

Ithaca College

Digital Commons @ IC

All Concert & Recital Programs

Concert & Recital Programs

12-5-2008

Concert: Kulmusik: Ithaca College Contemporary Chamber Ensemble at NYSSMA Conference

Ithaca College Contemporary Chamber Ensemble

Sally Lamb

Jeffery Meyer

Richard Faria

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.ithaca.edu/music_programs



Part of the [Music Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Ithaca College Contemporary Chamber Ensemble; Lamb, Sally; Meyer, Jeffery; and Faria, Richard, "Concert: Kulmusik: Ithaca College Contemporary Chamber Ensemble at NYSSMA Conference" (2008). *All Concert & Recital Programs*. 6490.

https://digitalcommons.ithaca.edu/music_programs/6490

This Program is brought to you for free and open access by the Concert & Recital Programs at Digital Commons @ IC. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Concert & Recital Programs by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ IC.

ITHACA COLLEGE
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**KULMUSIK
CONTEMPORARY CHAMBER ENSEMBLE**

Sally Lamb*, artistic director
Jacqueline Christen, flute
Paige Morgan*, oboe
Richard Faria*, Adam Butalewicz, clarinet
Tyler Ogilvie, horn
Alicia Aubin, trombone
Susan Waterbury*, Kate Goldstein, violin
Lauren Buono, viola
Heidi Hoffman*, Tyler Borden, cello
Nicholas Walker*, bass
Diane Birr*, Nathan Gulla, keyboards
Jeffery Meyer*, Richard Faria*, conductors

**NYSSMA Annual Conference
Hyatt Ballroom BC
Rochester, New York
Friday, December 5, 2008
7:15 p.m.**

ITHACA

PROGRAM

Five pieces for orchestra, Op. 16 (1909/25)
(chamber version)

Arnold Schoenberg
(1874-1959)

- I. *Vorgefühle* ("Premonitions")
- II. *Vergangenes* ("The Past")
- IV. *Peripetie* ("Turning Point")

Jeffery Meyer, conductor

Indigenous Instruments (1989)

Steven Mackey
(b. 1956)

- I. *swinging, crisp, rhythmic*
- III. *mesmerizing, strange, dark, funky*

Richard Faria, conductor

Joy Ride** (2008)

Sally Lamb
(b. 1966)

Kammerkonzert (1969/70)

Gyorgy Ligeti
(1923-2006)

- I. *Corrente*
- II. *Calmo, Sustainuto*
- III. *Movimento Preciso E Meccanico*
- IV. *Presto*

Jeffery Meyer, conductor

* faculty

** world premiere

To receive occasional emails from the School of Music about upcoming concerts,
send an email with your name and address to: concerts@ithaca.edu

Program Notes

Schoenberg's *Five Pieces for Orchestra* were composed from May to August 1909. The earliest performance of any of the music was in a two-piano, eight-hand arrangement (by Anton Webern) of several movements. In September 1912, Henry Wood conducted the first complete performance in England. Equally important was the acceptance of the pieces for publication by the prestigious firm of C. F. Peters. Despite their low fee, Schoenberg used this accomplishment as a bargaining chip with the Viennese publisher Universal. In a letter to Richard Strauss, Schoenberg commented on the unusual nature of the pieces:

Ich verspreche mir allerdings colossal viel davon, insbesondere Klang und Stimmung. Nur um das handelt es sich—absolut nicht symphonisch, direct das Gegenteil davon, keine Architektur, kein Aufbau. Bloss ein bunter, ununterbrochener Wechsel von Farben, Rhythmen und Stimmungen.

I have promised myself colossal results from these pieces, especially in terms of timbres and voicings. These are the only [compositional parameters of these pieces]—absolutely nothing symphonic; just the opposite: no architecture, no constructive premise. Exclusively a colorful, uninterrupted transformation of colors, rhythms, and voicings.

Five Pieces was later arranged in 1925 by Schoenberg for chamber ensemble to promote regular performances.

