



PALIMPSEST
the music of Elliott Carter

Wed. May 22 @7PM
CONCERT HALL

presents

Dean's Night at the Prebys

Palimpsest

The Music of Elliott Carter

Conducted by Donald Palma / Curated by Aleck Karis

Double Trio (2011)

Leah Asher, violin
Judith Hamann, cello
Calvin Price, trumpet
Eric Starr, trombone
Kyle Blair, piano
Stephen Solook, percussion

colla voce by Stephen Lewis (world premiere) (2013)

Tiffany DuMouchelle, soprano
Batya MacAdam-Somer, violin
Leah Asher, viola
Jennifer Bewerse, cello
Scott Worthington, bass
Christine Tivolacci, flute
Jonathan Davis, oboe
Samuel Dunscombe, clarinet
Todd Moellenberg, piano
Ryan Nestor, percussion

Triple Duo (1983)

Batya MacAdam-Somer, violin
Judith Hamann, cello
Rachel Beetz, flute
Curt Miller, clarinet
Kyle Adam Blair, piano
Jonathan Hepfer, percussion

intermission

Hiyoku (2001)

Samuel Dunscombe, clarinet
Curt Miller, clarinet

Elliott's Instruments by Rand Steiger (2010)

Batya MacAdam-Somer, violin
Judith Hamann, cello
Rachel Beetz, flute
Curt Miller, clarinet
Kyle Adam Blair, piano
Jonathan Hepfer, percussion

A Mirror on Which to Dwell (1975)

Alice Teyssier, soprano
Batya MacAdam-Somer, violin
Leah Asher, viola
Jennifer Bewerse, cello
Scott Worthington, bass
Christine Tivolacci, flute
Jonathan Davis, oboe
Samuel Dunscombe, clarinet
Todd Moellenberg, piano
Ryan Nestor, percussion

Remembering Elliott Carter

Composer Elliott Carter passed away November 5, 2012 just five weeks short of his 104th birthday. In recent years, from his perch above West 12th Street, flowed a most remarkable stream of works of imagination, craft, wit and humanity. It seemed the older he became the more he had to say. And the more the world wanted to listen. Many of us had the great privilege of working very closely with Elliott in numerous orchestral, chamber and solo settings. Always a gentleman, this sweet-natured man composed some of the most innovative and challenging music of our time. He was always available to help musicians, young and experienced alike, navigate the complexities and dramatic intentions of his works. His life and work in many ways defined the American experience and his compositions gave a new voice to the complexities of our society. It was indeed a gift to have him among us for so long. For over a century he was our past, our present and our future.

- Donald Palma

Double Trio

Brass instruments, especially the trumpet and trombone, recently interested me for use in chamber music because of their ability to play softly and use different kinds of mutes. Combining them with solo strings fascinated me so I wrote the *Double Trio*. This work was composed for the opening of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts' Bourgie Concert Hall in September of 2011.

The *Double Trio* is dedicated to Pierre Bourgie.

- Elliott Carter

colla voce

colla voce (2013) is a companion piece to Elliott Carter's *A Mirror on Which to Dwell*. I composed a textless soprano part so that I could create a more nuanced and intricate dynamic between the voice and the ensemble--a dynamic easily reduced to "soloist and accompaniment" when words are involved. The voice possesses great power. It grips listeners, commands attention like no other instrument. Yet this power is also its curse. The voice always commands attention, and it cannot be fully united into an ensemble of instruments. Yet it can come close, and I find it seductive to push the boundary. *colla voce* opens with the instruments playing an increasingly unstable drone, around and through which the voice and ensemble weave an intricate web of sound objects. As the piece progresses, the soprano takes over the leading role and the ensemble reacts. This transformation explores the threshold between the human voice and the constructed instrument in various ways, with specific inspiration coming from Debussy, Wagner, Gerard Grisey, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Salvatore Sciarrino, Scriabin, Amon Tobin, Radiohead, Chinary Ung, Don Delillo, Ravel, Haruki Murakami, wine, coffee, and dreams I used to have as a child involving impossibly beautiful sound masses both low and high.

- Stephen Lewis

Triple Duo

Triple Duo, for an ensemble of six musicians, is a work, as its name implies, that treats the group as three pairs of instruments: flute/clarinet, violin/cello, piano/percussion. Each of these pairs has its own repertory of ideas and moods. This free fantasy involves various contrasts, conflicts and reconciliations between the three duos. *Triple Duo* was composed during 1982 in Waccabuc, New York.

