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Twentieth Centuray Art Music of the Americas: David Dennis and Craig N. Hodges in a Faculty Recital

David Dennis

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Dennis, David and Hodges, Craig N., "Twentieth Centuray Art Music of the Americas: David Dennis and Craig N. Hodges in a Faculty Recital" (1989). *Faculty Performances*. 94.

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presents

DAVID DENNIS, PIANIST
CRAIG N. HODGES, BASS-BARITONE

IN

FACULTY RECITAL

**Twentieth Century Art Music
of the Americas**

Tuesday, September 12, 1989
Mabee Recital Hall
7:30 P.M.

PROGRAM

Six Preludes (1923)

Paul Bowles
(b. 1910)

Hymns for the
Amusement of Children (1972)
(Christopher Smart)

Conrad Susa
(b. 1935)

For Sunday

At Dressing in the Morning

Against Despair (Old Ralph in the Wood)

For Saturday

At Undressing in the Evening

The Conclusion of the Matter

Three Moods (1921)

Aaron Copland
(b. 1900)

- I. Embittered
- II. Wistful
- III. Jazzy

Sonata No. 1 (1952)

Alberto Ginastera
(1916 - 1983)

- I. Allegro marcato
- II. Presto misterioso
- III. Adagio molto appassionato
- IV. Ruvido ed ostinato

General William Booth
Enters into Heaven (1967)
(Vachel Lindsey)

Bruce Broughton
(b. 1945)

SIX PRELUDES

Author and composer Paul Bowles received his formal instruction at the Danning School of Music and the School of Design and Liberal Arts, both in New York. After his studies, Bowles travelled to Paris and worked as a telephone operator for the Paris Herald Tribune. While in Paris he studied composition with Aaron Copland and counterpoint with Nadia Boulanger. He was also a student of Virgil Thomson.

Bowles has composed music in several genres including ballet, opera, incidental music, chamber sonatas, choral music and orchestral suites. His music shows a strong influence of American jazz and Mexican dance and has been characterized as nostalgic and witty. Virtually all of his compositions are miniatures. His piano works include two sonatinas, and several smaller pieces including the six preludes presented here.

In 1949 Bowles published his first novel, The Sheltering Sky, and has devoted himself to literature since that time. He has written several novels and an autobiography (1972). In 1980 he opened a writing workshop in Tangier under the auspices of the School of Visual Arts in New York.

HYMNS FOR THE AMUSEMENT OF CHILDREN

Notes by Conrad Susa

Christopher Smart wrote his *Hymns for the Amusement of Children* in 1771, the last year of his life, while he was in debtor's prison. No stranger to prisons and mental institutions, he seems to have been afflicted with a sort of religious mania which some of his detractors considered to be madness. Boswell records Dr. Johnson as saying, "Madness frequently discovers itself merely by unnecessary deviation from the usual modes of the world. My poor friend Smart showed the disturbance of his mind by falling on his knees and saying his prayers in the street, or any other unusual place. Now although, rationally speaking, it is greater madness not to pray at all than to pray as Smart did, I am afraid there are so many who do not pray, that their understanding is not called into question."

Smart's collection consists of thirty-six hymns, together with three unnumbered hymns as a tailpiece. The poems are dedicated to His Highness Prince Frederick, the second son of George III, and "composed for his amusement...with all due submission and respect [and] humbly ascribed to him as the best of Bishops." The frontispiece to the collection shows the Prince as a bishop, aged seven, having held his See since he was six months old.

Lighter and more accessible than Smart's best poems (*Jubilate Agno* and *Hymn to David*, familiar in the settings by Benjamin Britten), the *Hymns for the Amusement of Children* were meant to instruct through entertainment.

Having decided the Hymns were already sufficiently instructive, I chose to emphasize their more amusing aspects by locating Smart's sensibility with American popular music forms and singing styles, as follows:

1. *For Sunday*, in calypso style as if for Harry Belafonte;
2. *At Dressing in the Morning*, modelled after (and for) Elton John;
3. *Against Despair*, in a flowing folksong style (with a tango thrown in) as if for Judy Collins; a brief piano cadenza leads directly to
4. *For Saturday*, a sort of "Carnival in Rio" that Louis Armstrong might have sung;
5. *At Undressing in the Evening*, moody blues suitable for, say, Al Green or Johnny Mathis;
6. *The Conclusion of the Matter*, as if for Roberta Flack or Barbara Streisand.

