The vocal music on this recording documents three generations of American music, each characterized by its own ideals yet shaped by its relationship to the past. Heard together on one disc, this music provides a glimpse of the rapid and often radical aesthetic upheavals that American music has undergone during the twentieth century. With this accelerated turnover of artistic ideals, the earlier music has often been forgotten, as each generation has attempted to bury the previous one before it has truly entered the public consciousness.

Arthur Shepherd was born in 1880 to a Mormon family in Idaho. When he was twelve he entered the New England Conservatory, where he was introduced to the traditional Germanic approach to theory and composition espoused by Percy Goetschius and George W. Chadwick. He was graduated with honors in 1897 and then rejoined his family, who had moved to Salt Lake City. During this period he became friendly with Arthur Farwell, who encouraged Shepherd to join him in the quest to develop an American musical language based on indigenous materials. Returning to Boston to teach at the New England Conservatory, Shepherd discovered the music of the French Impressionists and of Englishmen like Vaughan Williams; he found these styles more congenial than the orthodox German approach, and their influence can be felt in his work. After serving as a bandmaster in World War I, he settled in Cleveland, where he became assistant conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra. He became acquainted with Ernest Bloch, then director of the Cleveland Institute of Music. Bloch's music also left its mark on Shepherd's development. Two of Shepherd's most important compositions appeared during the 1920s: Triptych, for high voice and string quartet (NW 80453-2), and the Symphony No. 1 (Horizons--later renamed Nature Symphony). In 1927 Shepherd accepted a position at Western Reserve University in Cleveland, where he remained until his retirement in 1950. He died in Cleveland eight years later.

These three settings of poems by Oliver St. John Gogarty (1878-1957) were composed shortly before World War II. "Golden Stockings," "To a Trout," and "Virgil" exhibit a sensitive understated lyricism reminiscent of the songs of Vaughan Williams and Peter Warlock.

The American composers who reached maturity around the turn of the century--Shepherd, John Powell, John Alden Carpenter, Charles Ives, and others--were very much concerned with creating a distinctively American idiom. But, with the exception of Ives, they were too intimidated by European standards of taste to venture in this direction beyond a self-conscious exoticism homogenized into a reassuringly European syntax. They produced much of their best work when they disregarded the issue of an American musical identity. Ives, less enthralled by the European tradition, was bold enough to flout it, but his work did not win enough support to provide a viable alternative.

Such an alternative was to appear with the subsequent generation--Aaron Copland, Roy Harris, Walter Piston, and Virgil Thomson--who were also able to forge a populist musical language that by the early 1940s had begun to make an impact on the public. But by this time many composers were chafing under artistic constraints that no longer seemed as much populist as chauvinistic and vulgar. Arnold Schoenberg had moved to the United States, and was wooing American composers away from parochial concerns toward a new internationalism. Young American composers like Ben
Weber were drawn to the notion of following only the highest artistic principles, as developed through centuries of evolution in Europe--Germany and Austria in particular.

Ben Weber was born in St. Louis in 1916 and spent most of his youth in Chicago. He studied medicine for a year before yielding to his musical inclinations, which he pursued at De Paul University. After an encouraging meeting with Schoenberg in 1940, Weber became one of the earlier American adherents to the twelve-tone technique. In 1945 he moved to New York, where he spent the rest of his life, working actively on behalf of contemporary music until his death in 1979. During those years Weber's high standards and loyalty to his own ideals earned him the admiration of his colleagues. Despite his adoption of the serial technique, Weber viewed himself as a traditionalist: "I am not an experimenter primarily, . . . but I feel much more that I am an exponent of musical art with deep reference to the past, and with great respect for the best accomplishments of all those times." Notwithstanding the contrapuntal complexity of his work and the austerity of its emotional effect, Weber retained a concern for linear clarity and textural lucidity that distinguished him from many of his colleagues.

*The Ways,* a setting of a poem by Pauline Hanson, dates from 1961, the same year as Weber's highly praised Piano Concerto. The poetry's complex meaning and lucid texture are analogous to Weber's music. The work, in seven sections performed without pause, illustrates Weber's rarefied yet undeniably expressive compositional stance.

