

MUSIC OF
ELLIOTT CARTER, VOL. 8

DISC A (49:29)

1) **HORN CONCERTO*** (2006) (10:32)

Martin Owen, horn
BBC Symphony Orchestra
Oliver Knussen, conductor

MAD REGALES* (2007) (6:53)

on poems of John Ashbery
for 6 solo voices

2) I. 8 HAIKU (2:37)

3) II. MEDITATIONS OF A PARROT (1:16)

4) III. AT NORTH FARM (2:52)

BBC Singers

Emma Tring, soprano; Siân Menna, mezzo-soprano

Rebecca Lodge, alto; Edward Goater, tenor

Edward Price, baritone; Charles Gibbs, bass

5) **TINTINNABULATION (2008)** (7:56)

for six percussionists

New England Conservatory Percussion Ensemble
Victoria Aschheim, Steve Merrill, Takehiko Mochizuki
Andre Sonner, Dave Tarantino, Andrew Watkins
Frank Epstein, conductor

6) **WIND ROSE*** (2008) (6:09)

for wind ensemble

BBC Symphony Orchestra
Oliver Knussen, conductor

7) **SOUND FIELDS*** (2007) (7:19)

for string orchestra

BBC Symphony Orchestra
Oliver Knussen, conductor

8) **ON CONVERSING WITH PARADISE*** (2008) (11:40)

text excerpted from Cantos of Ezra Pound

Leigh Melrose, baritone

Birmingham Contemporary Music Group
Oliver Knussen, conductor

Disc B (53:42)

- 1) **RETRACING (2002)** (1:32)
Peter Kolkey, bassoon

- 2) **CLARINET QUINTET (2007)** (13:57)
Charles Neidich, clarinet
Juilliard String Quartet
Joel Smirnoff, violin 1 Ronald Copes, violin 2
Samuel Rhodes, viola Joel Krosnick, violoncello

- 3) **FIGMENT V (2009)** (1:57)
Simon Boyar, marimba

- 4) **LA MUSIQUE (2007)** (2:28)
text by Charles Baudelaire
Lucy Shelton, soprano

- 5) **RETRACING III (2009)** (1:57)
Jon Nelson, trumpet

DUE DUETTI (2009) (8:42)

- 6) I. Duettone (4:27)
7) II. Duettino (4:14)
Rolf Schulte, violin
Fred Sherry, violoncello

- 8) **FIGMENT III (2007)** (3:10)
Donald Palma, contrabass

- 9) **FIGMENT IV (2007)** (3:06)
Hsin-Yun Huang, viola

POEMS OF LOUIS ZUKOFSKY (2008) (13:44)

- 10) I. TALL AND SINGULARLY DARK (3:14)
11) II. ALBA (1952) (1:23)
12) III. FINALLY A VALENTINE (00:45)
13) IV. O SLEEP (1:36)
14) V. THE RAINS (00:47)
15) VI. RUNE (00:37)
16) VII. STRANGE (00:47)
17) VIII. DAISY (00:49)
18) XI. YOU WHO WERE MADE FOR THIS MUSIC (3:04)
Lucy Shelton, soprano
Charles Neidich, clarinet
- 19) **RETRACING II (2009)** (2:35)
William Purvis, horn

◆◆ A CARTER CENTENARY HARVEST ◆◆

Notes by Bayan Northcott

‘WHAT ARE YEARS?’ asked the American poet Marianne Moore. To which Elliott Carter might have responded, ‘What are centuries?’ as he flew the Atlantic six months after his own 100th birthday on 11 December 2008 to attend the premiere of *Conversing With Paradise* in Britain. Apart from the brief solos comprising *Retracing I-III*, every note on this CD has been composed since Carter’s 97th year, and not a few since he entered his second century—a spate of late creativity unprecedented in the history of Western music.

Some of these works—the *Horn Concerto*, the *Clarinet Quintet*, the *Due Duetti*, *Figment III-V*—comprise striking additions to favourite Carter genres; while the Ezra Pound and Louis Zukofsky settings continue his tributes to great American poets that have already encompassed Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, Hart Crane, Allen Tate, Elizabeth Bishop, John Ashbery, Robert Lowell, John Hollander, William Carlos Williams and Wallace Stevens—and Carter still talks of tackling T. S. Eliot... Yet *Sound Fields* for strings, *Wind Rose* for winds and *Tintinnabulation* for percussion have opened up a new interest in the possibilities of homogeneous ensembles, while the Baudelaire setting *La Musique*, the *Mad Regales* and *Retracing I-III* suggest still further directions in Carter’s work. Nor is the tally recorded here by any means all he has produced during this period. Among much else, there are subsequent concertos for flute and bass clarinet and a substantial new sequence of Marianne Moore settings, duly entitled *What Are Years?*.