In addition to the toying with singing styles and dance forms, the Hymns in the cycle are arranged to form a rudimentary plot: the first and last Hymns are sung by a parent, while the inner group is sung by the child. The whole set, like the classical sets of six (which commemorate the six days of Creation, Wednesday being the piano cadenza) spans a week in the child's life and symbolizes the span of one's whole life.

1 For Sunday

Arise—arise—the Lord arose
On this triumphant day;
Your souls to piety dispose,
Arise to bless and pray.

Ev'n rustics do adorn them now,
Themselves in roses dress;
And to the clergyman they bow,
When he begins to bless.

Their best apparel now arrays
The little girls and boys;
And better than the preacher prays
For heav'n's eternal joys.

2 At Dressing in the Morning

Now I arise, empow'r'd by Thee,
The glorious Sun to face;
O clothe me with humility,
Adorn me with thy grace.

All evil of the day fore-send,
Prevent the tempter's snare;
Thine Angel on my steps attend,
And give me fruit to pray'r.

O make me useful as I go
My pilgrimage along;
And sweetly sooth this vale of woe
By charity and song.

Let me from Christ obedience learn,
To Christ obedience pay;
Each parent duteous love return,
And consecrate the day.

3 Against Despair *Old Ralph in the Wood*

A raven once an Acorn took
From Basham's tallest stoutest tree;
He hid it by a limpid brook,
And liv'd another oak to see.

Thus Melancholy buries Hope,
Which Providence keeps still alive,
And bids us with afflictions cope,
And all anxiety survive.

4 For Saturday

Now's the time for mirth and play,
Saturday's an holiday;
Praise to heav'n unceasing yield,
I've found a lark's nest in the field.

A lark's nest, then your playmate begs
You'd spare herself and speckled eggs;
Soon she shall ascend and sing
Your praises to th'eternal King.

5 At Undressing in the Evening

These cloaths, of which I now divest
Myself, ALL SEEING EYE,
Must be one day (that day be blest)
Relinquish'd and laid by.

Thou cordial sleep, to death akin,
I court thee on my knee;
O let me exist, free from sin,
Be little more than Thee.

But if much agonizing pain
My dying hour await,
The Lord be with me to sustain,
To help and to abate.

O let me meet Thee undeterr'd
By no foul stains defil'd
According to thy holy word,
Receive me as a Child.

6 The Conclusion of the Matter

Fear God—obey his just decrees,
And do it hand, and heart, and knees;
For after all our utmost care
There's nought like penitence and prayer.

Then weigh the balance in your mind,
Look forward, not one glance behind;
Let no foul fiend retard your pace,
Hosannah! Thou hast won the race.

Hymns for the Amusement of Children
by Christopher Smart (1722-1771)

THREE MOODS

Aaron Copland was born in Brooklyn to Harris Copland, a Russian immigrant and Sarah Mittenenthal, originally of Lithuania. The youngest of five children, Copland was exposed to music in a variety of settings, including family singalongs and the Jewish synagogue.

Copland received his first piano instruction from his sister, Laurine. At age thirteen he secured the services of Leopold Wolfsohn, a noted piano instructor in the Brooklyn area. In 1917, Copland began studying harmony, counterpoint, and composition with Rubin Goldmark, at that time the premiere composition instructor in the United States. At Goldmark's suggestion, the young musician began piano studies with Victor Wittgenstein. Four years later, Copland travelled to Europe and became the first American composition student of Nadia Boulanger, who also provided instruction in orchestration and score reading.

Copland's contribution to piano literature is relatively small, but significant. His most notable works are the Passacaglia (1922), a Sonata (1939-41), Piano Fantasy (1955-57), and Variations (1930). Reflected in his writing are elements of American jazz, American folksong, and the European influence of Boulanger. Both the Fantasy and Variations are serialistic. Since 1930 Copland's composition has taken two directions, one designed for the concert-going public, the other presenting a more experimental and innovative style.

SONATA NO. 1

Ginastera began his musical studies at age seven with piano lessons. At the age of twelve he entered the Williams Conservatory where he received private instruction in piano, harmony, and composition, graduating in 1935 with the Gold Medal in the latter. From 1936-1938 Ginastera studied composition with José André at the National Conservatory of Music and graduated with highest honors.