Weber and his colleagues aimed to create a complex, uncompromising, progressive kind of music with a theoretical--if not harmonic--lineage stretching back to Bach and Beethoven through Brahms and Wagner. According to their view, tonality had been so thoroughly exploited by previous generations that its function as a structural principal was exhausted. The twelve-tone row was seen as an alternative organizing principle of equivalent scope. Such ideas dominated the thinking in prominent musical circles and in American academic institutions in the 1950s and 1960s. But the music itself won little support among the concert-going public.

By the early 1970s many composers felt stifled by dogmatic stylistic imperatives that were unconcerned with the needs of an audience and whose rationales seemed less and less convincing to the composers themselves. A new generation of composers were eager to reach out and attempt to create a constituency for new music. The enormous cultural diversity of the United States during the late twentieth century has entailed a variety of different musical approaches to this end. John Corigliano and Conrad Susa share one such approach, each reviving a lyrical vein that has remained a current in American music throughout the century in the music of Samuel Barber and others, despite its eclipse by the more outspoken mainstream movements. To varying degrees, Susa and Corigliano have also embraced theatrical and vernacular elements, which have enhanced their popular appeal.

Conrad Susa was born in Springdale, Pennsylvania, in 1935. He studied at the Carnegie Institute of Technology with Nikolai Lopatnikoff and at The Juilliard School with William Bergsma and Vincent Persichetti. Never comfortable with the austerity expected of serious young composers in the 1960s, Susa became active as a composer of music for dance, theater, and television. During this time he was music director of the APA/Phoenix Repertory Company and the American Shakespeare Festival. Most of his recent attention has been directed toward composing choral and vocal music, including three operas: *Transformations* (1973), *Black River* (1975), (both commissioned by the Minnesota Opera Company), and *The Loves of Don Perlimplin* (1984).
The Hymns for the Amusement of Children were composed in 1972 for medium voice and piano or harpsichord; a choral version followed several years later. The texts are by Christopher Smart, an eighteenth-century English poet whose religious fanaticism often landed him in prisons and asylums; he wrote these poems while in debtors' prison during the last year of his life. They are dedicated to Prince Frederick, the second son of King George III. While intended as moral instruction, the poems are also light and entertaining. Susa has cloaked them in diverting modern dress, with prominent use of popular music idioms. In fact, each song was composed with an admired pop-singer or two in mind: respectively, they are Harry Belafonte, Elton John, Judy Collins, Louis Armstrong, Al Green and Johnny Mathis, Roberta Flack, and Barbra Streisand.

John Corigliano was born in New York in 1938, the son of John Corigliano, Sr., an eminent orchestral violinist. After graduating from Columbia University, where he worked with Otto Luening, Corigliano studied privately with Vittorio Giannini. Like Susa, he was not attracted to the world of academic music but supported his compositional activity with work in radio and television. Corigliano's earlier compositions reveal a lyricism reminiscent of Samuel Barber and a zestful extroversion suggestive of Leonard Bernstein. Since 1975 his language has broadened to a far-reaching eclecticism, in which innovative orchestral techniques are often used to achieve brilliantly flamboyant sonorities and textures. These later developments are found in Corigliano's 1977 Clarinet Concerto, one of his most important compositions, and were explored further in his score to Ken Russell's film Altered States, for which he was nominated for an Academy Award in 1980.

The Cloisters is one of Corigliano's earlier works, dating from 1965. After his friend the poet and playwright William M. Hoffman wrote "The Unicorn," Corigliano suggested that several more poems, unified by the motif of the Cloisters, a museum of medieval art at the northern end of Manhattan, might provide wonderful material for a song cycle. The resulting group of four poems touches on romantic moods and picturesque images associated in Hoffman's mind with the Cloisters. The third song, "Christmas at the Cloisters," is dedicated to gospel singer Marion Williams. The cycle also exists in a version with orchestral accompaniment.

—Walter Simmons

Walter Simmons is a musicologist who specializes in contemporary music. He is a winner of the ASCAP/Deems Taylor Award for music criticism.

ARThUR SHEPHERD

TO A TROUT
(Oliver St. John Gogarty)
Into the brilliant air you leap,
Leaving your dim immortal home.
Quick as a thought out of the deep
Into a living word may come.
Why do you leave the lovely gloom
Whose floors are paved, when waves are sunny,
With golden patines on the brown
All pleasanter than last year's honey?
Not where the winds and waters make
A miracle of purple wine,
Nor where the margin of the brake
Is sanded to a crescent line,
And hollies for a moment shine
Like Thyades when they’re undressing;
But where the floating lily isles
Have kept the ripples from transgressing.