HORN CONCERTO (2006)

ALTHOUGH CARTER HAS ALWAYS WRITTEN WELL for the horn in his orchestral and ensemble textures, its sound has rarely seemed to epitomize his music as it does that of, say, Wagner or Richard Strauss. But, urged by James Levine to listen to the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s principle horn James Sommerville, Carter was so impressed that he forthwith embarked on a concerto in close technical and expressive consultation with the player himself. Commissioned by the Boston SO, dedicated ‘To James Levine for James Sommerville’, and comprising, in Carter’s words, ‘a number of short sections presenting the many different facets of the horn, which are most remarkable and beautiful’, the score was completed in August 2006. Of Carter’s previous solo concertos, for piano, oboe, violin, clarinet and cello, the *Horn Concerto* is perhaps closest in form and tone to the *Cello Concerto* (2001), but more compressed.

A few brusque chords disclose the solo horn, which proceeds to show off its repertoire of sustained notes, trills, galloping rhythms and songful phrases—periodically interrupted by noisy percussion. A calm section ensues with a long solo line against whisper-mute brass harmonies. But not for long: the percussion soon goads the horn into a frisky scherzando which is only put a stop to when the horn reasserts itself in a more rhetorical section over abrupt orchestral chords. A brief largo follows with the horn floating its highest register over rumbling percussion; then orchestral irruptions lead to what seems to be the final race to the finish. But this abruptly cuts off to enable the horn to unfold the long lyrical melody the work really seems to have been aiming towards all along and culminating on high F, traditionally the horn’s top note. A couple of tutti chords, and the horn is left asserting an obstinate mid-register F sharp. The performance here, by Martin Owen

and the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Oliver Knussen, was recorded during a Carter Centenary concert at London's Barbican Centre in December 2008.

MAD REGALES (2007)

DURING HIS STUDIES IN PARIS BETWEEN 1932–35, Carter directed a madrigal group and he wrote a fair number of unaccompanied choral settings in his earlier years up to 1947, but then came to feel his rhythmic and harmonic innovations far outstripped the capacities of vocal ensembles of the day. Aware, however, of how choral standards have risen over the decades and long intending to return to the poetry of John Ashbery which he had first set in *Syringa* (1978), he finally took the plunge with his three *Mad Regales* for six voices, commissioned for the 2007 Tanglewood Music Festival. Carter says he chose the poems 'partly because of their sardonic humour implies a deeper undertone'. In the opening number each of eight Ashbery haikus are assigned to a solo voice while the remainder gently intone the word 'haiku' in background harmonies. In *'Meditations of a Parrot'*, the bird's repetitiousness is suggested by D flat iterations of the name Robin Hood. *'At North Farm'* unfolds in contrasts between slow chords and urgent declamations, the two speeds only converging towards the end.

TINTINNABULATION (2008)

DURING HIS 'TEENS IN THE MID-1920S, Carter liked to escape from his respectable family background into the artistic Bohemia of Greenwich Village. There he encountered Edgard Varèse, whose innovatory writing for percussion was to prove a lasting stimulus, audibly in Carter's percussion-based *Double Concerto* (1961)—which Varese, in turn, admired. Only at 98, however, did Carter

square up to the challenge of Varèse's *Ionisation* (1931) for percussion ensemble alone, with his *Tintinnabulation*, dedicated to the percussionist Frank Epstein who conducted the premiere with the New England Conservatory of Music Percussion Ensemble in Boston on 2 December 2008.

Carter's score requires just six players as against 13 for the Varèse, but it is three minutes longer and he also makes things more difficult for himself by excluding instruments of precise pitch, such as tympani, glockenspiel and tubular bells. Nonetheless, some 65 instruments are called upon, ranging from basic noises like ratchet and metal pipes to such exotics as Darbouka and Chinese Opera Gong—the latter making a sensational appearance just before the end. After defining the three basic categories of percussive sonority—wood, skin and metal—in his peremptory opening bar, Carter settles into a characteristic interplay between fragmentary 'tuttis' of mixed sonorities and sections focusing on particular areas of color. Shortly after the beginning there is a dry 'woody' section for temple blocks, log drums and maracas; further on, tam tams and gongs reverberate in cross-rhythms; later still, hushed side drum rolls create a mood of expectation while towards the end bongos, congas and tom toms are given their head. A few final fissiparous bars and this astonishingly agile score ends with a bang.

