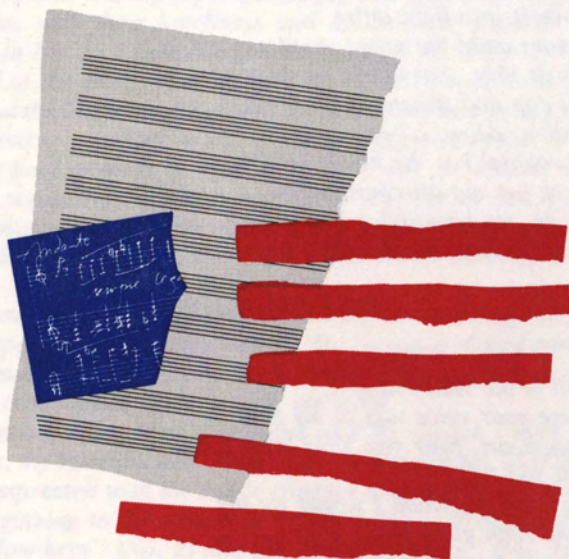


FESTIVAL OF
AMERICAN CONTEMPORARY MUSIC
at Rice University

November 5-15, 1989
celebrating American Music Week



Chamber Music by Ross Lee Finney
Poetry by James Joyce

JEANETTE LOMBARD, soprano

MARY NORRIS, piano

Friday, November 10, 1989

8:00 p.m. in Hamman Hall

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music

PROGRAM

Chamber Music (1952)

Ross Lee Finney

(b. 1906)

(Text by James Joyce)

- I. *Strings in the earth and air ...*
- II. *The twilight turns from amethyst ...*
- III. *At that hour when all things have repose ...*
- IV. *When the shy star goes forth in heaven ...*
- V. *Lean out of the window, Goldenhair ...*
- VI. *I would in that sweet bosom be ...*
- VII. *My love is in a light attire ...*
- VIII. *Who goes amid the green wood ...*
- IX. *Winds of May, that dance on the sea ...*
- X. *Bright cap and streamers ...*
- XI. *Bid adieu, adieu, adieu ...*
- XII. *What counsel has the hooded moon ...*
- XIII. *Go seek her out all courteously ...*
- XIV. *My dove, my beautiful one ...*
- XV. *From dewy dreams, my soul, arise ...*

INTERMISSION

(15 minutes)

- XVI. *O cool is the valley now ...*
- XVII. *Because your voice was at my side ...*
- XXVIII. *O Sweetheart, hear you Your lover's tale ...*
- XIX. *Be not sad ...*
- XX. *In the dark pinewood I would we lay ...*
- XXI. *He who hath glory lost ...*
- XXII. *Of that so sweet imprisonment ...*
- XXIII. *This heart that flutters near my heart ...*
- XXIV. *Silently she's combing ...*
- XXV. *Lightly come or lightly go ...*
- XXVI. *Thou leanest to the shell of night ...*
- XXVII. *Though I thy Mithridates were ...*
- XXVIII. *Gentle lady, do not sing ...*
- XXIX. *Dear heart, why will you use me so? ...*
- XXX. *Love came to us in time gone by ...*

INTERMISSION

(5 minutes)

- XXXI. *O, it was out by Donnycarney ...*
- XXXII. *Rain has fallen fallen all the day ...*
- XXXIII. *Now, O now, in this brown land ...*
- XXXIV. *Sleep now, O sleep now, O you unquiet heart! ...*
- XXXV. *All day I hear the noise of waters ...*
- XXXVI. *I hear an army charging upon the land ...*

For recording purposes, please applaud only at intermission and at the conclusion.

PROGRAM NOTE

I don't know when I first thought of setting the lyrics in Joyce's Chamber Music. I had a copy when I was a student in Paris in 1927. With a group of friends, we would spot Joyce with other very distinguished people at a cafe on the Left Bank, probably the Deux Magots, and we would settle at a nearby table to catch a few words from their animated conversation. When I was in O.S.S. in Paris during World War II, I relived, somewhat, my earlier experiences and began to think again of setting those poems. In 1952 the work had become so clear in my mind that I composed the entire cycle in a matter of a few months.

I thought of Chamber Music, not as a collection of independent lyrics, but as one long poem about love, starting with young love that leads to sex fulfillment (No. 14) and exhaustion (No. 15) and leading from disillusionment and bitter memories (No. 30) to the last six poems, with their loneliness and allusions to Ireland. No. 31 refers to "Donnycarney". In No. 32 "Rain has fallen, fallen all the day." In No. 34 "the voice of winter is heard at the door." In No. 35 "The noise of waters making moan, Sad as the sea-birds", and the last poem filled with the anguish of invasions from the sea "Arrogant in black armour, ... shaking in triumph their long, green hair ... They come out of the sea," and the final anguish of "My heart have you no wisdom thus to despair?"

The poems seemed to me like mosaics that together formed a larger picture, or perhaps like a stained-glass window where small pictures made a luminous totality. It seemed unthinkable to set a few of the lyrics, since it was the total picture of love that was important.

After completing the work, I had no desire that individual songs be performed, though that may have happened in spite of my wishes. The demands placed upon both singer and pianist, in performing the entire cycle, were tremendous, and it is not surprising that I have had to wait thirty-seven years to hear the work.

