

Organ Vesper Series

Presents CLARI-CENTRIC

M. Eugene Williams, clarinet
Marcia Kämper, alto flute
Ann Beebe, violin
Patricia Ritchie, cello
William Ritchie, double bass
Stacie Haneline, piano

Sunday, September 24, 2006

3:00 p.m.

Benny's Gig (8 Duos for Clarinet and Double Bass) **Morton Gould**
Trio in B-flat Major, Op. 29 for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano **Vincent d'Indy**

Overture
Divertissement
Chant Elegiaque
Finale

Intermission

Eleven Echoes of Autumn, 1965 **George Crumb**

- Eco 1. Fantastico
- Eco 2. Languidamente, quasi lontano ("hauntingly")
- Eco 3. Prestissimo
- Eco 4. Con bravura
- Eco 5. Cadenza I (for Alto Flute)
- Eco 6. Cadenza II (for Violin)
- Eco 7. Cadenza III (for Clarinet)
- Eco 8. Feroce, violento
- Eco 9. Serenamente, quasi lontano ("hauntingly")
- Eco 10. Senza misura ("gently undulating")
- Eco 11. Adagio ("like a prayer")

Trio for Piano, Clarinet, and Violoncello in A Minor, Op. 114
Johannes Brahms

Allegro
Adagio
Andantino grazioso
Allegro

Made possible with the support of



through funds from
the Nebraska Legislature and
National Endowment for the Arts.
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Benny's Gig (8 Duos for Clarinet and Double Bass) **Morton Gould**

Morton Gould (1913-1996) was an American pianist, conductor, and composer. Gould studied at the Institute for Musical Arts, which later became the Julliard School of Music in New York City. As a teenager and young adult, he worked in New York City playing piano for movie theaters, vaudeville acts and upon its opening, Radio City Music Hall as staff pianist. By 1935, he was conducting and arranging orchestral programs for WOR Mutual Radio, where he reached a wide-ranging national audience, combining popular programming with classical music.

Among his distinguished awards are the Grammy Award (1966) for his recording with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra of Charles Ives' First Symphony, American Symphony Orchestra League's Gold Baton Award (1983), Kennedy Center Honoree (1994) and the Pulitzer Prize (1995) for *Stringmusic*, a composition commissioned by the National Symphony in recognition of the final season of director Mstislav Rostropovich.

Benny's Gig (8 Duos for Clarinet and Double Bass) was written in 1979 and dedicated to Benny Goodman in honor of Goodman's 70th birthday. The dedication states:

For Benjamin David Goodman....a few notes on his 70th birthday,
May 30, 1979 from an admiring colleague and fortunate
friend....Morton Gould.....May 15, 1979

Further, Gould inscribed a few humorous annotations into his dedicatory comments

Dear Benny,

What does one do for a special longtime friend and super-colleague on a special birthday? Had you turned 70 before inflation a special gift worthy of this event would have been the answer. But under the circumstances, and as the last of the small spenders, I thought and thought – and finally decided to write you a piece – on 2 staves no less! To quote you, "It Ain't Sweet Georgia Brown" – but it does signify my affection and friendship and admiration for you. I hope it pleases you – and even if it doesn't you are stuck with it, and it's not returnable. After all – how many Benny Goodmans are there, at any age – or in any age. Be well, be happy, keep playing. Congratulations - Morton

Trio in B-flat Major, Op. 29 for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano **Vincent d'Indy**

