

California State University, Long Beach  
College of the Arts — Department of Music  
Instructionally-Related Activities  
present

## New Music Ensemble

in concert

Justus Matthews, director

With guest artists: Michele Temple, harp  
John Barcellona, flute  
Christen Herman, soprano  
With guest conductor: Martin Herman

Monday, Nov. 14, 1994  
8:00 p.m.

Gerald Daniel Recital Hall

### P R O G R A M

*Sonatine* (1961)

André Jolivet

- I. Andantino
- II. Quasi cadenza — Allegro
- III. Intermezzo — Vivace

John Barcellona, flute  
Justus Matthews, clarinet

From *Études pour piano*, book one (1985)

György Ligeti

Cordes vides  
Arc-en-ciel  
Fanfares

Mark Uranker

*Charanga* (1991)

Michael Colquhoun

John Barcellona

*Capitolo Siete* (1994) (Julio Cortazar)

Adriana Verdié

Christen Herman, speaker  
Ruben Rivas, alto flute  
Cac Ninh, dancer  
Nancy Kiyono, soprano  
Marilyn Deegem, alto  
Jeryck Acuña, tenor  
Graeme Langager, baritone

Justus Matthews, conductor

**World Premiere**

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

*Improvisation sur Mallarmé* No. 1

Pierre Boulez

*Le vierge, le vivace, et le bel aujourd'hui* (1957)

Sewell Griffith, soprano  
Michele Temple, harp  
David Gerhart, vibraphone  
Axel Clarke, chimes  
Keith Palmer, percussion  
John Whatley, percussion  
Angela Tabor, percussion  
Victor Wheeler, percussion

Justus Matthews, conductor

*The Anvil Chorus* (1991)

David Lang

John Whatley

*Oiseaux exotiques* (1955-56)

Olivier Messiaen

Cathy Apple, piccolo  
Jennifer Green, flute  
Alain Donnersberger, oboe  
Justus Matthews, Eb clarinet  
Jay Hassler, clarinet  
Tamara Bolduc, clarinet  
Bronwyn Gisborne, bass clarinet  
Chien-Hui Liu, bassoon

Tina Buschiazzi, horn  
James Hensley, horn  
Ray Nowak, trumpet  
David Gerhart, percussion  
Axel Clarke, percussion  
Keith Palmer, percussion  
John Whatley, percussion  
Angela Tabor, percussion  
Victor Wheeler, percussion

Mark Uranker, piano

Martin Herman, conductor

## NOTES

### Études pour piano

György Ligeti has a multi-national background: he was born in 1923 in a village in Transylvania (Rumania today), where Hungarian, German and Rumanian were spoken. He divided his studies in music between the Cluj Conservatory and Budapest's Superior School of Music, and from 1949 onwards, following Bartók's example, he studied folk music, to which he devoted several remarkable essays. At the time, Schoenberg and Berg were scarcely known in Hungary: "until 1952, I didn't know that electronic or serial music existed..." says Ligeti today.

In 1956 faced with Russian tanks, Ligeti chose exile in the West, and it was in a Cologne filled with electro-acoustic sound that he developed his own language. He settled in Vienna in 1959, took Austrian citizenship, and taught in Darmstadt, Stockholm, Berlin and Hamburg. After producing exclusively electronic pieces—*Glissandi* (1957), *Artikulation* (1958)—Ligeti turned to instrumental and vocal composition, and at once made his name as a post-serial musician. Even today, Ligeti's music is unlike any other: in it one can find that curious mixture of tradition (his love for strings and voices) and modernity that is so specific to Ligeti alone.

In the words of the composer: "At the center of my compositional intentions in these études lies a new conception of rhythmic articulation. I had worked for the first time with the ideas of superimposing rhythmic grids of various densities in *Poèmes Symphonique* for 100 metronomes (1962). Several years later in *Continuum* for harpsichord (1968), I experimented with an illusionary rhythm: the interpreter plays a very fast, even succession of notes, but as a result of the frequency with which certain notes reoccur, what we primarily perceive are slower, disjunct rhythmic configurations. I further developed the idea of illusionary rhythm in *Monument* for two pianos (1976) where both pianists play similar musical phrases, one in duple and the other in triple meter.

