

Program Notes

Eleanor Cory studied composition with Meyer Kupferman at Sarah Lawrence College; Charles Wuorinen at the New England Conservatory; and Chou Wen-chung and Bulent Arel at Columbia University. She received her DMA from Columbia.

She has taught at Yale University, Baruch College, Manhattan School of Music, Sarah Lawrence College, Brooklyn College, The New School for Social Research, and, currently, Kingsborough Community College, CUNY.

Her work has been recognized by awards from the National Endowment for the Arts; New York State Council on the Arts; New York Foundation for the Arts, and Yale University and prizes including the American Composers Alliance Recording Award; Hollybush International Composition Competition; Kucyna International Composition Prize; International New Music Composers Award; Music in the Mountains Competition, and New Jersey Guild of Composers Competition.

Her music is recorded on the CRI, Opus One, Capstone, and Advance labels; her solo CD, "Images," was released in the Fall of 1996 on the Soundspells label.

Performances and commissions of her work include the New Jersey Symphony (Hugh Wolf), Hudson Valley Philharmonic (JoAnn Falletta), New York Virtuoso Singers, Chamber Symphony of Princeton, St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, Contemporary Chamber Players of the University of Chicago (Ralph Shapey), members of Speculum Musicae, League-ISCM, Washington Square Contemporary Music Series, Guild of Composers, Composers Concordance, New York Camerata, Quintet of the Americas, Gregg Smith Singers, Eastman Chorale, Alea III, Earplay, Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, Cygnus Ensemble, and soloists Ursula Oppens, Aleck Karis, Gregory Fulkerson, Jayn Rosenfeld, Sue Ann Kahn, Patricia Spencer, Chris Finckel, David Holzman, Louise Schulman, and Marcia Eckert.

Bouquet

The title "Bouquet" came to me after the piece was written. The first movement is comprised of eleven small intervallically-related musical motives which are interwoven into a contrapuntal web. I began to sense their relationship to one another as a mixed bouquet of flowers. Throughout the piece the motives go in and out of focus as if we were examining each flower from different angles. A piano solo finally strings the motives together into a long line surrounded by arpeggios enabling us to see the effect of the bouquet as a whole. After a unified climax, we hear the line - a stem - and each type of flower again in a quiet coda.

Movement II, slow, soft, and abstract, may evoke images of imaginary flowers after the first movement. It explores exotic colors in the instruments against a sustained background of one, four, two and three-notes at a time. Sudden outbursts break into the subdued character of the ethereal atmosphere.

The last movement bears no resemblance to the other two. It is a fast and intense combination of a rushing wispy line passed from instrument to instrument and a series of jazz explorations, some quite explicit, others more discrete.

"Bouquet" was written for the fine musicians of the Stony Brook Contemporary Chamber Players.

-Eleanor Cory

Ricardo Zohn Muldoon

Born in 1962, in Guadalajara, Mexico, Ricardo Zohn Muldoon received his B.A. in Music from the University of California, San Diego, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in Composition from the University of Pennsylvania, where his principal teacher was George Crumb.

Mexican literature has provided the point of departure for many of his compositions. Previous works have been based on the pre-Hispanic myth of Quetzalcoatl. More recently, several a cycle of works have been based on the novel *Pédro Páramo*, by the great Mexican writer Juan Rulfo. His music has been selected for various international festivals, including the Gaudeamus International Music Week (prize finalist, Holland), Festival A'DEvantgarde (Germany), ISCM World Music Days (Romania, Mexico), June in Buffalo (U.S.A.), Society of Composers Inc. (U.S.A.), International Recorder Festival (Holland), Foro de Música Nueva (Mexico), Festival Internacional Cervantino (Mexico), among others. Throughout 1996 he was a Visiting Scholar at Harvard University, where he realized a composition project, under the auspices of a fellowship from the Guggenheim Foundation. Previous distinctions include an Associate Composer Fellowship to attend the 2nd Inter-American Composition Workshop at Indiana University (U.S.A.), Mexico's prestigious Mozart Medal, and fellowships from the Tanglewood Music Center (Omar del Carlo Fellowship, U.S.A.), Fondo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes (Mexico), Composers Conference (U.S.A.), Fondo para la Cultura y las Artes de Jalisco (Mexico), and the Bowdoin Music Festival (U.S.A.). During the Fall of 1992, he was composer-in-residence at the Camargo Foundation, in Cassis, France. From 1993 to 1995, he taught composition and theory at the School of Music of the University of Guanajuato, in Mexico, where he also co-directed the international festival and conference of new music Callejon del Ruido. In January of 1997, he joined the faculty of the College-Conservatory of Music of the University of Cincinnati, as Assistant Professor of Composition

Páramo

Written at the request of the Stony Brook Contemporary Chamber Players, *Páramo* is the last of a cycle of vocal works based on the novel *Pédro Páramo*, by the great Mexican writer Juan Rulfo. *Páramo* is conceived as the instrumental overture to the entire cycle.

The sound world of the piece is closely inspired on the peculiar unfolding of the novel, in which the orderly flux of time has been derailed, and where the borders between past, present, life, and afterlife have been rendered porous. The piece therefore ticks, toils, and even cuckoos with rage, like a deranged musical clock.

