

MUSIC OF HEAVEN AND EARTH
OLIVIER MESSIAEN:
A CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

CONCERT 5

HARAWI
A Song of Love and Death

Sunday, November 16, 2008
7:00 p.m.
Lillian H. Duncan Recital Hall

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music

PROGRAM

Le Merle Noir (The Blackbird) (1951)

for flute and piano

Olivier Messiaen

(1908-1992)

Leone Buyse, flute
Brian Connelly, piano

Theme and Variations for Violin and Piano (1932)

Eric Halen, violin
Brian Connelly, piano

INTERMISSION

Harawi, chant d'amour et de la mort (1945)

for soprano and piano

1. *La ville qui dormait, toi*
2. *Bonjour toi, colombe verte*
3. *Montagnes*
4. *Doundou tchil*
5. *L'amour Piroutcha*
6. *Répétition planétaire*
7. *Adieu*
8. *Syllabes*
9. *L'escalier redit, gestes du soleil*
10. *Amour oiseau d'étoile*
11. *Katchikatchi les étoiles*
12. *Dans le noir*

Lucy Shelton, soprano
Brian Connelly, piano

NOTES ON HARAWI

"Harawi" is a *Quechua* word (*Peruvian dialect*) meaning a type of love song which ends with the death of the lovers – hence the subtitle "song of love and death." At this time Messiaen was very interested in the writings of Bécand d'Harcourt on the folklore of the Andes. He became convinced that "Peruvian music contains... the most beautiful folk music in the world." As a result, in "Harawi" he worked images and words from these songs into his poems, including onomatopoeic sounds, and adapted some of their fundamentally pentatonic melodies into his "modes of limited transposition." The woman of the poems is called Piroutcha, but the man is not named as it is he who frequently addresses her. As in his earlier works, Messiaen uses a cyclic theme and arranges the songs around a central movement, the first

movement standing alone as an introduction. The second, seventh, and last songs form the main structural supports of the work and introduce the colombe verte (green dove) the sacred Mayan symbol of the beloved. They suggest the transition from life in the second song, through the parting and death of the seventh, to the final eternity of the last song. With its epic scale and proportions (it lasts nearly an hour), *Harawi* is a demanding tour-de-force for both singer and pianist.

— Note by Fabian Watkinson

Interspersing more conventional songs among primitive dances, forest calls and rosaries of incantation, *Harawi* is considerably further from the normal repertory of the song recital even than the *Poèmes pour Mi* and the *Chants de terre et de ciel*. Indeed, its disruption of the normal concert proprieties is hardly less violent than that of the *Trois petites liturgies*, except that its effort is not to transplant a sacred office into secular surroundings but rather to make of the recital hall what Antonin Artaud wanted to make of the theatre, a place where minds could radically be changed by exposure to what is unmediated by "good taste." And it is this refusal of good taste, rather than the dream or nightmare poetic imagery of the work, that makes *Harawi* one of the few surrealist masterpieces in music.

— Note by Paul Griffiths

BIOGRAPHIES

"A new-music diva if there ever was one," as she was described by the Boston Globe, LUCY SHELTON performs with "fire, sensitivity, astounding surety of pitch" and "what seemed like love abounding." Winner of two Walter W. Naumburg Awards – as chamber musician as well as solo recitalist – soprano Lucy Shelton continues to enjoy an international career bringing her dramatic vocalism and brilliant interpretive skills to repertoire of all periods. An esteemed exponent of 20th- and 21st-century repertory, she has premiered over 100 works, many written for her. Notable among these are song cycles by Elliott Carter, Oliver Knussen, Louis Karchin, and James Yannatos, chamber works by Elliott Carter, Joseph Schwantner, Mario Davidovsky, Stephen Albert, Lewis Spratlan, Charles Wuorinen, Gabriela Lena Frank, Bruce Adolphe, Alexander Goehr, Poul Ruders, Anne Le Baron, and Thomas Flaherty, orchestral works by Oliver Knussen, Joseph Schwantner, David Del Tredici, Gerard Grisey, Ezra Laderman, Sally Beamish, Virko Baley, and Ned Rorem, and an opera by Robert Zuidam.

