

Marc-Antonio Consoli

String Quartet

Tremont String Quartet

Six Ancient Greek Lyrics

Barbara Martin, soprano

Daryl Goldberg, cello

Elizabeth Zoe Sharpe, flute

Elizabeth Rodgers, piano

Saxlodie

Lynn Klock, saxophone

Nadine Shank, piano

Marc-Antonio Consoli was born in Italy, 1941, and immigrated to the United States at the age of fifteen, where he has lived ever since. He holds degrees from the New York College of Music (B.Mus.), the Peabody Conservatory (M.Mus.) and Yale University School of Music (D.Mus.A.).

Consoli has received numerous awards and honors including the Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship, twice; The National Endowment for the Arts Award, three times; The Creative Artists Public Service Award (CAPS), twice; The Fulbright Fellowship and the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters Award.

Among the prizes he has won are the International Symphonic Competition of Monaco; the XX International Symphonic Competition of Trieste, Italy and the Louisville Orchestra Recording Award. Consoli has been commissioned by the Steirischer Herbst Festival, Graz, Austria; The International Festival of Royan, France; The Fromm Music Foundation at Harvard University; The Koussevitzky Music Foundation and The Tremont String Quartet.

Consoli's music has been performed at various international festivals including the Gaudeamus Music Week (Holland); The Fromm Festival at Tanglewood; The ISCM's Festivals in Finland and Belgium, and by the New York Philharmonic; The Los Angeles Philharmonic; The Louisville Orchestra; The Baltimore Orchestra; The American Composers Orchestra; The Vara Radio Orchestra (Holland); The Nash Ensemble (London) and others.

His music has been recorded on the GM Recordings and Louisville labels; selected works may be heard on CRI recordings: SD 359, *Sciuri Novi* with Elizabeth Zoe Sharpe, flute; *Tre Canzoni* performed by Elsa Charleston, soprano; Elizabeth Zoe Sharpe, flute; SD 384, *Odefonia* performed by the American Composers Orchestra, Gunther Schuller conducting; SD 465, *Vuci Siculani* with Barbara Martin, soprano; ensemble conducted by Marc-Antonio Consoli.

Notes on the Music

The *String Quartet* was written between August and December of 1983 on commission from the Tremont String Quartet. Three musical ideas make up the basic materials for the first movement. The first is a six-note motive, repeated as a link-chain in a staccato manner alternating between pianissimo and fortissimo. The next idea is the fixed opening chord which alternates with the unison octave as it goes up chromatically three half-steps. Thirdly, a new six-note pattern is used in the central lyrical section of the movement. Though the first section is brought back in a shortened version, the structure of the movement cannot be said to fit into the classical arch form mold; the material is spiraled throughout rather than developed.

The second movement, in contrast to the driven momentum of the first, is more relaxed and meditative. Four of the opening six chords become small pillars to the structure of the movement. An important musical gesture is the partial quotation of Italian folk songs, though these are not meant to be heard as such. They are heard simultaneously in independent meters and tempi, and in soft tremolando. Like familiar whispering voices in the wind, they appear and disappear. This section is later repeated with added abstract materials which assume the "color" of their folkly surroundings. A veiled, quasi-waltz middle section, twelve measures long, repeated three times with small variants in the violins, also develops out of the general lyrical quality of the materials that precede it.

The last movement opens with a twenty measure introduction that leads to the faster main section. Three chords from this opening serve as an important referential point throughout the staccato section, reminiscent of the first movement. Except for the coda, the remainder of the movement uses materials stated in the main section; however, they are always varied and in different juxtapositions.

Six Ancient Greek Lyrics has a curious history, for at first it was not intended to be performed publicly. In 1984 I was planning to revisit Sicily after a long absence, and because Sicily was a colony of the ancient Greeks, I began to prepare for the trip with these Greek lyrics. They allowed me to fantasize musically the feelings and memories I had of the island and its people. As I was setting the lyrics to music, the entire process became a "shaping up" project, very much like an athlete getting in shape for his next athletic event. Each lyric transformed itself into an image of a place I had known or visited as a child. And each time I sat at the piano to polish the songs further, I would journey not only to a place, but to a time, for I was revisiting my birthplace. By becoming part of my journey back in time, the songs became my own possessions, more than any of my previous work. It was hard to share them, but at a last minute request to include them in a concert, I anxiously allowed their performance; today, I'm happy I did.

Because art is the artist's inner thermometer, it tells us a great deal about the artist's emotional condition. 1981 was a turbulent year for me, and the writing of *Saxlodie* represents an expression of that period. This is evident in the second of the two movements, where the energy level and driving force of the music translates into frantic gestures. By contrast, and not paradoxically, the first movement contains some tender moments. It is often cheerful, and even calm. The work was written for Lynn Klock on commission.

