

## **JAMES OSTRYNIEC, OBOIST AND FRIENDS**

JAMES OSTRYNIEC is one of the foremost exponents of contemporary oboe technique in America. Joseph McLellan of the Washington Post called him “an oboist for all seasons and styles” and Joseph Horowitz of The New York Times described him as “clearly a sensitive, expert performer.” Daniel Cariaga of the *Los Angeles Times* wrote, “James Ostryniec distinguished himself as musician, as technician, and as colorist” after his solo stint with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, while Robert Cornmanday of the *San Francisco Chronicle* called him “a superb player!” Ostryniec has recorded for Orion Master Records and Opus One, and has participated in numerous summer music festivals. Formerly the principal oboist of the Honolulu and Louisville Symphonies, Ostryniec is presently (1980) assistant principal oboist of the Baltimore Symphony. He has presented five world premieres and numerous U.S. premieres of oboe compositions, and serves as Vice President of the Chamber Music Society of Baltimore, Inc.

### **GEORGE ROCHBERG**

#### **LA BOCCA DELLA VERITA (1959)**

**with Charles Wuorinen, piano**

GEORGE ROCHBERG (b. Paterson, N.J., 1918) earned a B.A. degree from Montclair State Teachers College, then studied composition at the Mannes School of Music in New York. After service in the army, he resumed his studies at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, adding a Bachelor of Music and then a Master of Arts degree from the University of Pennsylvania to his academic credentials. From 1948 until 1954, Rochberg was a member of the faculty at the Curtis Institute and in 1951 was appointed Director of Publications for Theodore Presser Company, a position he held until 1960, when he joined the Music Department at the University of Pennsylvania. From 1961 until 1968 he was Chairman of that department and continues as Professor of Composition. His other CRI recordings are CRI 164, 231, 337, 360.

LA BOCCA DELLA VERITA (“the mouth of truth”) was written in 1958-59. The title refers to a legend that in neolithic times a shaman stood behind a huge open-mouthed mask of stone to deliver oracular sayings. The title was given to the composition after it was written, but not to suggest a program. The music is highly chromatic, consistently atonal, and observes no conventionally formal principle of structure. Instead it is a *fantasia* in several sections with the very last section echoing the opening phrases. Rochberg writes: “If any principle of structure was observed at the time I wrote LA BOCCA DELLA VERITA, it would have to be described in psychological terms; i.e., each phrase stimulates a response which confirms or contradicts the gesture of the activating phrase.” LA BOCCA DELLA VERITA was first performed by oboist Josef Marx, for whom the work was written, and David Tudor in Philadelphia on January 21, 1960.

### **RUTH CRAWFORD SEEGER**

#### **DIAPHONIC SUITE NO. 1 (1930)**

**oboe solo**

RUTH CRAWFORD SEEGER (1901-1953) was born in East Liverpool, Ohio and attended the American Conservatory in Chicago, where she studied piano and composition and also taught. She studied composition in New York with Charles Seeger. In 1930 she won a Guggenheim Fellowship, the first given to a woman for musical composition. In 1935, she moved to Washington where, in addition to her creative work, she made several thousand transcriptions of American folk music from recordings

at the Library of Congress and composed piano accompaniments for some 300 of them. She edited or arranged eight volumes of folk songs, among them *American Folk Songs for Children*, and was co-editor with Charles Seeger of *Folksong: U.S.A.*, a publication by John and Alan Lomax. She also developed teaching methods for children utilizing folk music. Her other CRI recordings are CRI 247, 249.

Ruth Crawford Seeger's compositions are astonishing in their technical boldness, often anticipating the future avant-garde. The *String Quartet* (1931) displays serial-like devices; the *Three Songs* for contralto, oboe, piano and percussion with orchestra *ostinato* (1930-32) displays an adventurous polymetric structure and a dictated pitch organization.

The DIAPHONIC SUITE NO. 1 was first published in *New Music* in 1953. Charles Seeger, in *American Composers on American Music*, describes the third movement as a little passacaglia with its pitch organization dictated by rotating the initial seven tone motive seven times. He characterizes the fourth movement as an organization of phraseology, where the balance of phrase lengths constitutes a successful experiment in structure. A similar organization of phraseology occurs in the first movement; the second is rhapsodic and thematic.

## **RALPH SHAPEY**

### **RHAPSODIE (1957)**

**with Charles Wuorinen, piano**

RALPH SHAPEY's history is one of controversy, paralleling shocked, excited and tumultuous response to his music. Yet he has firmly established himself, according to *The New York Times*, as one of America's "most gifted, vital, and dynamic composer-conductors of the 20th century." In 1970, reacting to what he described as the "rotteness of the musical world and the world in general," Shapey asked for a suspension of performances of his music. Happily, he reversed this decision with the performance and recording (on CRI) of his monumental oratorio, PRAISE, in 1976. CRI has recorded six large Shapey works (CRI 141, 232, 275, 355, 391) and is recording two more in 1980.