"While writing these pieces for two pianos in 1976, I was unaware of Nancarrow's music and that of sub-Saharan Africa. However, I have always had an interest in picture-puzzles, paradoxes of perception and ideas, for certain aspects of the shaping and building of form, for growth and transformation and for the distinction between various levels of abstraction in thought and language. Furthermore, I am very partial to the works of Lewis Carroll, Maurits Escher, Saul Steinberg, Franz Kafka, Boris Vian, Sándor Weöres, Jorge Luis Borges and Douglas R. Hofstadter. Since the beginning of the 1980s this list of stimulating interests has been extended to include the highly complex music for mechanical pianos of Conlon Nancarrow, recordings from Simha Arom's collection of Central African music and Benoit Mandelbrot's fascinating 'fractals'.

"One often arrives at something qualitatively new by unifying two already known but separate domains. In this case, I have combined two distinct musical thought processes: the meter-dependent hemiola as used by Schumann and Chopin and the additive pulsation principle of African music. Stemming from the mensural notation of Renaissance music, the hemiola arises from the metric ambiguity posed by a measure of 6 beats, which can either be divided in three groups of two or in two groups of three. In African music there is a ground layer consisting of fast, even pulsations which are however not counted as such but rather felt, and an upper layer of occasionally symmetrical but more often asymmetrical patterns of varying length, though always even multiples of the basic pulse. That which is eminently new in my piano études is the possibility of a *single* interpreter being able to produce the illusion of *several* simultaneous layers of different tempi. That is to say, our perception can be outwitted by imposing a 'European' accent pattern onto the non-accentuated 'African' pulsation.

"It would however be inappropriate to assume that my piano études are a direct result of these musical and extra-musical influences. By revealing my interests and inclinations I am merely indicating the intellectual environment in which I work as a composer. Moreover, in my music one finds neither that which one might call the 'scientific' nor the 'mathematical' but rather a unification of construction with poetic, emotional imagination."

—Stuart Walters

### Charanga

Composer/flutist Michael Colquhoun is currently active as a solo recitalist, as director of his genre-bending performing group "The MC Band," as president of the Composers' Alliance of Buffalo, and in numerous arts-in-education programs. He has earned his Ph.D. from SUNY Buffalo where he studied with Robert Dick, Morton Feldman, Cheryl Gobbeti, Lujaren Hiller, and Leo Smit. Several of his works have been published and are widely performed throughout the U.S.

In the words of the composer, "Salsa is a popular Hispanic American urban dance music with deep African And Cuban roots. Charanga is a style of Salsa which was popular from the 1920's through the 1970's. What made Charanga unique was that along with the usual percussion section (congas, bongos/cowbell), timbales, maracas/guiro and clave) there was a string section and a flute lead. When the music was *cocinando* or "cooking" the percussion, piano, bass and strings would play a powerfully swinging, polyrhythmic pattern over which the Charanga flutist was free to improvise complex and intricate riffs. These days, while Salsa is as popular as ever, the Charanga as a separate entity is rare. The flute, however, continues to be an important solo instrument. This piece is a cubist portrait of Charanga, and is dedicated to all the great Latin Charanga flutists."

### Capítulo Siete

I began to set to music the seventh chapter of Julio Cortazar's novel *Rayuela* (Hopscotch), captivated by the sound of its opening words "Toco tu boca . . ." and the rhythmic regularity of some of its phrases, along with its natural rounded form. The piece is composed in a succession of 29 modules which can be performed in different orders. The entire work is essentially in two parts, each of which is composed of three sections, framing the continually evolving image suggested by the text.

The aesthetic cycle of the chapter is emulated by the trilogy of soloists impersonating the action from three different angles, while the choir — using isolated syllables, words or short phrases extracted from the body of the text — creates the musical background for the rich visual suggestions impregnated by a heavy sensuality.

—Adriano Verdié

### *Capítulo Siete*

Toco tu boca, con un dedo toco el borde de tu boca, voy dibujándola como si saliera de mi mano, como si por primera vez tu boca se entreabiera, y me basta cerrar los ojos para deshacerlo todo y recomenzar, hago nacer cada vez la boca que deseo, la boca que mi mano elige y te dibuja en la cara, una boca elegida por mi para dibujarla con mi mano en tu cara, y que por un azar que no busco comprender coincide exactamente con tu boca que sonríe por debajo de la que mi mano te dibuja.

