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Concert: Ralph Dudgeon, trumpet. Visiting Artist Series 2008-9

Ralph Dudgeon

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ITHACA COLLEGE

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

VISITING ARTISTS SERIES 2008-9

Ralph Dudgeon, trumpet
William Cowdery, piano

Music for Trumpet and Piano by American Composers

Hockett Family Recital Hall
Monday, September 15, 2008
7:00 p.m.

ITHACA

PROGRAM

Fanfare for the Women for solo trumpet (1993) Libby Larson
(b. 1950)

Red White and Blues (1976) Leonard Bernstein
(1918-1990)

Sonata for Trumpet and Piano (1953) George Antheil
(1900-1959)

- I. Allegretto*
- II. Dolce-expressivo*
- III. Scherzo*
- IV. Allegretto*

Cries and Whispers (2001) Ned Rorem
(b. 1923)

Breeze from Alabama Scott Joplin
(1868-1917)
Arranged by Ralph Dudgeon

Quiet City (1941) Aaron Copland
(1900-1990)
Arranged by Peter Wastall

Three Preludes George Gershwin
(1898-1937)
Arranged by Anthony Kerns

Scherzo David Ahlstrom
(1945-1993)

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PROGRAM NOTES

Libby Larsen composed the two-minute *Fanfare for the Women* in 1994 for the opening of the University of Minnesota's Women's Sports Pavilion. The premiere featured the lone trumpeter in the center of the basketball court. According to Larsen, "The music is composed to create subtle layers of tonality, which overlap in space, especially a vast space with a long acoustic delay. It was extraordinary to watch and hear the solo effort of this fine musician as she spun the sound into time and space." The manuscript for the piece was placed in a time capsule and sealed in the cornerstone of the building.

Leonard Bernstein was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts in 1918, a son of Russian Jewish immigrants. In 1939, he graduated from Harvard and then continued his conducting studies at the Berkshire Music Festival in the summers of 1940 and 41 with Serge Koussevitzky. His conducting career took off after he conducted a difficult program as a substitute for an ailing Bruno Walter. He was the first American born musician to serve as resident conductor the New York Philharmonic, a position he assumed in 1958. Bernstein's catalog of compositions is not large, but it is noteworthy for its breath of styles from Broadway shows to film scores to profound orchestral and chamber works. *Red, White and Blues* is atypical for a blues form. Rather than the common twelve bar blues, it is a sixteen measure form. The composer employs the techniques and mannerisms of blues singing and suggests that the second statement of the decorated melody can be played as written or used as a basis for improvisation. Bernstein had a keen interest in jazz and was a denizen of New York jazz clubs.

George Antheil (1900-1959) had a quixotic career as a composer. He had a well-deserved reputation for musical experimentation in the 1920s with orchestral pieces such as *Ballet Mechanique* that included an airplane motor in the score. His music found an audience in the Paris of Pound, Picasso, Hemingway, Joyce, Yeats, Stravinsky, and Copland. Antheil was born in Trenton, New Jersey 8 July 1900 and died in New York City 12 February 1959. His composition teacher was Ernst Bloch with a short period with Busoni, but his style was primarily influenced by the music that he absorbed in Paris of the 1920s - Stravinsky, Les Six, the Russian school, and a host of experimental ex-patriots from America who flocked to the studio of Nadia Boulanger. He never formally studied with Boulanger, but he was within the circle of many of her associates and students. His early style is dissonant and acerbic and later was compared to the writing of Shostakovich and Ives. The trumpet sonata is a different breed of cat form his earlier work, however. It was reportedly written for Edna White Chandler in 1951-2. She had been an important female trumpeter in the early days of recording and was planning a comeback recital at Carnegie Hall. According to my interview with Edna when she was in her nineties, Antheil was infatuated with her and had offered the piece to her to play in a concert to be held in a bull-fighting arena in Spain. Edna, turned down the Spanish invitation, but used the piece as the focal point of her Carnegie Hall recital. My early theory that the piece was a sort of love letter to a trumpeter was dashed when I later learned that the piece had been performed by others earlier than Edna's recital. Neo-classic styles were certainly in the air in the early 50s and this alone could account for the kinder and gentler style of the sonata. It has a great deal of craft, bold harmonic movement, and interesting tunes. It sounds to many listeners that the piece should end with the third movement's last high C.

However, Antheil does not let the listener get off easy. A fourth movement recalls and develops previous themes and offers a powerful summary to the sonata, much like a lawyer's final remarks to a jury in a legal trial.

Ned Rorem's *Cries and Whispers* was part of a 1993 commission from the International Trumpet Guild that culminated in the Boosey and Hawkes 2001 publication an anthology of trumpet music curiously titled, *Go Blow Your Own!* It is a piece of extremes. It begins with poetically bold declamations and, as suggested by the title, ends in a whisper where the trumpeter is asked to glissando from a final note in a dying whimper. I think of this challenging piece as a *Lied ohne Worte* (song without words). Rorem was born in Richmond, Indiana on October 23, 1923. As a child he moved to Chicago with his family; by the age of ten his piano teacher had introduced him to Debussy and Ravel, an experience that "changed my life forever," according to the composer. At seventeen he entered the Music School of Northwestern University, two years later receiving a scholarship to the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia. He studied composition under Bernard Wagenaar at Juilliard, taking his B.A. in 1946 and his M.A. degree in 1948. In New York he worked as Virgil Thomson's copyist in return for \$20 a week and orchestration lessons. He studied on fellowship at the Berkshire Music Center in Tanglewood in the summers of 1946 and 1947.

