

# NOISE BRIDGE

Christie Finn, soprano / Felix Behringer, clarinet

Leda and the Swan (1976)

for voice and clarinet

Tzvi Avni

(b. 1927)

Sequenza III (1966)

for female voice

Luciano Berio

(1925-2003)

~

Photons (2010)

I. / II. "Air-play" / III.

Drake Ralph Andersen

(b. 1987)

Three Vocalises (1958)

I. Prelude / II. Scherzo / III. Quasi Menuetto

R. Vaughan Williams

(1872-1958)

Notebook (1980)

Version CFB

Stuart Saunders Smith

(b. 1948)

~

Récitation 11 (1977-78)

for voice solo

Georges Aperghis

(b. 1945)

In Freundschaft (1977)

for clarinet

Karlheinz Stockhausen

(1928-2007)

Of Mere Being (1972)

from last poems of Wallace Stevens

Ned Rorem

(b. 1923)

Aria of a young woman (2010)

an opera scene for soprano and clarinet

Matt Aelmore

(b. 1987)

~ Please hold applause until the end of each set. Thank you. ~

Program Notes:

In the Greek myth of *Leda and the Swan*, the god Zeus transforms himself into a swan in order to seduce the mortal queen Leda, thus fathering the infamous Helen of Troy. The myth is not clear whether Leda consented or not, and composer Tzvi Avni leaves the exact scenario to the performers and listeners. Luciano Berio had a similar idea of imagination in his piece, stating “...basically, the ‘theatre’ [of *Sequenza III*] is in the listener’s head.” Within an approximately 9-minute performance of this classic 20<sup>th</sup> century work of extended vocal technique, a singer or audience member may discover the entire operatic role of Lucia, a complete Shakespearean character, a protagonist from a Victorian novel, a personification of Sylvia Plath’s *Ariel*—snapshots of all of these women or none of the above.

The second set begins with a piece by New York composer Drake Ralph Andersen. In *Photons*, the performers play from parts, and there is no full score that exists. In three short movements, the work explores percussive noises paired with pitched, “air-play” and improvisation, and finally stillness and contour. Ralph Vaughn William’s *Three Vocalises* offers a garden of pentatonic-based melodies before launching into *Notebook* of Stuart Saunders Smith. In *Notebook*, Smith provides a thick score of difficult melodies—his “fake-book”—and performers choose the same melodic events, learn the events to the best of their ability—and perform the events in whichever order each individual would like, with whichever dynamics, tempi, and timbres the individual prefers.

*Récitation 11* of Georges Aperghis opens the third and final set. The score is additive and in the shape of a pyramid: the singer begins at the top, with the measure directly in the middle of the final phrase, and builds the final phrase around that central measure, adding two measures with each repetition. Aperghis’ work explores the contour and melody of language, and the text is like listening to half of a French telephone conversation. Karlheinz Stockhausen’s *In Freundschaft* (*In Friendship*) deals with the art of listening. The piece is built on a complex formula, and all audience members will hear and see identifying motives that reveal the overall formal structure in the end. Ned Rorem’s short song *Of Mere Being* is the only solo voice song in his *Last Poems of Wallace Stevens* song cycle (for soprano, cello, and piano). And, the program ends as it began—with a story. *Aria of a Young Woman* is excerpted from an opera scene of New York composer Matt Aelmore. The surrealist opera, entitled *Buster Keaton Takes a Walk*, is based on a text of Lorca, though the words of the aria were written by the composer. In the aria, the Young Woman, supposedly wearing the head of a nightingale, sings of the death of her lover with complete dispassion, as the clarinetist, representative of her lover, hangs on every word.

About NOISE-BRIDGE:

NOISE-BRIDGE is a soprano-clarinet duo based in New York City and dedicated to performing “new” music: standards in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century repertoire, contemporary works that are under-performed, and new commissions. NOISE-BRIDGE is especially dedicated to the experience of the audience, in particular listeners who are unfamiliar with difficult contemporary music. NOISE-BRIDGE is looking forward to future collaborations with other contemporary ensembles as well as more duo performances. German clarinetist Felix Behringer and soprano Christie Finn (a native of Kennett Square, Pennsylvania) met in the contemporary performance graduate program at Manhattan School of Music. Upcoming NOISE-BRIDGE events include a concert in New York City (at The Tank) on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, as well as participation in the Darmstadt Summer Courses 2010.