

SOCIETY FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

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present

KRONOS QUARTET

DAVID HARRINGTON, violin
JOHN SHERBA, violin
HANK DUTT, viola
JOAN JEANRENAUD, cello

This performance is part of the 1989-90 NEW NOW Series

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Cullen Theater, Wortham Center

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Kronos Quartet
320 Judah
San Francisco, CA 94122

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PROGRAM

JUSTINIAN TAMUSUZA

Mu Kkubo Ery Omusaalaba

HAMZA EL DIN
(adapted by Tohru Ueda)

Escalay
(The Water Wheel)*

JOHN ZORN

Falling Water*

ISTVAN MARTA

Doom, (Sigh)*

Intermission

STEVE REICH

Different Trains*

*Written for Kronos

Kronos Quartet records exclusively for ELEKTRA/NONESUCH.

PROFILE

In the past twelve years, the KRONOS QUARTET has shattered the illusions of contemporary music and emerged as a leading voice for new work. Combining a unique musical vision with a fearless dedication to experimentation, Kronos has assembled a body of work unparalleled in its range and scope of expression, and in the process, has captured the attention of audiences worldwide.

The Quartet's extensive repertoire ranges from Bartok, Webern and Ives to Charles Mingus, John Cage and Howlin Wolf. In addition to working closely with modern masters such as Terry Riley and John Zorn, Kronos commissions new

works from today's most innovative composers and mines the wealth of musical cultures from around the world, extending its reach as far as Uganda, Australia, Japan, Argentina and the Soviet Union.

Kronos performs annual concert seasons in San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York, and tours extensively with more than 100 concerts each year in concert halls, clubs and at jazz festivals throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Japan, South America, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Australia. The Quartet produces its own radio series, RADIO KRONOS, which is broadcast throughout the country. Kronos records exclusively for

ELEKTRA/NONESUCH and recent recordings include *Salome Dances for Peace* (1989), *Different Trains* (1989), *Winter Was Hard* (1988), *White Man Sleeps* (1987), which received a Grammy Nomination for Best Chamber Music Performance, and *Kronos Quartet* (1986).

For the Kronos Quartet:

Janet Cowperthwaite *Managing Director*
Teresa Byrne *Associate Director*
Tara Karki *Office Manager*
Aaron Copp *Production Manager*
David Meschter *Audio Engineer*

PROGRAM NOTES

JUSTINIAN TAMUSUZA (b. 1951)

Mu Kkubo Ery' Omusaalaba (1988)

Justinian Tamusuza was born in 1951 in Miyana, Uganda. He studied composition with Kevin Volans at Queens University in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Currently, Tamusuza teaches music and composition at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. *Mu Kkubo Ery' Omusaalaba* is Tamusuza's first string quartet.

HAMZA EL DIN (b. 1929)

Escalay (1989)

Hamza El Din was born in Nubia, Sudan in 1929. He studied music in Cairo at the Fouad Institute of Music and at Rome's Accademia di Santa Alighieri. El Din has performed concerts throughout the world, and has composed for numerous television programs and film scores, including Francis Ford Coppola's *Black Stallion*.

Escalay (adapted for the Kronos Quartet by Tohru Ueda with El Din) is the composer's first work for Kronos. Of the work El Din writes, "Escalay means the waterwheel in Nubian, my mother tongue. The waterwheel is an antique machine used for irrigation. This piece shows a scene where an old man is sitting and urging oxen to move and turn the water wheel in the fields. The sound of the gears on the waterwheel, the rhythmic steps of oxen and other repeated sounds hypnotize the old person so that he himself starts making his own sound. He is singing a song as follows: He is singing a very religious song thinking of the Prophet Abraham who is the father of the three major religions. After the pilgrimage season to mecca, every Moslem family has to sacrifice a healthy male sheep and they have to share it with the poor. As the waterwheel is moving, he repeats this song as if the moment is eternal. The message of the piece is that God doesn't want the sacrifice of human beings, but until now it is still happening everywhere."

JOHN ZORN (b. 1952)

Falling Water (1990)

Over the last several years, John Zorn has developed a compositional method in which he jots down diverse ideas and images — musical "moments" — on filing cards, which are then sorted and ordered, to provide the composition's structure.

Zorn's method of composition has been influenced by cartoon soundtracks and their composers, particularly Carl Stall (of the Warner Brothers cartoons), whom Zorn equates with Stravinsky for his ability to compose a piece from disparate musical elements.

Raised in the New York City borough of Queens, the 35 year-old Zorn played a variety of instruments before studying saxophone and composition at Webster College in St. Louis in the early 1970's. Six months each year he lives in Tokyo, absorbing a culture he admires for its ability to borrow and mirror other cultures, to devour and process information with breathtaking rapidity.

