

The Cleveland Composers' Guild of the Fortnightly Musical Club
sponsored by the Kulas Foundation presents

DONALD ERB Sonata for Harpsichord and String Quartet (1962)

John White with the Koch String Quartet

RUDOLPH BUBALO Three Pieces for Brass Ensemble (1959)

The Cleveland Brass Ensemble

MARCEL DICK Suite for Piano (1959)

JULI NUNLIST Two Piano Pieces (1961)

JANE CORNER YOUNG Dramatic Soliloquy for Piano (1961)

Arthur Loesser Piano

WITH THIS ALBUM and its companion, CRI 182/182 SD, Composers Recordings, Inc. embarks on what aspires to be a series of recording projects emphasizing creative musical activity in specific regions of the U.S.A., ranging from the far Northwest to the Deep South. These Cleveland Composers' Guild Albums stress the musical scene since World War II.

The city of Cleveland, Ohio takes justifiable pride in its great Cleveland Orchestra and in the master composers who have been part of its musical life — Ernest Bloch, Roger Sessions, Quincy Porter, Douglas Moore, Arthur Shepherd, and Herbert Elwell.

The Cleveland Composers' Guild had its beginnings in the late 1920's as a "Manuscript Section" of the Fortnightly Musical Club, the objective being to bring together "those residents of the Cleveland area who wish to cooperate with their colleagues in the dissemination of their work and to provide the area with creative as well as executant excellence."

The introductory remarks contained in the Guild's brochure state further: "These men and women do not believe that composers write primarily for each other. They have attained a standard that makes it possible for them to claim the attention and interest of a discerning public, to offer performers and listeners material of substance and value, and to contribute ultimately — as individuals rather than as a 'school' — to the literature of music." It is in this spirit that the Cleveland Composers' Guild and Composers Recordings, Inc. offer the works represented on CRI 183 and CRI 182/182SD.

These recordings are made possible through the generosity of THE KULAS FOUNDATION, the Cleveland non-profit organization that carries on the philanthropic work of Mr. and Mrs. Elroy J. Kulas, who for many years were among the nation's notable benefactors of music. Most recently, the Kulas Foundation has sponsored a series of American music recordings by the Cleveland Pops Orchestra under Louis Lane's direction, on the Epic label which, with these CRI discs of the Cleveland Composers' Guild, provide meaningful encouragement to the composers who have contributed significantly to the city's cultural life.

The Cleveland Composers' Guild and Composers Recordings Inc. wish to thank the Cleveland Institute of Music for the use of its new Kulas Hall for these recordings.

DONALD ERB (b. Youngstown, Ohio, 1927) studied at Kent State University, the Cleveland Institute of Music and at the University of Indiana. He worked in composition with Harold Miles, Marcel Dick, Nadia Boulanger, and Bernard Heiden. He is currently teaching and completing a doctorate at the University of Indiana. During 1962-63, he was a Ford Foundation Composer-in-Residence at Bakersfield, California. Most recently Mr. Erb completed his fourth commission for the well-known New York concert series, Music in Our Time.

Of Mr. Erb's Sonata for Harpsichord and String Quartet, John White, soloist on the present recording, informs us:

“Donald Erb's Sonata for Harpsichord and String Quartet (1962) is remarkable for its composer's conception of the harpsichord as a thoroughly contemporary instrument. Its range, rhythmic incisiveness, and varieties of registration are a sonorous foil to the myriad textures and timbres of his writing for string quartet. There are no overtones of 'neo classicism' in Erb's music for this medium, nor could the substitution of a piano for the harpsichord be tolerated. The characteristic burr of its attack acts as a powerful rhythmic generator to the first movement. — The slow movement, based on a four-note theme, builds to a climax in a harpsichord cadenza which is sustained by an answering cadenza for the quartet. — The peak of the finale is reached by the first violin in a high, isolated cantilena opposed by the harsh sonorities of the other instruments.”

RUDOLPH BUBALO (b. Duluth, Minnesota, 1927) teaches at the Cleveland Music School Settlement. He studied at the Chicago Musical College of Roosevelt University where his teachers included Vittorio Rieti, Karel Jirak, Ernst Krenek, Rudolph Ganz, and John J. Becker. He received the College's Alice M. Ditson Scholarship Award in Composition, 1954-1956. Mr. Bubalo's music has been represented extensively on programs of contemporary music festivals throughout the mid-west.

Three Pieces for Brass Quintet was completed in May 1959. The music is easily accessible to the listener in terms of thematic material, clarity of texture, and well-defined structure. The first movement contrasts lyrical-declamatory elements with thematic material suggestive of a tarantella. The middle movement is scherzo-like in quality. The outer sections are imitative in texture and virtuosic in manner while the more lyrical middle episode is distinctive in its syncopated rhythmic patterning. The last movement is in essence a study in lyrical polyphony. As such it makes exacting demands on the performers in terms of breath control and consistent beauty of tone, whether playing in muted or open style.

MARCEL DICK (b. Miskolcz, Hungary, 1898) has been head of the Cleveland Institute's Theory and Composition Departments since 1948. He is a graduate of the Royal Academy of Music in Budapest where he studied composition with Zoltán Kodály. A gifted string player, Mr. Dick was first violinist of the Budapest Opera and Philharmonic Orchestra, violist of the Kolisch, Rose and Stradivarius string quartets, and principal violist of the Vienna Symphony, Detroit, and Cleveland Orchestras.