... Entonces mis manos buscan hundirse en tu pelo, acariciar lentamente la profundidad de tu pelo mientras nos besamos como si tuviéramos la boca llena de flores o de peces, de movimientos vivos, de fragancia oscura. Y si nos mordemos el dolor es dulce, y si nos ahogamos en un breve y terrible absorber simultáneo del aliento, esa instantánea muerte es bella. Y hay una sola saliva y un solo sabor a fruta madura, y yo te siento temblar contra mí como una luna en el agua.

### *Chapter Seven*

*I touch your mouth, I touch the edge of your mouth with my finger, I am drawing it as if it were something my hand was sketching, as if for the first time your mouth opened a little, and all I have to do is close my eyes to erase it and start all over again, every time I can make the mouth I want appear, the mouth which my hand chooses and sketches on your face, and which by some chance that I do not seek to understand coincides exactly with your mouth which smiles beneath the one my hand is sketching on you.*

*... Then my hands go to sink into your hair, to cherish slowly the depth of your hair while we kiss as if our mouths were filled with flowers or with fish, with lively movements and dark fragrance. And if we bite each other the pain is sweet, and if we smother each other in a brief and terrible sucking in together of our breaths, that momentary death is beautiful. And there is but one saliva and one flavor of ripe fruit, and I feel you tremble against me like a moon on the water.*

### Improvisation sur Mallarmé No. 1

One of the most distinguished and influential musicians of the twentieth century, Pierre Boulez was born in 1925 in Montbrison, France. He studied music and higher mathematics before going to Paris, where he was a member of Olivier Messiaen's composition class at the Conservatory. He also studied counterpoint with Andrée Yaurabourg and serial technique with René Leibowitz. In 1946 Boulez was appointed Music Director of the Renault-Barrault Theatre Company, and during the decade in which he held that position he founded the Concerts du Petit Marigny, which subsequently grew into the well-known avant-garde series, Domaine Musicale.

Boulez first came to prominence as a composer with a performance of his *Le Marteau sans maître* in 1955 at the International Society for Contemporary Music Festival in Baden-Baden. This seminal work established him as one of the leading figures among post-war composers, and succeeding compositions confirmed his singular position in the fraternity of contemporary creative artists. As teacher and writer, Boulez has been an intrepid spokesman for new music and a new aesthetic of music. He has taught at the Academy of Basel and at the Blossom Festival School in conjunction with Kent State University. In 1963 he was a visiting lecturer at Harvard. He has written numerous articles and essays for publication and is the author of five books on music.

His difference of opinion about state intervention in the arts as espoused by André Malraux led him into voluntary exile from France for several years. However, he returned in triumph in 1974, when the French government under President Georges Pompidou invited him to found and direct a music research facility at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. Acclaimed internationally as the most advanced new music center in the world, the Institut de Recherche et de Coördination Acoustique/Musique (IRCAM) is home base for the Ensemble InterContemporain, which Boulez conducts regularly in France as well as on extended tours abroad.

Originally written in 1957 as one of Boulez's earliest ventures into his new-found world of aleatoric composition, the *Improvisation sur Mallarmé* No. 1 was later expanded and rewritten for chamber orchestra to be included in the composer's larger work entitled *Pli selon pli* ('fold by fold'), a five-movement composition utilizing five distinct sonnets by Mallarmé. At this early stage, the composer's use of aleatory is limited to the appearance of controlled flexible tempo markings applied to long passages with very pronounced shiftings of register and rapid grace notes, whose difficulty for each performer tends to cause small ruptures in tempo in the forward progress of each section of the work.

### STEPHANE MALLARME (1842-1898)

#### IMPROVISATION I

Le vierge, le vivace et le bel aujourd'hui  
Va-t-il nous déchirer avec un coup d'aile ivre  
Ce lac dur oublié que hante sous le givre  
Le transparent glacier des vols qui n'ont pas fui!  
Un cygne d'autrefois se souvient que c'est lui  
Magnifique, mais qui sans espoir se délivre  
Pour n'avoir pas chanté la région où vivre  
Quand du stérile hiver a resplendi l'ennui.  
Tout son col secouera cette blanche agonie  
Par l'espace infligée à l'oiseau qui le nie,  
Mais non l'horreur du sol où le plumage est pris.  
Fantôme qu'à ce lieu son pur éclat assigne,  
Il s'immobilise au songe froid de mépris  
Que vêt parmi l'exil inutile le Cygne.

