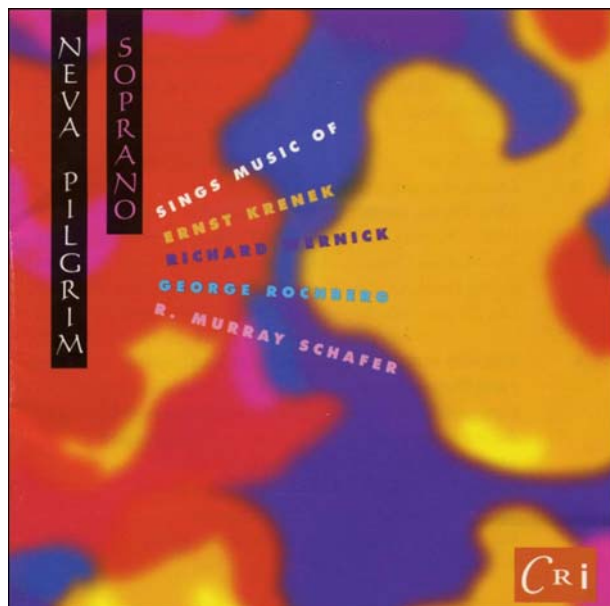


Neva Pilgrim, Soprano



Ernst Krenek

Trois Chansons (Three Verhaeren Songs),
Op. 30a (1924) (9:54)

Poetry by Emile Verhaeren

1. La barque (3:22)
2. Un soir (2:34)
3. L'heure mauvaise (3:57)

Neva Pilgrim, soprano; William Nichols,
clarinet; The Madison Quartet: Robert
Rozek, violin; Cordula Rosow, violin; John
Dexter, viola; Stephen Stalker, cello.

4. Richard Wernick: *Haiku of Bashō* (1967) (10:38)

Neva Pilgrim, soprano; Contemporary Chamber
Players of the University of Chicago: Andrea
Swan, piano; Marie Moulton, piccolo, flute, alto
flute; Stanley Davis, clarinet, bass clarinet, e-flat
clarinet; Terry Appelbaum, Edward Poremba,

percussion; Elliott Golub, violin; Michael Geller,
double bass; Richard Wernick, conductor.

George Rochberg

Songs in Praise of Krishna (1970) (33:51)

5. I. It was a bitter maytime (4:20)
6. II. After long sorrow (2:05)
7. III. Her slender body (1:57)
8. IV. As the mirror (1:04)
9. V. O Madhava (3:00)
10. VI. Lord of my heart (1:59)
11. VII. I brought honey (1:37)
12. VIII. My mind is not on housework (2:28)
13. IX. I place beauty spots (1:05)
14. X. Shining one (1:24)
15. XI. My moon-faced one (1:44)
16. XII. Beloved, what more shall I say (3:25)
17. XIII. Let the earth (1:17)
18. XIV. O my friend (6:25)

Neva Pilgrim, soprano; George Rochberg, piano.

Ernst Krenek

Zwei Zeitlieder, Op. 215 (1972) (7:43)

Poetry by Renata Pandula

19. I. Kennst du den Augenblick (4:56)
20. II. Hab Hände (2:47)

Neva Pilgrim, soprano; The Madison Quartet:

Robert Rozek, violin; Cordula Rosow, violin; John
Dexter, viola; Stephen Stalker, cello.

21. R. Murray Schafer: *Requiems for
the Party-Girl* (1966) (15:10)

Neva Pilgrim, soprano; Jan Herlinger, flute, piccolo;
Stanley Davis, clarinet, bass clarinet; Paul Ondracek,
horn; Thomas Siwe, percussion, timpani; Elizabeth
Cifani, harp; John Cobb, piano; Elliott Golub, violin;
Arnold Sklar, viola; Roger Malitz, cello.

Total playing time 79:36

© 1976, 1977, 1979, 1999 & © 1999 Composers Recordings, Inc.
© 2007 Anthology of Recorded Music, Inc.