Synopsis of the novel

The story in the novel takes place in the imaginary little village of Comala, a place so hot that "...when people die and go to hell, they have to return for their blankets...". As the novel unfolds it becomes increasingly apparent that all the principal characters are actually dead. The reason that they remain as ghostly inhabitants of the once prosperous Comala, is (as one of the characters puts it) that there are not enough people left alive in the village to effectively pray for such a quantity of souls to go to heaven. The narrator himself dies of fear early in the novel, but continues to be heard from the grave. The narration unfolds in kaleidoscopic fashion from the myriad perspectives of many characters, most of them dead, and even from the echoes of bygone murmurs trapped between the walls of the abandoned village. The story is very complex and multidimensional, revolving always around *Pédro Páramo*, the ruthless ruler of Comala. It is basically the story of a frustrated

BRUCE J. TAUB was born in New York City on February 6th, 1948. He began studying the bassoon at an early age with David Manchester of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and attended the High School of Music and Art. He was an active performer for many years as a member of the Composers Ensemble in New York. He has studied composition with Mario Davidovsky, Vladimir Ussachevsky, Jack Beeson, Chou Wen-chung and Charles Dodge at Columbia University, School of the Arts where he was one of the first two recipients of the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in 1974. He also studied Indian Classical Music with Ravi Shankar.

Mr. Taub's prizes and awards include: the Marc Brunswick Award in Musical Composition (for String Trio, 1969); Columbia University Fellow of the Faculty, National Defense Education Act Fellowship, 1969-71; the Joseph H. Bearns Prize in Music (Variations 11.7.3.3.4, 1971); BMI Award (Six Pieces for Orchestra, 1973); National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship (chamber opera, Passion, Poison, and Petrification, 1975); Fellowship to the 1975 Composers Conference in Johnson, Vermont and the 1985 Composers Conference in Wellesley, Massachusetts; Commission from the Criterion Foundation (Of Things Past, 1976); Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts (full length opera, Waltz on a Merry-Go-Round, 1981); Fellowship to the Charles Ives Center for American Music, 1984 and 1985; Friends of Harvey Gaul Composition Contest (Extremities II, 1984); Finalist, the 1987 Kucyna International Composition Contest (Extremities II, 1987); Commission from Sigma Alpha Iota (Inter-American Music Awards)(Three Preludes, 1987); Commission from the Cleveland Chamber Symphony (Edwin London, Conductor)(An Often Fatal Malady, 1990 and Lady Mondegreen Sings the Blues, 1995); Commission from the Fromm Foundation (Adrian's Dream, 1995).

From 1974-76 he served as the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the American Society of University Composers and from 1977 through the present he has been the Editor of the SCI (A.S.U.C.) Journal of Music Scores. Mr. Taub has taught at the City College of the City University of New York and at Columbia University. In 1974 he served as a Delegate to the International Conference on New Musical Notation at the University of Ghent in Belgium and was Assistant to the Director of the Index of New Musical Notation at Lincoln Center.

Mr. Taub has written over sixty compositions including pieces for orchestra, solo instruments, chamber ensemble, tape, computer, the ballet and two operas. His compositions have been performed by many contemporary music ensembles and at universities throughout the United States. His music is published by Music for Percussion and C.F. Peters Corporation. He is a member of BMI, the American Music Center, NACUSA and has been a member of the Board of Governors of the American Composers Alliance. In 1990 he was made a National Arts Associate of Sigma Alpha Iota.

Mr. Taub is currently the Editor in Chief for C.F. Peters Corporation, Music Publishers.

LADY MONDEGREEN BANGS THE CAN! was written during the spring and summer, of 1996. This new piece shares a lot of similar musical material with its two prequels: LADY MONDEGREEN'S DANCES which is a sextet for "pierrrot" ensemble plus percussion, and LADY MONDEGREEN SINGS THE BLUES which is for Winds, Percussion and Piano and was commissioned by the Cleveland Chamber Symphony, Edwin London, Conductor.

Lady Mondegreen does not exist. A mondegreen is a word or phrase that is construed as it is actually heard, not as the speaker intends it to be heard. Coined by Sylvia Wright in 1954 (Harper's), the word refers to the Scottish Ballad "The Bonny Earl of Murray" and how she recited it as a child: "They hae slain the Earl Amurray,/And Lady Mondegreen." The damsel bleeding loyally beside the slain Earl was in her romantic imagination and the last line was actually written "and laid him on the Green." After reading an article about this by William Safire in the New York Times, it occurred to me that mondegreens happen quite naturally in music all of the time; that everyone hears a piece of music quite differently. I intend for this piece to be last in the Lady Mondegreen series (although I said that about the second piece).

love. As a young boy, Pedro Páramo falls in love with Susana, who leaves the village with her father before Pedro Páramo reaches adolescence. The ulterior motive of Pedro Páramo's thirst for power and wealth is to recover Susana, whom he has not forgotten. Very late in his life, Pedro Páramo finally succeeds in bringing Susana back to Comala, but Susana has gone mad, forever out of his reach.