—Marc-Antonio Consoli, Molly Peacock

Notes on the Performers

for *String Quartet*

The **Tremont String Quartet** has made a specialty of performing American music, from the early scores of Charles Callahan Perkins to works by Karel Husa, Ben Johnston, Gunther Schuller, Ralph Shapey and others. The quartet has also premiered a large number of works written for them. The Quartet performs to consistent critical acclaim; they have appeared at the National Gallery of Art, the North America New Music Festivals, the Library of Congress, and, in New York City, at Carnegie Recital Hall, Merkin Hall and Symphony Space. The Tremont String Quartet is currently in residence at the State University of New York, Geneseo. They have recorded for the Opus One and Mark Educational Records labels. This is their debut on CRI.

for *Ancient Greek Lyrics*

Barbara Martin, soprano, is at home with both the standard and contemporary repertoire. Winner of the 1982 Concert Artists Guild Award, Martin made her New York debut in April 1983. She has appeared with the New York Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic, the Vienna Philharmonic and the Montreal Symphony. She has also performed with the Chicago Opera Center, the Minnesota Opera, the Central City Opera Festival, the Lenox Arts Center, the Caramoor, Aspen, Ravinia, Bowdoin and CalArts Festivals, among others.

A native New Yorker, Martin received her B.M. and M.M. degrees from the Juilliard School. She has recorded for the Musical Heritage and Grenadilla labels, and may be heard on CRI recordings: SD 363, Ung: *Mohori* with the Contemporary Chamber Ensemble conducted by Arthur Weisberg; SD 380, Argento: *Six Elizabethan Songs*; SD 465, Consoli: *Vuci Siculani*.

Daryl Goldberg, cellist, is a graduate of Northwestern and Yale Universities. An active freelance musician in the New York area, Goldberg plays regularly with orchestras such as the American Ballet Theater and the New Jersey Symphony. Her varied activities have included solo and chamber music recitals, Broadway shows and a tour of Japan with the New York Symphonic Ensemble. She has recorded for the Columbia and RCA labels and may be heard on CRI SD 465 performing Consoli's *Vuci Siculani*, with Consoli conducting.

Elizabeth Zoe Sharpe, flutist, is a graduate of Syracuse University and the Yale University School of Music. She was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to study contemporary music in Poland, where she has made numerous appearances on Polish radio and television and appeared as soloist with the Warsaw Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra. Now living in New York, Sharpe has recorded for the Odyssey and Muza labels, and may be heard on CRI SD 359, Consoli: *Tre Canzoni* and *Sciuri Novi*; on CRI SD 465, Consoli: *Vuci Siculani*.

Elizabeth Rodgers, pianist, is a graduate of the Manhattan School of Music. Active in the field of contemporary music, she is a member of Musician's Accord, in residence at CCNY, and has appeared with the Philadelphia Composers' Forum, Infusion, and Contemporary Concerts at Columbia University. Rodgers has premiered works by such composers as Miriam Gideon and Marc-Antonio Consoli and has recorded for the Opus One label. This is her debut on CRI.

for *Saxlodie*

Lynn Klock is a frequent soloist and recitalist throughout the United States and the Virgin Islands; he holds the distinction of being the first saxophonist to appear on the Warsaw Philharmonic Recital Series. He has been guest soloist with the Toledo, Springfield and New Hampshire Symphonies. Klock has premiered over 15 works written for him and is a founding member of the contemporary quintet Ancora. He has taught at the Interlochen National Music Camp, the Hartt School of Music, and is currently Associate Professor of Saxophone at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. He is principal Saxophonist and bass clarinetist in the Springfield and New Hampshire Symphonies. This is his debut on CRI.

Nadine Shank, pianist, won her first acclaim as winner of the Philharmonic Orchestra concerto competition at Indiana University, where she studied with Menahem Pressler. Shank has performed throughout the United States, the Virgin Islands and Germany. Orchestral pianist with the Springfield Symphony, she also teaches at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. This is her debut on CRI.

SIX ANCIENT GREEK LYRICS

1. LO STELLATO (Ibico)

Ardano attraverso la notte lungamente
le stelle lucentissime.

2. LA STELLA MATTUTINA (Ione di Ceo)

Aspettiamo la stella mattutina
dall'ala bianca che viaggia nelle tenebre,
primo annuncio del sole.

3. A ME NON DÁ QUIETE (Stesicoro)

Poi che raramente la Musa
allietta soltanto, ma rievoca
ogni cosa distrutta:

a me non dá quiete il dolce
sonante flauto dalle molte voci
quando comincia soavissimi canti.

4. DECIMA MUSA (Alceo)

O coronata di viole, divina
deice ridente Saffo.

5. FANCIULLEZZA (Saffo)

"Fanciullezza, fanciullezza, mi lasci, dove vai?"
"Non tornerò piú date, mai piú ritornerò."

6. VENTO (Anacreonte)

Vibra il cupo fogliame
del lauro e del verde pallido ulivo.

Translated from the original Greek by Salvatore Quasimodo, from *Lirici Greci* (Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 1963), Reprinted by permission.

Translated from the Italian (Quasimodo) version by Marc-Antonio Consoli and Molly Peacock.

SIX ANCIENT GREEK LYRICS

1. THE STARRY SKY

Burn long across the night
the bright stars.

2. THE MORNING STAR

We wait for the morning star,
the white wing that travels in the dark night
to announce the sun.

3. IT DOESN'T CALM ME

Rarely does the Muse
solely smile, but it brings to mind
everything destroyed:

it doesn't calm me, the sweet
sounding flute of many voices
when it begins its sweet songs.

4. TENTH MUSE

Crowned with violets, divine
sweet smiling Sappho.

5. YOUTH

"Youth, youth, you are leaving me, where do you
go?"
"I will never again return to you, I will never
return."

6. WIND

Laurel and pale-green olive,
tremble the dark leaves.

(original liner notes from CRI LP jacket)