- Elliott Carter

Hiyoku

Hiyoku was written for the clarinetists Ayako and Charlie Neidich, whose performances were so outstanding that I chose to write this piece in the fall of 2001 for them. I asked Ayako to suggest a title and she explained it: “an old poetic word (for Haiku) meaning two wings, with the connotation of two birds flying together in the wind. It also has the connotation of two people traveling through life together.”

- Elliott Carter

Elliott's Instruments

Elliott's Instruments was commissioned by the Ernst von Siemens Musik Stiftung for Boston Musica Viva, to celebrate Elliott Carter's centennial. One characteristic of Elliott Carter's music that I have always admired is the complex polyphony that grows out of the simultaneous presence of multiple, contrasting musical streams. I have aimed for something similar in *Elliott's Instruments*, which I offer as a companion piece to *Triple Duo*. It draws on all of the solo and chamber music that Carter wrote for these six instruments since the Sonata for Cello and Piano of 1948. References to the Sonata, *Triple Duo*, *Night Fantasies*, and the Duo for Violin and Piano appear throughout the work, and a reference to each of the other twenty pieces appears once, in chronological order. I see the piece as two simultaneous conversations, one among all these pieces, and another between Carter and myself. There are a few brief quotations, but mostly the piece consists of passages that are reminiscent of, yet not identical to, the sources.

- Rand Steiger

A Mirror on Which to Dwell

When I agreed to write a cycle of songs for Speculum Musicae I decided, first, that it should be for soprano and chamber orchestra. The poems of Elizabeth Bishop impressed me because they have a clear verbal coherence as well as an imaginative use of syllabic sounds that suggest the singing voice. I was very much in sympathy with their point of view, for there is almost always a secondary layer of meaning, sometimes ironic, sometimes passionate, that gives a special ambiance, often contradictory, to what the words say. The order of the songs is entirely mine, alternating as they do between considerations about nature, love and isolation.

A Mirror on Which to Dwell, a line from the poem, *Insomnia*, is the title I chose partly because it seemed to characterize the general world of the poems, partly because I wanted the music to be a mirror of the words and partly because Speculum Musicae, the organization which commissioned the work in honor of the U.S. Bicentennial. Its first performance was by Susan Davenny Wyner and Speculum Musicae, Richard Fitz conducting, in New York City on February 24, 1976. The work is dedicated to the artists that gave its first performance.

- Elliott Carter

ELLIOTT CARTER

Composer

Composer Elliott Carter is internationally recognized as one of the most distinguished American voices in classical music, and a leading figure of modernism in the 20th and 21st centuries. He was hailed as “America’s great musical poet” by Andrew Porter and noted as “one of America’s most distinguished creative artists in any field” by his friend Aaron Copland. Carter’s prolific career spanned over 75 years, with more than 150 pieces, ranging from chamber music to orchestra to opera, often marked with a sense of wit and humor. He received numerous prestigious honors, including the prestigious Pulitzer Prize on two occasions: for his String Quartet No. 2, 1960 and String Quartet No. 3, 1973. Other awards include Germany’s Ernst Von Siemens Music Prize, and the Prince Pierre Foundation Music Award. Carter was the first composer to receive the United States National Medal of Arts, and was one of a handful of composers elected to the American Classical Music Hall of Fame. He was recognized twice by the Government of France: named Commander of the “Ordre des Arts et des Lettres,” and received the insignia of Commander of the Legion of Honor in September 2012.

Born in New York City on December 11, 1908, Elliott Carter was first encouraged toward a career in classical music by his friend and mentor Charles Ives. He studied under composers Walter Piston and Gustav Holst while attending Harvard University, and later traveled to Paris, studying with Nadia Boulanger. Following his studies in France, he returned to New York, and devoted his time to composing and teaching, holding posts over the years at the Peabody Conservatory, Yale University, Cornell University, and The Juilliard School, among others.

Carter’s early works demonstrated a neoclassical style, highlighted by masterpieces such as Symphony No. 1 (1942) and *Holiday Overture* (1944), influenced by his contemporaries Copland, Hindemith and Stravinsky. After 1950, he shifted his compositional style away from neoclassicism and developed a unique and signature rhythmic and harmonic language, often using tempo modulation. Igor Stravinsky hailed his Double Concerto for harpsichord, piano and two chamber orchestras (1961) and Piano Concerto (1967) as “masterpieces.”

