Chamber Music by INGOLF DAHL LOU HARRISON LUKAS FOSS BEN WEBER

By Carter Harman

At the end of World War II, American composers faced a more promising prospect than most of their predecessors had experienced. On the material front, the return to a peacetime economy implied more leisure time for potential audiences, more money for cultural activities. Professionally, there would be a chance to consolidate the gains made in the immediate prewar years and during the period of national mobilization, when composers had discovered that there was a demand for functional music – for theater, dance, film, and school use – as well as for concert works. And the growth of music departments in colleges and universities, opportunities for teaching were on the increase, with the wartime baby boom encouraging projections of further increases. A time for optimism indeed – an optimism evident in the genuinely graceful, occasionally ecstatic lyricism shared by the four works in this album, disparate though they may be in other respects.

In earlier time, optimism had not been a particularly appropriate stance for American composers. Their problem was of long standing, and predated the difficulties encountered by the strange 'new music" that came from Europe in the early years of the century. Back in 1854, William Henry Fry, composer of operas and symphonies, was complaining of the new York Philharmonic Society that it "is an incubus on Art, never having asked for or performed a single American instrumental composition during the eleven years of it's existence." But this did not mean a prejudice against living composers: in the season of 1882-83, some sixty percent of the music played by that same Philharmonic – a fairly representative organization in its tastes – was the work of men still living, and later there were those who felt that Tchaikovsky's American visit, to inaugurate New York's Carnegie Hall in 1891, represented the high point of the nation's musical life to date.

Even the battle for Wagner, Europe's most significant musical conflict of the century, did not take long in America. The owners of New York's expensive new Metropolitan Opera House discovered very quickly that German opera could be put on much more cheaply than the fashionable Italian literature with its expensive stars. Fro seven seasons (1884-85 to 1890-91) a repertory centering around Wagner's dramas fixed them so firmly in the public ear that the succeeding Italian-oriented impresarios kept them on the boards. As a result, New York saw the major Wagner works – and repeatedly – even before Paris.

Only in the next generation, when the novel sounds of Debussy and Richard Strauss began to float across the Atlantic, did it begin to seem a handicap for a composer to be still alive. But to be American – even a dead American – had always been a handicap.

The directions that music took after the turn of the century tended to even things out by making new European music as unpo0pular as American. However, the more forward-looking conductors in the United States – notably Leopold Stokowski in Philadelphia and Serge Koussevitzky in Boston – who tried to bring new music to the attention of their audiences began to notice the American variety, and expanded their advocacy. Organizations sprang up to support new music. In 1921 Edgard Varese founded the International Composers Guild; a United States section of the International Society of Contemporary Music (ISCM), founded in 1922 in Salzburg, was established; and in 1923 a splinter group from the Guild formed the League of Composers. Ambitious concerts were undertaken, new works were commissioned and played, and much attention was gained for new music and its composers. In 1927 the composer Henry Cowell inaugurated a quarterly periodical called *New Mus*ic, which published scores deemed un-saleable by the commercial music firms – and to this, in a move ahead of its time, Cowell added a series of recordings (including, for example, the first of a song by Charles Ives: contained on New World Records NW 257, *When I Have Sung My Songs*).

All this activity was set back by the Great Depression, which dried up sources of funds and made orchestra and recital managers even more cautious about risking the displeasure of their dwindling subscription lists. But a new generation of American composers had made its mark – and they had learned how to organize themselves and make things happen. As New Deal arts programs came into being, and as the economy gradually revived, these men were in a position to see that American composers played a role.

During this period, another significant factor came to bear on the American scene. After 1933, the rise of the Nazis forced many of Europe's leading composers to emigrate to America: Schoenberg, Bartok, Hindemith, Krenek, and Milhaud were among the most prominent. On one level, their arrival and activities helped to heighten public consciousness of the modern composer; on another, most of them taught and were enormously influential on the next generation of composers in the United States. The inclement winters and stifling summers of the East Coast drove a number of the immigrant composers to southern California, where an active and adventurous music life grew up – although not an entirely unified one, for the antipathy between Schoenberg and Stravinsky was such that, though living for a decade only a few miles apart, they never met in California.

