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David Niethamer, clarinet

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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David Niethamer, *clarinet*

assisted by

Jennifer Cable, *soprano*
Joanne Kong, *piano*
Teri Lazar, *violin*
Pat Werrell, *flute*



SEPTEMBER 6, 2000, 7:30 P.M.
CAMP CONCERT HALL
BOOKER HALL OF MUSIC

• • • PROGRAM • • •

Three for Two (1999)
A Giddy Twosome
The Solitude of Self
Projecting the Self

Allan Blank
(b. 1925)

Links (1987)

Blank

• • • INTERMISSION • • •

As It Fell Upon a Day (1923)

Aaron Copland
(1900-1990)

Sonata (1986)

Aaron Copland

(transcribed by the composer from his Sonata for Violin and Piano, 1943)

Andante semplice: Allegro

Lento

Allegretto giusto

• • • PROGRAM NOTES • • •

Allan Blank was born in New York City in 1925. His early musical training was on the violin. He attended the High School of Music and Art in New York, where an interest in conducting and composition was fostered. Further studies were at the Juilliard School, Washington Square College, University of Minnesota, and University of Iowa. He was a violinist with the Pittsburgh Symphony (1950-52), and has taught at a number of schools and universities. Currently he is Professor Emeritus at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Recent awards include First Prize in the George Eastman Competition, the Eric Satie Mostly Tonal Award, and the Chautauqua Chamber Singers Annual Choral Composition Contest. He has received commission grants from the National Endowment Endowment for the Arts, the Virginia Commission for the Arts, the Virginia Shakespeare Festival, The Virginia Music Teachers Association, and the Roxbury Chamber Players.

Blank writes, "*Three for Two* for Clarinet and Piano (1999), presents, what I have been considering, three distinct types of relationships between two instruments or players. These are exemplified in the following movements. The first, *A Giddy Twosome*, is basically a sharing and playful interchange. The second, *The Solitude of Self*, is a retreat into one's being - and is meditative. The third, *Projecting the Self*, is fraught with impulses of assertion. These are all psychological analogues of gestural types we can extract from many works of music and are embedded in the basic disciples of counterpoint, harmony, form, etc."

Links was written for the 1988 International Clarinet Society conference held at VCU in Richmond. The work is in nine sections, with an Introduction that supplies many of the ideas elaborated on later. The groupings of the three

instruments are arranged in shifting patterns of trios, duos, and solos, which unfold a wide expressive palette.

One of Aaron Copland's assignments from Nadia Boulanger in 1923 was to write a short piece for clarinet and flute. Working on it in Vienna during a summer holiday, he decided to add soprano voice to the instruments. The text is an ode by Richard Barnefield (1574-1627) which was originally thought to be the work of Shakespeare. *As It Fell...* is Copland's sixth completed work.

The first performance was in 1924, with soprano Ada MacLeish (wife of the poet Archibald MacLeish) at a concert of the Société Musical Indépendante. One critic present at this performance wrote, "Written with a clear, firm, and bold pen, this song is full of ingenious and charming details: it, alone, permits us to hope for great things from the author." Another critic wrote "It shows a sensitive nature, and a technique which is already highly finished. With so few instruments, a composer cannot bluff: he must play fair. Therefore every effect is doubly meritorious...with his song, M. Copland has conquered, at the first shot, his diploma at Paris."

Copland's *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano* is a transcription of his *Sonata for Violin and Piano* (1942-43), which is dedicated to the memory of Lieutenant Harry H. Dunham, a friend of the composer, who was killed in action in the South Pacific in 1943. Ruth Posselt and the composer gave the premiere at New York's Town Hall on January 17, 1944.

Virgil Thomson once praised the work for what he termed its "calm elevation." In an interview with Phillip Ramey, Copland comments:

"It is certainly one of the least complex pieces that I've ever written. Actually, when you look at my works of the early 1940s — *Our Town*, *Fanfare for the*

Common Man, Rodeo, Lincoln Portrait — I seem to have been going through a pretty 'plain' period. You might say that the *Violin Sonata* of 1943 is well on the way to *Appalachian Spring*, composed the next year. And there the musical materials are very 'plain' indeed . . . There are no complexities — it's an uncomplicated and direct statement of rather uncomplicated and direct musical ideas that I enjoyed developing. Above all, the work is lyrical and emphasizes the singing qualities of the [solo] instrument. There is little pretense to virtuosity. . .

"Throughout the piece, the piano writing is deliberately spare and its linearity complements the melodic nature of the [solo] part. There are three movements — moderate tempo, slow and fast, the last two played without pause. The first movement alternates in mood between a tender lyricism and a more rapid-paced section. The slow movement is bare in outline and poetic in nature. Harmonically it is very plain 'white-notey,' you might say. The last movement

is . . . snappy and rather rhythmically intricate, combining light and bouncy material with sections that are more serious in tone. A short coda ends the *Sonata* with reference to the theme of the opening movement."