Carter wrote many pieces based on literature or poetry over the span of his career, setting texts by acclaimed American authors and poets, such as John Ashberry, Elizabeth Bishop, E.E. Cummings, Robert Frost, Wallace Stevens and William Carlos Williams. A creative burst of imaginative works began in earnest during the 1980s, with works such as *Night Fantasies* (1980), *Triple Duo* (1983), *Penthode* (1985), and major orchestral essays such as Oboe Concerto (1986–87), *Three Occasions for Orchestra* (1989), Violin Concerto (1990), and *Symphonia: sum fluxae pretium spei* (1993–96). Carter’s only opera, *What Next?* (1997–98) was introduced by Daniel Barenboim, a champion of the composer’s music, in Berlin in 1999. Carter’s remarkable late-career creative burst continued at an astonishing rate, with more than 60 works coming after the age of 90, with major additions to the modern repertoire, including his Cello Concerto (2000), *Of Rewaking* (2002), *Dialogues* (2003), *Three Illusions for Orchestra* (2004), *Mosaic* (2004) and *In the Distances of Sleep* (2006).

Carter celebrated his 100th birthday in 2008, a year marked with salutes and tributes at concert venues and music festivals around the globe. On the occasion of his birthday, New York’s Carnegie Hall presented a new work, *Interventions for piano and orchestra* (2007), performed by the Boston Symphony with James Levine and Daniel Barenboim.

In his final years, Carter continued to complete works with astounding frequency. His Flute Concerto (2008) was premiered by Emmanuel Pahud and the International Chamber Music Ensemble; *What are Years* (2009), commissioned by the Aldeburgh and Tanglewood festivals; and Concertino for Bass Clarinet and Chamber Orchestra (2009), premiered by Virgil Blackwell and Toronto’s New Music Concerts Ensemble. An all-Carter concert in honor of his 103rd birthday in December 2011 featured the world premieres of String Trio (2011) and *A Sunbeam’s Architecture* (2010), as well as two surprise pieces composed in the month preceding the concert: *Rigmarole and Mnemosyné*. Among Carter’s final works are *Dialogues II* (2012), a concerto for piano and orchestra dedicated to Daniel Barenboim and premiered just weeks before his passing at the age of 103, and *Instances* (2012) for the Seattle Symphony.

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DONALD PALMA

Conductor

Donald Palma has an active career as conductor, performer and educator. With the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Don received the ASCAP/Chamber Music America Award for Adventurous Programming twice during his tenure as Music Director. He has made three critically acclaimed recordings of American music with the Odense Symphony in Denmark featuring works of Elliott Carter, Stephen Jaffe and Peter Lieberson. The Lieberson CD was nominated for a Grammy award in 2006.

A founding member of the world famous Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Don has toured the globe and recorded over 50 CDs for Deutsche Grammophon including the Grammy award winning *Shadow Dances* featuring works of Igor Stravinsky. He has appeared at the Casals Festival in Puerto Rico, conducting a staged and televised production of Stravinsky's *L'histoire du Soldat* performed by NEC students and was part of the George Crumb 70th celebration conducting *Ancient Voices of Children* at Lincoln Center. An avid educator, Don has conducted at the Toho School in Tokyo, the Juilliard School, the Connecticut All-State Orchestra and SUNY Purchase. He is also on the faculty of the Yale School of Music and has given master classes all over the globe.

A native of New York City, Don was educated at the Juilliard School and joined Leopold Stokowski's American Symphony Orchestra at the age of 19. At 22 he joined the Los Angeles Philharmonic but soon returned to NYC to rejoin the recently formed Orpheus and Speculum Musicae, which then won the coveted Naumburg Award and Young Concert Artists management. With Speculum Musicae he participated in the first performance and recording of *A Mirror on Which to Dwell*. He was principal bass of the National Arts Centre Orchestra under Trevor Pinnock and played principal bass for Leonard Bernstein for his recording of *West Side Story*. Don also joined the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra for their recording of the complete Wagner Ring Cycle under James Levine and was a featured artist on Kathleen Battle's CD *Grace*.