None knows what makes you spring in air;
And no one knows what sets me silly,
Why a hookless bait I fare,
A hookless fly and a dumb gillie,
To cast for Beauty on the wind.
While tempting Fate's your like employment;
Then why should Life bewail its end,
If Death's the salt of all enjoyment?

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GOLDEN STOCKINGS
(Oliver St. John Gogarty)
Golden stockings you had on
In the meadow where you ran;
And your little knees together
Bobbed like pippins in the weather,
When the breezes rush and fight
For those dimples of delight,
And they dance from the pursuit,
And the leaf looks like the fruit.

I have a many sight in mind
That would last if I were blind;
Many verses I could write
That would bring me many a sight.
Now I only see but one,
See you running in the sun,
And the gold-dust coming up
From the trampled buttercup.


VIRGIL
(Oliver St. John Gogarty)
From Mantua's meadows to Imperial Rome
Came Virgil, with the wood-light in his eyes,
Browned by the suns that round his hillside home
Burned on the chestnuts and the ilices.
And these he left, and left the fallows where
The slow streams freshened many a bank of thyme,
To found a city in the Roman air,
And build the epic turrets in a rhyme.
But were the woodland dieties forgot,
Pan, Sylvan, and the sister nymphs for whom
He poured his melody the fields along?
They gave him for his faith a happy lot:
The waving of the meadows in his song
And the spontaneous laurel at his tomb.

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BEN WEBER

THE WAYS
(Pauline Hanson)
*(Text as set by the composer)*

I. In the fields of evening where
another April held the crystal
of the not day and the not night,
I saw, who looked with April sight,
that where the yellow legend flowers
folded the yellow legend in,
the way was in the luminous spring
and then in the remembering.

II. Where the constant winter was,
where stricken from myself I went
into the cold and colder sweep
of snow on snow already deep:
where once, waiting and white, the way
was to the everywhere of winter,
was where I found and could not keep
the wish of winter and of sleep.

III. And once, beyond the words of it,
slowly then all suddenly,
imagined in the longest night,
the way, the only way, was time.
And with more wonder than my own
such understanding came--to find
the way across, I sang it: but this
IV. When you touched me, when I touched you; when your shadows, when my shadows, shimmered into sensuous flesh, gathered into again these bodies: lust into lust we moved and then, then dreamed from every secret self of our remembering, it was like lost, like found, like always love.

V. When pain took flesh, took bone, took breath, when in this rage of knowledge body dying, dying, was not dead, what was I and what was it said: to the body pain gives back pain rages. Or now in words of death pain whispers to explain the despair of which I must but can make no prayer.

VI. And was a stranger of myself and went into the other world of madness, into the mysteries, until so sweet it seemed no madness until so sweet it seemed the sweetest the sanities of every sense and other words that said still say this inward is this outward way.

VII. What the mind can never know the heart remembers, and the heart, as it has sometimes found its grace, sometimes sings it in this place where nothing names us and we dream of yesterday and tomorrow but never of our knowledge know the way we come, the way we go.

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JOHN CORIGLIANO

THE CLOISTERS
(William M. Hoffman)
1. FORT TRYON PARK: SEPTEMBER
Alone in these woods
among vagaries of leaves,
pale arcades,
and plummeting berries,
we founder
and flee into dreams
of permanence.

The sun, diminished by trees
and blackening ivy,
the filtered sun, falters.
And, homeless, we seek
the cobbled court.
(where our laughter
rises like pigeons.)
(The last two lines of "Fort Tyron Park: September" were not set by the composer.)

2. SONG TO THE WITCH OF THE CLOISTERS

Old lady in the herb garden,
this Sunday in the lavender,
fat lady in the crawling leaves,
white lady in the sun,
I know by moonlight,
sweet lady, what you are.

Granny, Granny, the lovers wake
and, oh, they sigh and fold.
White shades glow like stained glass;
their cigarettes burn like incense.

Mistress who rules coriander
and curbs scents without mercy,
in whose palace grows
the woven pomegranate,
help me stop that stirring,
without me willing,
their kissing, their sleeping, their soaring.

My lady of the Cloisters,
where Mary is forever weeping,
the holy baby never wakes,
and Christ lies unresurrected,
before the moon moves
and is laced gently by leaves,
make the lovers be still.
3. CHRISTMAS AT THE CLOISTERS

The new one,
the third one,
Saviour and baby,
is born again.
Praise Him!

