ALECK KARIS

Aleck Karis has performed recitals, chamber music, and concertos across the United States, Europe and South America. As the pianist of Speculum Musicae he has participated in over a hundred premieres and performed at major American and European festivals. His appearances with orchestra have ranged from concertos by Mozart, Beethoven and Chopin to those of Stravinsky, Messiaen and Carter. His four previous solo discs on Bridge Records include music by Chopin, Carter and Cage (Bridge 9001), Mozart (Bridge 9011), Stravinsky (Bridge 9051) and Cage (Bridge 9081). His two discs on Roméo Records are Music of Philip Glass, and Late Chopin. He has studied with William Daghlian, Arturo Balsam and Beveridge Webster. He is currently a professor of music at the University of California, San Diego, and Associate Dean of the Division of Arts and Humanities.

CURTIS MACOMBER

The playing of violinist Curtis Macomber was praised recently by the New York Times for its “thrilling virtuosity” and by Strad Magazine for its “panache.” He enjoys a varied and distinguished career as soloist, chamber musician, and teacher, and he has for several decades been recognized as one of this country’s foremost interpreters and proponents of new music. His extensive discography includes the complete Brahms and Grieg Sonatas as well as hundreds of critically praised recordings of contemporary solo and chamber works.

As a member of the New World String Quartet from 1982-93, he performed in virtually all the important concert series in this country, as well as touring abroad. He is the violinist of Da Capo, a founding member of the Apollo Trio and the newest member of both the Manhattan String Quartet and the Walden Chamber players. Mr. Macomber is presently a member of the chamber music faculty of The Juilliard School, where he earned B.M., M.M., and D.M.A. degrees as a student of Joseph Fuchs. He is also on the violin faculties of the Manhattan and Mannes Schools of Music, and has taught at the Tanglewood, Taos and Yellow Barn Music Festivals.

DANIELLE FARINA

Violist Danielle Farina enjoys a varied career as a soloist, chamber musician, orchestral musician, teacher, and recording artist. Formerly with the Lark Quartet and the Elements Quartet, Danielle performs regularly with a number of ensembles in the New York area as well. In addition to performing, she is on the faculty of Vassar College, SUNY Purchase and the Juilliard School’s Pre-College Division.

CHRISTOPHER FINCKEL

Born into a family of cellists, Christopher Finckel began his studies with his father George Finckel and is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music where he studied with Mischa Schneider and Orlando Cole. Currently Mr. Finckel is the cellist of the Manhattan String Quartet with whom he performs on major Chamber Music series throughout the United States and Europe. Mr. Finckel has appeared at the Casals, Santa Fe, Ravina, Saratoga, Norfolk and Rockport Chamber Music Festivals, and has recorded for the Nonesuch, New World, CRI, Bridge and Vanguard record labels. A dedicated performer of 20th century music, Chris Finckel has been involved in New York City’s contemporary music scene for over 30 years, and has participated in the premieres of the works of over 150 composers including pieces by Milton Babbitt, Jacob Druckman, Elliott Carter, Mario Davidovsky, Donald Martino, Steve Reich and Charles Wuorinen.

In 2011 Mr. Finckel initiated the Sarajevo Chamber Music festival and institute and is co-director of this first classical chamber music festival in the Bosnian capital.

BIographies

WEDNESDAYS @ 7

ALECK KARIS

Radnofsky Saxophone Quartet
January 15th, 2014
Mark Dresser
February 12th, 2014
Palimpsest
February 19th, 2014
Takae Ohnishi and Che-Yen “Brian” Chen
February 26th, 2014
Shackle: Anne La Barge and Robert van Heumen
April 16th, 2014
Aleck Karis
April 23rd, 2014
Chamber Opera
May 7th, 2014
red fish blue fish
May 14th, 2014
Palimpsest
May 28th, 2014

CONTACT US

Red fish, blue fish
May 14th, 2014

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PROGRAM

LATE FELDMAN

PART I

Form (1959)  Stefan Wolpe

Piano (1977)  Morton Feldman

Form IV: Broken Sequences (1969)  Stefan Wolpe

Variations, Opus 27 (1936)  Anton Webern

Palais de Mari (1986)  Morton Feldman

intermission

PART II


About the Program

Program notes by Aleck Karis

In 1950, Morton Feldman met John Cage after a performance of Webern's Symphony. Feldman walked up to Cage and said, "Wasn't that beautiful?" Mutual admiration for Webern was at the beginning of a life-long friendship between the two men. At that time Feldman had been studying with the composer Stefan Wolpe for five years. In a 1962 essay he wrote: "...at eighteen I found myself with Stefan Wolpe. But all we did was argue about music, and I felt I was learning nothing."

However, in life Feldman acknowledged Wolpe's influence: "To have known Stefan Wolpe well [one] would have benefited, almost equally so, as the pieces for two pianos I have chosen to abandon. After 35 years I still feel the spark of his personal electricity when remembering my first lesson with him. Along with his incredible vitality – it never seemed to subside – was a delicacy of manner which is also very much in his music – those abbreviated benign shapes of his that suddenly appear and leave off with a smile." Feldman's description of the "delicacy of manner" and "abbreviated benign shapes" in Wolpe's music could also apply to his own music and that of Webern, with whom Wolpe studied from 1933-34. Beyond the teacher-student succession these three masters shared a deeper kinship. They created sound worlds, austere yet sensuous, of uncompromising originality and freshness of vision. They heard everything so acutely, informed but never inhibited by the past, with such impeccable craftsmanship, that in their music works like "dissonant" and "discordant" become irrelevant.

Stefan Wolpe

Form

Form, from 1959, is an important link to Wolpe's leaner, more angular late style. Its mercurial, somewhat explosive energy covers a lot of ground in three and a half minutes. It is tightly constructed, unfolding Wolpe's 12-tone techniques, but like Feldman limits the number of pitches in circulation, riffing on constellations of 4, 5 or 6 pitches. This piece brings to mind Elliott Carter's memorable description of Wolpe and his music, "Comets-like radiance, conviction, fervent intensity, penetrating thought on many different tempi, from 1959, is an important link to Wolpe's leaner, more angular late style. Its mercurial, somewhat explosive energy covers a lot of ground in three and a half minutes. It is tightly constructed, unfolding Wolpe's 12-tone techniques, but like Feldman limits the number of pitches in circulation, riffing on constellations of 4, 5 or 6 pitches. This piece brings to mind Elliott Carter's memorable description of Wolpe and his music, "Comets-like radiance, conviction, fervent intensity, penetrating thought on many different tempi, as well as a certain exuberant abandon."

Morton Feldman

Piano

Variations, Op. 27

Anton Webern

Palais de Mari

written a year earlier, it unfolds at a leisurely pace, with similar use of repetition and recurrence function as both memory signposts and formal tools. Wolpe encouraged people to look at fine oriental carpets close up, so they could appreciate a hidden world of detail and beauty; in late works like this he leads the listener to an awareness of details and beauty in sound that would be lost if experienced on a smaller scale, or with a less leisurely unfolding.

Morton Feldman

Piano

Palais de Mari, commissioned by Bunita Marcus, is Feldman's last work for solo piano. In it, he creates a magical atmosphere with great economy of means. Repetition and recurrence function as both memory signposts and formal tools. Wolpe encouraged people to look at fine oriental carpets close up, so they could appreciate a hidden world of detail and beauty; in late works like this he leads the listener to an awareness of details and beauty in sound that would be lost if experienced on a smaller scale, or with a less leisurely unfolding.

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