

MUSIC OF HEAVEN AND EARTH
OLIVIER MESSIAEN:
A CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

CONCERT 3

Visions de l'Amen

and

*Et exspecto
resurrectionem
mortuorum*

Saturday, October 25, 2008

8:00 p.m.

Stude Concert Hall

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music

PROGRAM

Visions de l'Amen (1943)
for two pianos

Olivier Messiaen
(1908-1992)

1. *Amen de la creation*
2. *Amen des étoiles, se la planète à l'anneau*
3. *Amen de l'Agonie de Jésus*
4. *Amen du Désir*
5. *Amen des Anges, des Saints, du chant des oiseaux*
6. *Amen du Jugement*
7. *Amen de la Consommation*

James Winn, piano 1
Brian Connelly, piano 2

INTERMISSION

Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum (1964)
for winds, brass, and percussion

1. "Des profondeurs de l'abime, je crie vers toi, Seigneur:
Seigneur, écoute ma voix!"
2. "Le Christ, ressuscité des morts, ne meurt plus;
la mort n'a plus sur lui d'empire."
3. "L'heure vient où les morts entendront la voix
du Fils de Dieu ..."
4. "Ils ressusciteront, glorieux, avec un nom nouveau
dans le concert joyeux des étoiles et les acclamations
des fils du Ciel"
5. *Et j'entendis la voix d'une foule immense ..."*

Cristian Măcelaru, conductor
Shepherd School instrumentalists

*The performance is approximately
one and three-quarter hours with intermission.*

*The reverberative acoustics of Stude Concert Hall magnify the slightest
sound made by the audience. Your care and courtesy will be appreciated.
The taking of photographs and use of recording equipment are prohibited.*

Flute Catherine Ramirez Heather Zinninger Natalie Zeldin	E-flat Clarinet Matthew Nelson	Piccolo Trumpet Larry Hernandez
Piccolo Henrik Heide Matthew Roitstein	Bassoon Gwen Seaton Miles Maner Thomas DeWitt	Trombone Benjamin Zilber Samuel Jackson Travis Sheaffer
Oboe Malia Smith Jayne Drummond Erin Tsai	Contrabassoon David Richmond	Bass Trombone John Stanley
English Horn Clara Blood	Horn Julie Thayer Roman Ponomariov Scott Strong Nicholas Hartman	Tuba David Kirk
Clarinet André Dyachenko Maiko Sasaki Eric Jacobs	Trumpet Erik Finley Matthew Muehl-Miller	Saxhorn (Tuba) Andrew Welborn
Bass Clarinet Benjamin Mitchell	Percussion Greg Tsalikis Casey Cangelosi Christian Slagle Craig Hauschildt Robert Garza Hoi Yan Law	

NOTES FROM THE COMPOSER

Visions de l'Amen (Visions of the Amen)

1. Amen of creation.

"And God said, Let there be Light! And there was Light!" The first piano plays a double rhythmic carillon pedal-point in palindromic rhythms. The second piano plays the "theme of creation," the basic theme of the composition. The piece begins in the mystery of this primeval galaxy which already contains the potential power of the Light (and the bells quivering in the light). Light – and consequently Life.

2. Amen of the stars and of the ringed planet.

A brutal and savage dance. Violently spinning stars, suns, and Saturn with its multi-colored rings. "God summons them and they say: Amen, we are here!" The piece evokes the life of the planets, and the amazing rainbow which colors the spinning rings of Saturn.

3. Amen of the agony of Jesus.

Jesus suffers and weeps. "My Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink of it, Thy will be done."

4. Amen of desire.

Desire is understood in its highest spiritual sense. There are two "themes of desire." The first is slow and ecstatic, the longing of profound tenderness, the tranquil anticipation of Paradise. The second is much more vehement; the soul is drawn by an irresistible love which reaches a crisis of yearning. In the coda the two principal voices seem to melt into one another, and only the harmonious silence of heaven remains.

5. *Amen of angels, saints, and birdsong.*

Song of the purity of the Saints: Amen. The exultant singing of birds: Amen. The angels bow before the throne: Amen.

