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An Evening of Richard Cumming: Susan Carol Kindall in a Faculty Recital

Susan Carol Kindall

Ouachita Baptist University

Jon Secret

Ouachita Baptist University

The Cumming Chamber Ensemble

Craig V. Hamilton

Ouachita Baptist University

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**Ouachita Baptist University
School of Music**

presents

“An Evening of Richard Cumming”

featuring

SUSAN CAROL KINDALL, piano

in

Faculty Recital

assisted by

Jon Secrest, dramatic reader

The Cumming Chamber Ensemble

Craig Hamilton, conductor

March 13, 1995

7:30 p.m.

Mabee Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

Program

Hommagerie for Piano (1991)

Arkansas Premiere

- I. *Hommage à Poulenc*
- II. *Yumajkuli uk Bartók*
- III. *Toccata—Hommage à Ravel*

Twenty-Four Preludes for Solo Piano (1966-69)

Arkansas Premiere

1. *Con brio*
2. *Andante con moto*
3. *Amabile*
4. *Adagio ma non troppo e senza rigore*
5. *Allegro maestoso*
6. *Volante*
7. *Presto*
8. *Andante, ma con poco moto*
9. *Allegro*
10. *Adagio*
11. *Allegro amabile*
12. *Poco Allegro*
13. *Con moto*
14. *Poco Allegro*
15. *Allegro moderato*
16. *Molto Adagio (quasi senza misura)*
17. *Andantino grazioso (poco alla Veneziana)*
18. *Presto scherzoso*
19. *Andante*
20. *Largo*
21. *Allegro*
22. *Adagio*
23. *Allegro comodo*
24. *Molto Allegro*

The Knight's Page (1954)

Arkansas Premiere
text by Anthony Livesey

Jon Secrest, dramatic reader
Susan Kindall, piano

The *Hommagerie for Piano* (1991) is one of Cumming's most recent contributions to piano literature. Completed in July 1991, the work is composed of three charming vignettes, that honor Poulenc, Bartók and Ravel. The work was written for a New York composer's contest and was premiered by Susan Kindall in 1993. The first movement, marked *Allegro amabile* captures the essence of Poulenc's style, à la Cumming. It is a reworking of an earlier piece, the *Sonata in F Major* (1948–49). The second piece, parodying the style of Bartók, was originally intended as an alternative to Prelude No. 22 in B-flat Minor of the *Twenty-Four Preludes for Solo Piano*. The finale, entitled Toccata, pays homage to Ravel with its liberal use of whole-tone scales, colorful pedaling and thematic allusions to the toccata of *Le Tombeau de Couperin*. As marked in the score, the final bars pay tribute rhythmically to Sergei Rachmaninoff's well-known G Minor Prelude Op. 23, No. 6.

Among Cumming's best-known works are the *Twenty-Four Preludes for Solo Piano* (1966–69) written for and premiered by American pianist John Browning. They comprise Cumming's most extensive work for solo piano to date and rank among the finest of American twentieth-century concert piano collections. The set is eclectic in style and genre, in the Bach-Chopin-Rachmaninoff tradition of writing twenty-four preludes in all keys. Cumming says, "The first nine preludes were composed in Switzerland in an almost compulsively inaccessible Alpine village during three weeks of the summer in 1966 and the last one was finished a few days before the premiere at Philharmonic Hall in New York City on December 17, 1969. . . . I tried to explore a variety of pianistic techniques and musical styles ranging from the café to strict twelve-tone (including a piece each for the right and left hand alone). . . and, to the best of my ability, express my own joy and respect for that noble and dynamic instrument I dearly love, the piano. I had a good time."

The Preludes' charm and appeal are undeniable. Inspirations for the music include a flirtatious young Brazilian woman pictured in Prelude No. 3 in D-flat Major, textures reminiscent of the Barber *Hermit Songs* in Prelude No. 7 in E-flat Major, the rattling of the New York subway in Prelude No. 9 in E Major, a summer tea dance at the Grand Hotel in Prelude No. 11 in F Major and the aura of oriental silks and heavy mists in Prelude No. 13 in F-sharp Major. The Prelude No. 20 in A Minor was originally composed in 1948 and is the only remaining movement of an early five-movement work entitled *Masque*. This prelude is a reworking of the third movement "Desperation." The Prelude No. 21 in B-flat Major was initially a choral piece for women's voices. One can almost hear the "Dominus Deus Sabaoth" text of the original in the opening melody. All of these pieces are masterfully crafted, encompassing the gamut of American and cosmopolitan idioms.

The Knight's Page (1954) was written as a result of a commission from the British Broadcasting Corporation with text by British actor and writer Anthony Livesey. The story centers around a chess game in which a little knight's page "saves the day." The music brings the characters in the story to life. The page, knight, and queen each have specific thematic material assigned to them. The narrative quality of the music punctuates the changing moods of the story line, however, the general character of the music remains light throughout. As Cumming says, "It's a silly piece."

The final piece on the program, *Masquerade* (1988), is one of Cumming's few chamber works which includes piano. It was premiered in Providence, Rhode Island in 1988. The piano contributes to the overall texture of the work, having few solo appearances. Like much of Cumming's music, this piece exhibits a refreshingly theatrical quality reminiscent of American popular music.

INTERMISSION

Masquerade (1988)

Arkansas Premiere

Allegro con spirito

Adagio

Allegro scherzando

Molto moderato

Allegro

Maestoso

James Smith and David Mears, violin

Meredith Nisbet, viola

Alex Nisbet, cello

Francis McBeth, double bass

David Etiene, flute

Earl Hesse, clarinet

James Flowers, oboe

Marilyn Sommer, bassoon

Tim Schodowski, trumpet

Sim Flora, trombone

Kevin Welch, horn

William Harris and Robert McClure, percussion

Susan Kindall, piano

Craig Hamilton, conductor

You are cordially invited to a reception in the Gallery immediately following the recital.