-Ricardo Zohn Muldoon

Stephen Blumberg

Born in New York City in 1962, Stephen Blumberg received his Ph.D. in composition from the University of California, Berkeley, and his M.A. and B.A. degrees from the University of California, San Diego. He studied with Richard Felciano and Andrew Imbrie at U.C. Berkeley, Bernard Rands, Will Ogdon, Joji Yuasa, Pauline Oliveros and Roger Reynolds at U.C. San Diego, and had private lessons with Ivo Malec in Paris. Blumberg has won numerous awards including the U.C. Berkeley Music Department's George Ladd Prix de Paris Fellowship for two years of independent research in Paris (1991-93), two Nicola De Lorenzo Prizes for Composition (1990 and 1994), and a BMI Student Composer Award (1987).

His works have been performed in France and the Netherlands as well as throughout the United States by ensembles such as the Arditti Quartet, the Cassatt Quartet, Earplay, and Octagon, and by noted soloists such as harpsichordists Jory Vinikour and Lorna Peters, and flutist Laurel Zucker. Joshua Kosman of the San Francisco Chronicle described Blumberg's Sextant as "a deftly shaped score of streamlined beauty" in a review of a performance by the new music ensemble Earplay at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco in February 1996. He has taught at the University of California, Berkeley, and has been teaching music theory and composition at California State University, Sacramento since 1995, where he was appointed Artist in Residence in 1997.

Daedalus and Icarus

Daedalus and Icarus was inspired by a recent reading of the myth as translated and commented upon by Robert Graves in his excellent two-volume collection *The Greek Myths*. In order to escape from the labyrinth which he himself designed to hold the Minotaur but within which he was now being held prisoner, Daedalus makes a pair of wings for himself and his son Icarus, and they manage to fly away from Crete, but Icarus, against his father's warnings, flies too high and the sun melts the wax holding the feathers, causing him to plummet into the sea. This piece is, in a sense, program music, and indeed the treacherous rise and tragic fall of Icarus are musically depicted, but I also saw in the myth a symbolic representation of my own artistic dilemma and that of the artist in general. I began composing this piece without a program in mind but soon felt as if, like Daedalus, I was trapped within a labyrinth of my own invention, and the idea struck me that the dramatic framework of the myth would serve this piece well, since it would force me to escape from the gravitational pull of low pedal tones and the use of ostinato and imitation set up early in the piece. Daedalus and Icarus represent the two sides of artistic creation: invention and artifice on the one hand versus imagination and flight of fancy on the other. The artist needs to escape from the self-imposed limitations of pattern by flying in the face of logic, somehow managing to be simultaneously both circumspect planner and heedless risk taker. Daedalus and Icarus was commissioned by the SUNY Stony Brook Contemporary Chamber Players to be premiered at the 12th Annual World Premieres Concert.

-Stephen Blumberg

Daniel Koontz was born in 1969 in Lafayette, Indiana. By age five he had learned to play guitar, and he began studying piano at age seven. Later, he gained proficiency on all of the instruments of the rock band, and developed a primitive means of making recordings of his own compositions, on which he would play all of the instruments. He attended the Eastman School of Music, where he studied piano and theory, graduating with distinction in 1992.

After two years as a performing rock musician, he continued his training in composition, receiving a Humanities and Fine Arts Fellowship to study at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, where he is now completing his Ph.D. His teachers have included Michael Gandolfi, Daria Semegen, and Daniel Weymouth.

His instrumental compositions have won several awards from such organizations as ASCAP and Society of Composers, Inc. He has received commissions from such groups as the Stony Brook Contemporary Chamber Players, a new music ensemble directed by Gilbert Kalish and Raymond Des Roches, and from Ensemble 21, a Columbia University-based contemporary chamber ensemble.

Dan Koontz's music has been performed by the New York New Music Ensemble and by the Dutch Nieuw Ensemble and has been featured at several new music festivals including the June in Buffalo festival, Music 98 at the University of Cincinnati and the 1998 California State University Summer Arts Composers Workshop.

His chamber work **TRELLIS** has been performed across the country and will be performed in Bucharest, Rumania in the fall of 1999 at the ISCM World Music Days festival. Also this fall, his **IMPROVEMENTS BOOK II** will be presented in China by pianist Wai Cheng. He is also active in electronic and computer music, and his tape music has been heard both in the concert hall and in radio broadcast. Currently, he teaches piano and theory at Southampton College and privately.

ENTANGLEMENT is a word used by physicists to explain why after joined particles have been separated they continue to exert influence over each other, sometimes across extreme distances. The particles are said to be entangled, and changes in one will always manifest themselves in the other. In **Entanglement I** illustrate this phenomenon by first presenting a sonic image of stray particles, which I then join together in various ways (melodic snippets, simultaneities or both) to show their entangled state. This finally results in a re-integration, at which point the music relaxes into more sustained sounds, only to slowly disintegrate into particles again. **ENTANGLEMENT** was written for the Stony Brook Contemporary Chamber Players, and is dedicated with gratitude to Daria Semegen.

-Daniel Koontz