6. *Amen of judgement.*

Three icy notes, like the bells of evidence. Verily I say unto thee, Amen.

7. *Amen of consummation.*

Paradise. The life of the glorious body in chimes of light. The second piano takes up the "theme of creation" and spins out a long chorale of glory. The first piano intones brilliant, scintillating chords and rhythms in increasingly condensed rhythmic canons. Sapphire, emerald, topaz, hyacinth, amethyst – the entire rainbow of precious stones of the Apocalypse, dancing, coloring, shocking, resounding, and perfuming the light of Life.

Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum

(I Await the Resurrection of the Dead)

This work was commissioned by André Malraux and was written and orchestrated in 1964. The scoring is intended for vast spaces, such as churches, cathedrals, the open air, or even mountaintops.

1. *"Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, o Lord. Lord, hear my voice."*

"Theme of the depths" in the lower brass and tam-tams – the six horns in harmony playing colored complexes – a cry from the depths.

2. *"Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him."*

A melody defined by its absences: the cessation of sound provides the contours. The cowbells and tubular bells work out a desi-tala (an Indian rhythmic pattern) underneath a trumpet melody, which springs from the colored complexes of the woodwind. Silences: they are as important as the music. Conclusion on solo clarinet and English horn.

3. *"The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God."*

The voice that shall awaken the dead is symbolized three times. First, in the woodwinds with the disjointed song, in contrasting dynamics, of the mysterious uirapuru, an Amazonian bird. Secondly, with peals on the tubular bells in various permutations. Thirdly, with a prolonged roll on the gongs and tam-tams.

4. *"It is raised in glory – a new name written – when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy."*

The three mysterious strokes of the tam-tam which continually interrupt the course of the piece, getting louder at each recurrence, symbolize both the solemn moment of resurrection and the distant melody of the stars. The Easter introat of the bells and cowbells, and the alleluia of the trumpets, with its halo of harmonics, symbolize the "gift of light." The Calandra lark, found in Greece and Spain, played on woodwinds, symbolizes joy. The angels and stars, and all the themes (even that of the first piece, played on the trombones) unite to acclaim the resurrected dead in their glory, by the superimposition of four levels of music, four glinting colors and four sound-complexes.

5. *"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude."*

The orchestral tutti and the gongs play this chorale-like movement, which remains vast, monolithic, and simple.

BIOGRAPHIES

JAMES WINN, piano and composition professor at the University of Nevada, Reno, since 1997, made his professional debut with the Denver Symphony at the age of thirteen, and has been performing widely in North America, Europe, and Japan ever since. With his duo-piano partner, Cameron Grant, he was a recipient of the top prize given in the two-piano category of the 1980 Munich Competition. Dr. Winn has been a solo pianist with the New York City Ballet, a member of the New York New Music Ensemble and of Hexagon (woodwind quintet plus piano), as well as a frequent guest with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Speculum, the Washington Square Contemporary Music Series, the Chamber Music Society of Sacramento, the Group for Contemporary Music, and Bargemusic. Well-known as a specialist in new music, he has been involved in numerous world premieres and premiere recordings by many renowned composers, among them thirteen Pulitzer Prize winners (John Adams, Michael Colgrass, Mario Davidovsky, Norman Dello Joio, Jacob Druckman, Aaron Kernis, George Perle, Wayne Peterson, Mel Powell, Joseph Schwantner, Melinda Wagner, Charles Wuorinen, and Ellen Zwilich). He is currently a member of Argenta, which is the resident chamber group of the University of Nevada, the pianist of the Telluride Chamber Music Festival, and performs regularly in recital with internationally acclaimed New York based violinist Rolf Schulte. An active recording artist, Winn is featured in more than three dozen CDs as soloist, chamber musician, and composer. Dr. Winn's compositions have been performed internationally. He has received the College of Liberal Arts' prestigious Mousel/Feltner award for creative activity, an Artist Fellowship Grant in composition from the Nevada Arts Council, and, in 2007, was the recipient of an Award for Creative Activity from Board of Regents of the Nevada System of Higher Education.