Notes

Neva Pilgrim graduated *magna cum laude* from Hamline University, received a master of music from Yale University, and studied at the Vienna Academy of Music on a Ditson Fellowship. But what is probably of more interest, and perhaps of more importance, is the fact that she grew up in a large family on a farm in Minnesota, and learned from early on what hard work meant. In addition to her wonderful musicianship and dedication to music, she has always had the energy and the imagination to make dreams come true—not only her own dreams, but the dreams of the vast multitude of composers whose music she has sung and promoted. A quick count of her repertoire reveals that she has sung the music of well over one hundred twentieth century composers, and since many of these composers are represented by two or more works, the degree of her contribution to the music of our time is incalculable.

I first met Neva at the University of Chicago in 1965. I was a fledgling assistant professor in the music department; Neva's husband, Richard, was a doctoral candidate in the history of religions department. During the first semester I heard Neva sing with the Contemporary Chamber Players. While I don't remember what she sang, I recall the strong impression she made on me, and my instantaneous decision to write something for her. (The result of that was *Haiku of Bashō*.) Neva became the workhorse of that group, and sang piece after piece on that stage in Mandel Hall.

Since 1968 we have lived in separate cities, but fortunately we live in an age when geography has become more of a nuisance than a barrier. Neva and I have done many things together, and shared many wonderful musical moments. She went on to help found the Syracuse Society for New Music, without question one of the most active contemporary music

scenes in this country. The Society is now more than a quarter of a century old, and Neva has been the driving force of that organization for most of that time. Its newsletter alone is a gold mine of information about the national contemporary music scene, and the amount of new music and recording that gets done in Syracuse is quite overwhelming.

Neva has performed with dozens of groups and dozens of conductors at a huge number of venues and recorded for a large array of record labels. She has commissioned a remarkable amount of music of every possible stylistic persuasion, and has been a staunch supporter of young and unknown composers. She has given generously of her time to organizations like The National Endowment for the Arts, The New York State Council on the Arts, The Copland Fund, and is currently President of the New York State Music Teachers Association. The Minnesota farm work ethic has never abandoned her; she always has yet another cause to fight for, and more new (and old) music to sing. *Bravissima*, Neva!

— Richard Wernick

Ernst Krenek's works exceed 220 in number, and most major trends and styles of this century are represented among them, from atonality through dodecaphony and serialism to aleatoric and electronic music. His compositions include over twenty operas, ballets, symphonies, chamber works, choral music, lieder, and solo works for a variety of instruments. Born in Vienna in 1900, Krenek achieved international fame with his opera, *Jonny spielt auf* in 1927. When he emigrated to America in 1938, he began a new career as an educator, starting with an appointment to the faculty of Vassar College. In 1942 he became head of the Music Department at Hamline University and soon afterward dean of its school of fine arts.

Krenek became an American citizen in 1945 and in 1947 moved to Southern California, where he lived until his death in 1991. Despite his teaching schedule, Krenek maintained an extraordinary creative drive and from 1950 on, he devoted himself mainly to composing despite many invitations to serve as a lecturer or visiting professor. He returned annually to Europe to conduct his operas and orchestral works and supervise production of his television operas. His opera *Pallas Athene weint* was commissioned for the opening of the new opera house in Hamburg in 1955, and was followed by two other operas for this institution: *The Gold Ram* (1964) and *Sardakai* (1970). In 1960 the Republic of Austria and the City of Vienna honored him with their Great Silver Cross and Gold Medal. Dr. Krenek was appointed a Regents Lecturer at UCSD [University of California, San Diego] in 1970, and his talks were published by the University of California Press under the title *Horizons Circled*.

The *Verhaeren Songs* were written in 1924 when Krenek lived in Switzerland and where he first encountered the incipient neo-classicism of Stravinsky and *Les Six*. The results of that infatuation with French music, literature and anything else, are unmistakable, sounding more French to the composer himself than any other music he had ever written. Krenek recalled that the *Verhaeren Songs* were performed at a *Hauskonzert*, but then he lost track of them. In 1975, when several organizations and universities in Minneapolis and St. Paul hosted a festival honoring Krenek on his 75th birthday, Neva Pilgrim gave the modern and American premiere of these songs with members of the Minnesota Orchestra. She performed them several times in Central New York subsequently.

