

NAUMBURG AWARD PERFORMERS PLAY NAUMBURG COMMISSIONS

JOHN HARBISON

QUINTET

Aulos Wind Quintet (Judith Mendenhall, flute; Rudolph Vrbsky, oboe; David Singer, clarinet; Alexander Heller, bassoon; Robert Rutch, horn)

John Harbison (b. 1938) studied composition with Boris Blacher, Earl Kim and Roger Sessions. As a performer he has been a chamber music violist and jazz pianist, and he conducted Boston's Cantata Singers from 1969-1973, specializing in baroque and recent music. His principal compositions are orchestral and operatic; a large orchestra piece, *Diotima*, was played by the Boston, Symphony in 1976 and a full length opera, *Winter's Tale*, premiered by the San Francisco Opera in 1979. He has been commissioned by the Fromm and Koussevitzky Foundations, the New York State Bar Association, the Harvard Glee Club, Collage and other performing groups. He has received the Brandeis Creative Arts Citation, an American Institute of Arts and Letters Award, grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Martha Baird Rockefeller Foundation, the Guggenheim Foundation and the Harvard Society of Fellows. He writes:

“QUINTET, the Naumburg Foundation commission, was a welcome opportunity, because I admired the Aulos' playing, because I had been writing a string of impractical pieces, and because I regarded the writing of a quintet for woodwinds as challenging. It is not a naturally felicitous combination of instruments, such as a string quartet.

“I determined to deal in mixtures rather than counterpoints, and to strive for a classical simplicity of surface — to maximize what I felt to be the great strength of the combination, the ability to present things clearly.

“Ever since Marsyas, a flute-playing satyr engaged in competition with the string player Apollo, was flayed alive for being unable to sing and play at the same time, wind players have been sentenced to forage in a sparse and undernourished musical literature. Now things are changing. Wind players, forced to be part of the musical present, are shaping a future for themselves through their energy and advocacy of new compositions. The collaboration with the Aulos Quintet has been rewarding, composer and performer enjoying and needing each other's skills. This recording is an emblem of that good fortune.”

"They were brilliant"

Raymond Ericson *The New York Times*

GEORGE ROCHBERG

SLOW FIRES OF AUTUMN

Carol Wincenc, flute; Nancy Allen, harp

GEORGE ROCHBERG (b. 1918, Paterson, N.J.) has had an active and extensive career. He has received numerous awards and honors, most recently the Friedheim Award for his *4th String Quartet*. His works have been widely performed in the U.S. and abroad. He was named Annenberg Professor of the Humanities (in 1979) at the University of Pennsylvania where he teaches composition. He writes:

“I wrote SLOW FIRES OF AUTUMN for flute and harp between November 1978 and January 1979, on commission from the Naumburg Foundation for Carol Wincenc's New York debut. Since it borrows some material from an earlier work for harp solo which I called 'Ukiyo-e.' I decided to sub-title the new work 'Ukiyo-e II.'

“The term *ukiyo-e* (oo-key-oh-ay) refers to a traditional school of Japanese painting whose great beauty and often piercing charm lies in its power to image the world not as static, fixed forms of 'reality' but as floating pictures of radiant qualities which range from states of forlornness and emptiness to quiet or ecstatic joy. While writing, I happened to be reading an obscure work of D.H. Lawrence, published in 1931, called *Apocalypse*. One passage which caught my attention was virtually a description of the necessary mental condition for composing *ukiyo-e* whether in sound, word or color.

Allow the mind to move in cycles, or to flit here and there
over a cluster of images . . . one cycle finished . . . drop or
rise to another level and be in a new world at once.

The main title of my work is a way of suggesting the purely subjective sources of the music, at the same time suggesting the more impersonal world of nature in which we move, observe and share in the cosmic process of the fires of autumn slowly, inexorably burning themselves out to make way for new life after the long sleep of winter.

“This work, coming directly on the heels of my *Concord Quartets* (String Quartets #4, 5 and 6), has nothing in common with them. Where they are concentrated, formalized and structured articulations, this music is completely imagistic. Structured, yes; but not formal. It inhabits a totally different world — one which balances for me the more strenuous world of western traditions with other ways of thinking and making music which sometimes appeal to me. The Japanese flavor of the music of *SLOW FIRES OF AUTUMN* derives principally from my use of an old Japanese folk-tune which appears in its simplest form in the last section of the work.”

NANCY ALLEN won the most coveted harp awards as a teenager and has developed a career as one of today's leading solo and ensemble harpists. She performs and teaches at the Aspen Music Festival during her summers and collaborates with leading flutists Julius Baker, Eugenia Zukerman, Claude Monteux, and Ransom Wilson. She has also performed with leading chamber groups, including the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Tashi, and the Vermeer, American and Galimir Quartets, and makes solo appearances across the country under the auspices of the American Harp Society, Young Concert Artists and Columbia Artists. CAROL WINCENC's repertoire covers music from the 16th to 20th centuries, and her popularity is wide and growing. Her teachers include Marcel Moyse, Arthur Lora, Harold Bennett, Robert Willoughby, Severino Gazzelloni, and Albert Tipton. Among her awards are a Fulbright-Hayes Grant in 1971 and the Metropolitan Museum of Art Introduction Series in 1977. She has appeared in the “Mostly Mozart” series at Lincoln Center, New York City; the Marlboro Festival, with Rudolf Serkin; at Aspen, Chautauqua, Grand Teton Spoleto (Italy), and Spoleto USA. Prior to winning the Naumburg Competition that is the source of this record, she was Principal and Solo Flutist in the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. She has recorded for Nonesuch with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and for RCA Victor with Tashi; this is her first CRI appearance.

This record was made possible by the Walter W. Naumburg Foundation, which has combined the talents of its prize winning performers with those of outstanding composers who were specially commissioned for performance by the performers. The Aulos Quintet won the Chamber Music Award and Carol Wincenc won the Soloists Award in 1978.

(original liner notes from CRI LP jacket)