

CRI 292

LEO KRAFT

SPRING IN THE HARBOR

**Catherine Rowe, soprano; Gerardo Levy, flute;
Alexander Kougell, cello; Andrew Thomas, piano**

DIALOGUES for flute and tape

Gerardo Levy, flute

SYDNEY HODKINSON

VALENCE

St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Sydney Hodkinson, conductor

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE SERIAL

**F. Gerard Errante, clarinet, bass clarinet, saxophone;
William Albright, piano;
supervised by the composer**

LEO KRAFT was born in Brooklyn in 1922 and educated in the New York City schools. His composition teachers were Karol Rathaus, Randall Thompson, and Nadia Boulanger. Chamber music occupies a central place in his musical *oeuvre*, which also includes vocal and orchestral music. Kraft is Professor of Music at Queens College, CUNY.

The composer writes

"I am always searching for words to set to music, and when I read the poems of Steve Stepanchev I knew I had found what I wanted. For one thing, anyone who could find something of aesthetic value in Flushing, N. Y., must be a true poet. For another, the poems are lean enough to allow room, a good deal of room, for music. I also found the frequent use of imagery drawn from the world of music stimulating, suggesting re-translation back into the language of music itself. I wrote the songs with Catherine Rowe's voice in my mind, and she gave the first performance at the Composers Theatre in New York City, April 25, 1970. The piece is dedicated to her and to the poet.

"The six songs that comprise the cycle are contrasted in mood and general character, but also in scoring and in the use of the piano. The keyboard instrument is not only played in the customary way but its strings are plucked, strummed, and struck with xylophone mallets. In the fifth song, the piano case is closed, and the pianist strikes the case and body of the piano to produce an array of percussive sounds.

"DIALOGUES was written during my sabbatical, in the fall and winter 1967-68. Shortly before, I had gone back to school (Columbia University) to learn about electronic music, and when my colleague Gerardo Levy asked me for a

piece for flute and tape I was delighted at the opportunity. The work is in four sections and a coda. In each section the dialogue is somewhat different. In the first, clear statements and responses; in the second, rapid exchanges; in the third, a short ternary piece in itself, the flute is answered with white noise sounds; in the fourth, constant interplay. The soda telescopes material from the four sections into a non-stop finale."

SYDNEY HODKINSON was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in 1934. He received his Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from the Eastman School of Music and his Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Michigan. He has studied composition with Louis Mennini, Bernard Rogers, Leslie Bassett, Niccolo Castiglioni, George B. Wilson, and Ross Lee Finney. Further studies with Elliott Carter, Roger Sessions and Milton Babbitt were undertaken at Princeton University. Major composition awards include those from the International Jeunesses Musicales; Prix de Composition Prince Pierre de Monaco; the Danforth Foundation; the Canada Council, and the award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters that made this recording possible.

In addition to his work as a composer, Hodkinson has conducted both amateur and professional chamber music and orchestral concerts throughout this country and Canada, and is a clarinetist.

Hodkinson has instructed at the University of Virginia, Ohio University and is currently Associate Professor in the School of Music at the University of Michigan, where he conducts the Contemporary Directions Ensemble. He is in the Twin Cities (1972) on a Ford Foundation grant under the Professional-in-residence program of the Contemporary Music Project, Washington, D.C.

About VALENCE, the composer writes:

"The American Heritage Dictionary defines valence as the capacity of something to unite, react or interact with something else.' The term is most commonly applied in chemistry to the bonding of atoms or groups of atoms.

"Sounds themselves can unite, react or interact with other sounds, depending on the nature of their presentation and their inherent properties (i.e. frequency, intensity, duration, timbre), hopefully providing the aesthetic necessities. For me, the aesthetic necessities come down to coherence, direction, contrast, unity, etc. – all the Western truisms.

"I consider VALENCE to be tonal in the sense that certain pitches are more important than others (A, C sharp and Eb all assist in making D important). Twelve-tone combinatorial sets do occur, especially in the latter part of the piece, as a result of the valence of specific pitches, but the composition is not 'twelve-tone' in the customary sense. The tendency of individual instruments or groups of same to grope their way towards a home base is, unfortunately, left unresolved.

"To assist the reaction of rounds, or reject it, as the case may be, the performing body for VALENCE has been widely separated. Antiphonal possibilities have been used by musicians for centuries and they are exploited here on an equal basis with the other characteristics of musical sound.

"VALENCE is scored for six woodwinds, two horns, piano and strings, and was commissioned by the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. The work was completed in St. Paul, Minnesota in November of 1970."

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE SERIAL, or, who stole my porridge? was completed in the fall of 1967 in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and was written for a series of new music concerts given at a local coffee house. Mr. Hodkinson has provided the following program note:

"The composer is here dealing with the implications and identity of systematized combinatorial adjacencies, with their inverse complements, on the communication between two musical performers, and the resultant ramifications of a cyclical, yet invariable, associative derivation, as set forth in group theories of the set structure. However, the equivalent analogous sequences of formulable pre-determined elements and varying magnitudes based on differing quanta characterizes all of the permutational relationships; ergo, enabling the parametrical properties, coupled with interlocking rotational juxtaposition, to provide the maximal significant referential functionality of the interconstructural hierarchization. But then ..."

CATHERINE ROWE is popular with composers and conductors because of her excellent musicianship and perfect pitch, She specializes in "vocal chamber music," such as SPRING IN THE HARBOR, with the contemporary and Baroque styles as her favorites. She is also a specialist in oratorio. An enthusiastic musician, she enjoys teaching as much as singing, always including ear training along with vocal instruction. She teaches at Sarah Lawrence College, and has taught at Rutgers and her alma mater, the Peabody Conservatory.

GERARDO LEVY was born in Argentina and lives in New York. He is a member of several chamber groups and orchestras, as well as teacher and conductor, but his deep enthusiasm is for contemporary music. DIALOGUES was composed specially for him.

The ST. PAUL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA is (1972) the only resident chamber orchestra in the country. It is brand new, having made its first appearance in 1970, and runs on brand new ideas: it is almost aggressively a part of the community, playing for schools, libraries, civic centers, hospitals — and as a result is paying its own way by its own vigorous efforts. It may also be heard on CR1 SD 274, playing the music of Donald Harris.

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(Original Liner Notes from CRI LP Jacket)