

## **MUSIC FROM BENNINGTON**

### **HENRY BRANT: Hieroglyphics 3**

viola solo by JACOB GLICK; CATHERINE SATTERLEE, mezzo-soprano; HENRY BRANT, organ; PHYLLIS MARTIN PEARSON, vibraphone & piano; MARIANNE FINCKEL, harpsichord; LOUIS CALABRO, timpani and chimes

### **VIVIAN FINE: Paean**

FRANK S. BAKER, soloist; EASTMAN BRASS ENSEMBLE; BENNINGTON CHORAL ENSEMBLE; VIVIAN FINE, conductor

### **LOUIS CALABRO: Environments**

GUNNAR SCHONBECK, clarinet; EASTMAN BRASS ENSEMBLE; LOUIS CALABRO, conductor

### **LIONEL NOWAK: Concert Piece for Kettledrums**

LOUIS CALABRO, timpani; BENNINGTON STRING ENSEMBLE: LIONEL NOWAK, conductor

Bennington College's innovative music program aims to provide every music student, even those at the beginning level, with opportunities to compose music in an individual 20th century idiom, and with the assurance of an immediate live hearing of everything that is written. Concurrently, each music student is expected to develop a working performing skill and to make use of it in assisting in the playing of the vast quantities of Bennington student and faculty music produced every year.

To carry forward this exacting program, Bennington's four faculty composers (all of whom are also practicing instrumentalists) have for many years collaborated closely with their performer colleagues, and many new faculty works are the results of these associations. The present LP presents a characteristic sample of the range of Bennington views and tendencies in composing and performing. All these works were first performed at Bennington concerts.

Since 1950, HENRY BRANT's name has been associated with "space music", in which the wide separation of groups of players in the hall is a fundamental requirement of the music. From his early studies of the music of Ives, Brant derived the concept of combining unrelated and highly contrasted materials heterophonically, and he has produced over 30 large works of this type. Some require elaborate instrumentations up to 250 performers. Brant is active as conductor, organist, percussionist and flutist; under his direction the Bennington College Community Orchestra gives premiere performances of new American choral-orchestral works every year. He came to Bennington College in 1957.

HIEROGLYPHICS 3, in its original version, required the viola soloist to play from 3 widely separated positions in a dark hall, accompanied by unrelated and distant timpani, chimes, celesta, piano and harp; it was first performed by Walter Trampler at the Library of Congress in Washington in 1958: The present 1970 reworking substitutes harpsichord for harp, and vibraphone for celesta, and adds an improvising voice and an improvising pipe organ. The improvised parts are not "aleatoric" but planned and controlled. All the other parts are fully notated and played exactly as written but without rhythmic coordination.

VIVIAN FINE was born in Chicago. Her early studies in composition were with Ruth Crawford; later she worked with Roger Sessions. In addition to her work in composition she is active as a pianist, performing chiefly 20th century repertoire. She is the recipient of a Ford Foundation Grant in the Humanities through Bennington College, where she went in 1964. Since then she has composed a number of new works, of which PAEAN (1969), a dramatic cantata, is the most recent. It presents quotations from Keats' ODE TO APOLLO, in a vocal treatment which offers many variations of singing, talking and declaiming, and which makes use at times of free multilinear textures and "free chords" Vocal participants are a male narrator (tenor) and a women's chorus. The instruments are trumpets and trombones, frequently scored in 12 parts. The passages quoted from Keats are the following:

I. Here Homer with his nervous arms  
Strikes the twanging harp of war,  
while the trumpets sound afar.

II. A silver trumpet Spenser blows,  
And, as its martial tones to silence flee,  
From a virgin chorus flows  
A hymn in praise of spotless chastity.

III. Next thy Tasso's ardent numbers  
Float along the pleased air  
Calling youth from idle slumbers,  
Rousing them from pleasure's lair:—  
Then o'er the strings his fingers gently move,  
And melt the soul to pity and to love.