Shapey was born in Philadelphia in 1921 and began violin studies at the age of seven. He studied violin with Emmanuel Zellin and composition with Stefan Wolpe. In 1964 he became Professor of Music at the University of Chicago and Music Director and conductor of its Contemporary Chamber Players.

The RHAPSODIE for oboe and piano is highly poetic in nature with haunting, sustained episodes for the oboe in contrast with more active, angular material for the piano. The dominant principle used through the composition is repetition with variation; when an event is repeated, either the motive will be slightly altered or the setting will have changed so that the effect will be new and fresh. The result is a thoroughly organized composition with a strong sense of direction. The RHAPSODIE begins with a melodic dialogue between the two instruments followed by a stark *ostinato* in the piano, over which the oboe presents a sustained but aggressive lyrical line. The subsequent arabesque for the oboe leads to an altered recall of the original motives.

## **GUNTHER SCHULLER**

### **TRIO (1948)**

**with Noah Chaves, viola; and David Bakkegard, horn**

GUNTHER SCHULLER (b. New York City, 1925) became solo French horn with the Cincinnati Symphony at the age of 17. By the time he was 19 he had accepted a position with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra where he remained for fifteen years, resigning to devote more time to composition. In 1965, Schuller was appointed head of the composition department at Tanglewood, succeeding Aaron

Copland, and became responsible for directing contemporary music activities. He was president of the New England Conservatory from 1967 to 1977. As a conductor, Schuller has made guest appearances with all the major U.S. orchestras as well as those in Europe; he organized the series of concerts entitled Twentieth Century Innovations, sponsored by the Carnegie Hall Corporation. He has composed for John Lewis and the Modern Jazz Quartet and, as early as 1972, his reorchestrations of Scott Joplin's works were played by his New England Conservatory Ragtime Ensemble. His other CRI recording is CRI 144.

The TRIO is in three movements: the first essentially a pensive, melancholy *Andante mesto* relieved by a brief agitated *Vivo* middle section. II is a playful and lighthearted *Allegretto scherzando* except for a somber, poignant interlude. The last movement presents the oboe and horn in lyrical arching lines. Towards the end of the movement the music evaporates in wisps of Webernesque pointillism — the composer's first use of this style.

## **JOSEPH JULIAN**

### **WAVE CANON (1977)**

**prerecorded tape created at Catholic University Recording Studio, Washington, D.C.**

JOSEPH JULIAN (b. Los Angeles, 1948) received his undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of California, studying with Roger Reynolds and Aurelio de la Vega and attending seminars with Gyorgy Ligeti, Mario Davidovsky, Milton Babbitt, Vladimir Ussachevsky, and Wlodzimierz Kontonski. His awards include a Ford Foundation recording award, a Rockefeller fellowship at the Center for Musical Experiment, an Atlantic Arts Association Events-in-Time competition, and an ASCAP composition award. He is the author of several articles concerning electronic music and its notation. Currently (1980) Julian is affiliated with Matrix Recording Studio in London.

WAVE CANON, written for James Ostryniec, is a five part canon with four parts previously recorded on tape. From a single note, the canon accumulates in density and dies away with quarter-tone inflected scale passages.

## **LAWRENCE SINGER**

### **WORK (1968)**

**oboe solo**

LAWRENCE SINGER (b. Detroit, 1940) is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music, where he studied oboe with Robert Sprenkle. He taught himself composition, except for formal lessons in dodecaphonic technique with Bruno Barloozzi. The recipient of a Rockefeller grant and two composition awards from Radio France, Singer has written various pieces for woodwinds and several compositions for chamber orchestra.

He writes: "WORK is a virtuoso piece which exploits many of the newly discovered monophonic and multiphonic (chord-like) possibilities of the oboe. The dense harmonic structures, delicate flute-like timbres, and combinations of the two create a quasi-orchestral, quasi-electronic effect. The performance given by James Ostryniec on this disc is of the highest musical and technical order."

CHARLES WUORINEN is highly respected as a composer, conductor and pianist. He has received numerous awards, honors and commissions, and has appeared as soloist with the Buffalo Philharmonic, the New York Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, and the Royal Philharmonic in London. DAVID BAKKEGARD has performed with the Chicago Symphony and the Chicago Lyric Opera, and is

presently (1980) co-principal French horn with the Baltimore Symphony. NOAH CHAVES is the assistant principal violist with the Baltimore Symphony; he has participated in numerous chamber music programs.

This recording employed hand-made ribbon microphones in pairs, spaced six feet apart, in the best available acoustical environment. Their output was fed to a 30 IPS Studer A-80 tape recorder, slightly modified for constant velocity record- playback characteristics. In this way the need for conventional (and troublesome) noise reduction devices was eliminated.

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*(original liner notes from CRI LP jacket)*