Mark A. Radice*

Indigenous Instruments is vernacular music from a culture that doesn't actually exist. I fantasized about a culture and their uses for music, did thought experiments to invent the kind of instruments they might play and wrote "folk melodies" idiomatic to those instruments. The exercise was silly but did in fact succeed in leading me to sounds and textures that I would never have thought of in my mode as serious concert-music composer.

My starting point was to retune or detune the ensemble; the cello has a radical microtonal scordatura, the violin G string is tuned down an octave and a quarter tone, the flute is pulled out a quarter tone flat, and one note of the piano is prepared. I went to all this trouble, again as in *Micro-Concerto*, to unbutton the sound of the ubiquitous Pierrot ensemble. The inspiration for this came from looking at transcriptions of the mbira (African thumb piano) in an ethnomusicology dissertation. I couldn't really get a sense of what the sound was because these transcriptions seemed so exotic with microtones and odd chord voicings but the look intrigued me and it fascinated me all the more that this indecipherable notation was somebody's vernacular music.

I've had a long fascination with exotic vernacular. I like the sense of a music that seems to obey some natural or, at least, culture-specific laws that are consistent and immutable but completely mysterious to me. Associated with my need to shake up the Pierrot ensemble is a slightly rebellious attitude toward the piano as tyrant of equal temperament. This led me to open the piece with a microtonal string figure which makes the piano, upon its entry, sound like a broken toy; this piece was fun to compose!

In order to compose the cello part, I borrowed a cello and put pieces of scotch tape where the frets "should" be (remember, I'm a guitarist) and learned how to play that pizzicato part in the last movement. Because I was flying by the seat of my pants with the microtones and had no codified or familiar harmonic system at my disposal, I could not think of anything to go with the cello part; none of the "normal" notes sounded good. I played it over and over waiting for inspiration until a UPS truck with its low moan and slow pitch bend pulled into my driveway and I had a Eureka moment: was the counterpoint between that big brown truck and that dark, funky cello part that led me to tune the G String down an octave.

I realize I'm probably sabotaging my credibility as an artist by revealing so much about the lucky accidents that inform my working method but then again I have always felt an affinity for the tradition of American crack-pot inventor/composers like Cowell and Partch.

Indigenous Instruments was commissioned by Chamber Music America for the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players and was premiered by them in November of 1989.

Steven Mackey

Joy Ride for six players (flute, bass clarinet, violin, cello, bass and piano) is intended to be a light-hearted, fun musical excursion that is essentially harmless and happy in nature. The short, rhythmic piece incorporates frequent meter changes with motives, tunes and harmonies that are clearly rooted in tonal and traditional American music. If there is any connection to other connotations of the title (reckless driving in a stolen car, for example), it might be in the way that the tunes are woven into fabrics that are themselves stitched together like a patch-work quilt. The pre-selected materials (and in one case, borrowed material) could be assembled in any number of ways to produce a potentially and equally-pleasing whole.

Sally Lamb

Kammerkonzert

In the Chamber Concerto (1969-70) for flute (piccolo), oboe (oboe d'amore, cor anglais), clarinet, bass clarinet (2d clarinet), horn, tenor trombone, harpsichord (harmonium), piano (celesta) and string quintet, all parts are equally important and equally demanding of the performers. At no time is any single instrument singled out for special treatment (as would occur in a solo concerto), nor is there a group of soli (as would be the case in a concerto grosso).

Concerning the structure of the piece, Ligeti has noted:

There are no tonal centres, nor are there any harmonic combinations or progressions which can be functionally analyzed; on the other hand the twelve notes of the chromatic scale are not treated as notes of equal importance, as in atonal and serial music. There are specific predominant arrangements of intervals, which determine the course of the music and the development of the form. . . . The harmonies do not change suddenly, but merge into one another; one clearly discernable interval combination is gradually blurred, and from this cloudiness it is possible to discern a new interval combination gradually taking shape. (commentary for Decca Record Company, 1976).

Mark A. Radice