

NAUMBURG RECORDING AWARD WINNERS

DAVID DEL TREDICI

I HEAR AN ARMY

Phyllis Bryn-Julson, soprano; Composers Quartet
(Matthew Raimondi, Anahid Ajemian, Jean Dupouy, Michael Rudiakov)

DAVID DIAMOND

STRING QUARTET NO. 9

Composers Quartet

DAVID DIAMOND

NONET

String Ensemble conducted by Charles Wuorinen

DAVID DEL TREDICI

SCHERZO

Robert Helps and David Del Tredici, pianists

DAVID DEL TREDICI is one of the most frequently-honored young composers in the country, with residencies at the Tanglewood and Marlboro Music Festivals, the MacDowell Colony and Yaddo, plus a glittering array of important awards and commissions, including a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Koussevitsky Foundation Commission from the Library of Congress and an award from the National Institute of Arts and Letters as well as the Naumburg Foundation award that resulted in this recording. Born in 1937, Mr. Del Tredici began his career as a pianist in San Francisco and received his B.A. from the University of California at Berkeley, and his M.F.A. from Princeton. From 1966 to 1972 he taught at Harvard University and now devotes his time exclusively to composition. Aaron Copland has said, "I know of no other composer of his generation, at least among those who write within the normal concert idiom, who composes music of greater freshness and daring, or with more personality."

I HEAR AN ARMY, written in 1964, was the first of three extended compositions based on the poems of James Joyce. NIGHT CONJURE-VERSE (CRI SD 243), augments the ensemble by the addition of a Counter-Tenor (or Mezzo-Soprano) and a wind septet. *Szygy* (recorded on Columbia) is the third. I HEAR AN ARMY was commissioned by the Fromm Foundation in 1964 and is a setting for soprano and string quartet of the last and by far the most dramatic of the poems collected in James Joyce's *Chamber Music*.

The composer writes:

"The poem itself is a description of a nightmare, growing steadily more terrifying as it progresses. The sleeper is finally frightened into

wakefulness but instead of relief feels only the despair and loneliness of a love lost.

“My conception of this dramatic episode suggested to me the three part, though continuous, form of the piece:

1. A long introduction for strings alone, *sempre agitato*, with the motives, which are to be important later, presented in a half-formed, fleeting manner — an image of troubled sleep, not yet crystalized into the terrifying clarity of a nightmare.
2. The nightmare itself — a setting of the poem for soprano and strings.
3. A postlude for strings alone, in which the nightmarish activity grows dimmer and dimmer, as the imagined terrors recede during wakefulness. But ever present in this fading away, is one single, insistent note, B — a symbol of the sleeper's poignant, unrelenting loneliness which remains undimmed to the end.

“SCHERZO for piano, four-hands, was written in 1960 at the request of Milton and Peggy Salkind, a marvelous four-hand piano team much interested in creating a contemporary literature for their very special medium.

“The piece follows the gesture and shape of the traditional scherzo, having an overall ABA form — the A sections being fast and virtuosic, and the central B section, a slow, more soulful contrast.”

DAVID DIAMOND was born in Rochester, N. Y. in 1915 and has been a prominent and distinguished figure in the United States and abroad since 1937 when his *Psalm for Orchestra* won the Juilliard Publication Award. After he completed his musical studies with Bernard Rogers, Roger Sessions and Nadia Boulanger, Diamond was the recipient of the Prix de Rome, three Guggenheim Fellowships, the Paderewski Prize, the ASCAP-Stravinsky Award, the New York Music Critics Circle Award. In 1966 he was elected a member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters and is at present (1972) one of its vice-presidents. His works continue to receive performances by major orchestras and performers here and abroad. His *Music for Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet* (CRI SD 216) and *The World of Paul Klee* (CRI 140) are among his most performed works.

Both the NONET and the QUARTET NO. 9 are works of homage. Both use the trill as an identification-sonority functioning as a structural-unification device. The nine-voice fugue in the NONET and the double canon of the QUARTET are high points of compositional achievement among the chamber music of David Diamond.

The NONET was composed for Igor Stravinsky's eightieth birthday. It was completed on February 25, 1962, in Florence, Italy. The NONET is extremely concentrated music in two movements. Although in certain striking passages all the instruments play together in octaves, most of the time each player contrasts his individual part to a luxuriantly contrapuntal texture. The first dozen bars of the first movement present the basic thematic material, and the music proceeds to merge traditional techniques with twentieth century serial procedures. The first section is characterized by a continual fluctuation of tempo and texture. The adagio that follows has a constant fluctuation of meter. The vigorous and varied second movement presents several figures which become more prominent in the concluding fugue. The fugue subject is announced by the first violin. The heavily syncopated leaps of the subject make it easily recognizable. The fugue builds to a savage climax, subsides suddenly, and the NONET ends with a simple tonal cadence.

STRING QUARTET NO. 9 was composed to commemorate Roger Sessions' seventieth birthday. It was completed on June 26, 1968, in Rochester. Like his first quartet of 1940, the ninth is in one extended movement utilizing almost all of the traditional structural procedures in nontraditional ways. All principal thematic materials are heard at the very opening of the quartet, and the two major themes become the fulfillment of the double canon which closes the quartet. Into the contrapuntal devices are filigreed motival and thematic references to Sessions' *Violin Concerto* (CRI SD 220) transformed into new expressive thematic shapes.

PHYLLIS BRYN-JULSON has a wide and widening reputation as a singer who can make the most difficult contemporary music sound as beautiful as a classic. The North Dakota-born soprano started her musical career as a pianist, but her voice was "discovered" by Gunther Schuller who encouraged her to develop it instead. She has since won high acclaim for her singing of both the classics and the moderns.

The COMPOSERS STRING QUARTET is made up of four outstanding virtuosos who also excel at ensemble playing. It is their combined ability to find truly musical solutions to the knottiest problems that has made theirs one of today's finest quartets.

ROBERT HELPS is among the most distinguished and able of American pianists. He is currently living and teaching in New York.

CHARLES WUORINEN is the distinguished composer, pianist and conductor and co-founder of New York's Group for Contemporary Music. His ensemble on this record consists of Fortunato Arico, Richard Bock, Eugene Drucker, Jean Dupouy, Michele Gallien, Rolfe Schulte, Louise Schulman, Fred Sherry and Ruth Anna Waterman.

This recording was made possible by a grant from the Walter W. Naumburg Foundation Inc., which offers an annual award in composition. The 1972 award was won by David Diamond and David Del Tredici.

THIS IS A COMPOSER-SUPERVISED RECORDING

(Original liner notes from CRI LP jacket)