In this transcription for clarinet and piano, the entire work has been transposed down a major third to bring the solo part in line with the compass of the clarinet, and make available the instrument's rich low (*chalumeau*) register.

The transcription was begun upon the suggestion of Timothy Paradise, who edited the clarinet part. In preparing the work for publication, Mr. Copland also consulted Michael Webster, some of whose suggestions regarding registration and articulation were incorporated into the final version.

The transcription in its present version was first performed March 10, 1986 at Merkin Concert Hall in New York City by clarinetist Michael Webster and pianist Barry Snyder.

As It Fell Upon a Day (1923) — Aaron Copland
(Words from Richard Barnefield (1574-1627))

Ah,
As it fell upon a day,
In the merry month of May,
Sitting in a pleasant shade,
Which a grove of myrtles made
Beasts did leap and birds did sing
Trees did crow and plants did spring
Ev'rything did banish moan
Save the nightingale alone
She poor bird as all forlorn
Leen'd her breast up till a thorn
And there sung the doleful'st ditty
Thet to hear it was great pity
Fie

Now would she cry
Tereu, Tereu, by and by
That to hear her so complain
Scarce I could from tears refrain
For her griefs so lively shown
Made me think upon mine own
Ah! thought I thou mourn'st in vain
None takes pity on thy pain
Senseless trees they cannot hear thee
Ruthless bears they will not cheer thee
King Pandion he is dead
All thy friends are lapp'd in lead
All thy fellow birds do sing
Careless of thy sorrowing
Even so poor bird like thee
None alive will pity me
Ah.

• • • PERSONNEL • • •

David Niethamer was appointed Principal Clarinetist of the Richmond Symphony in 1979. He has appeared thirteen times as soloist, most recently for the world premiere of Allan Blank's Concerto, commissioned for Niethamer with funding from the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. Niethamer also won critical acclaim and national recognition for the American premiere performances of Andre Casanova's Ballade for Clarinet and String Orchestra during his first season with the orchestra.

In addition to his orchestral career, Niethamer has maintained a busy schedule of chamber music, recitals and teaching. He has performed at the Albemarle Festival with the Monticello Trio and the Brentano Quartet, with the Kandinsky Trio, the Composers Quartet, and the Lenox String Quartet. From 1982 until 1992, Niethamer was the Clarinetist and Artistic Director of the Roxbury Chamber Players. He was Artistic Director of the Richmond Chamber Players' "Interlude" series from 1994 through 1997.

Niethamer performed at the 1990 ClarinetFest International in Quebec, at the 1988 joint conference of the International Clarinet Society and ClariNetwork

International, and at ClarFest '86 in Towson, Maryland. He has played recitals throughout Virginia with Richmond Symphony Music Director George Manahan.

An interest in the work of living composers has led to collaborations with Karel Husa, Gunther Schuller, and Ned Rorem. In Virginia, Niethamer has worked closely with Allan Blank, Judith Shatin, and Joel Suben. Niethamer's recordings are on the Opus One, MMC, and Elan labels.

Niethamer's teaching career has included two years as Visiting Lecturer of Clarinet and Chamber Music at Ithaca College. Niethamer has conducted Master Classes and workshops at Oberlin College, Tennessee Tech, University of Richmond, and the University of Alabama/Huntsville. He currently teaches at the University of Richmond.

Niethamer is married to the flutist Patricia Werrell. They have a daughter Terren.



Jennifer Cable has performed throughout the United States and Europe in solo repertoire ranging from the Renaissance through the 20th Century. In addition to opera and oratorio, Cable has sung with many chamber music ensembles, including Tragicomedia, Musica Nova, the Kennedy Center Chamber Players, the Richmond Chamber Players and Currents. She is a founding member and regular artist with Affetti Musicali, an early music ensemble well known to Richmond audiences, and has made several solo appearances with the Richmond Symphony Orchestra. Undergraduate study at Oberlin College was followed by the Eastman School of Music for her Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts. Cable was also awarded Performer's Certificates in both Opera

and Vocal Performance from the Eastman School of Music. She has attended the Aspen Music Festival, the Akademie fur Alte Musik in Bremen, Germany, the International Institute

for Chamber Music in Munich, the Aldeburgh Festival and the Britten-Pears School in Aldeburgh, England, and the Franz Schubert Institute in Vienna. She is currently studying voice with Marlena Malas in New York City and serves on the faculty of the University of Richmond in Richmond, Virginia. She has recorded for Word Records and the Contemporary Record Society.