I have no idea if Joyce viewed his work as I do, though I think he remarked that No. 14, "My dove, my beautiful one, Arise, arise", was pivotal, as it surely is. In setting the poems I was impressed with the subtle changes that took place: the change from the madrigalesque beginning to the almost operatic ending -- from the sounds of the "old piano" with "yellow keys" (No. 2) and the "sighs of harps" (No. 3) to the orchestral sounds of "I hear an army charging upon the land." The work is not just "Chamber Music", but also a great monody.

—Note by Ross Lee Finney

BIOGRAPHIES

For more than fifty years, ROSS LEE FINNEY has been prominent both as a composer and as a teacher. Born December 23, 1906, in Wells, Minnesota, his early study in composition was at the University of Minnesota (with Donald Ferguson) and Carleton College (where he also taught cello and history). From 1927 to 1928 he studied with Nadia Boulanger, from 1928 to 1929 with Roger Sessions at Harvard University, and from 1931 to 1932 with Alban Berg in Vienna.

Ross Lee Finney was a member of the faculty of Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts, from 1929 to 1948. He was awarded both Guggenheim and Pulitzer Fellowships in 1937. During World War II he served with distinction in the U.S. Office of Strategic Services. During these war years Finney turned from an eclectic international style to a more direct Americanism, introducing American folk materials into the Third String Quartet (1941) and producing Hymn, Fuguing Tune and Holiday (1943) and Pilgrim Psalms (1945). His Symphony No. 1 "Communiqué (1943) was an important step in the synthesis of his mature personal style.

After 1947, when he was awarded a second Guggenheim Fellowship, Finney composed much chamber music and was particularly concerned with problems of structure. He adopted a musical principle which he described as "complementarity" based on his concept of the tensions of opposing musical forces. His method of "complementarity", his preference for strong rhythmic motivation, his concern with variation, and his fascination with time as a philosophical as well as a musical phenomenon, were factors in forging his style. In 1949 he was appointed professor of music and composer-in-residence at the University of Michigan. His role in providing music for the chamber groups of the University School of Music and his need to define his ideas on the nature of music for his advanced students contributed to a decade of great creative energy. A gifted teacher, Finney soon attracted a group of talented students, among them William Albright, George Crumb and Roger Reynolds.

Finney then became more involved with serial techniques. *The String Quartet No. 6* (1950) uses three 12-note series; the *Fantasy in Two Movements* (1958) uses one, with one permutation. In 1959 he began to serialize non-pitch elements, deriving changes in tempo and the proportions of formal division from the pitch series in such works as the *Concerto for Percussion* (1965). Most characteristic of Finney's technique is the use of a structured series, particularly with balancing or mirror-image hexachords. More important to Finney than techniques of manipulation, however, is the philosophical basis of his work.

His prizes are many (among them that of the American Academy in Rome in 1960 and the Brandeis Medal in 1968), as are the commissions he has received from such sources as the Coolidge and Koussevitsky Foundations, and the Brussels World's Fair (1958).

Soprano JEANETTE LOMBARD was the recipient of two consecutive Fulbright scholarships for study of opera in Italy, where she made her Italian debut with the *Teatro dell'Opera di Roma* at Spoleto. She was awarded an additional scholarship to the Academy of St. Cecilia in Rome, and while there, and later in Vienna, concentrated on the study of song repertoire. Her Spoleto debut was followed by numerous concert appearances in Italy, Austria and Germany, including engagements with RAI (Italian Radio) and *Westdeutscher Rundfunk*. She has received critical praise for her many concert, oratorio and recital appearances, as well as for her portrayals of the heroines of Puccini, Mozart and Verdi. Included among those are *Tosca*, *Butterfly*, *Donna Anna*, *Fiordiligi*, *Violetta*, *Lady Macbeth*, and the *Leonoras* of *Trovatore* and *Forza del Destino*. As an outstanding Florida artist, Miss Lombard was selected to be soloist with the *Florida Bicentennial Orchestra* at Kennedy Center, where she later again sang several performances of Strauss' *Vier letzte Lieder* with the *Houston Ballet*. She also premiered a work with the *New York Philomusica* at Lincoln Center. Together with her husband, tenor Eugene Talley-Schmidt, she recorded the complete Schumann duets for soprano and tenor, for which they received high critical acclaim in the *American Record Guide*. Miss Lombard is currently Artist-Teacher of Voice at the Shepherd School of Music.

MARY NORRIS entered the Curtis Institute as a scholarship student of David Saperton. She made her debut as soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Pierre Monteux conducting, in a performance of the Rachmaninoff *Rhapsodie* on a Theme of Paganini, appearing subsequently with many other major orchestras. Later as orchestra pianist of the Saint Louis Symphony, she performed under the baton of such conductors as Vladimir Golschmann, Leopold Stokowski, Sir Georg Solti and Heitor Villa-Lobos conducting his own works. Front runners in the field of American chamber orchestras, Miss Norris and her husband, noted flutist Albert Tipton, inaugurated a highly successful series of chamber music concerts in Saint Louis which brought them to the attention of Columbia Artists Management. There followed twenty-five years of concertizing under this management during which time Miss Norris was heard in every state of the Union as well as Canada and Mexico as solo recitalist, soloist with chamber orchestras and member of the Tipton Trio. During her many summers as one of the distinguished teachers and performers at the Aspen Music Festival, she has collaborated with fellow artists Maureen Forrester, Jan de Gaetani, Albert Tipton, Szymon Goldberg, Leslie Parnas and others. Miss Norris is Professor Emeritus of Music at the Shepherd School of Music. She has recorded for Westminster and Pandora Records and is an honorary member of Sigma Alpha Iota.