



QUARTET NEW GENERATION

RECORDER COLLECTIVE

Susanne Fröhlich
Andrea Guttmann
Hanna Pape
Heide Schwarz

2:30 PM, April 18, 2010
Faye Spanos Concert Hall
In cooperation with Pacific's
Conservatory of Music

FANTASY THROUGH SYMMETRY

- Beata Viscera, Op. 74/B (2002)** **Fulvio CALDINI**
(b. 1959)
- Clockwork Toccata, Op. 68/C (1999-2000)** **CALDINI**
- Ricercar Quarto, sopra mi-re-fa-mi** **Girolamo FRESCOBALDI**
(1583-1643)
- Les Indiennes Galantes ou Les Folies Flamandes (1996)** **Álvaro GUIMARÃES**
I Die Frage des Zuckerrohrs an die See: sous dominó blanc... (b. 1956)
II La Sonate: sous dominó bleu...
III La consonanza: sous dominó vert...
IV Die Antwort der See an das Zuckerroh: sous dominó noir
- Fuga VI: c minor, from 6 Fugues for harpsichord, HWV 610** **George Frideric HANDEL**
(1685-1759)
- Mortal Flesh (2008)*** **Paul MORAVEC**
(b. 1957)
- intermission—
- Fuga IV: b minor, from 6 Fugues for harpsichord, HWV 608** **HANDEL**
- Airlines (2008)*** **Woiciech BLECHARZ**
(b. 1981)
- Concerto and Fuga in C Major, BWV 595, 545** **Johann Sebastian BACH**
(1685–1750)

Concert sponsored by Phil and Carole Gilbertson

Quartet New Generation is First Prize Winner of the Concert Artists Guild International Competition
Quartet New Generation appears by special arrangement with Concert Artists Guild
850 Seventh Ave., #1205, New York, NY 10019 www.concertartists.org V: (212) 333-5200 F: (212) 977-7149
**composed for QNG*

Artists

QNG—Quartet New Generation was founded in September 1998 at the Amsterdam Conservatoire and the University of the Arts, Berlin. Hailed as “Four Recorder Virtuosos” by The New York Times and “mind-blowing” by the Los Angeles Times, QNG took top honors at the 2004 Concert Artists Guild International Competition. The collective was also awarded the top prizes at the German Music Competition in Bonn, Germany; the International Gaudeamus Interpreters Competition for Contemporary Music in the Netherlands; the International Chamber Music Competition for Contemporary Music in Poland; and the 13^{ème} Concours International de Musique de Chambre’.

Starting with its successful U.S. debut in 2004 at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, the quartet has since performed in the US at the Pittsburgh Chamber Music Society, the Chautauqua Institution, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, Merkin Concert Hall, Regina Quick Center at St. Bonaventure University, and many other venues. Additional appearances at the Brooklyn Academy of Music’s BAM Café and Barbes Bar and Performance Space are part of CNG’s New Music/New Places initiative. In the 2008-2009 season, QNG made its debut in Carnegie Hall’s Stern Auditorium as part of a performance with the Kronos Quartet and an all-star line-up performing Terry Riley’s landmark work *In C*. In addition to U.S. tours, QNG has also toured Japan and throughout Europe.

Program

Since the High Middle Ages, Western music has shown almost constant stylistic change, reflecting the quickening pace of change in society as a whole. Musical stylistic changes are not unanticipated; cultural influences shape the composer’s output and need to be relevant to the moment. In this sense, music is a mirror of the larger society wherein it exists. The composers seek to be germane to the surrounding world and to write in a style that reflects that relevance. The rate of change of both Western society and musical style accelerates as we move from Middle Ages to present day. Once styles lasted for a century; we now see a style last for a mere decade. In today’s program, you have the opportunity to hear how a variety of composers created musical style reflecting society from the Middle Ages to the current day.

The recorder, instrument of choice from Medieval to Baroque, fell into complete disuse in the 19th century following a change in musical

taste to a preference for flute, oboe, and clarinet. It was rediscovered in the 20th century as part of the historic quest for ‘authentic’ style of performing music of previous eras on one hand and of creating contemporary music on the other. Its large palette of noises, whistles, and rustles, the delicacy of its tonal and dynamic nuances, and its ability to sound more than one note simultaneously has attracted 20th century composers and is a source of their inspiration. New playing techniques were developed and recorder builders improved the instrument, allowing composers to use a medieval instrument to reflect current style.

The makeup of a recorder quartet can include a broad range of instruments, from subcontrabass to soprano, so the sound can vary considerably, depending on which instruments are used. Taking advantage of this large family and their flexibility, QNG will demonstrate new possibilities of sound and expression. The instruments played by QNG include a large number of accurate copies of authentic historical instruments plus modern Paetzold bass recorders. These square, box-like recorders produce a different structure of overtones similar to that of some organ pipes and therefore a specific, extraordinary sound, which is further enhanced by the percussive, audible nature of the keys. Expect to be mesmerized by today’s innovative programmatic juxtaposition of early and contemporary music styles. Performing on as many as 20 different recorders of varying sizes, shapes, and sound palettes during the course of today’s concert, QNG promises to transport us into new sonic worlds, convincing us that the recorder is a viable, modern classical instrument.

