Southwest String Quartet

Southwest Chamber Music Society

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/music_programs

Recommended Citation
http://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/music_programs/51

This Guest Recital is brought to you for free and open access by the Music Performances at Chapman University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Printed Performance Programs (PDF Format) by an authorized administrator of Chapman University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact laughtin@chapman.edu.
Southwest String Quartet:
Peter Marsh and Susan Jensen (Violins), Jan Karlin (Viola) and Roger Lebow (Cello)
Stuart Horn, Oboe

PROGRAM

Phantasy, Op. 2

Celestial Mechanics for Oboe and String Quartet (1990)

I
II

INTERMISSION

String Quartet No. 15, Op. 144

Elegy
Serenade
Intermezzo
Nocturne
Funeral March
Epilogue
(Movements played without pause)

Please join the performers for a reception following the performance

Friday, November 18, 1994
Pasadena Presbyterian Church 8:00 PM

Sunday, November 20, 1994
Chapman University 3:00 PM
Benjamin Britten and Dmitri Shostakovich are two of the most articulate exponents of moral conscience in twentieth century music. Britten was certainly one of the few Western composers with whom Shostakovich developed friendly relations, dedicating his extraordinary Fourteenth Symphony for Soprano, Bass, Strings and Percussion to Britten. That artistic commonalities exist between the homosexual Britten and the politically suppressed Shostakovich is no surprise. Their musical voices, from Peter Grimes and Billy Budd to Katerina Ismailova and Stenka Razin, speak directly to issues that, however intensely symbolic they might be, go beyond gay or political causes. Britten and Shostakovich are grounded in an Apollonian tradition of classicism, an amalgamated classicism that incorporated Mozart and Haydn, but also paradoxically represents the culmination of 19th century nationalism. Dowland and Purcell for the English Britten or Mussorgsky and Tchaikovsky for the Russian Shostakovich cast significant shadows throughout either composer’s music. The conservative nature of their harmonic choices do not represent a capricious search for the *Paradise Lost* of tonality nor a strident repudiation of the genuine harmonic and rhythmic innovations that swirled around their careers. Their art is concerned with a complicated debate: the fate and freedom of the individual in an age subsumed with suppression and totalitarianism.

The *Phantasy, Op. 2 for Oboe and Strings* by Benjamin Britten was written for Leon Goossens. In one movement, it is a bright and energetic composition, with a muted string march metaphorically leading the work on and off stage. Britten’s lifelong characteristic of focusing on a protagonist is present in this early chamber work. The oboe soloist functions in an almost operatic role. Britten, who was a violist, exhibits a staggeringly high professional knowledge of orchestration - the work “sounds” from start to finish.

Jeff von der Schmidt

*Celestial Mechanics* - When the possibility of a commission for the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra’s Mozart Festival materialized in early 1990, I was asked by Stephen Hartke, the orchestra’s Composer-in-Residence at that time, which of Mozart’s chamber works I would be interested in addressing in some way in my own work. I immediately thought of Mozart’s Oboe Quartet and of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra’s extraordinary principal oboist, Allan Vogel. From the outset, Allan’s input as a musician influenced the composition of the piece. Before I had written a note, I attended a rehearsal of the Mozart Oboe Quartet involving Allan and a trio of distinguished string players. Hearing the piece take shape and hearing the varied aspects of Allan’s playing were truly inspiring, and were the springboards for *Celestial Mechanics*. Though you probably will not hear music of Mozart in a direct way, the spirit of the Oboe Quartet - and particularly of its slow movement - pervades the work. *Celestial Mechanics* is in two large movements, and is dedicated to Allan Vogel. It was completed in September 1990.

Donald Crockett

“I thought perhaps my experience could also be of some use to people younger than I. Perhaps they wouldn’t have the horrible disillusionment that I had to face, and would go through life better prepared, more hardened, than I was. And perhaps their lives would be free of the bitterness that has colored my life gray.” These words, attributed to Shostakovich by Solomon Volkov, represent an extreme internal existentialism. Without question Dostoevsky and Mussorgsky were an inherited
cultural mantle for Shostakovich. The *String Quartet No. 15 in E flat minor* became the end of the line for Shostakovich and his affinity for the string quartet medium. He had intended to write string quartets in every key, but fate ordained this somber minor keyed quartet to be the last. All the movements are marked *Adagio*, but not a trudging one if the composer’s fast \( j = 80 \) is observed. The discourse is further animated by virtuosic cadenzas, early on in the *Intermezzo* and then again in the last movement. The work is rich, deep and dramatically a walk on ice. There are hints of past composers, especially Beethoven and Wagner, but the solemnity of acceptance becomes almost ritual. How astonished Shostakovich would be to know he prepared the way for the commercial recording success of slow moving music from other former-east-bloc composers.

