

JOHN LENNON **DISTANCES WITHIN ME**

James Forger, saxophonist; Deborah Moriarty, pianist

JOHN ANTHONY LENNON (b. 1950, Greensboro, N.C.) grew up in Mill Valley, California. He attended the Universities of San Francisco and Michigan where his primary studies in composition were with Leslie Bassett, William Bolcom, Eugene Kurtz, and Mack Crooks. In 1977 he joined the composition faculty at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville and has also been a guest faculty member at St. Mary's College in Rome.

Lennon has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Rome Prize, a Charles E. Ives Scholarship from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, a National Endowment for the Arts grant, a prize from the East and West Artists Competition, a David Bates Award, and the Delius Festival Award as well as fellowships at Tanglewood and the MacDowell Colony. He writes:

"DISTANCES WITHIN ME was commissioned by James Forger for the National Saxophone Congress in Chicago and premiered there in 1979.

The title refers to a range of emotions and reflects the instinctive, rather than formal, way the piece was composed. Several recurring themes or motives give the sense of a rondo form to the work although it is actually through-composed. I have attempted to arrange the pace at which the emotions shift by creating areas of different intensity (i.e. degree of chromaticism) and density."

ELEANOR CORY **DESIGNS**

Arioso Trio (Benjamin Hudson, violinist; Judith Davidoff, cellist; Harold Lewin, pianist)

ELEANOR CORY (b. 1943, Englewood, NJ) studied composition with Charles Wuorinen, Chou Wen-chung, Bülent Arel and Meyer Kupferman. She has received grants and awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts (CAPS), the Frederick Hilles Fund of Yale University, and a Norlin Fellowship at the MacDowell Colony. She received her D.M.A. from Columbia University and is currently teaching composition and theory at Yale. She writes:

"DESIGNS revolves around solos for violin, piano, and cello which begin each of its three sections. The instruments play simple, lyrical music in their solos, saving their virtuosic capabilities for *tutti* passages. Separation among the instruments is most pronounced in a passage where the strings play widely-spaced octaves in contrast to the piano's continuous disjunct activity. The instruments' sounds are fused to create new timbres in other sections, most notably in a slow, atmospheric passage near the end of the piece.

"The compositional process involves chord progressions which are varied with increasing complexity. Each section of the piece is thus a series of mini-variations. The chords sound like jazz chords in some parts of the piece, and are more expressionistic, impressionistic, and romantic elsewhere. Because DESIGNS contains many stylistic contrasts, the ending brings together elements of the rest of the piece in an attempt to synthesize them and affirm their peaceful coexistence."

CHESTER BISCARDI
MESTIERE
Robert Weirich, pianist

CHESTER BISCARDI (b. 1948, Kenosha, WI) attended the University of Wisconsin in Madison where he received a B.A. in English Literature (with studies at the Università di Bologna and the Conservatorio di Musica "G.B. Martini"), an M.A. in Italian Literature and an M.M. in composition under the direction of Les Thimmig. He has M.M.A. and D.M.A. degrees from the Yale School of Music where he was a student of Yehudi Wyner, Robert Morris, Toru Takemitsu and Krzysztof Penderecki. In 1976-77, Biscardi was the Rome Prize Fellow in Musical Composition at the American Academy in Rome. He has also received a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Charles E. Ives Scholarship awarded by the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, fellowships from the Ford Foundation, the MacDowell Colony and the Composers' Conference in Johnson, Vermont, and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund for Music, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the American Music Center, Meet the Composer, and the Wisconsin Arts Board, among others. *TENZONE*, for two flutes and piano (1975), is recorded on CRI SD 400. Currently, he is on the music faculty of Sarah Lawrence College. He writes:

"MESTIERE is a celebration of the dramatically contrasting sonorities (incisive vs. lyrical) which are naturally suggested by the piano. The Italian title means craft, business, occupation — whatever is necessary to one's profession or art. The word 'mestiere' refers to what one is and does, what is integral to one's life and work. The word is also used here in the sense implied by the title of the collected journals of Cesare Pavese, *Il Mestiere Di Vivere* — The Business of Living.

"Dedicated to Robert Weirich, this work was commissioned by Tulane University for the Festival of Piano Music, 1979. Funds were provided in part by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for the Enrichment of the Humanities. It was included in the repertory for the fourth International American Music Competitions sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation and Carnegie Hall 1981."

CHARLES WUORINEN
PERCUSSION DUO

James Avery, pianist; Steven Schick, percussionist

CHARLES WUORINEN (b. 1938, New York City) won the Pulitzer Prize in 1970 for *Time's Encomium*, is co-director of the Group for Contemporary Music, and has appeared as conductor or pianist with numerous orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, and the Cleveland Orchestra. His works are widely performed and are recorded on CRI SD 149, 230, 231, 239, 306, 410 and 441. He writes:

"My PERCUSSION DUO was a joint commission from Steven Schick and James Avery, both then of the University of Iowa. These artists gave the first performance on October 20, 1979, at the University of Iowa.

"The work is in an unproblematic single movement, and for most of its length, it treats the two members of the duet as a single sonority. The percussion (vibraphone and marimba only) compensates for the fact that its range cannot match that of the more expansive piano by having two timbres at its disposal; through this device, real equality between the two players is achieved."

JAMES FORGER and DEBORAH MORIARTY are assistant professors of music at Michigan State University and well-known performers; he is a graduate of the University of Michigan and she of the New England Conservatory. The ARIOSO TRIO members are all extensively involved in chamber music and are soloists in the New York area and elsewhere. ROBERT WEIRICH, a prizewinner in the Kennedy Center/Rockefeller Foundation International Competition, performs throughout the United States and Canada and teaches at Northwestern. He may be heard on CRI SD 400 and 426. JAMES AVERY and STEVEN SCHICK have been performing as a duo since 1976, and have collaborated closely with composers. During 1982, they were in residence at the Staatlich Hochschule for Musik in Freiburg, W. Germany.

(original liner notes from CRI LP jacket)