Joanne Kong has garnered critical acclaim for her exceptional versatility as both a pianist and harpsichordist. Her sensitive artistry and technical brilliance have earned numerous honors, including the Grand Prize in the 1985 International Piano Recording Competition. As a recognized specialist in the music of J. S. Bach, she has performed in the Los Angeles and Oregon Bach Festivals, and her interpretations of the Goldberg Variations and Well-Tempered Clavier have received critical praise. Kong is also

in frequent demand as a chamber keyboardist and accompanist, including recent collaborations with the Shanghai String Quartet and cellist James Wilson. Currently she is the Director of Accompaniment at the University of Richmond.



Teri Lazar, violinist, has performed as a soloist and chamber musician in the United States, Europe and the Middle East. Ms. Lazar performs with the Sunrise Quartet, the Richmond Chamber Players and Currents and she is Concertmaster of the Virginia Chamber Orchestra. She has recorded chamber music for the Albany, Klavier, North/South Recordings, Living Music, Plucked String and Centaur labels and has been heard on National Public Radio's Performance Today program. She received a Doctorate of Music degree from the Catholic University of America where she studied with Robert Gerle. She is currently on the faculty of the American Univer-

sity where she teaches violin and is Artist in Residence. She was a winner of the National Association of Music Clubs Competition, the Alexandria Symphony Soloists Competition, the Brevard Concerto Competition, the Montpelier Arts Center Recital Competition and the Baltimore Chamber Music Awards and was a finalist in several international competitions. She has performed at the Spoleto festival in the USA and in Italy and she toured Europe twice with the New York group, Amor Artis.



Flutist Patricia Werrell holds degrees from Montclair State College and Lebanon Valley College, where she subsequently taught. She has studied flute with Harold Bennett, John Oberbrunner, and Nelson Hauenstine, and performed in master classes conducted by Marcel Moyse and Thomas Nyfenger.

Ms. Werrell is a founding member of the Roxbury Chamber Players, and of the contemporary music ensemble, Currents. As an orchestral flutist, she has performed with the Richmond Symphony, and as a soloist with orchestras in New Jersey, Michigan and Virginia. She can be heard on recordings with the Roxbury

Players (Opus One #144 - "Gazebo Music", by Judith Shatin, and other works)



and Currents (Various works, CENTAUR CRC 2248)

Ms. Werrell is on the music faculty at Longwood College as instructor of flute and director of the flute ensemble. At the Collegiate Schools, she teaches flute and coordinates the band program.

2000-01 Modlin Center Events

Concerts are free, no tickets required,
unless otherwise noted

Simon Dinnerstein: Paintings and Drawings
Now through October 7, 2000
Marsh Art Gallery

James Stroud: Linear Strategies
Now through December 17, 2000
Marsh Art Gallery

CURRENTS New-Music Ensemble
"Musical Recycling"
Fred Cohen, *director*
Sunday, September 10, 2000, 3 pm
Camp Concert Hall
Booker Hall of Music

Mike Davison and Chris Marks
Trumpet and Organ Recital
Sunday, September 17, 2000, 3 pm
Cannon Memorial Chapel

Russell Wilson, piano
Monday, September 18, 2000, 7:30 pm
Camp Concert Hall
Booker Hall of Music

University of Richmond adjunct faculty member Russell Wilson presents his annual piano recital.

Shanghai Quartet with David Soyer, cello
Wednesday, September 20, 2000, 7:30 pm
Camp Concert Hall
Booker Hall of Music

Having recently celebrated their 10th year as quartet-in-residence at the University of Richmond, the Shanghai Quartet helps kick off the Modlin Center's 5th anniversary season with an appearance by cellist David Soyer, a founding member of the Guarneri String Quartet. Mr. Soyer, an equally active chamber musician and soloist, joins the quartet in a performance of Schubert's String Quintet in C. This concert also marks the first Richmond appearance of the quartet's new cellist, Nicholas Tzavaras.

Tickets are required for this free event. Call 289-8980.

Eileen Ivers Band with Eileen Ivers, Irish fiddle
Monday, September 25, 2000, 7:30 pm
Camp Concert Hall
Booker Hall of Music

From her star musical turn in Riverdance and her 30-plus medals in the AllIreland Championships to her session work and appearances with such diverse artists and ensembles as Paula Cole, the Boston Pops Orchestra and Paddy Maloney, fiddler Eileen Ivers has established herself as the preeminent exponent of the Irish fiddle in the world today. Ms. Ivers and her band will be joined on stage by traditional Irish step dancers.

Tickets: \$18 adults, \$16 seniors. Call 289-8980.