Vincent d'Indy (1851-1931) was one of the major French musicians of the period extending from the Franco-Prussian War until the First World War. As a composer, teacher, conductor, and musicologist, his activities and interests were as numerous as his personal contacts with diverse musicians, literary figures, artists, and social and political groups. Though he originally intended to pursue a military career, after his active duty during the Franco-Prussian war, d'Indy enrolled at the Paris Conservatory in 1871 where he studied composition with César Franck. After graduation in 1875 he continued intensive studies in composition which led to the prestigious Grand Prix de la Ville de Paris award in 1885 for his cantata *Le chant de la cloche*. His most famous work, *Symphony on a French Mountain Air*, premiered in 1877. During this period, he was for a time the Secretary of the *Société Nationale de Musique*, an organization founded by Saint-Saëns and others to promote the performance of French instrumental music. He also was one of the founders of the *Schola cantorum* (a music school created as an alternative to the Paris Conservatoire). It was there in the 1890's that d'Indy developed his own core curriculum of composition entitled *Cours de Composition Musicale* which in turn influenced composers such as Messiaen and Villa-Lobos.

Franck was the composer with the greatest influence on d'Indy, but Bee-

thoven, Liszt, Brahms, and Wagner in particular, also influenced the young composer. Because d'Indy was such a great admirer of Beethoven he wrote a biography of the composer that was published in 1911.

On the whole, d'Indy's musical style gravitated to the more conservative traditions of the day as opposed to the group of composers known as "Les Six" (Milhaud, Poulenc, et al.) as well as Debussy and Ravel. Some would suggest that d'Indy ultimately became the victim of his conservatism and his inability to accept contemporary trends in music that were then prevalent in France. The modernists (Debussy, Ravel, et al.) prevailed and his music was forced out of favor.

The *Trio in B-flat Major, Op. 29* was written in 1929. An interesting characteristic of the *Trio* is that the opening theme of the *Overture* recurs in three of the four movements in various transformations. This undoubtedly points to the influence of Franck's cyclic forms (e.g. *Symphony in D minor*) on d'Indy's compositional style. We are first aware of this in the *Divertissement* where as the title would suggest, a light-hearted variation of the *Trio's* cyclical theme is presented. The movement continues in a rondo form. The *Chant Elegiaque* affords the clarinet and cello the opportunity to spin some delicious, sorrowful, and long spun melodies reminiscent of the French cabaret. In the *Finale* we hear two very disparate themes initially, but true to his mentor's technique of cyclical composition, the main *Trio* theme reappears midway and is seamlessly woven into the fabric of the movement under various guises.

Eleven Echoes of Autumn, 1965 **George Crumb**

George Crumb was born in 1929 in Charleston, West Virginia. He studied at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana and the University of Michigan Ann Arbor (Ph.D. 1959). He taught in Virginia, the University of Colorado, and the University of Pennsylvania where he retired from teaching in 1997. Crumb continues to compose and has received a number of awards, including the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 1968 for his orchestral work *Echoes of Time and the River* (commissioned by the University of Chicago for the Chicago Symphony) and a Grammy Award for Best Contemporary Composition in 2001 for his work *Star-Child*.

After initially being influenced by Anton Webern, Crumb became interested in exploring unusual timbres. He often asks for instruments to be played in unusual ways and several of his pieces are written for *electronically* amplified instruments. Crumb's music often seems to be concerned about the theatre of performance as much as the music itself. In several pieces he asks players to leave and enter the stage during the piece. He has also used unusual layouts of musical notation in a number of his scores. In several pieces (e.g. *Eleven Echoes*), the music is symbolically laid out in a circular or spiral fashion.

Several of Crumb's works, including a portion of *Eleven Echoes* and *Ancient Voices of Children*, a 1970 song cycle for two singers and small instrumental ensemble (which includes a toy piano), *use texts by* Spanish poet Federico García Lorca. *Black Angels* (1970) is another piece which displays Crumb's interest in exploring a wide range of timbres. Written for amplified string quartet (referred to as "electric string quartet" by the composer in the score, although the instruments called for are acoustic ones), the players are required to play various percussion instruments and to bow small goblets as well as to play their instruments in both conventional and unconventional ways. It is one of Crumb's best known pieces, and has been recorded by the Kronos Quartet.

