



presents the

MIRECOURT TRIO

Kenneth Goldsmith, Violin

Terry King, Cello

John Jensen, Piano

Thursday, October 17, 1991

8:00 p.m.

Stude Concert Hall

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music

PROGRAM

Elegy (1975)

Paul Chihara
(b. 1938)

Parable XXIII, Op. 150 (1982)

Vincent Persichetti
(1912-1987)

INTERMISSION

Scenario (1915) (Premiere)

for two violins, cello and piano

Henry Cowell
(1897-1965)

Largo, ma poco a poco accel. al fine -

Allegro - Largo

Lento

Larghetto, ma agitato

Wedding Anniversary (1957) (Premiere)

for two violins and cello

with Albert Muenzer, violin

Trio (1986)

Minoru Miki
(b. 1930)

I. *Freely*

II. ♩ = 104, *attacca*

III. ♩ = 54, *attacca*

IV. *Freely*

PROGRAM NOTES

Elegy Paul Chihara

The *Elegy* was composed as a companion piece to the *Piano Trio* (1974). Both works were written for the Mirecourt Trio and both have been recorded on CRI. The *Elegy* was written in memory of Mr. Chihara's father, who gave him his first violin lesson and encouraged him to become a musician.

Parable XXIII, Op. 150 Vincent Persichetti

The *Parable* series is a distinguished group of compositions personally associated with Persichetti much as the series of *Hymn and Fuguing Tunes* are to Cowell and *Portraits* are to Thomson. The *Parable XXIII* herein reflects the moral, allegorical and spiritual attitude implied in the title as much as music can. There is no known program, so the "text" of this particular work begins in a world beyond words, in the transcendence of any specific event. It is indeed a special work, full of what Slonimsky described as the "seemingly incompatible". Persichetti achieves profound meaning through the unveiling of the opening melodic gesture. Throughout this essentially one-movement piece, the sensuousness of the subject deepens as it explores every imaginable mood and context. *Parable XXIII* is a truly rewarding experience, surely one of the most important works in the idiom composed after 1950. It was written for the Marlboro Trio in 1981 and was premiered January 28, 1982 at the Juilliard Festival with the composer at the piano.

Scenario Henry Cowell

Scenario appears to be Cowell's second major work while studying with Charles Seeger following the *Cello Sonata* of earlier that year (1915). There are similarities with the *Cello Sonata* in terms of form and internal effects ... the allegro including fast arpeggiated figures, the three movements, essentially slow design, the amalgamation of themes in the last movement, and general centeredness of tonality: I - B minor, II - B minor, III - E major, albeit plenty of chromaticism. Cowell had by now written the famed cluster pieces beginning in 1912, but little of that has remained here.

Wedding Anniversary Music Henry Cowell

This follows in Cowell's tradition of occasional works for family celebration ... works that often germinated into larger forms and future styles. The collection called *Cleistogamy* (premiered by Kenneth Goldsmith and Terry King) grouped several of the two-part works into a whole as a kind of travelogue throughout his marriage to Sidney Robertson Cowell, another pioneering spirit. She was an ethnomusicologist, photographer and writer, having recorded Appalachian folk music early in the century, written the classic book on Ives (with her husband providing the analysis of the works), and worked an immeasurable amount in the organizing of her late husband's music and papers.

This three-part Largo movement explores a rich chromaticism touching upon an updated Renaissance atmosphere replete with some strict canonic imitation. Cowell indicates variable instrumental performance possibilities as those heard this evening — an alto recorder could occupy first line, a clarinet on the second line, and a horn as the bass line or the whole could also be performed by violin or alto recorder and piano.

— The above notes by Terry King

Trio Minoru Miki

This has been my first experience in composing for piano trio. In May 1985, when I was in St. Louis for the premiere of my third opera *Joruri*, I received a letter from the Mirecourt Trio asking me if I would write a piece for them, but I hesitated to make a commitment because the opera was so much on my mind and because a piano trio seemed quite traditional a western ensemble [sic]. Finally, at the end of the summer, while still absorbing how people reacted to *Joruri*, my ideas about the piano trio began to take shape. As I also had a full-length ballet to compose, writing chamber music seemed a refreshing change — an opportunity to write something of a more personal, or perhaps even naive nature, and I wrote [to the Mirecourt Trio] that I would begin working on a piano trio immediately.

The work was completed in March 1986. It is conventional in that there are four movements. For each of the movements, I adapted different Japanese modes which I feel comfortable with. The first movement is based on the *ritsu* mode; the second movement, the *ryu* (Okinawan) mode; the third movement, the *in* mode; and the final movement, the *yo* mode. There is no break after the second and third movements.

— Note by Minoru Miki

BIOGRAPHIES

Founded in 1973, the MIRECOURT TRIO has become one of America's most cherished and respected ensembles, both for their superb command of the classical piano trio repertoire and their exploration and commissioning of new works. They have actively sought out and worked with American composers and, in their eighteen years together, have commissioned more than fifty new compositions. In 1983 the Mirecourt Trio was chosen to travel and perform in the People's Republic of China, the first trio to be invited since the Cultural Revolution. The members of the trio also taught at the conservatories of Beijing, Xi'an and Shanghai. Since 1985 the Trio has broadened their commissioning program to include composers from Switzerland, Portugal, and Japan.

Guest violinist ALBERT MUENZER is Associate Professor of Music at the University of Houston. Mr. Muenzer was a member of the NBC Staff Orchestra in Chicago for 16 years before coming to Houston where he served as Associate Concertmaster of the Houston Symphony for 11 years. He has been concertmaster of the Houston Ballet and is presently concertmaster of the Houston Grand Opera and the Houston Pops. Mr. Muenzer is a member of the Lyric Art String Quartet and has recorded several chamber works during the past two years for Bay Cities recordings.