

CIRRUS ARTS

Houston's Contemporary Arts Festival

Chris Theofanidis, artistic director
C. David McCane, administrative director

*in association with the Shepherd School of Music
at Rice University*

presents

Concert 2

with guest soloists
Sara Laimon, piano
Patti Monson, flute

Sunday, September 20, 1998
2 pm
Duncan Recital Hall

The first annual festival of contemporary music
Thursday, September 17- Sunday, September 20, 1998

Concert #2

Narcissus (1988)

Thea Musgrave (SCOT)

Patti Monson, flute; Thad Brown, electronics

Road Movies (1995)

John Adams (USA)

- 1
- 2
- 3 40% swing

Mikylah Myers, violin; Sara Laimon, piano

rapid♦fire (1993)

Jennifer Higdon (USA)

Patti Monson, flute

Nine Bagatelles (1995)

William Bolcom (USA)

- ...the ghost mazurka
- ...aimai-je un reve?
- ...forgotten prayers
- ...cycle de l'univers
- ...la belle rouquine
- ...Pegasus
- ...this endernight
- ...recess in hell
- ...Circus Galop

Sara Laimon, piano

Vermont Counterpoint (1982)

Steve Reich (USA)

Patti Monson, flute; Thad Brown, electronics

Program notes

Narcissus for solo flute with digital delay was commissioned by the NEA for Wendy Rolfe, Harvey Sollberger, Patricia Spencer, and Robert Willoughby. Inside the score, Thea Musgrave offers this synopsis...

"Narcissus wanders through the forest, observing, enjoying... unselfconscious but self-absorbed. He sees a pool of water and then as he approaches notices his reflection in the water. He is intrigued and then jumps back in fright. Once more he approaches... it is still there. Narcissus steps away from the pool to consider this phenomenon. Several times he approaches, the figure is always there watching him. In the shimmering sunlight Narcissus seems to see this glorious and attractive being moving in the rippling water. He is dazzled and slowly holds out his arms. To his amazement the figure responds. In awe and wonder Narcissus approaches closer and closer. With a sudden change of mood, Narcissus begins to question anxiously the lack of any independent response... is he being mocked? He gets more and more agitated and finally in a fury he rushes headlong into the water to grapple with the figure. The waves surge up and Narcissus is drowned. There is a distant shimmering vision of Narcissus and his reflection. Then in the setting sun the vision disappears, the forest is empty and the pool lies undisturbed."

Composer John Adams is one of the most well-known names in contemporary music. He emerged in the late 1970's as a successor to minimalist composers Steve Reich, Philip Glass, and Terry Riley, with pieces such as *Phrygian Gates*, *Harmonium*, and *Harmonielehre*. In the 1980's his work turned to opera, and he wrote pieces like *Nixon in China* and *The Death of Klinghoffer*. Although he has continued to write opera (his most recent is *I was looking at the ceiling, and I saw the Sky*), most of his recent work has been back in the orchestral and chamber arenas. **Road Movies** was written in 1995 and shows his increasing interest in things uniquely American.

rapid♦fire for solo flute was written to portray the violence of the cities; more specifically, the innocent young who are cut down in their homes and on the streets. It is an expression of rage, of pain, and of disbelief; it is fear and terror; it is an inner city cry. **rapid♦fire** was commissioned by flutist Peter Brown. It is dedicated to his memory. -J.H.

Composer William Bolcom has composed prolifically for the piano. He won the Pulitzer Prize for his *Twelve New Etudes*, and this work, **Nine Bagatelles**, which was commissioned for the Vaa Cliburn International Piano Competition, is his most recent work for piano. William Bolcom performs widely as a pianist and is on the faculty of the University of Michigan.

Vermont Counterpoint by Steve Reich was commissioned by flutist Ransom Wilson and is dedicated to Betty Freeman. It is scored for three alto flutes, three flutes, three piccolos, one taped solo part, and one live solo part. The live soloist plays alto flute, flute, and piccolo, and participates in the ongoing counterpoint as well as more extended melodies. The piece can be performed by eleven flutists, but it is intended primarily as a solo with tape. The duration is approximately nine minutes. In that comparatively short time, four compositional techniques used are primarily building up canons between short repeating melodic patterns by substituting notes for rests and then playing melodies that result from their combination. These resulting melodies or melodic patterns then become the basis for the following section as the other surrounding parts in the contrapuntal web fade out. -S.R.

Cirrus would like to thank the following people:

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For more information on Cirrus, please call (713) 863-1810.