*Performances of pianist BRIAN CONNELLY span an unusually broad range of historical and modern repertoires. Born in Detroit, he attended the University of Michigan, where he studied with pianists György Sándor and Theodore Lettvin. Mr. Connelly has premiered works by a host of contemporary composers such as William Albright, Karim Al-Zand, Derek Bermel, William Bolcom, Anthony Brandt, Paul Cooper, David Diamond, Ross Lee Finney, Arthur Gottschalk, Richard Lavenda, and many others. He is a frequent guest with new music groups such as the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble and the Chicago Contemporary Players, and he was recently featured in the Carnegie Hall series Making Music in a tribute to William Bolcom. Known for his affinity for the works of Olivier Messiaen, Connelly's performances this season include recitals of Messiaen's piano music, the song cycles, the chamber music, **Oiseaux exotiques** with conductor Larry Rachleff and the Shepherd School Chamber Orchestra, and the **Trois petites liturgies de la Présence Divine** with conductor Donald Runnicles at the Grand Teton Music Festival. Mr. Connelly is also widely respected as a scholar and performer of historical instruments, appearing in the United States and Europe on 18th- and 19th-century pianos by Walther, Rosenberger, Graf, Pleyel, Bösendorfer, and Streicher. He performed nearly 150 solo and chamber works for Da Camera of Houston in its path-breaking first six seasons, and he has for thirteen years been a member of the renowned ensemble CONTEXT. Mr. Connelly has appeared with many of today's most respected instrumentalists, such as violinist Sergiu Luca, cellists Michael Kannen, Gary Hoffman, and Lynn Harrell, flutist Carol Wincenc, clarinetist Charles Neidich, and pianists Robert Levin and André-Michel Schub, and he has shared ragtime recitals with jazz pianist Marcus Roberts. He teaches piano performance and chamber music at the Shepherd School.*

Romanian violinist, composer, and conductor CRISTIAN MĂCELARU started studying music at the age of six in his native country. After winning top prizes in the National Music Olympiad of Romania (1994, 1996, 1997), Mr. Măcelaru attended the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan, where he furthered his studies in both violin and conducting. Upon his graduation, he moved to Miami, where he received a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Miami. While in Miami, Mr. Măcelaru was assistant conductor of the University of Miami Symphony Orchestra, associate conductor of the Florida Youth Orchestra, conductor and founder of the Clarke Chamber Players, and concertmaster of the Miami Symphony Orchestra. He has performed recitals throughout the United States, Europe, and China, as well as with orchestras such as the Houston Symphony Orchestra, the Miami Symphony Orchestra, the Naples Philharmonic, and the Banatul Philharmonic. Mr. Măcelaru recently received the Master of Music degree in violin performance from The Shepherd School of Music under the guidance of Sergiu Luca and completed a Master of Music degree in conducting with Larry Rachleff. He is currently Staff Conductor at the Shepherd School, a conductor with the Houston Youth Symphony, and the founder and artistic director of the Crisalis Music Project. Visit www.CrisalisMusicProject.org.

UPCOMING MESSIAEN CONCERTS

Concert 4 – Wednesday, October 29, 8:00 p.m., Edythe Bates Old Recital Hall
John Meier, organist

Program: **The Glorified Bodies** (for organ solo).

Messiaen was one of history's greatest composers for the organ.

He described this 50-minute cycle as "seven visions of the life of the resurrected."

Concert 5 – Sunday, November 16, 7:00 p.m., Duncan Recital Hall
Susanne Mentzer, mezzo-soprano

Brian Connelly, piano

Program: **Harawi**.

Messiaen's largest cycle, the volcanic **Harawi – Songs of Love and Death**, is perhaps the twentieth century's greatest song cycle.

Presented with short instrumental works.

Concert 6 – Sunday, November 23, 4:00 p.m., Duncan Recital Hall
Brian Connelly, piano

Selections from **Catalogue of the Birds** (for piano solo).

Messiaen's rarely-performed "bird music" for piano is some of his most difficult, imaginative, and exuberant. This final program includes selections from the massive **Catalogue of the Birds**. Presented with surtitles that accompany Messiaen's depictions of birds, landscape, and sky.