Ginastera viewed his evolution as a composer as comprising three periods: objective nationalism, subjective nationalism, and neo-expressionism. Music of the first period is marked by Argentine traits and themes in a direct manner, often employing tonal melodic elements. Rhythm and melody are modelled on Argentine folksong and dance (musica criolla).

The first piano sonata was composed during the second compositional period. Works of this period contain melodic and rhythmic motives of pampean music. A clear example of this is the use of the chord formed by the open strings of the guitar (E, A, d, g, b, e'), found in the second movement of the Sonata.

His neo-expressionism is characterized by the use of dodecaphonic techniques, polytonality, quarter tones, and alleatoric procedures.

Sonata No. 1, dedicated to Roy and Joanna Harris, was first performed by Joanna Harris in 1952. Serialism is found in both the second and third movements while the outer movements reflect the rhythmic substance found in Argentine folk and dance music.

GENERAL WILLIAM BOOTH ENTERS INTO HEAVEN

Born in Los Angeles in 1945, Bruce Broughton began his professional career working as a Music Supervisor for CBS Television in Hollywood. In 1977 he left the Network in order to work as a freelance composer for television and films. Since that time he has contributed hundreds of scores for television shows such as *Amazing Stories*, *Quincy*, *The Blue and the Gray*, and *How the West Was Won*. Nominated eleven times, he has won four Emmy awards for his scores to *Dallas*, *Buck Rogers*, and the mini-series, *The First Olympics: Athens - 1896*.

In 1985 his score for the motion picture *Silverado* was nominated for an Oscar. The soundtrack recording for *Young Sherlock Holmes* was nominated for a Grammy award in 1986. In addition to the above, Broughton has composed the music to such films as *Harry and the Hendersons*, *The Presidio*, *The Boy Who Could Fly*, *Sweet Liberty*, and Michael Jackson's *Moonwalker*.

Raised in the Salvationist tradition, Broughton was inspired in 1967 while a student at the University of Southern California to set Vachel Lindsey's classic poem *General William Booth Enters Into Heaven*, depicting the birth of the Salvation Army. This unpublished work is being performed tonight for the second time since its writing.

GENERAL WILLIAM BOOTH ENTERS INTO HEAVEN

VACHEL LINDSEY

Booth led boldly with his big bass drum.
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)
The Saints smiled gravely and they said: "He's come."
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)

Walking lepers followed rank on rank,
Lurching bravos, bravos from the ditches dank.
Drabs from the alleyways and drug fiends pale--
Minds still passion ridden, soul-powers frail;
Vermin eaten saints with moldy breath,
Unwashed legions with the ways of Death--
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)

Every slum had sent its half-a-score the round world over--
(Booth had groaned for more.)
Every banner that the wide world flies
Bloomed with glory and transcendant dyes.
Big-voiced lasses made their banjos bang.
Tranced, fanatical they shrieked and sang:
"Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?"

Hallelujah!
It was queer to see bull-necked convicts with that land made free.
Loons with trumpets blowed a blare, blare, blare
On, on upward through the golden air!
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)

Booth died blind, and still by faith he trod,
Eyes still dazzled by the ways of God.
Booth led boldly, and he looked the chief,
Eagle countenance in sharp relief,
Beard a-flying, air of high command
Unabated in that holy land.

Jesus came from out the courthouse door,
Stretched his hands above the passing poor.
Booth saw not, but led his queer ones there
Round and round the mighty courthouse square.

Then, in an instant, all that blear review
Marched on spotless, clad in raiment new.
The lame were straightened, withered limbs uncurled,
And blind eyes opened on a new, sweet world.

Drabs and vixens in a flash made whole!
Gone was the weaselhead, the snout, the jowl!
Sages and sibyls now, and athletes clean,
Rulers of empires, and of forests green!
The hosts were sandalled, and their wings were fire!
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)
But their noise played havoc with the angel choir.
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)

Oh, shout salvation! Salvation!
It was good to see Kings and Princes by the Lamb set free.
The banjos rattled, and the tambourines
Jing-jing-jingled in the hands of Queens.

And when Booth halted by the curb for prayer
He saw his Master through the flag-filled air.
Christ came gently with a robe and crown
For Booth, the soldier, while the throng knelt down.
He saw King Jesus. They were face to face.
And he knelt aweeping in that holy place.

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?