Penthode (1985) – Elliott Carter

Penthode is concerned with experiences of connectedness and isolation. Twenty players are divided into five groups of four, each group comprising instruments of different types. Each group has its own repertory of expressive characters embodied in its own special field of speeds and musical intervals. While the five groups oppose or combine with each other, one long continuous line passed from one instrument to another binds the first and third sections of the score together. The idea of a continuously unfolding line passed from one player to another was suggested by performances I heard in Berlin in 1964 of North Indian Dhrupad music by the Dagar Brothers. The score of Penthode was commissioned by the Ensemble Intercontemporain and is dedicated to it and its initiator, Pierre Boulez. Composed during part of 1984-85, it was given its premiere under Pierre Boulez’s direction at the Albert Hall in London, July 26, 1985.

– Elliott Carter

Accord in the Corral (2016) – Tobin Chodos

world premiere


Todd Moellenberg, soloist

I. Vivace molto ritmico e preciso
II. Lento e deserto
III. Vivace cantabile
IV. Allegro risoluto, molto ritmico
V. Presto luminoso: Fluido, costante, sempre molto ritmico

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– Elliott Carter

Elliott Carter once said, “I think that my music is like the ideal form of American democracy – dissenting independent voices create harmony.” 2016, the year in which I composed Accord in the Corral, was a year that underscored the difference between the ideal Carter had in mind and the reality of American democracy in practice. This difference – between, on the one hand, the harmonious interactions of authentically dissenting voices, and on the other, the blunt uniformity of manufactured accord – is the concept underlying this piece.

– Tobin Chodos
aleck karis has performed recitals, chamber music, and concerts across the Americas, Europe, Japan, and China. as the pianist of the new music ensemble speculum musicae he has participated in over a hundred premieres and performed at major American and European festivals. his appearances with orchestra have ranged from concerts by mozart, beethoven and chopin to those of stravinsky, messiaen and carter. his six solo discs on bridge records include chopin/carter/ schuman, mozart, stravinsky, cage, fendman/webner/wolpe, and poulsen. his two discs on roméo records are music of philip glass and late chopin. his recording of fieldman’s last work, piano, violin, viola, cello was listed as one of the top 25 classical releases of 2015 in the new york times and one of the 10best classical releases of 2015 in the sunday times of london. of his recent poulsen disc, icon magazine wrote: “aleck karis plays with dazzling, radiant, detail throughout.” he has studied with william daghilian, arrt balsam and brendir webster, and is a distinguished professor of music at the uc san diego.

torin chodos has a unique interdisciplinary practice that combines composition, performance and scholarship. he has received wide acclaim for his work as a pianist and composer, including international attention for his recent collaborations with larry polansky (three pieces for two pianos, new world recordings) and shanghai-based producer peng fei (third month). he has been named a fellow of the dave brubeck institute, the asian cultural council, and the ucross foundation. his scholarly work is primarily concerned with the relationship of economic deregulation to american aesthetics. his undergraduate degree is from columbia university, and he is a doctoral candidate in the uc san diego department of music.

todd moellenberg is a pianist and performance artist currently pursuing his doctor of musical arts in contemporary performance at uc san diego with aleck karis. recent performances include the work of julius eastman with monday evening concerts. claude vivier at the darmstadt international summer course for new music in germany, and stockhausen’s kontakte with percussionist ryan nestor, heralded by the los angeles times for their “striking virtuosity and theatricality.” todd’s creative work encompasses durational performance, public intervention, and poetry. recent projects include the usual traffic, a work for cellist and drummer in collaboration with judith hamann, an artist residency with the public art series parkeology, the fourth iteration of his daylong public performance only time on uc san diego’s library walk, and his long poem flood, published in chapbook form.

department of music
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barbara l. jackson, moso
linda higgins, fiscal manager
elizabeth cuevas, fiscal assistant
jessica c. flores, production manager
andrew munsey, recording engineer
forest reid, recording assistant

david espiritú, jr., technical production specialist
stage crew: daniel barbarita, mengdi emma huang, mikhails powers,
samantha ramming, samuel stewart
meghan roos, promotions manager
rachel beetz, program associate

audience members are reminded to please silence all phones and noise generating devices before the performance. as a matter of courtesy and copyright law, no unauthorized recording or photographing is allowed in the hall. uc san diego is a non-smoking campus.

the piano is something of a constant in the first movement of the concerto, leaving vast swaths of material in its wake for the ensemble to scavenge. in a charming example of the ensemble’s resourcefulness, a galloping flute plays a cagott melody out of the debris, beckoning the rest of the winds to tag along. the piano is often foregrounded in these moments, becoming overburdened by processual demands. solos for the instrument function as a restart button, but things tend to escalate again quickly. the second movement, by contrast, explodes only once, but ligeri prolongs the calmness. is it parodied underlining by the eclectic inclusion of an ocarina, slide whistle, and harmonica, or is it somehow amplified? the third movement begins benignly by comparison, the piano providing a rhythmic field that the winds and percussive section play against. the verticals seem to marry the two, but its poignancy is fleeting: after an empty threat that is quickly dispelled, a recurring oboe line is presented, leading by an ensemble cast, each of its members increasingly desperate to get a note in. the piano is often the piano soloist – todd moellenberg

piccolo/alt flute – michael matsuno
oboe/english horn – sarah skuster
clarinet/e-flat clarinet – michiko ogawa
bassoon – david savage

horn – jane zwerneman
trumpet – rachel allen
trombone – eric starr

percussion – ben rampel
violin – erik carlson
viola – banya macadam-somer
cello – judith hamann

double bass – matthew kline

academic events

piano studio students
march 7, 2017 – 2:00 p.m.
konrad prebys music center

wedse7 distinguished lecture series
henry spiller
march 8, 2017 – 7:00 p.m.
konrad prebys music center
recital hall

monday night jazz:
95jc jazz ensembles
march 13, 2017 – 7:00 p.m.
konrad prebys music center

upcoming events:

stephanie richards and phantom station:
conduction for butch morris, part iii
march 13, 2017 – 8:00 p.m.
the loft at uc san diego

konrad prebys music center
experimental theater

karis piano studio students
march 7, 2017 – 2:00 p.m.
konrad prebys concert hall

wedse7 distinguished lecture series
henry spiller
march 8, 2017 – 7:00 p.m.
konrad prebys music center
recital hall

konrad prebys concert hall

konrad prebys music center
experimental theater

uc san diego gospel choir
march 14, 2017 – 8:00 p.m.
mandeville auditorium

computer music focus: neil rolnick
march 17, 2017 – 5:00 p.m.
konrad prebys concert hall

konrad prebys music center

konrad prebys concert hall