



presents

PIERROT PLUS ENSEMBLE

DAVID COLSON, conductor

Thursday, March 22, 1990

8:00 p.m. in Hamman Hall

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music

PROGRAM

Septet (1953)

- I. ♩ = 88
- II. Passacaglia
- III. Gigue

Igor Stravinsky
(1882-1971)

Pierrot Plus Ensemble
David Colson, conductor

Piano Sonata No. 2 (1961)

- Allegro*
- Lento alla siciliano*
- Presto*

Samuel Jones
(b. 1935)

Henri-Paul Sicsic, piano

INTERMISSION

Tre Voci (1987)

- I. *Con Anticipazione; Adagio diventando Allegro*
- II. *Prestissimo volando; Tempestoso*
- III. *Con Riflessione*

Paul Cooper
(b. 1926)

Kevin Kelly, violin
David Garrett, cello
Scott Holshouser, piano

La Création du monde, Op. 81 (1923)

- Modéré*
- I.
 - II.
 - III.
 - IV.
 - V.

Darius Milhaud
(1892-1974)

Pierrot Plus Ensemble
David Colson, conductor

PIERROT PLUS ENSEMBLE

Amy Winn, piccolo	James Wilson, horn	Dagny Wenk-Wolff, violin
Elaine Murphy, flute	Reynaldo Ochoa, trumpet	Igor Pandurski, violin
Stephen Champion, oboe	Mary Thornton, trumpet	Amy Chang, violin
Richard Nunemaker, clarinet and saxophone	Aubrey Tucker, trombone	Rifat Qureshi, viola
Susan Moore, clarinet	John Hendrickson, piano	Mary Beth Melvyn, cello
Margaret Beard, clarinet	J. Riely Francis, percussion	Diana Parmeter, cello
James Rodgers, bassoon	David Murray, percussion	Debra Stehr, double bass
		David Colson, conductor

PROGRAM NOTES

Septet Igor Stravinsky
(for clarinet, horn, bassoon, violin, viola, cello and piano)

Stravinsky's **Septet**, commissioned by the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and premiered in 1953, is in many ways an important transitional work that reflects aspects of both the composer's middle and late styles. Though Stravinsky's opera **The Rake's Progress** (1951) is generally considered to be his last effort in a neoclassical vein, the **Septet** nevertheless displays his affinity for classical forms and styles. The first movement embodies sonata-allegro form, while the second and third movements — the *Passacaglia* and the *Gigue* — are cast as Baroque dances. Stravinsky's frequent use of contrapuntal procedures such as canon and fugue, though reminiscent of J. S. Bach's style, is combined with a twentieth-century approach to harmony and voice-leading. Stravinsky's experiments with serialism in the **Septet** (influenced largely by the music of Anton Webern), would serve as the basis for the formation of his late style.

— Note by Trevor Hoyt

Piano Sonata No. 2 Samuel Jones

Samuel Jones' **Piano Sonata No. 2** was composed in 1961-62 and received its world premiere on October 17, 1963, in Alma, Michigan, in a performance by the composer at Alma College where he was at that time a member of the music faculty as well as music director of the Saginaw Symphony.

The sonata, in three movements, is faithful to the traditional argument of the sonata concept, but with its own unique points of view. For example, though the first movement presents conflict, as expected, between the tonal areas of the principal and secondary themes, the greater conflict exists in the bitonality of the opening idea itself, which becomes a point of fierce contention in the coda, with the C Major of the right hand finally winning out in the last moment of the B-flat Major of the left. The opening motto contains other salient features as well: though each hand mirrors the neighboring-tone expansion of the other, they have decidedly different ideas of how to go about it, the bass emphasizing regular accents and treble preferring instead to speak in dotted rhythms. These conflicts find momentary resolution in the development section when a new melodic idea, an offshoot of the lyrical second theme, wends its way with undotted rhythms from the tenor range ever higher, all the while gracefully accompanied by the right hand's dotted laceries. But the original conflict soon arises, at first surreptitiously then more insistently, leading the reiteration of opening materials and finally culminating in the aforementioned struggle in the coda.

The second movement is a graceful siciliano, with the expected gently-rocking six-eight rhythms. The stage is set by a brief prologue, which is repeated at the close of the movement. In between is intoned a simple song-form in which chords built from recurring wheel-fragments support a plaintive melody which seeks seemingly every nonharmonic way possible to escape the tonal dominance of its accompaniment. In the middle section the theme is joined by a canonic partner and the music reaches a peak of intensity though it does not overturn the rule of the harmonies. They return, and the plaintive melody sings again, alone now, and this time it finds contentment in its surroundings.

The final movement is an ABACABA rondo in which the main theme undergoes a striking transformation from the jaunty innocence it exhibits at the opening to the vehement intensity it has acquired by the time the movement — and the work — ends. The first diversion from the rondo theme is strongly related to the second theme of the opening movement. The middle diversion is a two-part form, the first being a steady expansion of a melody which is initially restricted to only two pitches and which gradually wins for itself greater freedom, and the second being a quiet chorale (presented simultaneously with its mirror an octave lower) which seems to offer momentary thanks for the newly-won freedoms. But the struggles have deeply affected the main idea, and the transformation mentioned above is immediately noticed upon its return. If one feels at the end a certain desperation, one also senses an unmistakable resolve and a final resolution which expresses a fierce determination to meet any challenge.

— Note by Samuel Jones

Tre Voci Paul Cooper

Tre Voci was commissioned for the Canterbury Trio by the Bicentennial Committee of Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The problem of dynamic balance among these three instruments was uppermost in my mind and I chose this particular title to convey to the performers and listeners how very much I wanted an equality among the violin, cello, and piano. At the same time, there are numerous passages in which one of the instruments is deliberately dominant and the others are tacet or provide background texture. *Tre Voci* is presented in three movements played without pause. Superimposed on this basic structure is a massive wedge that extends from the opening pianissimo measures through the fairly outrageous *tempestoso* section. I felt that the final reflective movement was essential for both structural and emotional balance.

Tre Voci was first performed by the Canterbury Trio in September 1987 at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and at Kaufmann Concert Hall in New York City.

— Note by Paul Cooper

La Création du monde, Op. 81 Darius Milhaud

In 1923, Milhaud received a commission from the Swedish producer Rolf de Maré for a score to accompany a new ballet dealing with the creation of the world as represented in African folklore. Milhaud, who was always fascinated by popular and folk idioms, hit upon the brilliant idea of exploring the exciting new rhythms, melodies, and harmonies of black jazz musicians. The composer had been introduced to the Harlem jazz scene on a recent visit to New York City. Though many European composers of the early twentieth century were heavily influenced by jazz, Milhaud's *La Création du monde* represents one of the first successful attempts to mix elements of jazz with Western art music. Milhaud skillfully combines wild, syncopated rhythms and melodies full of "blue" notes (chromatic inflections typical of jazz) with twentieth-century techniques such as polytonality in a style that is uniquely his own.

— Note by Trevor Hoyt