



Western Connecticut State College ARTS FESTIVAL

"20th CENTURY AMERICAN PIONEERS"
MARCH 13-16, 1978



Western Connecticut State College
TWENTIETH CENTURY ARTS FESTIVAL
AMERICAN PIONEERS IN TWENTIETH CENTURY ARTS
March 13 - 16, 1978

The Festival this year is held in honor of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the College's founding. As in the past, this Festival is dedicated to a greater understanding and appreciation of the arts of our time. In order that any age may understand its own arts, they must be seen and heard, until that which at first may have seemed strange becomes both meaningful and timely.

OTTO LUENING AND VLADIMIR USSACHEVSKY

Our honored guests are among the foremost "American pioneers". They are best known for their experimentation, in the 1950's, in the field of electronic music, with such works as Luening's *Fantasy In Space* and Ussachevsky's *Sonic Contours*. But although they founded the famous Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center, by no means has the creative output of these masters been limited to such experimental work, and they may well be said to have expanded the horizons of twentieth century music significantly in a variety of compositional styles.

Otto Luening and Vladimir Ussachevsky are among the leaders of American pioneers in this century, and the College is honored to welcome them as its guests.

PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Art Department
Robert Alberetti, Chairman

Music Department
Richard Moryl, Chairman

Conatus

The English Society

The Board of Governors

Department of Speech Communication and Theater Arts
Richard Reimold, Chairman

Cover design by Chris Durante
Calligraphy by Howard Tuvelle

MONDAY, MARCH 13

2:00 P.M.:

White Hall
Room 122

For Music Students

AN INFORMAL DISCUSSION

OTTO LUENING and VLADIMIR USSACHEVSKY

AMERICAN PIONEERS IN OPERA AND SONG

I

SONG RECITAL by SONYA BAEHR, Soprano
and THOMAS WETTELAND, Pianist and Commentator

Seven songs by Charles Ives

Two Little Flowers (1921)
Maple Leaves (1920; Thomas Bailey Aldrich)
The Swimmers (1921; Louis Untermeyer)
Grantchester (1920; Rupert Brooke)
Slugging a Vampire (1902)
The Children's Hour (1901; Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)
Vote for Names (1912)

Three songs by Henry Cowell

Rest

Two Anti-Modernist Songs (1938; Nicholas Slonimsky):
A Sharp Where You'd Expect a Natural
Who Wrote This Fiendish Rite of Spring?
(Performed from unpublished manuscripts,
by permission of Mrs. Henry Cowell)

Four more by Ives

At the River (1916; Robert Lowry)
Watchman! (1913; John Bowring)
An Old Flame (1896)
When Stars Are in the Quiet Skies (1891; Bulwer-Lytton)

Sonya Baehr was the leading singing actress in the Off-Off Broadway contemporary opera, *The Well*, and with Thomas Wetteland has been heard in three New York recitals and over WNYC, in twentieth century music. Mr. Wetteland is also a composer, conductor, and educator.

INTERMISSION

II

SCENES FROM THE OPERA "EVANGELINE"

Libretto and music by OTTO LUENING, based on the poem "EVANGELINE", by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Cast of Characters (in order of appearance): Basil Lajeunesse, father of Evangeline's fiancé - Christopher Hickerson; Father Felician, the village priest - Stephen Bertothy; Benedict Bellefontaine, Evangeline's father - Donald Brainerd; Gabriel Lajeunesse, Evangeline's fiancé - Bradley Peterson; René Leblanc, notary - John Soroka; Captain Murray, a British officer - Matthew Griffin; Pierre Le Bar, a villager - John Coloski; Evangeline - Lauren Cook; Mother Benoit - Eleanor Notuck; 2nd old woman - Cynthia McCorkindale; 1st young woman - Mary Ann Vagnini; 2nd young woman - Janet Malota; Two young girls - Jacalyn Hadley, Suzanne Craven; Sergeant - Michael Gosselin; Two women - Bernadette Aubin, Robin Caligiure. (All the foregoing are members of the OPERA ENSEMBLE.)

Villagers - THE CONCERT CHOIR
Pianist - BARBARA COOPER
Narrator - MERLE LENTZ

Musical Direction - DON CRAIG
Staging - RICHARD REIMOLD
Scenery and Lighting - MERLE LENTZ

Introductory Remarks - MR. LUENING

(continued)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15

(con't.)

Abe Ajay, Artist
John Hermansader, Artist, Teacher
Herb Janick, Professor of American History

Moderator - Robert Alberetti, Chairman, Art Department

(This event is funded by a grant from
the Connecticut Commission on the Arts.)