Crumb wrote the following as program notes for the first performance of *Eleven Echoes*:

Eleven Echoes of Autumn, 1965 was composed during the spring of 1966 for the Aeolian Chamber Players (on commission from Bowdoin College). The eleven pieces constituting the work are performed without interruption.

-The Artists-

Each of the echi exploits certain timbral possibilities of the instruments. For example, eco 1 (for piano alone) is based entirely on the 5th partial harmonic, eco 2 on violin harmonics in combination with 7th partial harmonics produced on the piano (by drawing a piece of hard rubber along the strings). A delicate aura of sympathetic vibrations emerges in echi 3 and 4, produced in the latter case by alto flute and clarinet playing into the piano strings. At the conclusion of the work the violinist achieves a mournful, fragile timbre by playing with the bow hair completely slack.

The most important generative element of *Eleven Echoes* is the “bell motif” - a quintuplet figure based on the whole-tone interval - which is heard at the beginning of the work. This diatonic figure appears in a variety of rhythmic guises, and frequently in a highly chromatic context.

Each of the eleven pieces has its own expressive character, at times overlaid by quasi-obbligato music of contrasting character, e.g., the “wind music” of the alto flute and clarinet in eco 2 or the “distant mandolin music” of the violin in eco 3. The larger expressive curve of the work is arch-like: a gradual growth of intensity to a climactic point (eco 8) followed by a gradual collapse.

Although *Eleven Echoes* has certain programmatic implications for the composer, it is enough for the listener to infer the significance of the motto-quote from Federico García Lorca: “...y los arcos rotos donde sufre el tiempo” (“...and the broken arches where time suffers”). These words are softly intoned as a preface to each of the three cadenzas (echi 5-7) and the image “broken arches” is represented visually in the notation of the music which underlies the cadenzas.

Trio for Piano, Clarinet, and Violoncello in A Minor, Op. 114 ***Johannes Brahms***

In November of 1881, Brahms (1833-1897), was invited to perform his Second Piano Concerto at the prestigious Meiningen music festival by Hans von Bülow, the conductor of the Meiningen orchestra. Thereafter, with this successful performance and friendships firmly established with Bülow and Meiningen court officials, Brahms visited Meiningen frequently. During one such visit in March of 1891, Brahms met Richard Mühlfeld, principal clarinetist of the orchestra. After hearing Mühlfeld perform the F minor Concerto by von Weber, he wrote to his friend Clara Schumann (wife of Robert Schumann) that “it is impossible to play the clarinet better than Herr Mühlfeld does here; he is absolutely the best I know”. At Brahms’ request during this same Meiningen visit, Mühlfeld gave a private recital for his admirer, totally familiarizing Brahms with the clarinet. Duly inspired, Brahms wrote his Clarinet Trio, Op. 114 and Clarinet Quintet, Op. 115 in May and June of the same year. Brahms also wrote his Clarinet Sonatas (1894) for Mühlfeld. The first performance of the Trio was on November 24, 1891 in Meiningen.

The opening triadic theme of the *Allegro* is serious and somber but quickly energizes en route to the serene secondary theme in the relative major key. The movement continues with a brief but tightly woven development section, and closes with a sublime, quiet coda. The *Andantino* grazioso characterizes Brahms’ predilection for waltz style movements in lieu of the standard minuet-trio. The trio’s style in this movement is reminiscent of the Austrian *Ländler*. The finale movement is a romp in a flexible rondo-sonata form (recurring themes with development) with three distinctive themes. In the entire Trio, we can hear all the compositional techniques often associated with Brahms: contrapuntal skill, simple yet elegant themes, and rhythmic vitality.