An avid chamber musician, Shelton has been a guest artist with ensembles such as the Emerson, Brentano, Ensō, Mendelssohn, and Guarneri string quartets, the Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society, 21st Century Consort, Speculum Musicae, Da Capo Chamber Players, Sospeso, New York New Music Ensemble, Boston Musica Viva, Da Camera of Houston, eighth blackbird, the Ensemble Moderne, Nash Ensemble, Klangform Wien, Schoenberg-Asko, and Ensemble Intercontemporain. Shelton has participated in numerous festivals including those of Aspen, Santa Fe, Ojai, Tanglewood, Chamber Music Northwest, BBC Proms, Aldeburgh, Caen, Kuhmo, Togo, and Salzburg.

Shelton has appeared with leading conductors such as Alsop, Barenboim, Boulez, De Leeuw, Dutoit, Gilbert, Knussen, Nagano, Rattle, Rilling, Ros-

tropovich, Salonen, Slatkin, and Spano with major orchestras worldwide including Amsterdam, Boston, Chicago, Cologne, Denver, Edinburgh, Helsinki, London, Los Angeles, Melbourne, Minnesota, Munich, New York, Paris, St. Louis, Stockholm, Sydney, and Tokyo.

Highlights of recent seasons include her Zankel Hall debut with the Met Chamber Orchestra and Maestro James Levine in Carter's **A Mirror On Which To Dwell**, numerous performances of **Pierrot Lunaire**; **A Cabaret Opera** in collaboration with the eighth blackbird ensemble and Blair Thomas Puppets, and participation in various composers' birthday celebrations: Elliott Carter's 100th in Turin, Italy, and New York; Oliver Knussen's 50th in London; Sir Peter Maxwell Davies' 70th in Turin, Italy; James Primrosch's 50th in Philadelphia; George Perle's 90th and Milton Babbitt's 90th in Princeton and New York. Six CDs have been released with works by Alberto Ginastera, Anne Le Baron, Virko Baley, Louis Karchin, Chinariy Ung, and Charles Wuorinen. Her extensive discography is on the Deutsche Grammophon, Koch International, Naxos, Nonesuch, NMC, Bridge, Albany, and Innova labels.

A native of California, Shelton's primary mentor was Jan De Gaetani. She has taught at the Third Street Settlement School in Manhattan, Eastman School, New England Conservatory, Cleveland Institute, and the Britten-Pears School. She joined the resident artist faculty of the Tanglewood Music Center in 1996. In the fall of 2007, she joined the Manhattan School of Music's Contemporary Performance Faculty.

Performances of pianist BRIAN CONNELLY span an unusually broad range of historical and modern repertoires. Born in Detroit, he attended the University of Michigan, where he studied with pianists György Sándor and Theodore Lettvin. Mr. Connelly has premiered works by a host of contemporary composers such as William Albright, Karim Al-Zand, Derek Bermel, William Bolcom, Anthony Brandt, Paul Cooper, David Diamond, Ross Lee Finney, Arthur Gottschalk, Richard Lavenda, and many others. He is a frequent guest with new music groups such as the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble and the Chicago Contemporary Players, and he was recently featured in the Carnegie Hall series "Making Music" in a tribute to William Bolcom. Known for his affinity for the works of Olivier Messiaen, Connelly's performances this season include recitals of Messiaen's piano music, the song cycles, the chamber music, **Oiseaux exotiques** with conductor Larry Rachleff and the Shepherd School Chamber Orchestra, and the **Trois petites liturgies de la Présence Divine** with conductor Donald Runnicles at the Grand Teton Music Festival. Mr. Connelly is also widely respected as a scholar and performer of historical instruments, appearing in the United States and Europe on 18th- and 19th-century pianos by Walther, Rosenberger, Graf, Pleyel, Bösendorfer, and Streicher. He performed nearly 150 solo and chamber works for Da Camera of Houston in its path-breaking first six seasons, and he has for thirteen years been a member of the renowned ensemble CONTEXT. Mr. Connelly has appeared with many of today's most respected instrumentalists, such as violinist Sergiu Luca, cellists Michael Kannen, Gary Hoffman, and Lynn Harrell, flutist Carol Wincenc, clarinetist Charles Neidich, and pianists Robert Levin and André-Michel Schub, and he has shared ragtime recitals with jazz pianist Marcus Roberts. He teaches piano performance and chamber music at the Shepherd School.