SOUND FIELDS (2007)

WIND ROSE (2008)

THE FIRST OF THESE SHORT STUDIES arose out a request by Ellen Highstein, Director of the Tanglewood Music Center, for a new piece to premiere during the comprehensive Carter celebration there in the summer of 2008. 'In thinking about the musical contrasts between thick textures and thin ones, Carter writes,

'I had the idea of writing a piece which depended only on such contrasts, always remaining at the same dynamic and tone-color using strings non-vibrato. Helen Frankenthaler's fascinating *Color Field* paintings encouraged me to try this experiment.' The score was duly commissioned by the Tanglewood Music Center and dedicated to Ellen Highstein.

Sound Fields is scored as a 12-part texture for a minimum of 31 strings and its first half is based on a single all-interval 12-note chord. However, this is rarely sounded as a whole; rather, Carter extracts and variously layers different parts of the chord to create the illusion of harmonic progression within a constant field. For a short period, Carter then moves to a second all-interval 12-note chord—though with four pitches in common with the first—before 'modulating' back to his opening chord for the coda. The hushed mezzo piano dynamic and the calm turn-over of sonorities, suggest a passage through some remote, still landscape at the furthest remove from Carter's more expressive and argumentative scores.

When Oliver Knussen heard the Tanglewood premiere, he urged Carter to compose a companion piece for winds—a suggestion the composer fulfilled between 28 July and 8 August 2008. *Wind Rose* is structured on the same principle as *Sound Fields*, but the effect is very different. Carter asks for a line-up of no less than 24 wind instruments, making the most of the timbral contrasts between his flute, single reed and double reed families to colour his textures, and drawing, from his cohort of bass/contrabass clarinets and bassoons, some of the most cavernous sonorities in his output. The result has a restrained yet craggy grandeur.

Wind Rose was commissioned by the BBC and is dedicated to Oliver Knussen who conducted the BBC Symphony Orchestra in its world premiere, together with the

British premiere of *Sound Fields* on 16 December 2008 at the Barbican Centre, London—from which these recordings are taken.

ON CONVERSING WITH PARADISE (2008)

THIS UNCOMPROMISING SETTING of lines from Ezra Pound's vast, unfinished epic *The Cantos*, is the nearest thing Carter has yet composed to a creative testament. During the Second World War, Carter reminds us, Pound, then living in Italy 'was occasionally allowed by the Fascist-controlled radio to broadcast in English his rather fanatical ideas that the American bankers and the banking system were destroying the US, a country he loved'. Arrested as a traitor by the American Army, he was imprisoned in a cage at Pisa, where he wrote of his artistic aspiration and failure in the so-called *Pisan Cantos*.

In the sections of *Pisan Canto 81* and the fragment of *Canto 120* that Carter has chosen, Pound evokes the lost ideal of pure lyricism epitomised by the fusion of verse and music in 17th century English song. Then he seems to envision a new visitation of the lyric muse—

'What thou lovest well is thy true inheritance' —only to turn savagely on himself for betraying the ideal: 'Pull down thy vanity/ How mean thy hates/ Fostered in falsity.' Yet whatever the failure 'to write paradise'—the perfect poem—to have done instead of not doing/ this is not vanity...' Finally, the artist must 'learn of the green world what can be thy place'. In words from the fragmentary late Canto 120: 'Do not move/ Let the wind speak/ that is paradise'.

Carter sets these demanding texts for high Verdian baritone and a stark ensemble comprising flute/piccolo, clarinet, bass/contrabass clarinet, horn, five percussionists, and a small body of strings. The work begins with an oracular horn solo, shortly succeeded by an implacable barrage of percussion—evoking, perhaps, the poet's voice and his imprisoning cage. The subsequent music ranges from a tentative lyricism,—always threatened by the percussion—by way of an equally tempered affirmation in the 'What thou lovest well' section, to a fearsome tirade at 'Pull down thy vanity'. At the end there is just a hint of the renewed wind of inspiration. *Conversing With Paradise*—the title, which Pound once thought of using, comes from Blake—was commissioned by Aldeburgh Music and premiered in the composer's presence at the Snape Maltings on 20 June 2009 by the baritone Leigh Melrose and the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group under Oliver Knussen, to whom the score is dedicated.