4:00 P.M.:

White Hall
Ives Auditorium

THE ITHACA COLLEGE SAXOPHONE ENSEMBLE

Dr. Steven Mauk, Director

Contemporary works for saxophone quintet and quartet

8:00 P.M.:

Berkshire Auditorium

The Board of Governors presents

CONNECTICUT DANCE THEATRE

Mary Giannone, Artistic Director

THURSDAY, MARCH 16

4:00 P.M.:

White Hall
Room 315

WORKSHOP/LECTURE IN JEWELRY

Presented by JANE CAMPBELL

8:00 P.M.:

Student Union
Connecticut Room

The English Society and Conatus present

GWENDOLYN BROOKS

in a reading of her poems

CREDITS

The Arts Festival participants gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the following:

The Board of Governors, The Senior Class, The Junior Class
The Sophomore Class, The Freshman Class, Student Government Association

Faculty-Student Committees:

Audio-Visual: Michael Mennone, Faculty; Joseph Bartozzi, John Grieco, Michael Gosselin

Finance: Joanne Moryl, Faculty; Louine Gagnon, Donald Ginnerty, Lynne Heywood, Cheryl Wielk

Hospitality: Doreen Voltmann, Faculty; Barbara Cooper, Lydia Davis, Lynne Heywood, Jean Kuchma,
Anne Lombardi, Diane Lynn, Jennifer Nejame.

Printed Program: Don Craig, Faculty; David Payton, Jr., Janet Waller

Publicity: Lawrence Huntley, Faculty; Marcel Blanchett, Marybeth Ingraham, Donna Louis,
Diane Lynn, Cynthia Pascale, Susan Thyren

Stage: David Smith, Faculty; Anthony Barton, Anthony Camp, David Carlson, Ruth Green,
Randy McQuilkin, Joellen Patrizio.

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Coordinator: The Arts Club

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Paul Lemanski, Asst. Treasurer; Jennifer Nejame, Secretary; Edward Petrowski, Asst. Secretary;
Terri Praino, Historian

Music Educators National Conference: Carol Benson, Arts Festival Coordinator

Anthony Camp, Assistant to Festival Director

Scenes

The porch of Benedict's house, late evening
Garden of the house, the next morning
A street in the village, four days later
On the banks of the Gaspereau River, late evening
An almshouse in Philadelphia, many years later

TUESDAY, MARCH 14

2:00 P.M.:

White Hall
Ceramic Studio
Room 011

A WORKSHOP IN CLAY

Presented by ANN TUBBS

2:00 P.M.:

White Hall
Ives Auditorium

AN INFORMAL MEETING WITH OTTO LUENING AND VLADIMIR USSACHEVSKY

A question and answer session on music today

8:15 P.M.:

White Hall
Ives Auditorium

PIONEERS OF AMERICAN MUSIC featuring the music of OTTO LUENING and VLADIMIR USSACHEVSKY

Fanfare for a Festive Occasion Otto Luening
The Brass Ensemble - Lawrence Huntley, Conductor

Fantasy in Space Otto Luening

Incantation
Otto Luening and Vladimir Ussachevsky

Sonic Contours Vladimir Ussachevsky

The Banshee Henry Cowell
Joanne Moryl, Pianist

Aeolian Harp Henry Cowell
Joanne Moryl, Pianist

The Unanswered Question Charles Ives
The Orchestra
James Furman, Conductor
Lawrence Huntley, Assistant Conductor
Joseph Macari, Trumpeter

Intermission

Two Scenes from the Creation:
Vladimir Ussachevsky

Conflict

Epilogue: Spell of Creation
(Poem by Kathleen Raine)

The Chorus, James Furman, Conductor

Entrance and Exit Music for Brass
Otto Luening

The Brass Ensemble - Lawrence Huntley, Conductor

A reception for Mr. Luening and Mr. Ussachevsky, with members of Sigma Alpha Iota assisting, will be held in White Hall, Room 127, following the concert. All are welcome.

(Program notes follow)

CHARLES IVES

Charles Ives, who was born in Danbury in 1874 and educated at Yale, and who lived for years in West Redding, is our area's chief claim to international fame. When he was a child, his father, a Civil War Bandmaster with the First Connecticut Heavy Artillery, encouraged him to experiment with music, playing melodies in two keys at once to train his ear, writing phrases in the whole tone scale, imitating bells and echoes. From the age of twenty-two on, he experimented with discords, polyrhythms, atonality, and polytonality, apparently ahead of all other avant-garde composers, whose work he did not know and who did not know his.

Yet all this experimentation was directed to an end: the artistic expression of a "spiritual reality." Ives was particularly interested in the content or substance of music, rather than what he called "the lower value of form, quantity, or manner." Thus he found the French composer Debussy's music lacking in content, and observed that the latter would have been worthier of his manner "if he had hoed corn or sold newspapers for a living." Bach and Beethoven, on the other hand, were composers whose substance satisfied him.

Imbued as he was with the New England ideals of independence and self-reliance, Ives kept his own feet firmly on the ground. Realizing that his music was far too out of the ordinary to win popularity enough to support his family, he did not even try to publish most of it for many years. He did not hoe corn or sell newspapers, but he went into the insurance business, and in less than twenty years became head of the largest insurance agency in the America of his day - at the very same time that he was writing, at night, on weekends, and during his vacations, the music for which he is now internationally famous. Most of it Ives never heard played in his own lifetime, though there were a few triumphs in his later years.

