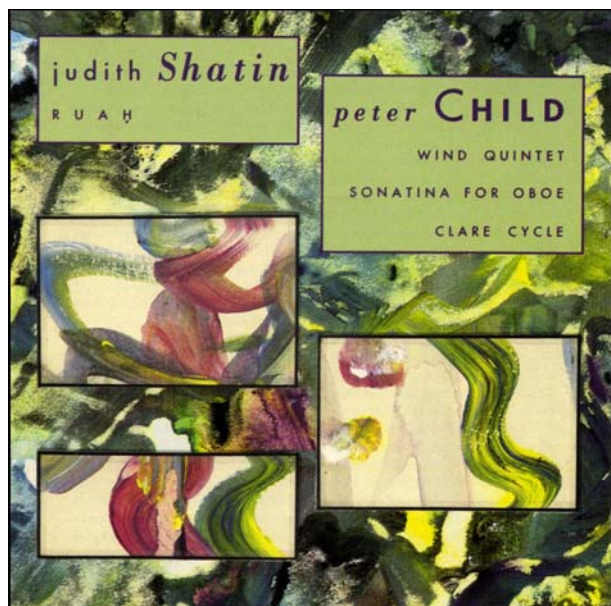


Judith Shatin: *Ruah*

Peter Child: Wind Quintet; Sonatina for Oboe; Clare Cycle



Judith Shatin

Ruah (1987) (24:04)

1. I. Soaring (10:51)
2. II. Serene (7:34)
3. III. Impassioned (5:32)

Renee Siebert, flute; Prism Chamber
Orchestra; Robert Black, conductor

Peter Child

Wind Quintet (1983) (13:03)

4. I. Agitated, angular (4:37)
5. II. Slow (4:03)
6. III. Swing (1:12)
7. IV. Slow (3:05)

Ariel Quintet: Clare Nielson, flute; Charlyn
Bethell, oboe; Rebecca Leonard, clarinet;
Ellen Donohue-Saltman, French horn; Tracy
McGinnis, bassoon

Sonatina for Oboe (1986) (9:41)

8. I. Invention (1:55)
9. II. Air (4:58)
10. III. Toccata (2:39)

Peggy Pearson, oboe

Clare Cycle (1985) (16:45)

Four Settings from the Poetry of John Clare

11. I. The Yellowhammer's Nest (1:58)
12. II. Song (6:36)
13. III. I Am (6:07)
14. IV. Clock a Clay (2:04)

College New Music: Joan Heller, soprano; Randolph
Bowman, flute; Fred Cohen, oboe; Robert Annis,
clarinet; Ronan Lefkowitz, violin; James Cook, violin;
Roberto Diaz, viola; Joel Moershel, cello; James
Orleans, bass; Frank Epstein, percussion; Christopher
Oldfather, piano; David Hoose, conductor

Total playing time: 63:48

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Notes

“Ruah” is a Hebrew word that translates as air, wind, or breath. In Kabbalistic mysticism it also refers to the part of the soul that mediates between the body and the spirit. Both the colloquial and spiritual meanings are at work here. The images of breath and air inform the timbral stretching of the flute’s sound, with the flutist using voice and breathflow in various conjunctions with played tones.

The image of the wind is captured in the swift unfolding of the lines in the first movement, *Soaring*, and third, *Impassioned*. The second movement, *Serene*, emerges from a dynamic stillness, and has far-flung registral limits and large interval spaces. Its three-part organization mirrors the larger scale three-movement plan of the entire work. The final movement, *Impassioned*, is a more furious spin through space, and it has a more tightly wound, assertive character than the first two movements. This movement, however, also refers to those preceding. The spiritual reference is embodied in the flute as it variously springs forth from and mediates between the instruments of the ensemble.

Ruah was composed for and is dedicated to Renee Siebert, who premiered it with the Prism Chamber Orchestra in March 1987. Its composition was made possible in part by an NEA

Composer Fellowship as well as by a residency at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts. The second movement was choreographed by Kate Johnson of the Paul Taylor Dance Company, and it was presented at New York’s City Center in May 1989.