These two poles represented the fundamental dichotomy of modern music in the first half of the century, a dichotomy reflected in American music. Stravinsky's post-1920 aesthetic, early dubbed "neoclassicism," represented a violent reaction to nineteenth-century Romanticism, a rejection of all that Wagner – and, in significant part, Beethoven – stood for; neoclassicism espoused precision instead of passion, abstraction instead of representation. It was equally a retrenchment from the radical possibilities of rhythmic development that Stravinsky had begun to explore in his earlier works (*The Rite of Spring Les Noces*). Both for its cool artifice and for what it rejected, Stravinsky's neoclassical music was attractive to many, and for several decades it engendered many distinctive personal styles. Its particular influence on the American scene came not only through Stravinsky's own works (which were performed and promoted, especially by Koussevitzky, and many of which became available, after 1930, on recordings directed by the composer) but through a remarkable French teacher, Nada Boulanger, with whom a number of Americans studied in the twenties, thirties, and forties. Many of these composers – Aaron Copland and Virgil Thomson in particular – were in the forefront of the organizing activities that centered around the league of Composers; although it composers' music was diverse in style an wholly individual, the League was regarded as the Stravinsky wing of American music.

Schoenberg, on the other hand, did not reject Romanticism but followed through the implications of the most daring passages in Wagner and Strauss to a pint where the harmonic procedures that had unified Western music for several centuries were no longer useful. The system of tonality, with its tensions and relaxations based on the relation of all harmonies in a piece to a stable home key had been increasingly strained by the introduction of harmonies so distant that they almost entirely obscured any sense of key center (tonic). In the first decade of the twentieth century, Schoenberg began writing music with no home key, in which melody and rhythmic shapes and unstable chords evolved their own logic for each new piece. Eventually, he became uncomfortable with this as a principle for organizing longer works, and in the 1920's developed for a new technique, which he called "composition with twelve notes related only to one another."

In pieces written in what soon, if imprecisely became known as the "twelve-tone system, " no single note (let alone a stable tonic) was given priority; all the notes were constantly in use and a "row," or "series," of all twelve functioned as a matrix that, under certain logical permutations, was intended to furnish an underlying coherence, similar in degree if not in kind to that offered by the keys and their relationships in tonal music.

Like Stravinsky, Schoenberg in the twenties withdrew from some of his earlier experimental direction; his new pieces were in Classical Viennese forms: sonata-allegros, dance movemen5ts, rondos, variations and the like. He believed his new technique to be essentially conservative, a way to revivify the old structures rather than to overturn them. But listeners at first tended not to hear them this way, for the sounds themselves were extremely dissonant by traditional standards, obscuring the formal similarities of older music. The aesthetic stance of Schoenberg's music remained essentially that of the expressive German tradition, thought he sonorities became more transparent the emotionalism more refined.

Not many American had studied with Schoenberg in Europe, but naturally the numbers of his American adherents grew when he came to the United States and settled into teaching at UCLA. The left wing of American music in the twenties was something else: a group whose activity centered first around Varese and later around the indefatigable Henry Cowell, with the little-known Charles Ives as a kind of father figure and patron (he had virtually stopped composing by this time), and Carl Ruggles, Wallingford Riegger, and John Becker as strong supporters. These mend were sympathetic to Schoenberg on principle (Cowell published a Schoenberg piano piece in *New Music*), but they represented a different, determinedly indigenous, kind of avant-garde. They felt that something radically new was needed to create an American music free from European influence: in Becker's words, "to follow the paths of any composer is but to be imitative." They investigated new textures, new sounds and playing techniques (see, for example, Cowell's piano pieces on New World Records NW 203, *Sound Forms for Piano*) and new formal principles.

When the crunch of the Depression came, however, the music of this group suffered first, and their momentum was at least temporarily lost, just as another tendency was growing: a new nationalism that drew on consciously American subjects and musical materials, though expressed now in a contemporary vocabulary derived largely from Stravinsky's neoclassicism rather than in the mostly Germanic language of earlier American nationalism. This "Americana" movement, with its strong populist tendencies, became dominant in the years before the war and won an acceptance for the American composer that at the time seemed remarkable. New music was heard in films, theaters, schools; Lincoln Kirstein's Ballet Caravan and others commissioned new dance scores; the League of Composers published a lively magazine, Modern Music; and even the major record companies were releasing American works. And when the war came, music was pressed into patriotic service as well.

