

# **ROBERT HALL LEWIS**

## **NUANCES II**

**Adagio — Allegro Moderato**

**Andante Espresso**

**Allegro Moderato — Adagio**

**ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA; ROBERT HALL LEWIS, conductor**

**Whale sounds recorded by New York Zoological Society**

ROBERT HALL LEWIS (b. Portland, Oregon 1926) has been active as a composer and teacher since becoming a resident of Baltimore in 1957. He studied composition with Bernard Rogers at Eastman and Hans Erich Apostel in Vienna; his conducting teachers were Eugene Bigot and Pierre Monteux. He holds degrees from the University of Rochester and diplomas from the Paris Conservatory and Vienna Academy of Music. His awards include a Kosciuszko Foundation Chopin Award, a two-year Fulbright Scholarship, the LADO prize and a Guggenheim Fellowship. He received the second annual Walter Hinrichsen Award for Composers in 1972, an award from the American Academy-Institute of Arts and Letters, a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, and an award from the Koussevitzky Music Foundation. He has received commissions from the Chamber Music Society of Baltimore, the Hans Kindler Foundation, the McKim Fund of the Library of Congress and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.

Mr. Lewis's compositions have been widely performed in the United States and Europe by such organizations as the Baltimore, Boston, Denver, New Orleans and Kol Israel Symphony Orchestras, the CBC and Lausanne Chamber Orchestras, the Gregg Smith Singers, the Juilliard and Die Reihe Ensembles, and numerous other chamber groups and soloists. He is Professor of Music at Goucher College, a Professor of Composition at the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, and Music Director of the Chamber Music Society of Baltimore. His music also appears on CRI SD 263 and 331.

NUANCES II was commissioned by the National Whale Symposium held at the University of Indiana in November, 1975. The work was composed in Baltimore, Barcelona, Nice and Paris during the summer of that year, and was given its first performance by the University of Indiana Symphony Orchestra with the composer conducting. Lewis has stated that this composition reveals stylistic tendencies which first appeared in his Second Symphony (1971) and were further developed in a series of works entitled *Combinazioni* and *Osservazioni*. In these more recent compositions, melodic material is often integrated with novel sound elements, two or more areas in different tempi may occur simultaneously, and subtle dynamic and textural gradations become essential features of the music.

In the slow second movement, a theme and four variations, humpback whale sounds become an integral part of the variation process. Excerpts of whale "songs" recorded near Bermuda by Dr. Roger Payne of the New York Zoological Society are presented in the more extended third variation as well as in the final measures of the movement. The composer has said that while the inclusion of whale sounds was not a condition of the commission, he soon became aware of the expressive potential of this material. A variation consisting of quiet masses of strings and wind tremolo figures evolved after considerable thought to create the atmosphere for the taped whale "songs." Bowed percussion instruments accompany these sounds in the concluding measures.

The remaining movements are each in two parts, divided by cadenza-like *ritornelli* which feature solo violin and viola respectively. Movement three begins with dramatic, kaleidoscopic textures leading to sections with aleatory contrapuntal elements for the full orchestra. A recurrence of material from the first movement may be heard in the final *Adagio*, which serves as a culmination and synthesis of earlier events.

Mr. Lewis gratefully acknowledges permission granted him by the New York Zoological Society for inclusion of the humpback whale sounds in this composition.

## **FRANK AHROLD**

### **SECOND COMING (Yeats)**

**PHILIP LANGRIDGE, tenor;**

**LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA; HAROLD FARBERMAN, conductor**

### **SONG WITHOUT WORDS**

**LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA STRINGS; HAROLD FARBERMAN, conductor**

FRANK AHROLD (b. Long Beach, California, 1931) is a graduate of U.C.L.A., where his principal teachers in composition were John Vincent and Lukas Foss. Following graduation, Mr. Ahrold became active in the musical life of Long Beach as conductor of the *Camerata dei Musici*, the Long Beach Civic Chorus, and associate musical director of the Long Beach Civic Light Opera.

Ahrold has composed extensively; his catalogue of more than 170 works includes three piano sonatas, a piano concerto, music for ballet, two one-act operas, symphonic scores, numerous art songs, and over 60 published choral works. His compositions have been performed throughout the United States and in Europe and have won high critical praise.

In addition to his work as a composer, Frank Ahrold is professionally active as a teacher and pianist. Now residing in San Francisco, he performs in solo and chamber music recitals throughout California, serves as accompanist for many Bay Area singers, and since 1973 has held the post of pianist for the Oakland Symphony Orchestra. He has been honored by awards from A.S.C.A.P. and commissions from the Sacramento Chorale and Oakland Ballet. His tone poem, *Star Journey*, was chosen by Harold Farberman to open the 1976-1977 season of the Oakland Symphony Orchestra. He writes:

“SECOND COMING was written on a commission from the Oakland Symphony Orchestra, and received its world premiere on November 14, 1972, with Harold Farberman conducting. It was taped by the London Symphony Orchestra in 1975. It is a large work for dramatic tenor and full orchestra based on three poems of W.B. Yeats. Though written at different times in the poet's life, the poems share a central theme of social upheaval and anarchy leading to the inevitable collapse of civilization and the arts. In 1972 as I composed the music, much of the world was enmeshed in war, and the poetry seemed to me both a prophetic reflection and a warning.

“Musically the work is conceived as one uninterrupted movement divided into three sections. The orchestra shares equally with the voice in illustrating or highlighting the meaning of the densely imaged poetry. And while the text is wide-ranging in its emotional content, with great contrast of mood within each poem - as well as from one poem to the next - and a large variety of orchestral colors and textures, musical unity is achieved through the recurrence of intervallic relationships, motives and certain thematic ideas.

“In 1968, the newly appointed conductor of the Long Beach Symphony, Alberto Bolet, suggested that I write a work for the orchestra. The result was a *Concerto for Strings* which was given its premiere on January 17, 1971. The SONG WITHOUT WORDS is the adagio movement of the *Concerto*. It is tonally conceived and monothematic, consisting of a twelve-tone melodic utterance of descending notes first heard in solo violin. This is counterpoised by a rising triadic figure, and punctuated with a persistent rhythmic pulsation. The music is contrapuntal, and filled with chromaticisms and dissonances that underscore its melancholy character.”

PHILIP LANGRIDGE is one of Britain's foremost tenors, and has sung throughout Britain and Europe. He has recorded frequently in both contemporary and classical repertoire works. This recording marks his debut on an American label. HAROLD FARBERMAN is musical director of the Oakland, California Symphony Orchestra. In the course of his busy career as composer-conductor, he has built a reputation as a first rank Ivesian, as well as a leading interpreter of contemporary works. He can be heard conducting music of Ives on CRI SD 314, and Andrew Imbrie on CRI SD 308.

Each year, the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters honors four composers for achievement during the year, and part of their award is a recording on CRI. Robert Hall Lewis was a 1976 winner. CRI also wishes to thank the Publication and Research Fund of Goucher College, and those who contributed supplemental funding for both recordings.

Produced by Carter Harman

*(original liner notes from CRI LP jacket)*