—Judith Shatin

Judith Shatin has won great acclaim for her compositions, some of which use traditional instruments, and some that involve computer generated sound. “Bursting with imaginative detail” (San Francisco Chronicle) and “fresh and bold” (Denver Post), Ms. Shatin’s music has been widely performed in America and abroad. Her work explores timbral boundaries of traditional instruments and the ways of combining acoustic with electronic instruments and their processes. Trained as a flutist, Ms. Shatin has been particularly drawn to the instrument. In addition to *Ruah*, which is scored for piano and flute, her music includes *Gabriel’s Wing* for flute and piano, *Fasting Heart* for solo flute, *Gazebo Music* for flute and cello, and *Kairos* for flute, a computer running HMSL, Quadraverb, and the Roland VP-70 voice processor.

Originally from Boston, Ms. Shatin is a graduate of Douglass College, holds an M.M. from the Juilliard School, and has a Ph.D. from Princeton University. She has received commissions from, among others, the Barlow Foundation, the Painted Bride Arts Center, the Virginia Chamber Orchestra, the Roxbury Chamber Players, and the Ash Lawn Opera Festival. A recipient of three NEA Composer Fellowships, Ms. Shatin has also been awarded grants by the Virginia Commission on the Arts, the New Jersey State Arts Council, the American Music Center, and Meet the Composer. She is currently associate professor of music at the University of Virginia, where she founded and directs the computer music laboratory. She also serves as president of American Women Composers, Inc., a national organization based in Washington, D.C. Her *Ignoto numine* is performed by the Monticello Trio on CRI CD583.

Each of the four movements of my Wind Quintet (1983) has a broadly improvisatory character. The first two movements, which are connected without a break, feature a great deal of busy figuration and intertwining instrumental colors out of which more sharply defined melodic material periodically emerges. The last two movements are also connected without a break. The third movement is a cheerful scherzo that borrows its rhythmic, textural, and formal features from early jazz. The last movement has an arching, introspective lyric line that is projected chiefly by the oboe. This work was composed in 1983 for the Emmanuel Wind Quintet and was premiered by them the following year.

My Sonatina for Oboe (1986) was specially written for Peggy Pearson. Although it is an unaccompanied one part piece, much of it has an underlying two part structure, and one of the problems for the performer is to convey both parts in much the same way that a single actor might have to convey both parts of a dialogue. The music of the first movement, *Invention*, is brisk, lively, and full of tricky rhythmic shifts and syncopations. The second movement, *Air*, is a lyrical, long-lined piece that was very much composed with Ms. Pearson's special cantabile qualities in mind. The last movement was called Toccata because of its lively rhythmic character.

John Clare, known in his day as the Northamptonshire peasant poet, was an untutored, spontaneous, ultimately tragic figure whose poetry is today gradually gaining the wider recognition it deserves. The four poems that are set in *Clare Cycle* (198) were chosen to represent the principal genres of John Clare's poetry, and in their juxtaposition they are meant to depict an evolution and illumination of their subject matter. The four movements are connected without pause.

"The Yellowhammers Nest" is typical of Clare's nature poetry in its attention to descriptive detail and its loving attitude towards its subject. The poem is spoken against a musical background, and the ironic twist at its close prepares the spiritually more anguished poems that follow. The form of "Song," in which Clare addresses the emotional disturbance that precipitated his entrance into a madhouse, reflects the ballad tradition in which he was raised. That tradition is similarly reflected in the present musical setting. The shift of mood in "I Am" from despair, which stemmed from the isolation Clare suffered in the asylum, to tranquility, which was born of an inner vision of calm and blessedness, is reflected in a shift of musical language. Though it is barbed and unsettled in the first two stanzas, the music becomes lyrical and consonant in the third.

