

## MUSIC FROM THE EASTMAN SCHOOL

### SYDNEY HODKINSON

**DANCE VARIATIONS: on a Chopin fragment —A Divertimento for Piano Trio — 1977**  
**Barry Snyder, piano; Zvi Zeitlin, violin; Robert Sylvester, cello**

SYDNEY HODKINSON (b. Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1934) received his Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from the Eastman School of Music, studying composition with Louis Mennini and Bernard Rogers. Further studies followed with Elliott Carter, Roger Sessions, and Milton Babbitt at the Seminar in Advanced Musical Studies, Princeton University, and then, in 1968, the Doctor of Music Arts degree from the University of Michigan, where Hodkinson studied with Leslie Bassett, Niccolò Castiglioni, Ross Lee Finney, and George B. Wilson. He taught at the University of Virginia (1958-63), Ohio University (1963-66), and the University of Michigan (1968-73). He served as Artist-in-Residence for Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, under a grant from the Ford Foundation-sponsored Contemporary Music Project, Washington, D.C. (1970-72), and in 1980 was Associate Professor of Conducting and Ensembles at the Eastman School. He has composed in many media, is widely performed and has received awards including a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Canada Council Senior Arts Award, an award from the National Endowment for the Arts, and a recording grant from the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund for Music and an award from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, both of which resulted in CRI recordings.

Hodkinson writes:

“The varying forms of popular dances have for centuries been grist for the inner-ear mills of composers — mine included. Childhood memories of some 20th century dances offered me 'malleable stuff' and served, I trust, in no less beguiling a manner for a 1977 artist as their counterparts (e.g., polonaises, courantes, estampies and allemandes) did for others before me. Certainly, boogies, hoedowns and rhumbas were as much a part of my North-American musical environment — even my instrumental training — as were mazurkas, gigues and waltzes for my creative forebears.

“DANCE VARIATIONS is a light piece, in the nature of the instrumental serenade. The fragment-theme is a brief excerpt from Chopin's Polonaise-Fantasia, Op. 61. The distinguishing characteristics and historical ancestry of each dance in the Variations have been largely maintained (for example, the Minuet variation is in a moderate tempo 3/4, the Tarantella a rapid 6/8 meter, etc.).

“In addition, some of the variation material is itself varied and interspersed throughout separate movements: the piano rhythms of Variation III recur in truncated fashion in Variations V and VIII; the string statements of harmonics — cello, Variation II and violin, Variation VI — foreshadow their use in the final Polka. There is no harmonic material in the work that does not derive (albeit sometimes circuitously) from the original Chopin chords.”

DANCE VARIATIONS was completed in June of 1977 in Fairport, New York. The work was commissioned by, and is dedicated to, the Eastman Trio, which gave the premiere performance on April 1, 1979 at Bowling Green State University, Ohio.

DANCE VARIATIONS: on a Chopin fragment

1. *Overture*: Galliard-Boogie
2. Allemande
3. Tarantellum Perpetuum
4. Minuet
5. Rhumba
6. Hornpipe
7. Tango
8. *Finale*: Polka — Hoedown

## **SAMUEL ADLER**

### **SIXTH STRING QUARTET — A Whitman Serenade**

**Jan deGaetani, mezzo-soprano;**

**Fine Arts Quartet (Leonard Sorkin, Abram Loft, violins; Bernard Zaslav, viola;**

**George Sopkin, cello)**

SAMUEL ADLER (b. Mannheim, 1928) came to the United States in 1939. He holds a BM from Boston University, an MA from Harvard University and a Doctorate of Music (honorary) from Southern Methodist University. During his service in the U.S. Army, he founded and conducted the 7th Army Symphony Orchestra and because of the orchestra's great psychological and musical impact on the European cultural scene, he was awarded the Army's Medal of Honor.

Adler's catalog includes over 160 published works in all media including four operas and five symphonies; he is also the author of musical books and articles. He has received commissions and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Charles Ives Award and many others. His works have been performed by major symphonic, choral and chamber organizations in the United States, South America, Europe and Israel. His opera, *The Wrestler*, was featured on National Public Radio during the 1976-77-78-79 seasons.

Since 1966, Adler has been professor of composition at the Eastman School of Music and chairman of the composition department since 1974. He has also appeared as conductor with major orchestras both here and abroad and his compositions have been recorded on RCA, Vanguard, Crystal, Lyrichord, Mark, Turnabout and Golden Crest records. He writes:

“The SIXTH STRING QUARTET was commissioned by the Fine Arts Music Foundation for Jan DeGaetani and the Fine Arts Quartet. It is based on four poems by Walt Whitman and had its premiere performance in Chicago on May 9, 1977 by the present performers. The QUARTET is in one continuous movement consisting of five large sections.

1. The Introduction for string quartet alone is a complex dialogue among the instruments, which sounds as if there were no directions left into which mankind may venture. However at the moment of greatest tension and disarray, the voice enters with the words 'Darest Thou Now O Soul Walk Out With Me Into The Unknown Regions.'

2. First poem in a rather fast deliberate tempo.

3. Interlude consisting of trills and freer aleatoric passages to the second poem marked 'Slower, but without loss of tension.'

4. A very relaxed lyric interlude leading to the third poem which begins slowly and then becomes impassioned at the words 'but now the chorus I hear and am elated.'

