



presents works by

Joseph Dubiel

Shih-Hui Chen

and

Richard Lavenda

Wednesday, December 6, 2000

8:00 p.m.

Lillian H. Duncan Recital Hall

Celebrating **25** *years*

THE SHEPHERD SCHOOL OF MUSIC RICE UNIVERSITY

1975-2000

PROGRAM

Quartet (1981)

Joseph Dubiel
(b. 1955)

Michael Webster, clarinet
Kenneth Goldsmith, violin
Karen Ritscher, viola
Norman Fischer, cello

Fu II (1999)

Shih-Hui Chen
(b. 1962)

Wu Man, pipa
Leone Buyse, flute
Rochelle Oddo, clarinet
Kenneth Goldsmith, violin
Norman Fischer, cello
Richard Brown, percussion
Michael Webster, conductor

INTERMISSION

Quintet for Clarinet and
String Quartet (1997)

Richard Lavenda
(b. 1955)

Blaze
Serenade
Dynamo

Michael Webster, clarinet
Kenneth Goldsmith, violin
Elbert Tsai, violin
Karen Ritscher, viola
Norman Fischer, cello

PROGRAM NOTES

Quartet Joseph Dubiel

My "Quartet" is almost twenty years old, but I still remember quite a bit about how I came to write it. I had the idea of writing a piece for a few instruments, with one instrument different from all the others, in which I wouldn't make the one-of-a-kind instrument a soloist, backed up by the others, but at the same time I would let that instrument behave differently enough from the others that its different color wouldn't be just arbitrary. I don't tell you this out of a feeling that you, as listeners, have any obligation to concern yourselves with a compositional issue that concerned me; but I do think that one way to get involved with this piece is to listen to the clarinet among the strings: how much it stands out, how much it weaves in; how obvious or hidden its comings and goings are; whether it has a particular partner (or opponent) among the strings? And the strings can be individuals, too, not always a group.

I generally don't like the program notes that try to tell you in advance what you're going to hear; and I particularly don't for this piece, where a lot of the biggest changes happen in such a way that a new kind of action may not be clearly recognizable until after it's been going on for a while. This means that it may not always be easy to know where you are in this piece; but I hope you'll be able to accept this trait as something like shyness, and give the piece a little time to declare itself. (It only asks for about eight minutes — one of the few things it can be good to know in advance.)

— Note by the composer

Fu II Shih-Hui Chen

Fu literally means "ambush," while in terms of *pipa* technique, *Fu* is the action of abruptly stopping the strings after striking them violently. The extreme contrast between the sharp percussive attack and the silence which follows provided the generative kernel for these pieces.

In addition to the ensemble version of *Fu II*, there is a solo version of this piece entitled *Fu I*. The *pipa* part in both works is nearly identical. The addition of ensemble in *Fu II*, however, puts the *pipa* in a new dimension as the relationship between soloist and ensemble is developed. The soloist and ensemble are in direct opposition in the first part of *Fu II* in terms of texture, dynamic, and character. Gradually, they begin to appropriate materials from each other leading to the last third, when they share similar materials.

Fu II was made possible by a grant from the Fromm Foundation at Harvard University.

— Note by the composer

Quintet for Clarinet and String Quartet Richard Lavenda

My *Quintet for Clarinet and String Quartet* was commissioned by my friend Richard Nunemaker, a superb clarinetist whose dedication to new music is legendary. He and the T'ANG String Quartet premiered it and recorded it on RedMark Recordings, CD 9213.

Nunemaker asked me for a big piece, one that might fill an entire half of a program, as it does tonight. "Think Brahms *Quintet*," he suggested. That challenge and inspiration was on my mind as I composed, and while the resulting piece is not, you may be happy to learn, as long as the Brahms, it is nonetheless a substantial workout for all involved.

I composed the *Quintet* in the summer and fall of 1997. It is in three movements, each with its own character and identity, but each sharing certain harmonies and gestures with the others. One of these common traits is that the clarinet, while certainly prominent, is by no means always the soloist. Indeed, all the parts share equally in the presentation and development of the music, and the clarinet is at various times a member of the ensemble or an accompanist, as well as the soloist.

— Note by the composer



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