Program notes by M. Eugene Williams

Associate Concertmaster **ANN BEEBE** has been with the Omaha Symphony since 1987. Previously she played in the Oklahoma Symphony Orchestra, and served as Concertmaster for Chamber Orchestra Oklahoma City. In Omaha, Ann teaches privately, and also enjoys coaching sectionals for the Omaha Area Youth Orchestras. A native Midwesterner, she grew up in Winnetka, Illinois. She studied with James Buswell at the Indiana University School of Music, where she earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees in violin performance. A veteran of many summer music festivals, Ann now spends summers in Wyoming, performing in the Grand Teton Music Festival. In addition to playing symphony and chamber music with colleagues from orchestras all over the country, the lure of hiking in the mountains continues to draw her back to Jackson Hole.

STACIE HANELINE holds degrees in Piano Performance from the Manhattan School of Music and Converse College. While in New York, she served as studio accompanist for numerous vocal pedagogues, including Mignon Dunn, Marlina Malas, Cynthia Hoffman, Ellen Faull, Robert White, and Theodore Uppman, as well as playing master classes for Nico Castel. She was also an accompanist for the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Columbia and Barnard Universities, Manhattan and Mannes Schools of Music. Stacie has been an accompanist for the Hawaii Opera, Hawaii Vocal Arts, Symphony Chorus and University. While living in Australia, Stacie worked under the Director of the Sydney Opera House as a répétiteur. She was awarded the Yamaha Young Artist Award. Stacie is currently on the accompanist staff of Opera Omaha and is a substitute pianist for the Omaha Symphony.

MARCIA KÄMPER, flutist, is a member of the Omaha Symphony. At age 16 she performed Mozart's D Major Concerto with the Henderson Civic Symphony, followed by solo performances with the Las Vegas Youth Orchestra and the Las Vegas Music Festival. Shortly after moving to Omaha three years ago, Marcia performed Bernstein's *Halil* and has since performed several other concerti with the Omaha Symphony Chamber Orchestra. Marcia is a frequent performer in Omaha's chamber music concerts and has created her own ensemble, ANALOG arts ensemble, with her husband, trumpet player Dolf Kämper. A graduate of Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University, she is a winner of the Las Vegas and Washington DC flute competitions.

PATRICIA RITCHIE has taught orchestra in Omaha and Millard schools, and performed professionally as a cellist for the past 20 years. She received her Bachelor's degree in Music Education from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, and her Masters degree in cello performance from Lamont School of Music at the University of Denver. Whether coaching, adjudicating, conducting, or performing, Patricia is weaving a strong musical tapestry in the Omaha community. Ms. Ritchie is currently teaching at Millard West, Russell Middle Schools, and was voted 1994 Nebraska Orchestra Teacher of the Year. She currently serves as Vice President of NeASTA (American String Teachers Association).

WILLIAM RITCHIE, Assistant Principal Bass of the Omaha Symphony since 1983, began his professional career as the orchestra director for the St. Joseph Public Schools in his hometown of St. Joseph, Michigan, where he was also the first conductor of the Lake Michigan Youth Orchestra. He has been a member of the Florida Orchestra (Tampa Bay), Grand Rapids Symphony, and has performed with the Kansas City Symphony. Bill regularly performs with the Detroit Symphony at Orchestra Hall in Detroit and on tour: two to Europe in 1998 and 2001, and one of Michigan in 2003.

M. EUGENE WILLIAMS is in his 17th season as Second Clarinet with the Lincoln Symphony. Previously he was Second Clarinet with the Omaha Symphony for 6 years, Third/Bass Clarinet for 2 years and continues with the Omaha Symphony as an extra. This summer Dr. Williams will begin with 18th season as Principal Clarinet with the Lakeside Symphony in Lakeside, Ohio. He also played 7 seasons with the Des Moines Metro Opera Orchestra. He earned his DMA from the University of Michigan in Clarinet Performance and Master's and Bachelor's degrees from the University of Houston and Bradley University. His principal teachers included Fred Ormand, Jeffrey Lerner, Clark Brody, Martin Zwick, and Dean Howard. He has taught clarinet and saxophone at Creighton University and the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Currently, he teaches for the Omaha Public Schools.