Don has performed with the Emerson, the Juilliard and the Borromeo Quartets, Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society, Da Camera Chamber Music Society and has appeared in recitals with Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Jean-Pierre Rampal and Jan DeGaetani. In recent seasons, he has conducted and performed concerts in New York and Boston celebrating the 100th and 103rd birthdays of Elliott Carter, toured Europe with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, performed and recorded with pop icon Sting in New York City, and appeared with Brazilian singer Ivan Lins at "Jazz at Lincoln Center." Don maintains a busy schedule of conducting, performing and teaching throughout the northeast and worldwide. He is currently Music Director of the Symphony-by-the-Sea in Marblehead, MA. This season he performed and recorded with the Wayne Shorter Quartet and appeared with Orpheus and Richard Goode in Carnegie Hall. He will visit Mexico to conduct the Xalapa Symphony Orchestra in June. He resides in Newton, MA with his wife, Maira, and fifteen year-old son, Miles.

STEPHEN LEWIS

Composer

Stephen Lewis (b. 1983) is a composer, pianist, and conductor originally from Western Massachusetts. Stephen has performed contemporary and classical music in solo and ensemble concerts at Miller Theater in New York, Severance Hall in Cleveland, the Walt Disney and Zipper Halls in Los Angeles, as well as at smaller venues throughout the United States. He has been commissioned by or written works for UC-San Diego's Palimpsest, the Diagenesis Duo, ensemble et cetera, the Wellesley Composers Conference, Trio Kobayashi, and a number of individuals. An outstanding collaborative pianist, Stephen is in demand as a professional accompanist and vocal coach. Stephen is currently a PhD candidate in Composition at UC-San Diego, where he studies with Rand Steiger. He also plans on earning his DMA in Contemporary Piano Performance, studying with Aleck Karis. Stephen is a graduate of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, where he majored in both Composition and Piano Performance.

RAND STEIGER

Composer

Rand Steiger's compositions have been commissioned and performed by many ensembles including the American Composers Orchestra, Ensemble Intercontemporain, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, where he held the position of Composer Fellow. He has engaged in computer music research throughout his career, including collaboration on works with real-time signal processing with Olivier Pasquet at Ircam, and Miller Puckette at UCSD, where he is the composer-in-residence of the California Institute for Information and Telecommunications Research. Next season six new works will be premiered by the International Contemporary Ensemble on a portrait concert at Miller Theater in New York, and a new CD will be released by the Talea Ensemble. That will be followed by a cycle of works for orchestra and electronics for the Boston Modern Orchestra Project. For much of his career Steiger was also active as a conductor, and lead many premieres, (including works by Andriessen, Babbitt, Boulez, Ferneyhough, Harvey, Riley, Rzewski, and Saariaho) and recordings (including operas by Hilda Paredes and Anthony Davis, and other works by Carter, Reynolds, Stockhausen, Subotnick, and Xenakis.)

TIFFANY DU MOUCHELLE

Soprano

Tiffany Du Mouchelle expands the definition of the classical voice for the 21st century. A passionate performer who holds nothing back, she is known for her musical versatility, an electric stage presence and exceptional dramatic sensibilities. Her performances span the globe, from Lincoln Center in NYC to Disney Hall in Los Angeles, the Acropolium in Carthage, The American Center in Egypt, and even to Yoro Village in Papua New Guinea. A specialist in new music, Ms. Du Mouchelle frequently commissions and premieres new works for the voice. Ms. Du Mouchelle is a cultural ambassador for Cultures in Harmony, an NGO that focuses on cultural diplomacy through music. She has a strong interest in preserving the indigenous music of the world, and has contributed in numerous research and outreach projects in the Pacific Islands. She is the co-founder of Aurora Borealis, a voice/percussion duo with Stephen Solook.

ALICE TEYSSIER

Soprano

"An arresting soprano, in all senses", Alice Teyssier brings "something new, something fresh, but also something uncommonly beautiful" to her performances. Hailed as possessing a voice with "unusual depth," Alice's mission is to share lesser-known masterpieces with a wider audience. A uniquely gifted advocate for new music, Alice collaborates tirelessly with living composers to create new works for the singing voice. Also a professional flutist, she has given residencies for composers and performers of new music at such universities as Harvard, Leeds, Huddersfield, Oberlin and SUNY-Buffalo. She has performed numerous premieres on Los Angeles' renowned Monday Evening Concerts series, including works by S. Sciarrino, R. Riehm, C. Miller and K. Lang. Last spring, she was featured on a San Diego Symphony Masterworks concert, singing Fauré and Villa-Lobos. Alice is also devoted to historically informed and technically sound performances of early music; she performs regularly with the Bach Collegium San Diego and is a core member of La Perla Bizzarra (Germany) as well as the Musical Oratory. She has earned degrees from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music (BM, MM Opera Theater), the Conservatoire de Strasbourg (Specialization Diploma) and is currently pursuing a Doctorate of Musical Arts at UCSD, where she studies with Susan Narucki.