RETRACING I FOR SOLO BASSOON (2002)

RETRACING II FOR SOLO HORN (2009)

RETRACING III FOR SOLO TRUMPET (2009)

THESE ARE NOT EXACTLY NEW PIECES, more extracts from earlier Carter scores. *Retracing I* comprises, virtually unaltered, the comic bassoon solo from near the end of the *Asko Concerto* (2000)—without the rest of the ensemble snapping at its heels. *Retracing II* plucks from the labyrinthine fabric of the *Quintet for Piano and Winds* (1991) various expressive horn phrases that are here assembled like a mosaic into a continuous discourse. *Retracing III* is the floridly evocative trumpet solo that launches the all-too rarely performed *A Symphony of Three Orchestras* (1976) with cryptic interpolations of new material. So why should Carter publish these recensions as self-sufficient items? For an answer one has to go back to his

contrapuntal studies with Nadia Boulanger and her insistence that, no matter how deeply embedded in a texture, each line should have a shape and character that could stand alone. *The Retracings* are a demonstration of how Carter has kept faith with that Bach-like ideal.

CLARINET QUINTET (2007)

THE CLARINET QUINTET', CARTER REMARKS, 'was written with the wonderful performers and warm friendship of the Juilliard Quartet and the outstanding clarinetist Charles Neidich in mind...work on this was particularly attractive.' And it shows in a 14-minute span that is less strenuously schematic, more warmly lyrical in tone than the Oboe Quartet. One would hesitate to describe it as 'autumnal' however, for the ear is recurrently startled by isolated snap pizzicatos—as though, behind the continuous, five-movement sequence through which the music evolves, another starker time scheme were ticking away.

The music begins with an eight-bar upbeat in which the clarinet ripples out the characteristic intervals Carter assigns to it, while the string quartet presents its contrasting intervals in sustained chords ('When I was a student, we always worried about the upbeat,' comments Carter). The brisk ensuing section comprises a play of inventive fragments and flurries, until a more sustained string passage foretells a change of mood. The momentum now slackens into an intermezzo-like second movement in which the strings pass a melodic line between them while the clarinet holds long pedal notes. This finally calms into an Adagio in which strings accompany expressive clarinet phrases featuring huge leaps across its entire range. Later the strings turn restive, presaging the humorous quirks of the ensuing Presto. Finally, the clarinet embarks on a sustained melody while the

strings reassemble all the work's livelier textures—ultimately grinding to a halt as the clarinet vanishes into thin air.

The Clarinet Quintet was first performed, twice, by its dedicatees at the Juilliard School in April 2008—between which the 99-year old composer offered a witty 20-minute exposition of its structure.

FIGMENT III FOR DOUBLE BASS (2007)

FIGMENT IV FOR VIOLA (2007)

FIGMENT V FOR MARIMBA (2009)

FIGMENT MEANS A THING INVENTED or existing only in the imagination. Carter first used the term to entitle his *Figment I for cello* (1994), but it could be applied to almost any of his instrumental miniatures, rather in the sense that Thomas Morley defined the spirit of *Fantasy in his Plaine* and *Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (1597): 'when a musician taketh a point at his pleasure and wresteth and turneth it as he list, making either much or little of it according as shall seem best in his own conceit. In this may more art be shown than in any other music...' In each of the *Figments*, Carter generates from his basic material, a collection of phrases, figures and effects appropriate to the specific instrument he is writing for, and then, like a skillful juggler, variously plays them off against one another them to create his form. In the gestural *Figment III* composed for the great New York double bassist Don Palma, the instrument's limited capacity for double-stops is effectively extended by the use of open strings. *Figment IV* for viola—a favourite instrument of Carter's—'was written for the wonderful violist, Samuel Rhodes, who performs to brilliantly with the Juilliard Quartet'. It starts with a mix of figures and chords and then evolves into longer phrases, eventually

overtaken by more aggressive rhythms. *Figment V* for marimba was written as a 17th birthday present for Carter's grandson Alexander 'who is interested in percussion instruments'. It largely comprises fast toccata-like figures, but demands precise grading of dynamic contrasts.

LA MUSIQUE (2007)

AFLUENT FRENCH-SPEAKER SINCE HIS BOYHOOD, Carter left it until he was 98 before actually setting the language. The occasion was a conference celebrating the 150th anniversary of the publication of Baudelaire's *les Fleurs du Mal* at Brown University, Providence, RI, in October 2007. Baudelaire's quatrains evoke the tempestuous, oceanic impression of the music of Beethoven and Wagner, but Carter's setting for unaccompanied high voice is as careful to respect the verbal rhythms and expressive contours of the text as his vocal writing always is. The song was premiered by Carter's trusted interpreter Lucy Shelton, and is dedicated to her.