Marked at first by his own remarkably versatile alto saxophone, John Zorn's music over the last decade has incorporated other instruments, unconventional sounds, and musical "information" from around the globe. "Kaleidoscopic" has been used to describe John Zorn's approach to composition, because his pieces present a quick-changing array of disparate sound elements.

John Zorn's *Falling Water* was commissioned for the Kronos Quartet by Lincoln Center and the Beigler Trust. This is Zorn's third work for Kronos: In 1988 he composed *Cat O'Nine Tails*. Zorn's *Forbidden Fruit* appears on the Kronos Quartet's recording "Winter Was Hard."

ISTVAN MARTA (1952)

Doom, (Sigh) (1989)

Istvan Marta was born in Budapest in 1952. He studied composition at the Bartók Secondary School for Music and the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music with József Soproni, Reso and Emil Petrovics. Currently, Marta is a member of the jazz faculty at the Bartók Secondary School of Music. He composes for ensembles, theatre, film and television, and regularly tours Europe as a performer (harpischord and percussion) with the Mandel Quartet.

Marta spent the summer of 1973 collecting folksongs on a tour of Moldavia, Romania. "The dirge on which *Doom, (Sigh)* is based is the last signal of a unique genre, a century-old tradition. In the first half, Mrs. Pieter Benedek, 58 years old, evokes her long dead parents . . . "tatikam, s mamikam," in a Speech-

gesang crystallized over many generations. The second half is based on a bloody ballad encompassing past and present and sung by Mrs. Gergel Imre, 46 years old. It was one of the most terse songs she sang for me, adorned with the finest ornaments."

Doom, (Sigh) was composed on a commission from the Kronos Quartet in November, 1989 and is dedicated from Istvan Marta to the quartet.

STEVE REICH (b. 1936)

Different Trains (1988)

"When I was one year old," Steve Reich recalls, "my parents separated, with my mother going to Los Angeles and my father staying in New York. Since they arranged divided custody, I used to travel back and forth by train frequently between New York and Los Angeles, from 1939 to 1942, accompanied by my governess. While these trips were exciting and romantic at the time, I now look back and think that, as a Jew, if I had been in Europe during this period, I would have had to ride very different trains."

Such is the historical subtext for Reich's *Different Trains*, a composition in three movements commissioned by Betty Freeman for the Kronos Quartet.

To construct *Different Trains* Reich first made a series of tape recordings: of his governess, Virginia, now in her 70's, remembering the cross-country train trips; of Lawrence Davis, a retired Pullman porter who regularly made the NY-LA run, reminiscing about his life; of Rachella, Paul and Rachel, three Holocaust survivors (and Reich contemporaries) who now live in America; and of American and European train sounds of the 30's and 40's. Reich then selected small speech samples and notated the musical pitches of these fragments, using the resultant melodies as the basis of the composition.

These melodies were performed and then overdubbed on tape by Kronos, so that as many as three "Kronos Quartets" are heard at one time. Reich next used sampling keyboards and a computer to mix in the original speech samples and train sounds. Kronos appears on stage to perform with the prepared tape.

The Kronos Quartet extends special thanks to performance tape producer Judith Sherman.

TEXTS

Different Trains

I *America — Before the War*

"from Chicago to New York"
 (Virginia)
 "one of the fastest trains"
 "the crack train from New York"
 (Mr.
 Davis)
 "from New York to Los Angeles"
 "different trains every time"
 (Virginia)
 "from Chicago to New York"
 "in 1939"
 "1940"
 "1941"
 "1941 I guess it must've been"
 (Virginia)

II *Europe — During the War*

"1940" (Rachella)
 "for my birthday"
 "The Germans walked in"
 "walked into Holland"
 "Germans invaded Hungary" (Paul)
 "I was in second grade"
 "I had a teacher"
 "a very tall man, his hair was
 concretely plastered smooth"
 "he said, 'Black Crows invaded our
 country many years ago'"
 "and he pointed right at me"
 "No more school" (Rachella)
 "You must go away"
 "and she said, 'Quick go'" (Rachella)
 "and he said, 'Don't breathe'"
 "into those cattle wagons" (Rachella)
 "for 4 days and 4 nights"
 "and then we went through those
 strange sounding names"
 "Polish names"
 "Lots of cattle wagons there"
 "They were loaded with people"
 "They shaved us"
 "They tattooed a number on our arm"
 "Flames going up to the sky — it
 was smoking"

III *After the War*

"and the war was over" (Paul)
 "Are you sure?" (Rachella)
 "The war is over"
 "going to America"
 "to Los Angeles"
 "to New York"
 "from New York to Los Angeles"
 (Mr. Davis)
 "one of the fastest trains" (Virginia)
 "but today, they're all gone"
 (Mr. Davis)
 "There was one girl, who had a
 beautiful voice" (Rachella)
 "and they loved to listen to the
 singing, the Germans"
 "and when she stopped singing
 they said, 'More, more' and they
 applauded"