Caldini—Beata Viscera

Italian composer Fulvio Caldini has become a specialist writing for recorder. Many of his pieces show the strong influence of minimalism, particularly the work of Steve Reich and Louis Andriessen. While you would not mistake Caldini for either of these composers, he uses many of the devices typical of their music, speaks a similar harmonic language, and inculcates a similar dancing vitality. Caldini is skilled at creating unique sound worlds by combining the instruments in a diversity of designs, so you will hear a variety of sounds not usually associated with the recorder quartet genre. Caldini’s ensembles are often astonishingly quirky and create truly

unconventional sonorities. “Beata Viscera” (blessed is the womb) uses instruments from the lower end of the spectrum, which have a haunting, intense meditative enrichment that evokes far-off times.

Caldini describes the piece as composed around a medieval melody by Pérotin (Perotinus): “Starting with one added pedal tone only, I gradually built a canon with more voices. I heard Perotinus’ original work in a concert in January 1998 in Arezzo and I was deeply struck by it. Perotinus composed only the melody, but it seemed to me so beautiful I gave in to temptation and enriched it with a harmony created by a canon.”

Caldini—Clockwork Toccata

This is a densely packed piece comprising a swift inspection of the stylistic elements of minimalist music. It is a miniature having a go at synthesizing in a few moments what traditional minimalism frequently waters down in lengthier works and more generous instrumentations: think Phillip Glass on a triple espresso.

Frescobaldi—Ricerca Quarto

Frescobaldi was a native of Ferrara, a city which during the 15th century had emerged as one of the foremost musical trend-setters in Europe, a position it maintained until 1598, with the annexation of the city by the papacy. Frescobaldi had long since departed the city when he published his first composition, a collection of well-crafted but otherwise unexceptional madrigals. The composer demonstrated his mastery over this fashionable medium of the time, but in his next publication, issued only a few months later, he turned his back on contemporary fashions and embarked upon a road that eventually would lead to new styles for the world to emulate.

In the musical culture of Frescobaldi’s time the literary text reigned absolute; to forward-looking composers, music’s highest duty was to serve the word. If instrumental music were needed, it could be produced by “uneducated” musical technicians and did not deserve the attention of great artists. Yet, Frescobaldi turned his full attention to the discovery of wordless sound and he brought to this abstract musical style a range of emotional expression unsurpassed in the finest contemporary vocal music.

A ricerca is a type of late Renaissance and mostly early Baroque instrumental composition. The term means to search out, and many ricercars serve as a prelude that “searches out” the key or mode of a following piece. In its most

* If “modern classical” is not an oxymoron

common contemporary usage, it refers to an early kind of fugue, particularly one of a serious character in which the subject uses long note values. Listen for themes to be developed through melodic imitation with mixed passages in chordal style, running scale passages, and alternation of high and low phrases that suggest the many-voiced texture of a vocal motet.

Guimarães—Les Indiennes...

Álvaro Guimarães is a Belgian composer born in 1956 in Brasil. He studied piano and composition at the Conservatory and Faculty Mozarteum in Sao Paolo. He is co-founder of the "Nucleo Musica Nova de Sao Paolo," an association for contemporary music that was active in the '70s and '80s. He was a teacher at the Royal Conservatory of Gent and artistic director of the "Spectra Ensemble for Contemporary Music" before his death in 2009.

Les Indiennes Galantes ou Les Folies Flamandes [The gallant Indian women or the Flemish follies] is a commanding and fascinating minimal. Its four movements have in part mystical, in part ironic titles in a polyglot of German, French, and Italian.

The first movement is called "*Die Frage des Zuckerrohrs an die See: sous dominó blanc*" [The sugar-cane's question to the sea: under the white cape]. Set for three basses and a great bass, it consists mainly of long, sustained notes and might make you think of either conch shells or fog horns.

Movement two, "*La Sonate: sous dominó bleu*" [Bell: under the blue cape], is set for four tenors and grows from even, sustained, bell-like quarter notes to a cacophony of repetitive figures, often pitting triplets against sixteenths. Brief sustained solo passages here and there afford you a break from the dense ensemble.

The third movement, set for four altos, is titled "*La Consonanza: sous dominó vert*" [Consonance: under the green cape]. Here Guimarães' sense of irony is strongest. Far from being music of consonance, listen for the dissonant interval of a major second as its primary harmonic color. Listen also for the same rapid repetitive patterns a major second apart, and for the modal quality of the other movements replaced by chromaticism. This movement is quite a bit more difficult to listen to than the others and will require concentration.