DUE DUETTI FOR VIOLIN AND CELLO (2008/09)

CARTER WRITES: '*Due Duetti for violin and cello* are dedicated to my good friend Milton Babbitt, and the individual titles were suggested by his fascinating *Duettini*. They were written for Rolf Schulte and Fred Sherry, who had asked me many times to write for their instruments'. Carter had composed for the violin/cello combination long before, of course, in the guise of *Duo 1* in his *String Quartet No. 3* (1971). But there, the pair present a sequence of separate movements in contention with the *Duo 2* of violin and viola. *The Duetti*, by contrast cross-cut many kinds of musical material within short time-spans. Completed in May 2008, *Duettino* is an Allegro playing off sustained chords against long phrases,

scherzando figuration, and much bouncing of rhythms and chords back and forth. The *Duettone*, dated January 2009, starts more moderately with an interweaving of melodies, picks up momentum with stalking rhythms and a pizzicato episode, culminating in a ductile peroration. The *Duetti* may be performed separately, but when heard together, Carter stipulates that the *Duettone* should precede the *Duet-tino*—as in this recording.

POEMS OF LOUIS ZUKOFSKY (2008)

LOUIS ZUKOFSKY (1904-78) was key figure in the American modern movement whose own verses, according to The Oxford Companion to 20th century Poetry, 'can be gems of sonic counterpoint and verbal compression'. Not surprisingly, Carter has been a long-standing admirer, and, discovering that Ezra Pound was also a fan, he set to work on his *Poems of Louis Zukofsky* the very day after completing his Pound setting *On Conversing with Paradise* in October 2008. Of the nine songs, seven are of lapidary concision: syllabic phrases for soprano around which the clarinet touches in patterns of accompaniment or flourishes of commentary. The first and last songs, however, are more sustained. '*Tall and Singularly Dark*' is a dream-like coastal scene in which the clarinet billows around long wave-like soprano phrases. '*You Who Were Made for This Music*' is a setting of rising fervour of the poet's tribute to his son, the celebrated violinist Paul Zukofsky, who premiered Carter's *Duo for violin and piano* (1974) and to whom these settings are dedicated.

©Bayan Northcott, October/December 2009

8 HAIKU

Too low for nettles but it is exactly the way people think and feel
And it is a dream sailing in a dark unprotected cove
You lay aside your hair like a book that is too important to read now
In rags and crystals, sometimes with a shred of sense, an odd dignity
The dreams descend like cranes on gilded, forgetful wings
What trees, tools, why ponder socks on the premises
The wedding was enchanted everyone was glad to be in it
He is a monster like everyone else but what do you do if you're a monster

37 Haiku, A Wave—Poems by John Ashbery, The Viking Press

MEDITATIONS OF A PARROT

Oh the rocks and the thimble
The oasis and the bed
Oh the jacket and the roses.
All sweetly stood up the sea to me
Like blue cornflakes in a white bowl.
The girl said, "Watch this."

"These the waves tore in pieces."
(His old wound—
And all day! Robin Hood! Robin
Hood!)

*Some Trees - John Ashbery
Corinth Books*

I come from Spain, I said.
I was purchased at a fair.
She said, "None of us know."
"There was a house once
Of dazzling canopies
And halls like a keyboard.

AT NORTH FARM

Someone somewhere is traveling furiously toward you,
At incredible speed, traveling day and night,
Through blizzards an desert heat, across torrents, through narrow passes.
But will he now where to find you,
Recognize you when he sees you,
Give you the thing he has for you?

Hardly anything grows here,
Yet the granaries are bursting with meal,
The saks of meal piled to the rafters.
The streams run with sweetness, fattening fish;
Birds darken the sky. Is it enough
That the dish of milk is set out at night,
That we think of him sometimes,
Sometimes and always, with mixed feelings?

A Wave—Poems by John Ashbery
The Viking Press

ON CONVERSING WITH PARADISE

Zeus lies in Ceres' bosom...
before sunrise...

AOI!
a leaf in the current

at my grates no Althea

Yet
Ere the season died a-cold
Borne on a zephyr's shoulder
I rose through the aureate sky

Lawes and Jenkyns guard thy rest
Dolmetsch ever be thy guest,

Has he tempered the viol's wood
To enforce both the grave and the acute?
Has he curved us the bowl of the lute?

Lawes and Jenkyns guard thy rest
Dolmetsch ever be thy guest

Hast 'ou fashioned so airy a mood
To draw up leaf from the root?
Hast 'ou found a cloud so light
As seemed neither mist nor shade?

Then resolve me, tell me aright
If Waller sang or Dowland played.