LIONEL NOWAK was born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1911. He made his debut as a pianist at the age of four, an event which he says led him to compensate by engaging in numerous other musical activities, of which composition has always been prominent. As a teenager, he was organist and choir master and wrote anthems. Later he accompanied modern dancers and wrote ballets, and still later composed teaching pieces and music for his performer-colleagues. He lists among people who were particularly influential on his career as Edwin Fischer, Otto Luening, Beryl Rubinstein and Carl Ruggles. He went to Bennington in 1948.

About the CONCERT PIECE, the composer writes:

"It was written in 1961. During the previous year I had begun a string quartet but lost interest in it. When the suggestion was made that I write something for my colleague, Louis Calabro, I dug up an unfinished movement of the quartet and developed from it the Allegro of the CONCERT PIECE. Since I wished also to explore the kettledrums in a lyrical manner the opening Adagio was added. Though more dramatic when played by a large string orchestra, the piece has been performed with a string quintet."

LOUIS CALABRO was born in Brooklyn, N.Y. in 1926, and studied at the Juilliard School. His music, which includes all areas of chamber, choral and symphonic, has won him distinguished commissions and awards, including two Guggenheim Fellowships and two Elizabeth Coolidge Chamber Music Awards. He has been teaching at Bennington since 1955.

Mr. Calabro writes:

"ENVIRONMENTS is scored for six trumpets, six trombones, and an amplified clarinet. The title of the work suggests a backdrop of various and contrasting milieu played by the brass, which the clarinet journeys through as a sort of Ulysses.

"The Brass opening is a 12-tone cluster, with each brass then playing through its own 12-tone row in different rhythms. The parts coincide in the original cluster at the end of each set. From then on the work proceeds in a very free fashion, using the opening material in various ways. The clarinet serves throughout as a one-man dialogue, commenting to himself on the different moods that the brass textures create."

GUNNAR SCHONBECK, who joined the Bennington faculty in 1945, is a clarinet and saxophone soloist with a long record of first performances of new works. He is also an accomplished oboist, bassoonist and contrabassist. He maintains a second active career as a designer and builder of musical instruments, and has produced a family of steel harps in microtonal tunings, a family of slide clarinets; marimbas and gongs made of Vermont marble, and numerous reconstructions and adaptations of mediaeval instruments and instruments from non-Western cultures.

FRANK BAKER founded the Lyric Theater, an operatic ensemble specializing in 20th century repertory at Piermont, New York, in 1950, and was its director until 1962. He has been active in the performance of contemporary voice literature, and has presented Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* and Walton's *Facade* at Bennington, and concerts devoted to 50 songs by Charles Ives, in Vermont and New York City. He has been in charge of voice studies at Bennington College since 1955.

JACOB GLICK has presented solo viola recitals in New York City in 1961, 1964, 1965, and 1968. He has been an active participant in the Contemporary Chamber Ensemble at Rutgers University and in the Group for Contemporary Music at Columbia University; he is a co-founder of the New Music Association. He is also a performed composer, a virtuoso mandolinist, and a practicing magician. He joined the Bennington faculty in 1969.

THE EASTMAN BRASS ENSEMBLE: Charles Baker, James Bates, Frederick Boyd, Gordon Cherry, Philip Collins, Susan Comstra, Gregory Cox, Vincent Di Martino, Joseph Mosello, Marvin Perry, William Reichenbach, Geoffrey Richter.

BENNINGTON CHORAL ENSEMBLE: Yasmin Aga Khan, Frances Allen, Elna Barnet, Martha Broderick, Carol Child, Constance Crawford, Nancy Deanin, Jane Donnelly, Priscilla Hayes, Alexandra Hughes, Nina Karp, Deborah Kaufmann, Caren Pert, Mei-Mei Sanford, Lynn Salomon, Amy Snyder, Janet Spangler, Elizabeth Swados, Gail Swinnerton, Sarah Tenney, Kimball Wheeler, Maria Williams, Marsha Winsryg, Peggy Worthington.

BENNINGTON STRING ENSEMBLE: Jeanne Benjamin, Joseph Schor, Ernestine Schor, Thomas Kornacker, Hilary Trigaux, Alison Nowak, Jacob Glick, Deborah Borda, George Finckel, Michael Finckel, Alvin Brehm.

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*(Original Liner Notes from CRI LP Jacket)*