It was against this background that normal musical life resumed after the war. Stimulated by Schoenberg's presence and also by the teaching of Roger Sessions, a younger man who, though he did not at the time employ the twelve-tone technique, was essentially in sympathy with Schoenberg's ideals, and American "Schoenberg school" began to grow up. The music of Ives was gradually being discovered during these years, although that of most of his above-mentioned supporters had to wait a good deal longer. Varese, who hadn't produced a work since the early thirties, began to compose again. If American composers didn't have as much room to breathe as they might have liked, at least there was room enough for a variety of styles, and many distinctive voices came to public attention, notably the four composers whose works are heard on the present disc: born between 1912 and 1922, two native-born, tow from among the countless immigrants who enriched our music life at the time. All four works are for small instrumental combinations, which have gradually become the twentieth century's predominant mode of expression. A decline in orchestral performances of new music has been happily counterbalanced in part by the dedication and expertise of recent generations of soloists and camber ensembles.

Lou Harrison Suite for Cello and Harp

Lou Harrison was born in Portland, Oregon, on May 14, 1917. He studied with Henry Cowell and with Schoenberg and has earned his living by teaching (at Mills College, 1937-40), copying music, writing (critic for the *New York Herald Tribune*, 1945-48), and performing. At various times he has been associated with Charles Ives (some of whose music he edited for publication), Harry Partch, and John Cage, and his free, open approach to composition shows their influence. Harrison's interest in Asian music and his use of exotic tunings, unusual instruments, and medieval compositional techniques suggest the range of his mind, which has extended to designing and constructing new instruments, inventing musical systems, writing plays, and constructing mobiles. At present he lives in San Jose, California, and teaches at San Jose State College.

From his early days as accompanist for dance classes, Harrison created quantities of music in many forms, and he has on occasion dipped into these files. The present Suite for Cello and Harp is an excellent example of Harrison's economy. Its first and second movements derive from a score written for, but not used in, a film about the prehistoric paintings in the caves at Lascaux, France. According to the composer, the first movement comes from music that depicted

An old man plowing in the ancient manner behind the immemorial ox [the second], The willowed, rivered landscape of the valley of the Dordogne where the caves were discovered.

Musically, the two pieces were written as a demonstration and lesson in the discovery of how a scale is made out of two tetrachords. In the Chorale [the first movement] there are three voices, each of which sings only its allotted four tones, and is related to the others by counterpoint of the second; a double restriction. The ornaments are meant to suggest the ancient French style. In the second movement, the tetrachords change within themselves and in their relation to one another according to a formal plan of ordering, dissolving, and reordering scales. The upper voice is permitted the transposition by the octave of one of the tones of its tetrachord. The form of this pieces is that of the cumulatively decorated rondeau.

The third movement was written for the Suite as a cello solo, and was arranged in its better present form by Seymour Barab. The fourth movement is on section of the Scherzo of a Symphony in G which, while it is a strict twelve-tone work, is tonally centered.

The final movement is a repetition of the first. The Suite was assembled especially for the performers on this recording, Seymour Barab and Lucile Lawrence, and performed by them at New York's Town Hall in the fall of 1949.

Ben Weber Sonata da Camera

Ben Weber, born in St. Louis on July 23, 1916, first studied medicine at the University of Illinois, then turned to music at DePauw University. He had little formal training in composition, but was encouraged by the pianist Artur Schnabel (who also composed, in a twelve-tone idiom) and then by Schoenberg. Since 1945 he has lived in New York, where he teaches composition and orchestration privately.

Weber's synthesis of twelve-tone techniques with traditional thematic and structural elements produced a distinctive style that brought him wide recognition, including two Guggenheim Fellowships, a Formm Award (for the *Sonata da Camera*), and an award from the National Institute of Arts and Letters (of which he became a lifetime member in 1970).

The *Sonata da Camera* was completed on October 25, 1950, and is dedicated to the violinist Anahid Ajemian. The first movement is a saraband, the second a modified passacaglia and the finale a rondo; all three are based on a single tone row.