LEONE BUYSE is the Joseph and Ida Kirkland Mullen Professor of Flute at The Shepherd School of Music. Previously principal flutist of the Boston Symphony and Boston Pops and a member of the San Francisco Symphony and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, she has appeared as soloist with those orchestras and also with the Utah Symphony and l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. She has performed with the Boston Symphony Chamber Players throughout Europe and Japan, with the Tokyo, Juilliard, and Muir String Quartets, and in recital with Jessye Norman and Yo-Yo Ma. Widely regarded as one of America's foremost flute pedagogues, she has taught at the New England Conservatory, Boston University, the University of Michigan, and the Aspen, Sarasota, and Norfolk music festivals, and has presented recitals and master classes across the United States and in Canada, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. Her solo recordings are available on the Crystal, Boston Records, and C.R.I. labels.

ERIC HALEN joined the Houston Symphony as Assistant Concertmaster in 1987. In 1997, he assumed the position of Associate Concertmaster and served as Acting Concertmaster for the 2005-06 season. He is serving as Acting Concertmaster this season as well. After earning his bachelor's degree at Central Missouri State University where he studied violin with his father, Dr. Walter Halen, he received his master's degree at the age of twenty from the University of Illinois while studying with Sergiu Luca. Mr. Halen has performed in solo and chamber music programs in the United States and abroad, including solo appearances with the St. Louis and Houston Symphonies. As a chamber musician, Mr. Halen has collaborated with many pre-eminent artists including violinist Sergiu Luca, cellists Gary Hoffman and Lynn Harrell, and pianists Christoph Eschenbach and John Kimura Parker. Mr. Halen has made frequent guest appearances with Da Camera of Houston and Music in Context. He teaches orchestral repertoire at The Shepherd School of Music and serves on the faculty at the Aspen Music Festival.

FINAL MESSIAEN CONCERT

Concert 6 – Sunday, November 23

4:00 p.m., Duncan Recital Hall

Brian Connelly, piano

Selections from *Catalogue of the Birds* (for piano solo).

Messiaen's rarely-performed "bird music"

for piano is some of his most difficult, imaginative,

and exuberant. This final program includes

selections from the massive *Catalogue of the Birds*.

Presented with surtitles that accompany Messiaen's

depictions of birds, landscape, and sky.

Harawi

A Song of Love and Death

Poems by Olivier Messiaen

Translation by John Underwood

1. *The Sleeping City, Thou*

*The sleeping city, thou.
My hand on thy heart by thee.
The bench in the depth of midnight, thou.
The double violet, thou.
The eye immobile, thy gaze unwavering, me.*

2. *Good Morning, Green Dove*

*Good morning, green dove,
back from the sky.
Good morning, limpid pearl,
leaving the water.
Enchained star,
shared shadow,
thou, of flower, fruit, sky and water,
bird song.
Good morning,
of water.*

3. *Mountains*

*Red-violet, black on black.
The ancient, useless black ray.
Mountain, hearken to the solar chaos of vertigo.
The kneeling stone bears his black masters
In close-packed monks' hoods the firs rush to the black.
An abyss cast on all sides towards vertigo.
Black on black.*

4. *Doundou tchil*

*Doundou tchil.
Piroutcha there thou art,
o my own one, the dance of stars,
doundou tchil.
Piroutcha there thou art,
o my own one, mirror of a tame bird,
doundou tchil.*

5. *The Love of Piroutcha*

(The girl:)

*"Toungou, ah, toungou, rock,
my ashes of light,
rock thy little girl in thy green arms.
Piroutcha, thy little ashes, for thee."*

(The boy:)

*"Thine eye all heavens, doundou tchil.
Chop off my head, doundou tchil.
Our breath, blue and gold.
Chains of red, black, mauve, love, death."*

6. *Planetary Repetition*

Ah! O

mapa, nama, lila, tchil.