5. The final section begins with a short introduction featuring a violin solo followed by pianissimo chords. Then the voice quietly intones 'The Last Invocation' over a soft but agitated quartet background, and the work ends tenderly.

“While on leave in Vienna, I read a great deal of poetry before I reread Walt Whitman whose work I have always loved but never set. Perhaps it was my temporary status of expatriate that made his strong images and hopeful language even more vivid and exciting, and made me finally decide to attempt a setting. The four poems appear in a set in the *Leaves of Grass* called 'Whispers of Heavenly Death.' I have attempted to keep the vocal line lyrical, trying at all times to picture the strength and meaning of the text.”

JAN DeGAETANI, probably the most loved and admired singer of today's art music, joined the Eastman School of Music faculty as professor of voice in 1973. Earlier, she served on the faculties of the Juilliard School of Music, Bennington College and the State University of New York at Purchase, and she has taught at the Aspen Music School since 1971. Ms. DeGaetani has appeared with major symphony orchestras and in chamber recitals throughout the United States, Europe and the Far East. She has recorded for Columbia, CRI, Decca, Desto, Music Guild, Nonesuch, Vanguard and Vox.

BARRY SNYDER was a student of Vladimir Sokoloff and Cecile Genhart at the Eastman School. A prize winner in the 1966 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, he has appeared as soloist with major symphony orchestras, and with the Cleveland, Curtis, Purcell and Composers string quartets. ROBERT SYLVESTER has appeared as recitalist and soloist in New York City, as well as throughout the United States, Europe and Scandinavia. He has been guest artist with such ensembles as the Amadeus Quartet and the Cleveland Quartet, and participated in the Casals Festival in Puerto Rico and the Marlboro Festival in Vermont. ZVI ZEITLIN studied with Sascha Jacobsen, Louis Persinger and Ivan Galamian at the Juilliard School and has appeared with many of the great symphony orchestras of the world. He is also the head of the violin department at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, California. Messrs. Snyder, Sylvester and Zeitlin are on the Eastman faculty. Since its founding in 1946, THE FINE ARTS QUARTET has been heard in many of the most prestigious auditoriums of the world and in eight years of weekly broadcasts on the American Broadcasting Company network. It has recorded one of the largest catalogues of chamber music of any ensemble in existence. It has made many videotape programs for National Educational Television and frequent appearances on such commercial television programs as the NBC Today show. The Quartet's chamber-music series at Chicago's Art Institute has featured annual commissions to leading contemporary composers — Babbitt, Shifrin, Johnston, as well as the Husa Quartet No. 3, which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1969, and the Adler quartet heard in this release. In 1963 the members of the Fine Arts Quartet became professors and artists-in-residence at the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee.

This record was made possible by the generous assistance of the Eastman School of Music.

*(original liner notes from CRI LP jacket)*

## DAREST THOU NOW O SOUL

DAREST thou now O soul,  
Walk out with me toward the unknown region,  
Where neither group is for the feet nor any path to follow?

No map there, nor guide,  
Nor voice sounding, nor touch of human hand,  
Nor face with blooming flesh, nor lips, nor eyes, are in that land.

I know it not O soul,  
Nor dost thou, all is a blank before us,  
All waits undream'd of in that region, that inaccessible land.

Till when the ties loosen,  
All but the lies eternal, Time and Space,  
Nor darkness, gravitation, sense, nor any bounds bounding us.

Then we burst forth, we float,  
In Time and Space O soul, prepared for them,  
Equal, equipt at last, (O joy! O fruit of all!) them to fulfil O soul.

## QUICKSAND YEARS

QUICKSAND years that whirl me I know not whither,  
Your schemes, politics, fail, lines give way, substances mock and  
elude me,  
Only the theme I sing, the great and strong-possess'd soul,  
etudes not,  
One's-self must never give way — that is the final substance —  
that out of all is sure,  
Out of politics, triumphs, battles, life, what at last finally remains?  
When shows break up what but One's-Self is sure?

## THAT MUSIC ALWAYS ROUND ME

THAT music always round me, unceasing, unbeginning, yet long  
untaught I did not hear,  
But now the chorus I hear and am elated,  
A tenor, strong, ascending with power and health, with glad notes  
of daybreak I hear,  
A soprano at intervals sailing buoyantly over the tops of immense  
waves,  
A transparent base shuddering lusciously under and through the  
universe,

The triumphant tutti, the funeral wailings with sweet flutes and  
    violins, all these I fill myself with,  
I hear not the volumes of sound merely, I am moved by the  
    exquisite meanings,  
I listen to the different voices winding in and out, striving,  
    contending with fiery vehemence to excel each other in emotion;  
I do not think the performers know themselves — but now I think I  
    begin to know them.

#### THE LAST INVOCATION

AT THE last, tenderly,  
From the walls of the powerful fortress'd house,  
From the clasp of the knitted locks, from the keep of the well-  
    closed doors,  
Let me be wafted.

Let me glide noiselessly forth;  
With the key of softness unlock the locks — with a whisper,  
    Set ope the doors O soul.

Tenderly — be not impatient,  
(Strong is your hold O mortal flesh,  
Strong is your hold O love.)

from LEAVES OF GRASS by Walt Whitman