In 1949 Rorem moved to France, and lived there for ten years among the leading figures of the artistic and social milieu of post-war Europe. He currently lives in New York City. Words and music are inextricably linked for Ned Rorem. However, his musical and literary ventures extend far beyond this specialized field. Rorem has composed three symphonies, four piano concertos and an array of other orchestral works, music for numerous combinations of chamber forces, ten operas, choral works of every description, ballets and other music for the theater, and literally hundreds of songs and cycles. He is the author of sixteen books, including five volumes of diaries and collections of lectures and criticism.

John Stark and Son published Joplin's *Breeze from Alabama* on 29 December 1902. I chose to arrange the original piano score for trumpet and piano because the work is dedicated to the African American cornet virtuoso, P. G. Lowery.

Aaron Copland's *Quiet City* was originally written to accompany an experimental drama by Irwin Shaw. The original version was scored for trumpet, saxophone, clarinet, and piano. The script was about a young trumpeter, David Mellnikoff, who imagined the night thoughts of different people in a large city. He played his trumpet to express his emotions and aroused the consciences of other characters in the play and the audience. The 1932 drama was dropped after only two rehearsals, but Copland kept the music and in 1940 rearranged it for English horn and trumpet with string orchestra. By this time, Copland had found his voice as a composer of a new and distinctive style that soon became identified with American music. *Quiet City* premiered in New York City on 28 January 1941 at Town Hall by the Saitenberg Little Symphony, followed by Koussevitzky conducting it at Tanglewood that summer and then with the New York Philharmonic on 19 February 1982. Peter Wastall arranged the version that we are performing for trumpet and piano in 1984 under the composer's supervision. According to his friends and in Copland's own accounts of his working methods, he was something of a night owl. He preferred to compose at night and I believe this piece especially reflects the quality of a

nocturne. Copland wrote that the piece evokes "the nostalgia and inner distress of a society profoundly aware of its own security." The opening timid trumpet calls are marked mezzo piano, nervous and mysterious. The music travels through more arched lyrical sections and closes with the same nervous, mysterious music with which it began, as the muted trumpet fades into the foggy urban landscape. Certainly, any large city can produce this emotional affect in the small hours of the morning, but this feeling is especially evoked in Copland's two favorite cities, his native New York and his beloved Paris. When I walk the evening streets of these cities, I also hear this piece.

George Gershwin was born Jacob Gershin, the son of Russian immigrants, in Brooklyn, New York on 26 September 1898. He began his career as a song plugger in music stores. A life-long learner, Gershwin continued studies with some of the best composers and theorists of his day, long after he had established a successful career as a songwriter. The result was a body of songs that reflected the craft of a composer of art music and art music that echoed the harmonies and melodic formulas of jazz and popular traditions. He died of a brain tumor at the age of thirty-eight.

David Ahlstrom (1927-1993) was an author, music theorist, composer, conductor, and music director of BAYO and Voices/SF, an ensemble specializing in presenting new American Operas and other musical theater. He got the idea for this *Scherzo* in 1961 after being bombarded by the sounds of Eastman music students blasting out scales from their practice rooms at the Eastman School in Rochester. He taught composition for a time at Southern Methodist University, where my teacher, Jack Logan was a student and became a fan of his music. Jack recorded the piece while I studied with him at San Diego State and he suggested it as the finale to my Master Degree recital. It's been in my recital repertoire ever since. It is the only piece in the trumpet repertoire, to my knowledge, that used a cup mute throughout. There are three versions of the piece; trumpet and piano, trumpet with winds and percussion, and trumpet with orchestra.

THE ARTISTS

Ralph Dudgeon is a versatile musician/scholar who is known for historically informed performance on period instruments as well as his performances of contemporary repertoire. Dudgeon received his Ph.D. in musicology from the University of California, San Diego. He earned a Master of Arts degree in trumpet performance and a Bachelor of Arts in music education from San Diego State University.

Dudgeon has appeared throughout the United States, Europe, Canada, and Mexico as a trumpet soloist and conductor. His debut solo album, *Music for Keyed Bugle*, was the first full-length recording devoted to the keyed bugle. He has recorded for Musical Heritage Society, Music Masters, Newport Classic, Nimbus, Hyperion, Innova, and Spring Tree labels. He is a Professor of Music at State University of New York, College at Cortland where he teaches music history and trumpet. He is also the trumpet teacher at Colgate University. For two months a year, he is a research consultant for Instrumentenmuseum, Schloß Kremsegg in Kremsmünster, Upper Austria and performs annually in Europe.

Dudgeon has contributed articles to the *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (6th and 7th editions), the *New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments*, the *New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, the *American Musical Instrument Society Journal*, the *International Trumpet Guild Journal*, *Ovation*, *Annual Review of Jazz Studies*, and the *Historic Brass Society Journal*. Dudgeon contributed two chapters to the *Cambridge Companion to Brass Instruments*. His 1993 book, *The Keyed Bugle* (Scarecrow Press), is considered the definitive research on that instrument. The second, expanded edition of *The Keyed Bugle* was released in 2004. Dudgeon's *Das Flügelhorn*, (2003) is published by PPMEDIEN GmbH in German and English. The work is a brief history of the flügelhorn and features over a hundred color photos of instruments housed in the Instrumentenmuseum, Schloß Kremsegg, Upper Austria as examples of changes in instrument technology over the past three hundred years. In 2006, Dudgeon received the *Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities* from the State University of New York.

William Cowdery works as musical director and organist of the First Congregational Church of Ithaca, and as an instructor at Cornell University. He has taught on the faculties of Ithaca College, Colgate University, and Keuka College. He appears widely as a keyboardist and musical lecturer in the upstate New York area. He authored numerous articles in the *New Harvard Dictionary of Music* and the *Harvard Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*, and co-edited *The Complete Mozart* with Neal Zaslaw (Norton).