The idea of tranquility in the midst of adversity continues in "Clock-a-clay," and the subtext of Clare's life lends

tremendous pathos to his depiction, which uses the language of a child's ditty, of a small, vulnerable creature taking shelter from a storm. The setting of this poem features propulsive rhythms and bright harmonic colors that bring the cycle to a cheerful close.

Clare Cycle is scored for high soprano accompanied by two violins, viola, cello, double bass, flute, oboe, clarinet, piano, and percussion. It was commissioned by the New England Conservatory Contemporary Ensemble through a New Works grant from the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities.

—Peter Child

Born in Great Yarmouth, England in 1953, **Peter Child** has lived in the United States since 1973. He is presently associate professor of music at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Child received his doctorate in composition from Brandeis University in 1981, and his principal teachers were William Albright, Arthur Berger, Martin Boykan, Jacob Druckman, and Seymour Shifrin. His compositions have earned awards from Tanglewood, the New England Conservatory, WGBH Radio, East and West Artists, and League-ISCAM, Boston. He also won composition fellowships from the Massachusetts Artists Foundation in 1986 and 1989, fellowships from the Watson Foundation, the MacDowell Colony, and the Composers' Conference. In addition, he has earned four New Works commissions from the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities. Child's compositions are usually the product of collaborations with professional performing ensembles in the Boston area, and they include works for orchestra, chorus, computer synthesis, and various chamber music combinations.

Renee Siebert, flute, has appeared as a concerto soloist with the New York Philharmonic for three seasons, twice with artists Jean-Philippe Collard, Emanuel Ax, Peter Serkin, and Marc Neikrug. Ms. Siebert has toured Germany with the Heilbronn Chamber Orchestra, with whom she recorded all of the Mozart flute concertos for Vox.

Robert Black, conductor, is music director of the Prism Orchestra and has recently appeared as guest conductor with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the American Symphony Orchestra in Carnegie Hall, and on tour with the national orchestras of Finland, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. He is also principal conductor of the New Amsterdam Symphony, music director of American Opera Projects, artistic director of the New York New Music Ensemble, and a conductor of *Speculum Musicae*. He has recorded extensively, most recently as conductor with the Warsaw Philharmonic.

The Ariel Quintet was established in 1984 by New England Conservatory graduates, and in 1988 it was awarded an artists' diploma in chamber music from the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The quintet has featured in a wide range of activities throughout New England, including formal recitals, educational programs, concert series, and radio broadcasts. The members of the quintet are freelance performers and teachers in the Boston area.

Peggy Pearson, oboe, is soloist with the Emmanuel Chamber Orchestra and has appeared with many chamber groups, including the Orpheus Chamber Ensemble, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Music from Marlboro, and Collage New Music. She is an active exponent of new music and was a fellow of the Radcliffe Institute in contemporary music, where she premiered numerous works written specifically for her. Currently, she is on the faculty at the Longy School of Music.

Collage New Music is a Boston-based chamber music ensemble dedicated to the performance of new music. Comprised principally of Boston Symphony Orchestra musicians, Collage is led by music director Frank Epstein and manager Nancy Shafman. Since its founding in 1972, the

ensemble has commissioned and premiered over 200 new works that have been performed during the ensemble's annual concert series in Boston and its extensive touring throughout New England and New York. Many of these works have been recorded for CRI, GM Recordings, and the Sonority label.

Production Notes

Ruah

Produced by Marc Aubort and Joanna Nickrenz. Recorded at the Masonic Temple, NYC on March 25, 1987. Engineered by Elite Recordings Inc., NYC. Published by ACA (BMI).

Wind Quintet and Sonatina for Oboe

Recorded at Houghton Chapel, Wellesley College, on November 20-21, 1990. Recording engineer: Toby Mountain, Northeastern Digital Recordings.

Clare Cycle

Recorded at Slosberg Recital Hall, Brandeis University, May 27, 1989. Recording engineer: Toby Mountain, Northeastern Digital Recordings. All rights held by the composer (BMI).

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