Renata Pandula, a Czechoslovakian poet who moved to West Germany in 1968, had written a cycle of 30 poems entitled *Zeit* (Time), lyrical and philosophical reflections on

the experience of time. Krenek set two of the poems for soprano and string quartet so that Dusan Pandula, the poet's husband and head of a renowned string quartet, could perform them for his wife's pleasure. The musical diction is free and flexible, according to the character of the poems. Mr. Krenek gave these songs to Neva Pilgrim following her performance of the *Verhaeren Songs* in St. Paul, Minnesota. She sang the Los Angeles premiere in January of 1978 on the Monday Evening Concerts, having been coached in them previously with the composer. During the fall of 1978, Ms. Pilgrim and the Madison Quartet performed them at Colgate, Cornell, and Syracuse Universities prior to recording them.

Richard Wernick was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1934, and earned his B.A. from Brandeis and his M.A. from Mills College, studying under such distinguished composer/teachers as Irving Fine, Harold Shapero, Arthur Berger, Ernst Toch, Leon Kirchner, Boris Blacher, and Aaron Copland. He has taught at SUNY Buffalo, the University of Chicago, and at the University of Pennsylvania, where he was the Magnin Professor of Humanities.

Wernick won the Pulitzer Prize for music in 1977, and is the only two-time first prize Friedheim Award recipient. In addition he has been honored by awards from the Ford and Guggenheim Foundations, National Institute of Arts and Letters, and the National Endowment for the Arts. From 1983–1989, he served as the Philadelphia Orchestra's consultant for contemporary music and from 1989–1993 as special consultant to the music director.

Mr. Wernick has composed numerous solo, chamber, and orchestral works; vocal, choral, and band compositions; as well as a large body of music for theater, films, ballet, and television. He has been commissioned by the Philadelphia Orchestra, Ravenna Festival of Italy, the Juilliard Quartet, National Symphony, American Composers Orchestra, Emerson Quartet, Syracuse Society for New Music (*A Poison Tree*, recorded on Spectrum), to name but a few, and has written solo works for violist Walter Trampler, mezzo-soprano Jan DeGaetani, and pianist Lambert Orkis, among others.

Haiku of Bashō is a setting of five haiku by and (in one instance) about Matsuo Bashō (1643–1694), generally acknowledged the foremost writer of this form of Japanese verse. The first four poems of the cycle are fine examples of how Bashō was able to capture the essence of seemingly inconsequential moments or vignettes and, using the most frugal means of literary expression, communicate to the reader a sense of the timeless and eternal. The fifth poem, written a century later by Sengai, is more in the nature of a seventeen-syllable one-line joke, a play on the word "bashō" which means "banana leaf."

Wernick writes that there are no programmatic connections between the haiku and the music, nor any word painting. The relationship of the music to the words is rather one of attitude—attempting, through an economical and tightly woven means of abstract musical expression, to create sound images similar to (or analogous to) the poetic images evoked by the haiku. The attitude is perhaps best summed up by Bashō's own admonition to his pupils, "Do not seek to follow in the footsteps of the men of old; seek what they sought."

The melodic and harmonic aspects of the score are derived from one tone row that appears throughout the piece in several forms. There is a departure from conventional twelve-tone technique in that the rows are used only as the basis for harmonic and melodic materials that are then subjected to more or less standard procedures of development and variation. The improvisational qualities of the *Haiku...* are

partially achieved by the use of metrical modulation in which the conjunction and the superimposition of even and uneven metrical units generate continuous changes in the speed of the music. Apart from a few places where the speed may vary at the discretion of the conductor or one of the instrumentalists, the relationship of rhythm to speed is directed by the composer's notation, and is intended to provide a feeling of freedom without the composer abdicating control of the music.

George Rochberg, born July 5, 1918 in Paterson, New Jersey, studied at the Mannes School of Music with Hans Weisse and George Szell and then with Menotti at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia. Following his studies at Curtis, Rochberg taught there for six years. He also served as editor and director of publications at Theodore Presser for nine years, and as chairman of the Music Department of the University of Pennsylvania and later as its composer-in-residence. Rochberg met Dallapiccola in Italy in 1950, and became impressed by the expressive power of serialism, writing some elegant works in that style. However, after the death of his son, Paul, the composer re-embraced tonality and argued articulately against the serialist orthodoxy. His subsequent new works at first referred to other works or styles, in the manner of "collage." But he also explored the pop music of his youth, especially in *Eleven Songs* (1970), which were premiered by Neva Pilgrim with the composer at the piano.