Your eye two wol sleye me sodenly
I may the beauté of hem nat susteyne

And for 180 years almost nothing,

Ed ascoltando al leggier mormorio
there came new subtlety of eyes into my tent,
whether of spirit or hypostasis,
but what the blindfold hides
or at carneval

nor any pair showed anger
Saw but the eyes and stance between the eyes,
colour, diastasis,
careless or unaware it had not the
whole tent's room
nor was place for the full $\epsilon\iota\delta\omega\varsigma$
interpass, penetrate
casting but shade beyond the other lights
sky's clear
night's sea
green of the mountain pool
shone from the unmasked eyes in half-mask's space.

What thou lovest well remains,
the rest is dross

What thou lov'st well shall not be reft from thee
What thou lov'st well is thy true heritage
Whose world, or mine or theirs

or is it of none?

First came the seen, then thus the palpable
Elysium, though it were in the halls of hell,
What thou lovest well is thy true heritage
The ant's a centaur in his dragon world.
Pull down thy vanity, it is not man
Made courage, or made order, or made grace,
Pull down thy vanity, I say pull down.
Learn of the green world what can be thy place
In scaled invention or true artistry,
Pull down thy vanity...

Thou art a beaten dog beneath the hail,
A swollen magpie in a fitful sun,
Half black half white
Nor knowst'ou wing from tail
Pull down thy vanity
How mean thy hates
Fostered in falsity,
Pull down thy vanity,
Rathe to destroy, niggard in charity,
Pull down thy vanity,
I say pull down.

But to have done instead of not doing
this is not vanity...
To have gathered from the air a live tradition

or from a fine old eye the unconquered flame
This is not vanity.

Here the error is all in the not done,
all in the diffidence that faltered...

—Pisan Canto LXXXI

I have tried to write Paradise

Do not move

Let the wind speak
that is paradise

—Canto CXX

Texts—Ezra Pound

LA MUSIQUE

La musique souvent me prend
comme une mer!
Vers ma pâle étoile,
Sous un plafond de brume
ou dans un vaste éther,
Je mets à la voile;

La poitrine en avant
et les poumons gonflés
Comme de la toile
J'escalade le dos des flots amoncelés
Que la nuit me voile;

Je sens vibrer en moi
toutes les passions
D'un vaisseau qui souffre;
Le bon vent, la tempête
et ses convulsions

Sur l'immense gouffre
Me bercent. D'autres fois,
calme plat, grand miroir
De mon désespoir!

—Charles Baudelaire

MUSIC

Music oft seizes me and sweeps me
like a sea toward where
my distant star shines,
With mists for ceiling,
or through an immensity
of ethereal sky I set sail.

My breast flung forward
and my lungs swollen
like white canvas, windswept
I scale The backs of heaping waves
over which gentle night has wound a
darkling veil.

So all the passions of a vessel suffering
rise in me; the brave blast Of winds,
and storms in their convulsive move-
ments, swing me, cradled on the vast
Abyss. At other times, dead calms, like
mirrors there, reflecting my despair.

—Translation by Elliott Carter

POEMS OF LOUIS ZUKOFSKY

1. TALL AND SINGULARLY DARK

Tall and singularly dark you pass
among the breakers—
Companionship as of another world
bordering on this;
To the intelligence fastened by the
senses you are lost
In a world of sunlight where nothing
is amiss:

For nothing but the sun is there and
peace vital with the sun,
The heaviest changes shift through no
feature more than a smile,
Currents spread, and are gone, and as
the high waves appear,
You dive, in the calming are as lost
awhile.

How in that while intelligence escapes
from sense
And fear with hurled human might
darkens upon bliss!

Till as again you stand above
the waters
Fear turns to sleep as one who dreamt
of falling, an abyss!



2. ALBA (1952)

In sleep where all that's past goes
on—
A dawn loves more than sleep.
Clear as leaves of spring. Loves no less,
wintering,
Greener than summer goes—
A sleep gainsays the dawn.

3. FINALLY A VALENTINE

There is
a heart

has no
complaint

better a—
part

than
faint

so the
faintest

part of
it

has no
complaint—

a
part.

4. O SLEEP

O sleep, the sky goes down behind the
poplars,
I scrape the gravel with my shoes and
toe
The ties:
The milky moon is in the clearing,
Only the power-plant hurries
in winter.

PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES



A composer-conductor of worldwide repute, **OLIVER KNUSSEN** is Artist-in-Association with both the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, as well as the London Sinfonietta's Conductor Laureate. Among his many honours was the 2006 Nemmers Prize in Musical Composition from Northwestern University.



British hornist, **MARTIN OWEN** (born 1973), is one of Europe's foremost players, appearing as soloist, chamber musician and concerto soloist at leading international festivals. After 10 years as principal of the Royal Philharmonic, Martin now retains the principal chair of the BBC Symphony Orchestra. Martin holds a professorship at the Royal Academy of Music, London, where he was made a fellow in 2006.