Lukas Foss Capriccio

Lukas Foss (originally Fuchs) was born in Berlin on August 15, 1922. He studied first in Berlin, then (from 1933) in Paris. He came to the United States in 1937 and studied at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia with Rosario Scalero and Randall Thompson (composition), Isabelle Vengerova (piano) and Fritz Reiner (conducting). Later, he studied with Koussevitsky at Tanglewood and with Paul Hindemith at Yale. All Foss's multiple musical talents have been continually in evidence ever since, and in addition he has been active as a teacher. The major fixed points in his career include pianist of the Boston Symphony (2944-50), teaching at UCLA (1953-63), and musical director of the Buffalo Philharmonic (1963-70).

The Capriccio for cello and piano was commissioned by the Koussevitzkkly Music Foundation in 1945 and was published in 1946. The piece offers an appealing blend of European balance and craftsmanship with American enthusiasm and unpredictability. Its single lyrical movement is comfortingly Classical in structure, but the melodies are neither completely symmetrical nor completely predictable. The unabashedly traditional accompaniment figures are frequently cross-accented or otherwise short-circuited to amusing effect – and, indeed, much of the Capriccio's high spirits consist of unexpected twists on familiar routines.

In the 1950's Foss became interested in improvisational techniques, and in recent years he has presented works employing these and other ideas of confrontation and game structure.

Ingolf Dahl Concertino a Tre

Ingolf Dahl was born in Hamburg, of Swedish parents, on June 9, 1012. He studied composition with Philipp Jarnach in Cologne and musicology at the University of Zurich before migrating to the United States in 1935. After working in Hollywood as a radio arranger and conductor, in 1945 he became a teacher at the University of Southern California, and remained there until his death on August 7, 1970, in Switzerland. Among many other activities, Dahl as conductor of the Monday Evening Concerts in Los Angeles, one of the nation's leading contemporary-music series, and from 1964 to 1966 was musical director of the Ojai festival. He was close to Igor Stravinsky, especially during the 1940s, and made the two-piano arrangement o the latter's *Danses Concertantes*. In 1952 Dahl received a Guggenheim Fellowship, and from 1952 to 1955 he taught at the Berkshire Music Center (Tanglewood) in Massachusetts.

Dahl's catalogue comprises primarily music for a wide variety of instruments and combinations. His early music, in line with his European training, is marked by complex, dissonant polyphony. In America the textures became more open, the rhythms broader, the emphasis harmonic rather than contrapuntal.

The Concertino a Tre (1946) is one of the most attractive and elegant examples of neoclassicism. Dahl elicits from the clarinet, violin, and cello a fullness of texture that is little short of astonishing. Although the idiom is firmly based in traditional harmony, the chords are refreshed by added notes, and the rhythms have a neobaroque drive (the neoclassic style was in fact "neo-eighteenth-century," drawing its inspiration as much from Bach as from Hayhdn and Mozart).

The work's three major divisions are aced along traditional lines-fast, slow, fast – and the development techniques are those of the Classical period. The slow movement resembles and extended song. In the finale a lyrical cello threnody is set off by jagged accompaniment figures, and then the movement bounces into successive jig, jazz and gallop rhythms.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chase, Gilbert. America's Music, New York: MacGraw Hill, 1966.

Childs, Barney, and Schwarts, Elliot (eds.). *Contemporary Composers on American Music.* Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1933.

Hitchcock, Wiley. Music in the United States. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969.

Perle, George. Serial Composition and Atonality. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972.

Schoenberg, Arnold. Style and Idea. New York: Philosophical Library, 1950.

Slonimsky, Nicolas. Music Since 1900. New York: Scribner, 1971.

Thomson, Virgil. American Music Since 1910. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971.