As a result of that collaboration, Rochberg wrote *Songs in Praise of Krishna* for Ms. Pilgrim during the summer of 1970. The cycle was premiered by Ms. Pilgrim and the composer at the University of Illinois on March 16, 1971. The texts for this cycle of fourteen songs are drawn from a small volume titled *In Praise of Krishna*, beautifully translated from the Bengali by Denise Levertov and Edward C. Dimock, Jr. The lyrics celebrate the classical Indian legend of Radha, a beautiful girl, and Krishna, the god, or more symbolically, the longing of flesh for spirit and spirit for flesh. Rochberg set the poems as though they were a libretto for an opera—which, in a very real sense, they are, since they center on the passions of human and divine love.

Three characters speak: Radha, Krishna, and an old woman (Krishna's messenger to Radha). Each character has his or her own music. Since Radha is at the center of the poems, she sings ten of the fourteen songs. The work is highly chromatic, but with tonal centers. In order to bring out the psychology of what might be called "internal opera," Rochberg used considerable variety. Numbers II, IV, IX, X, and XIII are true songs in the *lieder* tradition. But many of the sections, e.g. I, V, and VIII, combine elements of *arioso* and *recitative*. All three—song, *arioso*, *recitative*—are called for in numbers VI, VII, XII, and XIII. The role of the piano is to accompany, set off, punctuate, establish atmosphere, and connect and extend the lines of the singer.

When the cycle begins, we are literally at the end of the story. In Hymn I, "It was in bitter maytime..." Radha is describing how Krishna has left her. She is full of the pain of loss. The events of Hymn II, "After long sorrow..." though appearing as the second song of the cycle, occur somewhere halfway through the story: Krishna has returned and Radha alternates between the pain of remembering his absence and the joy of having him back. From III to XIV, the final song of farewell, each song encapsulates a different shade of the progression of Radha's passion. Krishna's songs, III and XI, are interpolations of a kind to show the character of Krishna whose love for Radha is curiously remote, yet full of sweetness and desire. In her two songs, IX and X, the old woman messenger pleads with Radha and flatters her, all with the intention of softening her anger against the newly returned Krishna.

Radha expresses her first awareness of love in IV, the terrors and fears accompanying the knowledge that she will give herself to Krishna in V, her sense of deep fulfillment after being with Krishna in VI, the bitterness and jealousy over his faithlessness in VII, her distractedness and painful uncertainty in VIII, and her absolute ecstasy and complete submission to love in XII. In the last song, the transcendent, shining Radha of XIII is transformed into the suffering woman who must learn to live with the loss of her lover and dearest friend.

Songs in Praise of Krishna was recorded at the RCA studios in New York City (with Gene Rochberg, the composer's wife, serving as page turner). George Rochberg went on to write another major work for Neva Pilgrim also in the 1970s. His *Phaedra* for orchestra and soprano was commissioned by the Syracuse Society for New Music and the Syracuse Symphony for the bicentennial on a grant from the New York State Arts Council. Neva Pilgrim premiered the work with the Syracuse Symphony under conductor David Loebel. Not only were Rochberg and Pilgrim musical collaborators for many years, but the Rochbergs are godparents of the Pilgrims' second son, Jason.

R. Murray Schafer was born in Canada in 1933, and studied composition at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto and with Weinzweig at Toronto University. After being expelled from the latter for insubordination, he went to Europe to study and travel from 1956–61. During that time he met Ezra Pound and edited his writings on music in *Ezra Pound and Music*. He moved back to Toronto in 1961, and then taught at Memorial University, Newfoundland from 1963–65. In 1965 he joined the faculty of Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. In 1970 he founded the World Soundscape Project, which he directed until 1975, and which led to his revolutionary 1977 book, *The Tuning of the World*. Schafer then decided to live on farms in rural Ontario in order to have more time to compose. Most of his time and energy during the past two decades have gone into creating music theater works and five string quartets. He continued to devote time to expanding his *Patria* cycle, and became increasingly interested in performance situations in which the environment played an integral role in the work. In 1979 he wrote *Beauty and Beast*, an opera for solo voice, masks, and string quartet that is one of the many musical components of *Patria III: The Greatest Show*. Neva Pilgrim has performed that work many times with several different quartets. Schafer's music makes use of various reference points and a wide variety of techniques from aleatoric to electronic. He is considered to be Canada's most illustrious living composer.