"The Unanswered Question" (1906) illustrates Ives's preoccupation with "substance." Using his unfamiliar, original techniques, he addressed himself to nothing less than the Riddle of the Universe - "the searching questions of *What* and *Why* which the spirit of man asks of life." Though he wrote these words about the philosophy behind his Fourth Symphony, they apply equally well to "The Unanswered Question," in which the strings, playing very softly at the same steady tempo throughout, stand for the silences which answer "the Perennial Question of Existence" asked by the trumpet and repeated by the "the flutes and other human beings."

HENRY D. COWELL

Henry D. Cowell was not only a prolific composer himself, with more than 1000 compositions, including fourteen symphonies, to his credit, but also an enthusiastic advocate of all the new musical techniques and an early propagandist for such pioneers of modern music as Charles Ives. A man of insatiable curiosity, wide knowledge, and eclectic tastes, he dreamed of a new music which would draw on "old and new musical means" and on the music of every part of the world, East as well as West. An experimenter, it was he who gave the name "tone cluster" to the device of playing a group of adjacent piano keys all at once, with his fist or palm or forearm. He also liked to reach inside the piano to create new sounds and exploit the instrument's percussive possibilities, a technique later developed systematically by his pupil John Cage. Cowell was interested in every sort of musical trick, new or old, and in every sort of music, including the primitive, hymnology, and folk music. Above all, he was fascinated by the new sonorities and the new men, including Bartok, Schoenberg, and Ives.

One of his many enthusiasms was Irish folklore, and "The Banshee" is inspired by the wailing ghost of Irish legend. "The Aeolian Harp" attempts to imitate the sounds made by the wind blowing through the strings of a wind harp.

ELECTRONIC MUSIC

Just as the invention of the motion picture gave rise to a new art form, the development in recent years of electronics and acoustics has given rise to new ways of making music. Electronic music has opened a fantastic range of hitherto unknown sonic possibilities. For instance, conventional instruments can produce seventy to eighty pitch levels; electronic music can call upon the whole range of frequencies which the ear can perceive, from about fifty cycles per second to fifteen thousand. Similarly, a vast range of dynamic levels can be achieved, as well as "an infinite number of rhythmic values based on durational levels measured in centimeters on tape." In short, electronically produced music has burst through the limitations our traditional instruments impose just as space ships have transcended the limitations of the airplane.

Electronic music is revolutionary in still another way: the performer can be eliminated. Now the composer, like a painter or sculptor, can reach his audience directly, without an interpreter, the singer or instrumentalist, coming between.

What all this will mean to the future development of music is still not entirely clear. In his *Introduction to Contemporary Music*, Joseph Machlis writes that the emphasis is now "on the sound stuff itself rather than the emotional meanings that have accrued to it." He describes electronic music as objective and abstract, the "music of a machine age, the product of an urbanized culture" which could eradicate the personal element from music forever. On the other hand, man and machine may, he says, be reconciled in a "new synthesis of artistic expression."

However this may be, we certainly cannot expect musicians, of all people, to ignore the enormous range of new possibilities that sound technology has opened up. We have to open our ears to the new sounds science has offered us.

VLADIMIR USSACHEVSKY AND OTTO LUENING

A little over twenty-five years ago, two men already known as composers, Otto Luening and Vladimir Ussachevsky, pioneered the development of electronic music in the United States, at first using a flute, a piano, and sometimes the human voice as sources of sound which they then manipulated by means of a magnetic tape recorder. They employed speed transposition, playback recording, and mixing and splicing to create sonic layers; for Luening's "Fantasy in Space," for example, the two invented "a way to mix (without a mixer) in order to achieve the multiplicity of three layers." Their ultimate objective was "creative collaboration with machines ... to expand the boundaries of perception." Vladimir Ussachevsky has described how, after a state of "mutual responsiveness" between the machine and the composer had been reached, "suddenly, a window would open into a vast field of possibilities; the time limits would vanish, and the machines would seem to become humanized components of the interactive network now consisting of oneself and the machine, still obedient but full of suggestions to the master controls of the imagination. All then seemed possible: one leaned on the horizon and pushed it away and forward...."

"Incantation" (Ussachevsky and Luening) and "Sonic Contours" (Ussachevsky) both belong to the first five years of experimentation, in the early 1950's, when Ussachevsky and Luening were working together at Columbia University. Later their studio expanded into the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center. From the start, their goal has been to explore all the possibilities of the tape recorder, but without mechanizing music.

-Program notes by Constance Bruzelius, English Department

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15

2:00 P.M.:

White Hall
Ives Auditorium

Symposium: W. P. A. AND THE ARTIST

Carlus Dyer, Artist; Director, Aldrich Museum
of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut

(continued)