O S E R S

NORMA BEECROFT

NORMA BEECROFT, eminent composer, producer and broadcaster, has for twenty years contributed immensely to Canadian culture. Acknowledged as a pioneer of electronic music in Canada, her compositions continually explore the rich and ever-changing relationships between electronic and instrumental music.

She is the co-founder (with Robert Aitken) and president of New Music Concerts. As a broadcaster, she was host/commentator and/or producer of CBC radio's Music of Today, Ideas, From the Age of Elegance, Organists in Recital and R.S.V.P. She also produced numerous documentaries, including the award winning, The Computer in Music, which received a Major Armstrong Award for excellence in FM broadcasting.

NORMA BEECROFT began her compositional studies with John Weinzweig. At Tanglewood she continued with Aaron Copland and Lukas Foss, and in 1959, embarked on a three year study period in Europe with Geofreddo Petrassi (Rome) and Bruno Maderna (Darmstadt and Devon). Her preoccupation with technology and music has been a constant one. Fascinated by the enormous and endless possibilities of electronic sound, she has worked for almost two decades in many of the finest electronic music studios. During the 60's, works such as From Dreams Of Brass (narrator, mixed choir, orchestra and tape), and Two Went To Sleep (soprano, flute, percussion and tape) emerged out of her use of electronic music studios of the University of Toronto, and Columbia - Princeton University. More

recently, computer music systems have captured her interest. Piece for Bob (flute doubling on percussion and tape), used the University of Toronto's Out-perform program for the tape part. The SSSP (Structured Sound Synthesis Project), has contributed to Cantorum Vitae, the work to be heard tonight. MS. BEECROFT has also worked at Simon Fraser University at the computer music facilities of Barry Truax, and in France, with UPIC system of Iannis Xenakis.

The recipient of numerous commissions and awards, NORMA BEECROFT is currently completing the ballet score Hedda Gabler (orchestra and tape), commissioned by the National Ballet of Canada, to be premiered in the winter of 1982.

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ELIOTT CARTER

Elliott Carter was born in New York City on December 11th, 1908. The son of a wealthy lace-curtain importer, he was expected to succeed his father in the firm. Consequently, his musical education was not considered important although he was allowed piano lessons as a child and during his years at high school. In 1923, he met Charles Ives who befriended him, introduced him to avant-garde music and musicians, and persuaded him to pursue a musical career. Throughout the Twenties, Carter spent his summers in Europe, where he came under the influence of Schoenberg, Berg, Webern and Scriabin.

In 1926, he went to Harvard where he took an A.B. in English Literature, studying playing and composing music as extra-curricular activity. His post-graduate years at Harvard were spent as a composition student. He studied harmony and counterpoint with Walter Piston, choral composition with A.T. Davison and composition with Gustav Holst, then a visiting professor at Harvard. He subsequently spent three years in Paris studying with Nadia Boulanger.

Carter has been the recipient of awards and honours throughout his career. The first work to gain international recognition was the FIRST STRING QUARTET which won him the Concours International de Quatuor in Liège, Belgium in 1953. Other awards include Pulitzer prizes for the SECOND and THIRD STRING QUARTETS, Guggenheim Fellowships, the Prix de Rome and the Sibelius Medal for music.

FREDERICK RZEWSKI

FREDERICK RZEWSKI was born in the United States in April, 1938. He attended Harvard University, studying counterpoint with Randall Thompson and orchestration with Claudio Spies and later he went to Princeton to study the music of Wagner with Oliver Strunk. He also included in his studies philosophy and Greek literature.

MR. RZEWSKI went to Italy to teach at the Cologne Courses for New Music for several years and to perform professionally as a pianist. In 1966 he helped found the Musica Elettronica Viva Studio in Rome, where live electronics was used to produce a kind of participatory theatre, - half electronic, half environmental theatre. Many of his musical ideas have been influenced by extra-musical disciplines, and by the music of John Cage, David Tudor and Karlheinz Stockhausen.

P E R F O R M E R S

URSULA OPPENS

The recipient of many honors and prizes including the first prize at the 1969 Busoni International Piano Competition, the 1970 Diploma d'Honore of the Accademia Chigiana, and the 1976 Avery Fisher Prize. Ms. Oppens was recently acclaimed for the 1979 Record World Award for her recording of Frederic Rzewski's The People United Will Never Be Defeated.

A champion of contemporary composers, many of whom have written works especially for her, Miss Oppens is a founding member of the Speculum Musicae, the New York ensemble specializing in Twentieth Century music.

URSULA OPPENS has concertized extensively in America and abroad both in recital and with orchestras, which include the New York Philharmonic, the St. Louis Symphony, and the Milwaukee Symphony. She performed in the Beethoven Festival in Bonn as well as at the Bath Festival in England where she gave the World premiere of Elliott Carter's Night Fantasies.

Miss Oppens was born in New York into a musical family, studied economics and English literature at Radcliffe College before deciding to become a musician. She attended the Juilliard School of Music, studied with Rosina Lhevinne, Leonard Shure, Guido Agosti and Edith Oppens (mother), and chamber music with Felix Galimir.

AKI TAKAHASHI

AKI TAKAHASHI was born in Kamakura, Japan. She began to study the piano at the age of five with her mother. She received her M.A. from the Tokyo University of Arts where she studied with Yutaka Ito and Georg Vassarhelyi. Since her student days she has been very active in the field of new music. In her first recital in 1970, in which she presented works by Messiaen, Boulez, Xenakis, Takemitsu, her brother Yuji Takahashi, and others, she displayed her excellent musical talent and technique as well as her enthusiasm for performing contemporary music. Many Japanese composers such as Takemitsu, Ichiyanagi, Ishii, Matsudauram and Yuasa have composed works for her.

Ms. Takahashi is considered by many critics to be one of the foremost interpreters of modern music in the world. Her recitals at the Berlin Festival and Paris Autumn Festival in 1972 won her many admirers in Europe, and her subsequent yearly recitals in European cities have continued to spread her fame in the world of contemporary music.

P R O G R A M N O T E S

CANTORUM VITAE (1980-81)

Commissioned by the Vancouver group Days, Months & Years to Come with the assistance of the Canada Council, CANTORUM VITAE combines electronic and instrumental sounds in a manner totally new to this composer. Until this point my compositions with tape have always attempted to blend the two sound sources, but in this work, the tape is relatively independent of the instruments and is a kind of continuum over which the instruments ebb and flow. The one relationship between the live and the tape is that the instrumental material is derived from an analysis of the tape sounds - the pulses, the dynamics to a certain extent, and the intervallic relationships.

The tape is made solely from material produced using the VOSIM mode (voice synthesis) of the Structured Sound Synthesis Project created by William Buxton and his colleagues of the Computer Services Research Group at the University of Toronto. The end result was achieved by multi-layering of the original material, subjecting it to many speed changes, and mixing and remixing. For the use of equipment and/or technical assistance, the composer is indebted to many persons, in particular Sue Frykberg, Phillip Werrin, the Canadian Electronic Ensemble and the University of Toronto Electronic Music Studio (UTEMS).

CANTORUM VITAE, although a continuous composition, can be divided in three sections which concern themselves chronologically, with life, death and regeneration, subjects that were occupying the composer at the time of writing.

Notes by Norma Beecroft

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