SELECTED DISCOGRAHY

Ingolf Dahl

Allegro and Arioso (New York Woodwind Quartet) Concert-Disc 216

Concerto for Saxophone (Frederick Hemke, sax.; Milton Granger, pf.) Brewster 1203

Divertimento for Viola and Piano (Milton Thomas, vla; Georgia Akst, pf.) Protone 145

Duettino Concertante for Flute and Percussion (Boston Symphony Chamber Players) RCA LSC-6189

Sonata Seria; Sonata Pastoale; Hymne (Fierro, pf.) Orion 76209

The Tower of St. Barbara, Symphonic Legend (Robert Whitney, Louisville Orchestra) Louisville SG-2(mono)

Lukas Foss

Baroque Variations (Lukas Foss, Buffalo Philharmonic) Nonesuch 71202

Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra (Bert Gassman, ob.; Akira Endo, crystal Chamber Orchestra) Crystal S-851

Elytres; Pradigm; NiBruit ni Vitesse (Lukas Foss, chamber ensemble) Turnabout 34514

Geod (Lukas Foss, Buffalo Philharmonic) Candide 31042

Parable of Death (Vera Zorina, nar.; Farrold Stephens, t.; Robet Whitney, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Chorus, Louisville Orchestra) Columbia CSP-AML 4859 (mono)

Psalms; Behold - I Build an House (Roger Wagner Chorale) CRI S-123

1 Sainis, Denoid - 1 Duna an 1100se (Roger Wagner Chorate) Cici 5-125

Quartet No. 1 (American Art Quartet) Columbia CSP AML-5476 (mono)

Song of Songs (Jennie Tourel, m-s.; Leonard Bernstein, New York Philaharmonic) CRI S-284 E

Time Cycle (Adele Addison, s.; Lukas Foss, pf.; Howard D. Colf, cello; Richard Duffallo, clar.; Charles DeLancey, vibes.;

Leonard Bernstein, Columbia Symphony Orchestra) Columbia CSP AMS-6280

Lou Harrison

Canticle No. 1 for Percussion (Paul Price, Manhattan Percussion Ensemble) Mainstream 5011

Concerto in Slendro (Daniel Kobialka, vln.; Robert Hughes, ensemble) Desto DC 7144

Concerto for Violin and Percussion Orchestra (Eudice Shapiro, vln.; William Kraft, Los Angeles Pecussion Ensemble) Crystal 853

Four Strict Songs for Baritone and Orchestra (Davis Bingham, bar.; Robert Whitney, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Chorus, Louisville Orchestra) Louisville 58-2 (mono)

Pacifika Rondo; Four Pieces for Harp; Two Pieces for Psaltery; Music for Violin with Various Native Instruments of Europe,

Africa, and Asia (Robert Hughes, Oakland Youth Orchestra, and soloists) Desto DC 6478

Song of Quetzalcoatl (Paul Price, Manhattan Percussion Ensemble) Orion 7276

Suite for Percussion (Paul Price, Manhattan Percussion Ensemble) CRI S-252

Suite for Violin, Piano, and Small Orchestra (Maro Ajemian, pf.; Anahid Ajemian, vln.; Leopold Stokowski and Orchestra) CRI 114 (mono)

Symphony on G (Gerhard Samuel, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra) CRI SD-236

Ben Weber

Concert Aria After Solomon, OP. 29 (Bethany Beardsiee, s.; Frank Brieff, wind ensemble) Desto 6422E

Consort of Winds (Boehm Woodwind Quintet) Orion 7136

Domen, an Elegy (Robert Whitney, Louisville Orchestra) Louisville S-676

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 52 (William Masselos, pf.; Gerhard Samuel, Royal Philharmonic) CRI S-239 String Quartet No. 2 (New Music Quartet) CRI SD 358

Symphony of Poems of William Blake (Warren Galjour, bar.; Leopold Stokowski and orchestra) CRI 120 (mono)

3 Pieces for Piano; Bagatelles; Fantasia (George Bennette) Desto 7136

the artists

Seymour Barab is noted as both an instrumentalist and a composer. He has been cellist with several American orchestras, including the Cleveland. His compositions include chamber and orchestral works, theater pieces for young people, several operas, and music for films.

Victor Gottlieb was cellist with the Coolidge Quartet, first cellist with the Aspen Festival Orchestra, and first cellist with the RKO Studio Orchestra. Mr. Gottlieb died in Los Angels in 1963.

