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New Music Ensemble

Chapman New Music Ensemble

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CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY
Conservatory of Music

presents

New Music Ensemble

Sean Heim, Director

Special Guest – Harold Oliver

Thursday December 4, 2008 • 8pm
Salmon Recital Hall

Program

as quiet as *Ken Fürneisen*

As the Sun Sleeps *Jon Harmon*

Five *John Cage*

Trio Per Uno *Nebojsa Zivkovic*

Edges *Christian Wolff*

Sparrow Village *Jon Harmon*

Hidden Dimensions *Harold Oliver*
World Premiere

It Happened One Night *Bruno Louhouarn*

Stripsody *Cathy Berberian*

Morgan Beckett – oboe, Tamer Edlebi – oboe,
Laura Lascoe – clarinet/bass clarinet, Daphne Medina - violin,
Maria Myrick -violin, Laura Dill – viola, Scott Kawai – cello,
Mark Buchner -bass, Kevin Baker – bass, Daniel De Arakal –
guitar, Diana Patterson - piano, Nathan Campbell – piano/tuba,
Collin Martin – percussion, Craig Shields – percussion, Chriss
Suits – voice/percussion

Program Notes:

Edges

The signs in the score are not primarily what a player plays. They mark out a space or spaces, indicate points, surfaces, routes or limits. A player should play in relation to, in, and around the space thus partly marked out. He can move about in it variously (e.g., in sequence, or jumping from one point to another), but does not always have to be moving, nor does he have to go everywhere. Insofar as the signs are limits, they can be reached but should not be exploited. The way to a limit, or points, can be taken at different distances – for example, far away, like a horizon, or close, like a tree with branches overhead – but decide where any given moment you are. You can also use the signs as cues: wait till you notice one and then respond. Or you can simply play a sign as it is, but only one in a performance.

Hidden Dimensions was commissioned by Professor Sean Heim and written for the Chapman University New Music Ensemble in 2008. It was partially inspired by popular descriptions of mathematical string theory in physics which imagine several dimensions that are hidden from our own four dimensional universe. This composition then projects the simultaneous interaction of apparently unrelated musical structures, some appear and disappear rather quickly, others are more normal in size and a few are overwhelmingly large. These separate entities vary in structure, length and loudness and collide with one another going their separate ways. Perhaps, rather than apprehending this as a “piece of music” one might more profitably think of it as “pieces of musics.”

It Happened One Night

Through my work in films and in cognitive science, I have developed an enduring interest in the role music plays in eliciting emotions to visual experiences. This piece focuses on the tiny and fleeting facial expressions called “micro-emotions” that while not consciously perceived, are often the root of what we call an “instinctive” response to others. How might music influence, even bias, audiences' perception of intention, tone and emotion of actors in film? And how might that investigation lead me to deeper creative explorations combining music, film, and various aspects of performance? In this musical exploration, I use a clip from the film *It Happened One Night*, a pre-code (1934) film with Clark Gable and Claudette Colbert. This piece was particularly interesting to me, since in the early days of sound very little, if any

music was used, leaving all the emotional portrayal to the actors. While the actors' performances are comic in tone, their subtext and the cinematography, create a more ambiguous impression. I wrote a "score" of this scene to explore the extreme range of perceptions music could induce with respect to a visual experience. In the first section of the piece I forefront the music in a way that recalls the highly stylized performances of the silent era and attempts to connect the audience to the uncanny and often un-detected expressive details in the actors' faces. In the second section I use the same motifs, but in a more subdued way, to underscore the scene, and relate to the "naturalistic" performance style of the sound era.

Harold Oliver was born in 1942 in Easton, Maryland. His early school years were in a small rural community near Gettysburg, PA. He was attracted to music initially through vocal music, primarily opera, and then studied a variety of instruments when he decided to be a composer. He received a BM from the Peabody Institute, where he met and married his wife, a pianist, Patricia. He received an MM from the Yale School of Music and a Ph.D from Princeton University. He received grants and awards from Yale, Princeton, the Tanglewood Music Center, state arts councils in New York and New Jersey, Meet the Composer, and AMC. His major composition teachers were Milton Babbitt, Mel Powell, Donald Martino, Gunther Schuller, and Harrison Birtwhistle. He has two children: Laura Oliver, who studied and performed at the New York City Ballet, and is now an applied behavior analyst, working with autistic children, and Sam Oliver who is a violinist and composer and performs in chamber music ensembles, and as a soloist and is a member of the San Francisco Symphony.

Bruno Louchouarn studied artificial intelligence in Paris and obtained a Ph.D. in music composition at UCLA where he studied composition with Ian Krouse, Paul Chihara, and Jerry Goldsmith. His music has a broad range, from the futuristic cantina music heard in the film *Total Recall* to live experimental multimedia performances, works for large orchestra and music for the theater. His musical work, which frequently calls on percussion, electronic music, and multimedia, often focuses on the performative aspects of language and music, the structure of myths, and rhetoric. His work has been performed at RedCat in Disney Hall, UCLA's Royce Hall, the Getty Center, and the Getty Villa. He teaches music, multimedia, and cognitive science at Occidental College.