ELLIOTT CARTER

A Mirror on Which to Dwell

(Six Poems of Elizabeth Bishop *)

for Soprano and Chamber Orchestra

1. Anaphora

Each day with so much ceremony
begins, with birds, with bells,
with whistles from a factory;
such white-gold skies our eyes
first open on, such brilliant walls
that for a moment we wonder
‘Where is the music coming from, the energy?
The day was meant for what ineffable creature
we must have missed? ‘ Oh promptly he
appears and takes his earthly nature
instantly, instantly falls
victim of long intrigue,
assuming memory and mortal
mortal fatigue.

More slowly falling into sight
and showering into stippled faces,
darkening, condensing all his light;
in spite of all the dreaming
squandered upon him with that look,
suffers our uses and abuses,
sinks through the drift of bodies,
sinks through the drift of classes
to evening to the beggar in the park
who, weary, without lamp or book
prepares stupendous studies:
the fiery event
of every day in endless
endless assent.

2. Argument

Days that cannot bring you near
or will not,
Distance trying to appear
something more obstinate,
argue argue argue with me
endlessly
neither proving you less wanted nor less dear.

Distance: Remember all that land
beneath the plane;
that coastline
of dim beaches deep in sand
stretching indistinguishably
all the way,
all the way to where my reasons end?

Days: And think
of all those cluttered instruments,
one to a fact,
canceling each other’s experience;
how they were
like some hideous calendar
“Compliments of Never & Forever, Inc.”

The intimidating sound
of these voices
we must separately find
can and shall be vanquished:
Days and Distance disarranged again
and gone
both for good and from the gentle battleground.

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3. Sandpiper

The roaring alongside he takes for granted,
and that every so often the world is bound to shake. He
runs, he runs to the south, finical, awkward,
in a state of controlled panic, a student of Blake.

The beach hisses like fat. On his left, a sheet
of interrupting water comes and goes
and glazes over his dark and brittle feet.
He runs, he runs straight through it, watching his toes.

- Watching, rather, the spaces of sand between
themwhere (no detail too small) the Atlantic drains
rapidly backwards and downwards. As he runs, he stares
at the dragging grains.

The world is a mist. And then the world is
minute and vast and clear. The tide
is higher or lower. He couldn't tell you which.
His beak is focussed; he is preoccupied,

looking for something, something, something.
Poor bird, he is obsessed!
The millions of grains are black, white, tan, and gray
mixed with quartz grains, rose and amethyst.

4. Insomnia

The moon in the bureau mirror
looks out a million miles
(and perhaps with pride, at herself,
but she never, never smiles)
far and away beyond sleep, or
perhaps she's a daytime sleeper.

By the Universe deserted,
she'd tell it to go to hell,
and she'd find a body of water,
or a mirror, on which to dwell.

So wrap up care in a cobweb
and drop it down the well
into that world inverted
where left is always right,
where the shadows are really the body,
where we stay awake all night,
where the heavens are shallow as the sea
is now deep, and you love me.

5. View of the Capitol from the Library of Congress

Moving from left to left, the light
is heavy on the Dome, and coarse.
One small lunette turns it aside
and blankly stares off to the side
like a big white old wall-eyed horse.

On the east steps the Air Force Band
in uniforms of Air Force blue
is playing hard and loud, but - queer -
the music doesn't quite come through.

It comes in snatches, dim then keen,
then mute, and yet there is no breeze.
The giant trees stand in between.
I think the trees must intervene,

catching the music in their leaves
like gold-dust, till each big leaf sags.
Unceasingly the little flags
feed their limp stripes into the air,
and the band's efforts vanish there.

Great shades, edge over,
give the music room.
The gathered brasses want to bo
boom - boom.

6. O breath

Beneath that loved and celebrated breast,
silent, bored really blindly veined,
grieves, maybe lives and lets
live, passes bets,
something moving but invisibly,
and with what clamor why restrained
I cannot fathom even a ripple.
(See the thin flying of nine black hairs
four around one five the other nipple,
flying almost intolerably on your own breath.)
Equivocal, but what we have in common's bound to
be there, whatever we must own equivalents for,
something that maybe I could bargain with
and make a separate peace beneath
within if never with.

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A black and white photograph of a city skyline at night, with numerous skyscrapers illuminated and their lights reflecting on the water in the foreground. The sky is dark, and the overall mood is serene and urban.

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