Requiems for the Party-Girl was awarded the Fromm Foundation Prize in 1968. The work was composed in 1966 on commission from the CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Company]. It was intended to be part of Schafer's opera-in-progress, *Patria*, and is a cycle of connected arias documenting the mental collapse and suicide of a young woman. The text is by the composer, though he was influenced by the thoughts of Kafka and Camus. Schafer writes that he called the young woman simply "The Party-Girl," "and as such she is the prototype of those strange harlequinesque creatures one meets occasionally at parties, beneath whose furious demonstrations of gregariousness and *joie de vivre* one detects obscure signs of terror and alienation. As the gossiping voices around her whisper their absurd propositions in her ear, there is laughter in her eyes to disguise the anguish in her heart. She is resolved to suicide from the beginning and she knows that no one will prevent her. 'Outstretched hands are rare,' she says.

"If only she could discover a friend. But her methods are

bizarre. She says, 'Whenever I go out I leave a paper on my desk for visitors to sign... No one signs. Though people are coming and going and seldom silently.' But as the cycle progresses the voices of the world become fainter and few, for the Party-Girl's resolution obliterates this whole confused and whirling picture around her to fix itself now on the only absolute future she can comprehend.

"The music is calm, detached. Then suddenly, she kills herself. At the moment she dies the strings begin a long sustained chord very softly, like an organ tone over which the dead spirit of the girl looks back reflecting on what has just happened. 'On my door I had written, "Come in, I have killed myself." I had written "I" but there is no longer any "I".' The work ends with furious and spasmodic repetitions of the *Requiem* by the singer, accompanied by throngs of bells."

The music is partly improvised, and is performed without a conductor.

The **Madison Quartet** performed throughout the U.S. and made major appearances in New York, Boston, and Washington, D.C. They served as artists-in-residence at L'Ecole Hindemith in Vevey, Switzerland, and were in

residence at Colgate University, having performed more than seventy-five concerts in New York State before disbanding.

William Nichols, clarinet, a native of Little Rock, Arkansas, holds a D.M.A. from the University of Iowa. He was the recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship at the Vienna Academy of Music as well as an NDEA Fellowship. Dr. Nichols taught at Syracuse University and performed regularly with the Society for New Music, prior to joining the faculty at the University of Northern Louisiana.

The **Contemporary Chamber Players** of the University of Chicago was under the direction of composer/ conductor Ralph Shapey from its inception until recently. Comprised of up to two dozen musicians of extraordinary capabilities, the players not only met exacting technical standards, but had the facility for contemporary music. Paul Fromm, patron of the arts par excellence, lived in Hyde Park where the University of Chicago is located. He was a regular attendee and financial supporter of these concerts as well as for hundreds of composers nationally through the Fromm Foundation commissions and awards.

Production Notes

Digitally mastered by Robert Wolff, engineer, at Sony Music Studios.

From CRI SD 245: *Requiems for the Party-Girl* produced by Carter Harman, recorded by Bruce Swedien; originally released in 1969. The original recording was made in cooperation with the Contemporary Chamber Players of the University of Chicago, assisted by a grant from the Alice M. Ditson Fund for Music.

From CRI SD 360: *Songs in Praise of Krishna* produced by Carter Harman; recorded June 1972. Original release made possible by a grant from the Alice M. Ditson Fund for Music.

From CRI SD 379: *Haiku of Bashō* produced by Carter Harman, recorded by Richard Mintel in May 1922 in Chicago. The original recording was a prize won by Richard Wernick for artistic achievement from the American Academy Institute of Arts and Letters.

From CRI SD 79348: *Trois Chansons* and *Zwei Zeitlieder* produced by Gideon Cornfield; Maurice Stith, recording engineer. Recorded December 1978, in Ithaca, New York.

Publishing

Schafer: *Requiems for the Party-Girl*, Berandol Music Ltd. (SOCAN);

Rochberg: *Songs in Praise of Krishna*, Theodore Presser (ASCAP);

Wernick: *Haiku of Bashō*, Theodore Presser (ASCAP);

Krenek: *Trois Chansons* and *Zwei Zeitlieder*, Universal Edition (BMI).

This recording made possible through the generous support of the Aaron Copland Fund for Music.