Jeff von der Schmidt

*Donald Crockett* (b. 1951 in Pasadena, California) has been Composer-in-Residence with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra since 1991, and is also Professor of Composition at the University of Southern California. Commissions and performances of his music have come from such artists and ensembles as the Kronos Quartet, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, Stanford String Quartet, Los Angeles Philharmonic, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, tenor Jonathan Mack and many others. *Celestial Mechanics* for oboe and string quartet, commissioned by the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, took second prize in the 1991 Kennedy Center Friedheim Awards. Crockett has also received grants and prizes from BMI, the National Endowment for the Arts, Meet the Composer, the Aaron Copland Fund, the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities and the Burlington Northern Foundation. Most recently, he received the Goddard Lieberson Fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Also active as a conductor of new music, Crockett has presented many national and regional premieres with the Contemporary Music Ensemble of the University of Southern California, and as a guest conductor with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, Monday Evening Concerts, XTET, and the Green Umbrella series of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. His music is published by MMB Music, St. Louis, and recorded on Pro Arte, Orion, Dominguez Digital and CRI.

The *Southwest Chamber Music Society*, founded in 1987, includes the *Southwest String Quartet, Southwest Early Music Consort, Southwest Wind Quintet*, as well as double bass, keyboards and percussion. The Society is Southern California’s busiest chamber music ensemble, presenting concert series throughout the year in Pasadena, Orange County, Santa Monica, and The Huntington Library in San Marino. Recipient of a Chamber Music America Residency Grant, Southwest begins a three-year residency in 1994-1995 at the Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena for educational and community outreach activities. The ensemble has toured and been presented throughout California by the University of California, the Orange County Performing Arts Center, the Getty Center for the History of Arts and the Humanities, the San Francisco Symphony and the Ojai Festival, among others, and is regularly featured on the Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department “Sundays at Four” radio broadcasts on KUSC-FM. Southwest has collaborated on educational and community outreach activities with the Southwest Museum in Highland Park, Newport Harbor Art Museum, Pasadena Library, Orange County Philharmonic Society and the Armory Center for the Arts. Music by Prokofiev and Poulenc is featured on Southwest’s compact disc recording for Cambria Records.
Many thanks to the Friends of the Southwest Chamber Music Society for their continuing support of our activities.

Composers Circle
National Endowment for the Arts
California Arts Council
National/State/County Partnership
L.A. Cultural Affairs Department
Chamber Music America
Ahmanson Foundation
Aaron Copland Fund
Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation
C. E. Heller Charitable Foundation
James C. Irvine Foundation
Metropolitan Associates
Ralph M. Parsons Foundation
Virginia Steele Scott Foundation
William H. Brady, III
Fritzie and Fred Culick
James Donahue
Betty Freeman
Dr. Stephen Kanter
Mr. and Mrs. Martin Karlin
Dr. and Mrs. G. A. Mulder
Mr. and Mrs. H. A. Vonderschmidt

Musicians Circle
Amphion Foundation
Elizabeth and Brack Duker
Heidrun Mumper-Drumm
Meet the Composer/California
Mrs. Marjorie Richardson
Liz and Gene Rose
Randol Schoenberg

Octet Circle
Mr. and Mrs. Horace Baker
Suzanne and Bert Bigelow
Dr. and Mrs. Jesse Greenstein
David Gregorich
Mr. and Mrs. Saul Jacobs
Dr. and Mrs. Eldridge Lasell
Pasadena Foundation
Peggy Phelps
Mr. and Mrs. George Stephens

Quintet Circle
Dr. Charles Baker
Kenneth Blaydow
Margaret and Lemuel Bonilla
Linda Brownridge
Alice and Joseph Coulombe
Cecilia Cloughly & Frank Stott
Elisa Crystal
Richard Derby
Elena and Pieter De Vries
Edward R. Felix
Dr. Celia Fountain
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Geiger
George Housner
Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Jones
Joan Kemper
Mr. and Mrs. William Kraft
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Offen
Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Ogdon
Mr. and Mrs. Stephan Robinson
Mr. and Mrs. Ron Rosen
Rose and Bob Sabaroff
Carol and Carl Selkin
Michael Stevenson
William Thomson
Mr. and Mrs. Adrian Tucker
Diane Weegar
Mr. and Mrs. David Wood
Mr. and Mrs. F. H. Wright
Brenn von Bibra

Quartet Circle
Dennis Baker
Dr. Richard Bing
Ruth Budd
Donna Burrell
Mr. and Mrs. C.R. Crowell
Roger du Plessis
Michael Fischer
Ernest Fleischmann
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Grossman
Mr. and Mrs. William Kline
James Kowalski
Ben Krouk
Robert Lower
Albert Mace
Barbara and John Madden
Reg Marsh
Lydia Matthews
Priscilla Pawlicki

Trio Circle
Debra Ayers
Mr. and Mrs. Barry Brisk
Diane Edwards
Anita Metz Grossman
Douglas Johnson
William Byrne Paullin
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Schamberg
Mrs. Elisabeth W. Zall

Soloists
Ann Burke
Ken Carmichael
Theodore S. Cline
William Du Bois
Dr. Elinor Ives
Mr. and Mrs. Norman Jufer
Geraldine Keeling
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Kevles
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Nygren
Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Rutter
Dr. Robert Scher
Mr. and Mrs. Hans Wachtel
Bert C. Williams

Board of Directors
Fritzie Culick, President
Lemuel Bonilla
William H. Brady III
James Donahue
Jan Karlin
George Lin
Heidrun Mumper-Drumm
Carl Selkin
Randol Schoenberg

Administration
Jeff von der Schmidt, Artistic Director
Jan Karlin, Executive Director
Jean Jacobs, Administrative Assistant