The last movement, "*Die Antwort der See an das Zuckerrohr: sous dominó noir*" [The sea's answer to the sugar-cane: under the black cape], is predominantly sustained notes. Only two of the players participate, one on soprano,

the other on soprano (or perhaps garklein[†]) recorder.

The composer shares: "I wrote this music, partly intellectually but much more intuitively, in memory of my father. It has been done with some science and a lot of intuition."

Handel—Fugues IV & VI

Handel is usually thought of as a composer of large music: operas, oratorios, and orchestral suites, which have tended to eclipse his smaller works such as his sacred music. But he had his intimate side as well, no better expressed than in his keyboard works.

According to his contemporaries, Handel was one of the greatest organ and harpsichord virtuosos at his time. He wrote more than twenty keyboard suites, of which his eight Suites for Harpsichord (HWV 426-433) and six Great Fugues for Organ or Harpsichord (HWV 605-610) is the most representative.

The Great Fugues are certainly the pinnacle of his fugue composition, combining contrapuntal method with individual distinctiveness and strong expression. This is especially interesting since Handel was notorious for writing phoney fugues—pieces that would start out in fugal texture but evolve into simple melody and accompaniment.

Handel later reused some of these fugues in his concerti grossi, the oratorio "Israel in Egypt," and in a trio sonata, where they have become far more familiar today than the originals. As you listen, see if you recognize them from these other works. But listen also for the stylistically contemporary nature of these works performed on recorder rather than organ.

Moravec—Mortal Flesh

Paul Moravec, winner of the 2004 Pulitzer Prize in Music, has composed over 100 orchestral, chamber, choral, lyric, film, and electro-acoustic compositions. His music has been described as "tuneful, ebullient, and wonderfully energetic," "riveting and fascinating," and "assured, virtuosic." A graduate of Harvard University and Columbia University, he has taught at Harvard, Columbia, Dartmouth, and Hunter College, as well as Adelphi University.

The composer states that *Mortal Flesh* comes from the ancient hymn text known in English as "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence," set to the haunting 17th century French carol "Picardy." *Mortal Flesh* is a free fantasia on

fragments of the melody, rather than a rigorous set of variations on the whole. This is also an etude on instrumental doubling, requiring each of the four players to move gracefully from bass upward through tenor, alto, soprano and soprano recorders. Very slow and low at the outset, listen for the composition to accelerate in tempo and rate of musical exposition, and to quicken and ascend to final evanescence in the highest possible register. *Mortal Flesh* is dedicated to the members of QNG.

Blecharz—Airlines

Wojciech Blecharz studied composition at the Frederick Chopin Academy of Music in Warsaw with M. Borkowski. He finished his studies in December 2006 with distinction and received an MA in composition. He has won several scholarships for workshops in Poland, France and Germany as well as several prizes at international competitions in Poland, Czech Republic, Germany, and France. His work has been commissioned by Intégrales (Hamburg), Kwartludium Ensemble (Warsaw), Michael E. Richards (Baltimore), and QNG, today's artists.

The composer writes: "The sound material used in my new composition is mainly focused on transformations of timbre, constellations of miscellaneous kinds of hiss, whisper, colored air, inhalation, exhalation, speaking, forced and overblown sound, and others."

Libstien for the many extended and unconventional articulation techniques play using different parts of the recorder: blowing, whispering, singing, or whistling into a labium, tube, or finger holes.

Bach—Concerto & Fuga in C

Johann Sebastian Bach regularly copied...er, arranged...pieces by other composers. He did this to study different styles, to use the materials in performance, and to teach his students. Bach was on very good terms with his employer, Prince Johann Ernst of Saxony, while he was engaged at the Court of Saxe-Weimar. The prince was a violinist and composer and had a passion for Vivaldi's music. During this time, Bach made several organ and harpsichord transcriptions of concertos by both Vivaldi and the prince. BWV 595 is an arrangement Bach made of the first movement of a concerto composed by the prince. The original has unfortunately been lost. The fuga in C is Bach's own work conceived for organ. Listen for open texture, simple motifs, and fine pedal lines.

Notes© by Dr. Michael Spencer

[†] Barely 6 inches long, it is the smallest of the recorders.

FIFTY-FOURTH SEASON

2009-2010

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(Supported in part by a SAC Grant)

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Brentano String Quartet

7:30 PM Saturday, November 7, 2009
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Quartet New Generation

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- Please turn off cellular phones and disengage audible alarms on pagers and watches.
- Students are admitted free on a space-available basis.
- Concert programs are subject to change without notice.
- Seating is unreserved for the current Season.
- Contributions, including memorials, are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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FOCM welcomes children to our concerts. However, an adult must accompany children ten years and under (no babes in arms please). At the request of our artists, children should not sit in the first four rows.

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