Mitchell Lurie heads the Woodwind Department for the Music Academy of the West and is Professor of Woodwinds at the University of Southern California. He has a been a frequent guest at the Casals Frestivals, is often heard with such ensembles as the Buidapest, Paganinik, Hungarian, and Fine Arts Quartets, and makes many solo appearances with major orchestras throughout the United States.

Miczyslaw Horszowski celebrated the 70th anniversary of his 1906 Carnegie Hall debut during the 1976-77 season. Among his countless concerts in the United States were numerous appearances with the NBC Symphony under Arturo Toscanini, a twelve-concert cycle in 1957 of Beethoven's complete works for solo piano, and a 1961 concert at the White House. Mr. Horszowski was active with the Casals Festivals, is a member of the faculty of the Curtis Institute, and is associated with Rudolf Serkin and Alexander Schneider at Marlboro. He has made many recordings throughout his career, nad may be heard on Columbia, Vanguard, and Vox records.

Lucile Lawrence taught at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia and was staff harpist with the Logines Symphonette and Firestone Orchestra. Miss Lawrence is currently on the faculties of the Mannes School of Music, the Manhattan School of Music, Boston University, and the Berkshire Music Center, Tanglewood, Massachusetts.

Gregor Piatigorsky, one of the most celebrated cellists of our day, was born in Russia in 1903. He made his American debut with the New York Philharmonic in 1929, and throughout his distinguished career appeared as soloist with virtually every major orchestra in both hemispheres. His association with living composers began in the mid-1920s, when he played the solo cello part in Don Quixote under the direction of Richard Strauss; in subsequent years Piatigorsky was to commission works from numerous contemporary composers, Hindemith and Castelnuovo-Tedesco among them. Piatigorsky made numerous recordings for RCA and was also a celebrated teacher. He died in Los Angeles on August 6, 1976.

Eudice Shapiro has long been associated at Aspen as violinist in the Festival Orchestra and teacher at the Music School. She is also Chairman of the Violin Department at the University of southern California. Miss Shapiro has premiered works by Stravinsky, Milhaud, Mennin, Roy Harris, and many others.

Side One Total Time 21:46

1	LOU HARRISON: SUITE FOR CELLO AND HARP	(publ. Peer International)
2	BEN WEBER: SONATA DA CAMERA	
	Side Two Total	Time 24:24
1	LUKAS FOSS: CAPRICCIO FOR CELLO AND PIANO*	
2	INGOLF DAHL: CONCERTINO A TRE	

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to thank CBS Records for the Harrison, Weber, and Dahl works; and RCA Records for the Foss work.

Producer of Foss Capriccio for RCA: Simon Rady
Engineer for RCA: Bernard Keville
Rerecording engineer: Jerry Bruck
Cover Art: Paul Cadmus. "Mobile." Serigraph.
Courtesy Midtown Gallery, New York.
Cover design: Elaine Sherer Cox

Library of Congress Card No. 76-750738

© 1976 © 1976 Recorded Anthology of American Music, Inc.

THESE RECORDINGS WERE MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH A GRANT FROMN THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION

FOR NEW WORLD RECORDS:

Herman E. Krawitz, President; Paul Marotta, Managing Director; Paul M. Tai, Director of Artists and Repertory; Lisa Kahlden, Director of Information Technology; Virginia Hayward, Administrative Associate; Mojisola Oké, Bookkeeper.

RECORDED ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN MUSIC, INC., BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Richard Aspinwall; Milton Babbitt; John Lee Carroll; Emanuel Gerard; David Hamilton; Rita Hauser; Herman E. Krawitz; Paul Marotta; Robert Marx; Arthur Moorhead; Elizabeth Ostrow; Cynthia Parker; Don Roberts; Marilyn Shapiro; Patrick Smith; Frank Stanton.

Francis Goelet (1926-1998), Chairman

NO PART OF THIS RECORDING MAY BE COPIED OR REPRODUCED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION OF R.A.A.M., INC.

NEW WORLD RECORDS

16 Penn Plaza #835

NEW YORK, NY 10001-1820

TEL 212.290-1680 FAX 212.290-1685

Website: www.newworldrecords.org
email: info@newworldrecords.org

LINER NOTES © Recorded Anthology of American Music, Inc.