Dimitri Mitropoulos and The Cleveland Orchestra premiered Mr. Dick's Symphony in 1950, and the composer led the same ensemble in premieres of his Capriccio for Orchestra in 1957 and of the Adagio and Rondo for Orchestra in 1963.

Mr. Dick's Suite for Piano was commissioned by Kent State University honoring its Semi-centennial in 1960. After its Cleveland premiere by Arthur Loesser in March 1964, Bain Murray reviewed the work in the Heights Sun-Press:

"The Suite is compelling and imaginative in its blend of 20th and 18th Century ideas. Here the twelve-tone technique is molded into a series of Baroque dance and contrapuntal forms which give it great variety of texture and mood. It contains a driving Prelude, a Menuet that makes a graceful bow to the famous one in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, an imposing Recitative, a scampering Scherzo, a Gavotte, Arioso, and closing Toccata which uses the cantus firmus technique."

Mr. Dick, commenting on the serial aspect of his Suite for Piano, observes:

"I do not think that technical details, such as the nature of the tone-row, etc. would be of much interest to the listener. The tone row does not serve to generate my musical images any more than the diatonic scale did in previous times."

JULI NUNLIST (b. Montclair, New Jersey, 1916) graduated from Barnard College as a Phi Beta Kappa English major in 1940, and has turned seriously to musical composition only in recent years. She studied at the Manhattan School of Music in New York, receiving her Master's Degree there in 1964. Her composition teachers include Vittorio Giannini, Nicolas Flagello, Ludmila Ulehla, and Stephen Jay.

Mrs. Nunlist's Two Piano Pieces — *Lento* and *Presto* were composed in April 1961 and are dedicated to Anna Jatovsky, wife of her piano teacher, David Jatovsky. The *Lento* is lyric in character and rich in harmonic texture, while the *Presto* is a propulsive dance-like piece. Both are cast in simple three-part song forms. The Two Piano Pieces won the 1962 National Competition for Solo Piano held at Olivet College's Annual Festival of Fine Arts in Olivet, Michigan. They have been performed by Ralph Votapek, the talented young pianist who won the first International Van Cliburn Contest at Fort Worth, Texas, and by Andrius Kuprevicius of the Cleveland Music School Settlement faculty. Mrs. Nunlist's other works include 'an opera on Chaucer's *Pardoner's Tale* and an orchestral suite on Jiminez's *Platero and I*.

JANE CORNER YOUNG was born in Athens, Ohio, and is on the faculty of the Cleveland Music School Settlement. She studied at Ohio University, Western Reserve University and the Cleveland Institute of Music where she worked in composition with Marcel Dick and in piano with Beryl Rubinstein and Arthur Loesser. A well-known Cleveland pianist, Mrs. Young is Head of the Music Department at Hawthornden State Hospital.

In 1961 she received the Cleveland Institute Alumni Contest Award for her *Essences* for Two Violins.

Mrs. Young, commenting on her *Dramatic Soliloquy* (1961) tells us:

“I conceived this piece for piano, later named *Dramatic Soliloquy*, as a pianistic expression of dramatic contrasts. As a spoken drama uses a limited number of characters who unfold the meaning of the play, so does the opening thematic, harmonic and rhythmic material introduce the ‘characters’ and their relationships used throughout the one-movement composition.

“The drama unfolds by using this material in numerous ways. Alternating tempi and themes dramatize changing moods as the various ‘scenes’ unfold. The clashing opening contrasts with the trailing ending to symbolize the endless stream of human drama.”

ARTHUR LOESSER, whose perceptive and sensitive pianism takes up a full side of the present disc, has long been one of the well-loved veterans on the American musical scene. A native of New York, Mr. Loesser made his professional debut in Berlin in 1913. In the years since he has made innumerable world tours as soloist with leading orchestras and as ensemble artist.

He has been on the piano faculty of the Cleveland Institute of Music since 1926 and head of the department since 1953. A gifted linguist and writer as well as musician, he has been program annotator for The Cleveland Orchestra and music critic for *The Cleveland Press*. However, his major work in this area is *Men, Women and Pianos: A Social History* (Simon & Schuster, New York, 1954), one of the most informative and entertaining books of its kind. Mr. Loesser was awarded an honorary degree Doctor of Humane Letters from Western Reserve University in 1960.

JOHN WHITE, soloist in the Erb Sonata for Harpsichord and String Quartet, is well-known both as a harpsichordist and writer on music. He is presently Professor of Musicology at the University of Indiana.

THE KOCH STRING QUARTET — Joseph Koch, first violin; Samuel Epstein, second violin; William Kiraly, viola; Donald White, ’cello— has been one of the most prominent chamber ensembles on the Cleveland musical scene, particularly in the field of contemporary music. Its four players are all members of The Cleveland Orchestra.

THE CLEVELAND BRASS ENSEMBLE — Harry Herforth, first trumpet; David Zauder, second trumpet; Roy Waas, French horn; Allen Kofsky, trombone; F. Chester Roberts, tuba — was organized in 1955 at which time all its members were also playing in The Cleveland Orchestra. In the course of its many recitals in the Cleveland area, the Cleveland Brass Ensemble has generated a renewed interest in brass chamber music, among schools and the general public alike. Its repertoire covers a huge range from Gabrieli and Bach to Shostakovich and Henry Cowell.

(Original liner notes from CRI LP jacket)