THE BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA has played a central role at the heart of British musical life since its inception in 1930. Jirí Belohlávek took up the post of Chief Conductor of the BBC SO in July 2006. David Robertson is Principal Guest Conductor and Sir Andrew Davis is Conductor Laureate. Oliver Knussen became Artist in Association in July 2009.



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THE NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE, directed by Boston Symphony Orchestra percussionist Frank Epstein, performs

twice a year in Jordan Hall and makes appearances throughout Boston. The repertoire has included premieres of works by Irwin Bazelon, Elliott Carter, Peter Child, John Harbison, Fred Lerdahl, Christopher Rouse, and Joan Tower.



FRANK EPSTEIN is a graduate of the University of Southern California, the New England Conservatory, and the Tanglewood Music Center. Having joined the Boston Symphony in 1968, he is now in his 43rd season as percussionist with the orchestra. Mr. Epstein is a member of the faculty at the Tanglewood Music Center and the New England Conservatory.



BIRMINGHAM CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP Formed in 1987 from within the CBSO and with Sir Simon Rattle as its Founding Patron, BCMG is internationally acclaimed for its commissioning and performances of

new music. The group is passionately committed to engaging people with the most exciting classical music of our time through pioneering concerts, tours, recordings, media projects, learning programmes and audience-building initiatives.'



LEIGH MELROSE is a highly valued performer of contemporary repertoire, having given many premiere performances. Working in both opera and symphonic fields, Melrose has performed on stages in Vienna, Berlin, Antwerp, London, Seattle, Paris, Rouen and Buenos Aires. He gave the world premiere of Elliott Carter's *On Conversing with Paradise* at the Aldeburgh Festival.



A gifted performer of both extraordinary musicality and virtuosic artistry, bassoonist **PETER KOLKAY** claimed First Prize at the 2002 Concert Artists Guild International Competition

and was awarded the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant in 2004, the first artist on his instrument to receive both honors.



CHARLES NEIDICH has been described as one of the most mesmerizing musicians performing before the public today. Winner of numerous international competitions, he is known for expanding the technical and expressive possibilities of the clarinet. Neidich has premiered works by Babbitt, Carter, Denisov, and Mamlok, championing the music of Elliott Carter throughout the world.



THE JUILLIARD STRING QUARTET is internationally renowned for performances characterized by a clarity of structure, beauty of sound, purity of line and an extraordinary unanimity of purpose. Celebrated for its performances of works by composers as diverse as Beethoven, Schubert, Bartók

and Elliott Carter, it has long been recognized as the quintessential American string quartet.



SIMON BOYAR has performed numerous world premieres for marimba and percussion, and has been a soloist with over 35 orchestras around the world. Simon is a faculty member at NYU and has previously served as the director of The Juilliard Pre-College Percussion Department. He is a Yamaha Performing Artist and a member of The Vic Firth Education Team.



Soprano, **LUCY SHELTON**, is an internationally recognized exponent of 20th and 21st-century repertory. She has worked closely with composers of our time including Elliott Carter, Charles Wuorinen, Pierre Boulez, György Kurtág, Kaija Saariaho and Oliver Knussen, many of whom have written expressly for her. Carter's song cycle *Of Challenge and Of Love* (1995)

and *La Musique* (2007) were written for her, and she also premiered *Tempo e Tempi* in 2000 and *Poems of Louis Zukofsky* in 2009.



JON NELSON is currently Associate Professor at The University at Buffalo Music Department. As a founding member of Meridian Arts Ensemble and as an independent artist, he has commissioned, premiered, and recorded over 200 works by contemporary composers.



ROLF SCHULTE was born in Germany. He began studying the violin at age five under his father's tutelage. His concerto recordings include Poul Ruders's *Violin Concerto No. 1*; Schoenberg's *Violin Concerto*; and Elliott Carter's *Violin Concerto*. Writing of this recording Elliott Carter said: "Rolf Schulte, with extraordinary command of his instrument, gives my Violin Concerto a most artistically imaginative performance,

very telling and very beautiful."



FRED SHERRY was a founding member of Speculum Musicae and Tashi and is an Artist Member of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. He is the dedicatee of Elliott Carter's *Figment No. 2, Uno from Tempo e Tempi*, the 2007 version of *Elegy* and the *Cello Concerto*.



DONALD PALMA: double bassist, conductor and educator. As a founding member of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and Speculum Musicae, he has championed the works of composers old and new on four continents. He has performed on over 100 recordings and is on the faculties of the New England Conservatory and Yale University.