Will the virginal, strong and handsome today  
Tear for us with a drunken flap of the wing  
This hard forgotten lake which the transparent glacier  
Of flights unflown haunts under the frost!  
A swan of former times remembers it is he  
Magnificent but who without hope gives himself up  
For not having sung of the region where he should have been  
When the boredom of sterile winter was resplendent.  
All his neck will shake off this white death-agony  
Inflicted by space on the bird which denies space,  
But not the horror of the earth where his wings are caught.  
Phantom whom his pure brilliance assigns to this place,  
He becomes immobile in the cold dream of scorn  
Which the Swan puts on in his useless exile.

### The Anvil Chorus

David Lang's *The Anvil Chorus* stems not from the familiar moment in Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, but from the melodies that the blacksmiths of yore invented to help coordinate difficult hammering patterns. The work was inspired by such melodies, triggered in this case by hand-hammered and foot-activated metallic percussion instruments. Lang allows the performer some leeway in the choice of instruments. The work was written for Steven Schick, and commissioned by the Fromm Foundation for performance at the 1991 "bang on a Can" Festival, one of New York's liveliest new music gatherings.

### Oiseaux exotiques

Born in Avignon in 1908, Olivier Messiaen began to compose music at the precocious age of eight and entered the Paris Conservatory in 1919 at the age of eleven. Among his teachers were the organist Marcel Dupré and the composer Paul Dukas. His first music to be published was *Le Banquet Céleste* for organ in 1928. Already the musico-philosophical tenets that were to become so important as to compel Messiaen to place his work "at the service of the dogmas of Catholic theology" were beginning to assert themselves, as this piece is concerned with a very Roman Catholic concept — the "Last Supper" shared by Jesus with his disciples. A set of piano *Preludes* followed in 1929 and the first orchestral work in 1930. In the following year Messiaen was appointed organist at the Church of La Trinité in Paris and he became somewhat notorious for treating Sunday worshippers to tradition-defying improvisations.

In 1936, reacting against the neo-classicism of French composers of the 1920's, Messiaen, along with Daniel Lesur, Yves Baudrier and André Jolivet, formed an avant-garde group dedicated to "new" Romantic principles called *Le Jeune France*. In the same year Messiaen began to teach at the École Normale de Musique and the Schola Cantorum. His pedagogical career was interrupted, however, in 1939 by the war and service in the French army. A year later Messiaen was captured by the Germans and was incarcerated in a prison camp. Under these very difficult conditions he still managed to write music and in 1941 produced the *Quatuor pour la Fin du Temps*. After his liberation in 1941 he resumed his teaching, becoming professor of harmony at the Paris Conservatory.

Following the war, Messiaen began to gain a reputation outside France as both composer and teacher (among his students were pianist Yvonne Loriod — later to become his wife, Serge Nigg, Pierre Boulez, and Karlheinz Stockhausen), and shortly thereafter he became recognized as one of the most significant composers of the twentieth century.

Messiaen was very interested in many aspects of non-Western musics, chief among these his tendency to use bird-calls and the building of an entire composition on them. The composer dates this rather special interest to a remark made by Paul Dukas: "Listen to the birds. They are great masters." Certainly Messiaen did take this advice seriously (one is tempted to say *with a vengeance*) and spent much time and energy over many years engaged in eavesdropping on Nature and notating what he heard. The result was a huge collection of bird-calls, some of which occasionally found their way into his works. However, it was not until 1953 that they became a significant aspect part of his music. Among his various bird-call pieces, *Oiseaux exotiques* is a kind of concerto for piano and instrumental ensemble, containing the bird-calls of 40 different exotic birds from India, China, Malaysia (East Indies) and North and South America (one must remember, to a Frenchman birds of America are exotic). The result is a work with dazzling sonorities achieved often by the compiling of layers of sound, certainly one of the most beautiful pieces of its kind in twentieth-century literature.