Mapa, nama, lila, mika, pampahika.

Ahi! O

Tchil, pampa hika, tchil

pampa hikama, doundou tchil.

Ride astride a black shriek,

black echo of time,

shriek from before the earth constantly,

black echo of time,

spiraling stair.

Whirlpool,

red star,

planet eats spinning.

7. *Farewell*

Farewell to thee, green dove,

angel downcast.

Farewell to thee, limpid pearl,

guardian sun.

Thou of night, fruit, sky, day,

wing of love.

Farewell to thee, new light,

two-voiced potion.

Enchained star,

shared shadow,

in my hand my heaven's fruit or day's,

far distance of love.

Farewell to thee, my heaven of earth,

farewell to thee, weeping desert,

mirror without the breath of love,

of flower, night, fruit, sky, day,

for ever.

8. *Syllables*

Dove, green dove,

the figure five for thee,

the double violet shall double,

Far, far away, so low.

O my heaven, thou flowerest,

Piroutcha mine!

O we will blossom with water,

Piroutcha mine!

Kahipipes, mahipipas.

Pia pia pia pia

doundou tchil.

So low.

9. *The Stair Repeats, Gestures of the Sun*

*He speaks no more, the stair smiles,
each stair towards the south.*

Sky, water, time, the stair of time.

Its eye is desert, light in secret.

Clear stone, clear sun.

Water, time, sky, stairway to the sky.

My little ashes thou art there,

thy green, mauve temples on water.

Like death.

The water's eye.

*The stair repeats, gestures of the sun,
the color of new silence.*

Water, time, sky, stairway to the sky.

I wait in the green, love bestarred.

So simple it is to be dead.

Time, sky, water, the stairway to the water.

My little ashes thou art there,

the green, mauve temples on time.

Like death.

The eye of time.

Sky, water, time,

your eye, it is now breathing,

water, time, sky,

the heart of the mad timepiece.

Death is there, my green dove.

Death is there, my limpid pearl.

Death is there.

Far from time we sleep in thy gaze.

I am dead.

*The water shall overtop our heads,
guardian sun.*

*The fire shall devour our breath,
two-voiced potion.*

*Our gaze, from one end to the next,
seen by death.*

*We will invent the love of the world
to seek each other out, to weep,
dream, find each other.*

*Sky, water, time, your heart, breathing,
my fruit, my share of darkness, thou art there,
thou.*

Love, joy!

Silence is dead, embrace time.

The sun with joyous cries.

Time, sky, water, the stairway of water.

Gaiety flourishes in the arms of the sky.

A fan made of birdsong.

Sky, water, time, the stairway of time.

My little ashes thou art there,

thy green mauve temples on sky.

Like death.

Heaven's eye.

10. Love Bird of a Star

*Bird of a star,
thine eye, singing,
towards the stars,
thy head upturned under the sky.
Thine eye, starlike,
falling chains,
towards the stars,
the shortest path from shadow to the sky,
all the birds of the stars,
far from the picture, my hands sing,
star, augmented silence of the sky.
My hands, thine eye, thy neck, the sky.*

11. Katchikatchi the stars

*Katchikatchi the stars,
make them leap,
Katchikatchi the stars,
make them dance,
Katchikatchi the atoms,
make them leap,
Katchikatchi the atoms,
make them dance.
The spiral nebulae, hands of my hair.
Electrons, ants, arrows, silence halved.
Alpha Centauri, Betelgeuse, Aldebaran,
dilate the rainbow space kicking up a row in time,
ionized laughter rage of timepiece for absent murder,
chop off my head, its figures are rolling blood!
Tou, ah! mane, mani, Tou, ah! mane, mani, O.
Roll in blood! Ah!*

12. In the Dark

*In the dark, green dove.
In the dark, limpid pearl,
In the dark, my fruit of sky, of day.
Far distance of love.
My love, my breath!
Dove, green dove,
the figure five for thee,
the double violet shall double,
far far, away, so low.
Far away, so low, far away.
The sleeping city...*