Violist **HSIN-YUN HUANG**, came to international prominence as a winner of the ARD Competition (Munich).

She has been soloist with the Tokyo Philharmonic and Berlin Radio Symphony and has collaborated with the Guarneri, Orion, Brentano, and St. Lawrence quartets. She was a member of the Borromeo String Quartet from 1994–2000.



WILLIAM PURVIS pursues a multifaceted career both in the U.S. and abroad as horn soloist, chamber musician, conductor and educator. Mr. Purvis is a member of the New York Woodwind Quintet (which will perform the world premiere of Elliott Carter's new woodwind quintet, *Nine by Five*, in February of 2010), the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the Yale Brass Trio, and the Triton Horn Trio. Mr. Purvis is currently a faculty member of The Juilliard School and The Yale School of Music where he is Professor of Horn, Coordinator of Winds and Brass and Interim Director of the Musical Instrument Collection at Yale.

Executive Producers: Virgil Blackwell and Becky & David Starobin
Producers: David Starobin, Ann McKay, Sam Phillips, Adam Abeshouse, Charles Peltz, and Virgil Blackwell
Editor: Charlie Post
Mastering Engineer: Adam Abeshouse
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Horn Concerto: BBC recording producer: Ann McKay; engineer: Simon Hancock; recorded by BBC Radio 3 on Dec. 16th, 2008 Barbican Hall, London; **Mad Regales:** BBC recording producer: Ann McKay; engineer: Simon Hancock; recorded by BBC Radio 3 on Dec. 16th, 2008 Barbican Hall, London; **Tintinnabulation:** producers: Charles Peltz and Virgil Blackwell; engineer: Patrick Keating; editors: Frank Epstein, Patrick Keating; recorded: Feb. 12th, 2009 in Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory, Boston MA; *Tintinnabulation* was commissioned by the New England Conservatory for Frank Epstein and the New England Conservatory

Percussion Ensemble with generous support provided by Catherine and Paul Buittenwieser; **Wind Rose**: BBC recording producer: Ann McKay; engineer: Simon Hancock; recorded by BBC Radio 3 on Dec. 16th, 2008 Barbican Hall London; **Sound Fields**: BBC recording producer: Ann McKay; engineer: Simon Hancock; **On Conversing with Paradise**: BBC Radio 3 producer: Sam Phillips; BBC Engineer: Tim Archer; recorded on June 20th, 2009 at Snape Maltings Concert Hall, Aldeburgh, England. **Retracing**: producer: David Starobin; engineer: Adam Abeshouse; recorded September 22nd, 2009; American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York City; **Clarinet Quintet**: producer: David Starobin; engineer: Adam Abeshouse; recorded April 19th, 2009; Lefrak Concert Hall, Queens College, New York City; **Figment V**: producer: David Starobin; Engineer: Adam Abeshouse; recorded September 5th, 2009; Lefrak Concert Hall, Queens College, New York City; **La Musique**: producer: Adam Abeshouse; engineer: Adam Abeshouse; recorded October 4th, 2009; Lefrak Concert Hall; Queens College; New York City; **Retracing III**: producer: David Starobin; engineer: Adam Abeshouse; recorded September 22nd, 2009; American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York City; **Due Duetti**: producer: David Starobin; engineer: Adam Abeshouse; recorded September 22nd, 2009; American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York City; **Figment III**: producer: Robert Sadin; engineer: Dave Darlington; recorded Oct. 15th, 2009 at Clinton Recording Studios, New York City. **Figment IV**: producer: David Starobin; engineer: Adam Abeshouse; recorded September 22nd, 2009; American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York City; **Poems of Louis Zukofsky**: producer: Adam Abeshouse; engineer: Adam Abeshouse; recorded October 3rd-4th, 2009, Lefrak Concert Hall, Queens College, New York City; **Retracing II**: producer: David Starobin; engineer: Adam Abeshouse; September 22nd, 2009, American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York City

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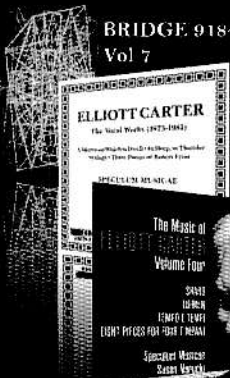
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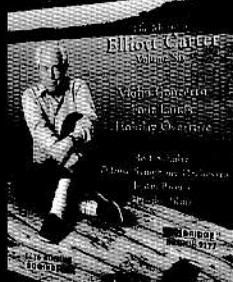
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