The straw child,
the wood child,
the holy doll,
lives again.
Praise Him!

The innocent,
the penitent,
redeemer and martyr,
cries again.
Praise Him!

The uptown Christ,
the Hudson guest,
the Inwood babe,
smiles again.
Praise Him!

The new one,
the third one, Saviour and baby,
sleeps again
in Bethlehem.
Praise Him!

God invests December.
Hallelujah and amen.

4. THE UNICORN

Now, now as buds grow
and snow melts in parks--
and black before, far away,
the trees verge purple
on the Palisades--
pale boy,
make clear how you stand
in relation to tulips
and, after, languor
in the green blast of the sun.
Now, now before asphalt buckles
and this grass-starved city
grows weeds in the street,
quick boy, come to me cold--
let our swell and sweet bend
warm these woods--
lest
spring catch you three nights sad,
when fog obscures the bridge
and stars shimmer in the arc-lamp haze;
lest tubers and tendrils and red oak,
yellow streamers,
and the smell of mud and river
catch the unicorn
who thinks love, like vision,
proceeds from hit eyes.


CONRAD SUSA

HYMNS FOR THE AMUSEMENT OF CHILDREN
(Christopher Smart)
1. FOR SUNDAY

Arise, Arise, the Lord arose
On this triumphant day, the Lord arose
On this triumphant day; Arise, Arise!

Your souls to piety dispose,
Arise to bless and pray.
Arise, Arise, Arise!

Ev'n rustics do adorn them now,
Themselves in roses dress;
And to the clergyman they bow,
When he begins to bless.

Their best apparel now arrays
The little girls and boys;
And better than the preacher prays
For heav'ns eternal joys.

2. AT DRESSING IN THE MORNING

Now I arise, empow'r'd by Thee,
The glorious Sun to face;
O clothe me with humility,
Adorn me with thy grace.

All evil of the day fore-send,
Prevent the tempter's snare;
Thine angel on my steps attend,
And give me fruit to pray'r.

O make me useful as I go
My pilgrimage along;
And sweetly soothe this vale of woe,
By charity and song.

Let me from Christ obedience learn,
To Christ obedience pay;
Each parent duteous love return,
And consecrate the day.

3. AGAINST DESPAIR
(OLD RALPH IN THE WOOD)

A raven once an Acorn took
From Bashan's tallest stoutest tree;
He hid it by a limpid brook,
And liv'd another oak to see.

Thus Melancholy buries Hope,
Which Providence still keeps alive,
And bids us with afflictions cope,
And all anxiety survive.

4. FOR SATURDAY

Now's the time for mirth and play,
Saturday's an holiday;
Praise to heav'n unceasing yield,
I've found a lark's nest in the field.

A lark's nest, then your playmate begs
You'd spare herself and speckled eggs;
Soon she shall ascend and sing
Your praises to th'eternal King.

5. AT UNDRESSING IN THE EVENING

These cloaths, of which I now divest
Myself, ALL SEEING EYE,
Must be one day, that day be blest
Relinquish'd and laid by.
Thou cordial sleep, to death akin,
I court thee on my knee;
O let me exit, free from sin,
Be little more than Thee.

But if much agonizing pain
My dying hour await,
The Lord be with me to sustain,
To help and to abate.

O let me meet Thee undeterr'd
By no foul stains defil'd!
According to thy holy word,
Receive me as a Child.

6. THE CONCLUSION OF THE MATTER

Fear God obey his just decrees,
And do it hand, and heart, and knees;
For after all our utmost care
There's nought like penitence and pray'r.

Then weigh the balance in your mind,
Look foward, not one glance behind;
Let no foul fiend retard your pace,
Hosanah! Thou hast won the race.

The text "Hymns for the Amusement of Children" is in the public domain.

HENRY HERFORD, baritone, was the 1982 winner of the Carnegie Hall International American Music Competition for vocalists, and is the first non-American to win the competition's top prize. Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, he graduated in English from Cambridge University. He studied singing at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, where he was awarded the Curtis Gold Medal. His performances have included engagements with the English Bach Festival, the Handel Opera Society, the London Philharmonic, the English Chamber Orchestra, the Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Glyndebourne touring company. In the United States he has appeared with the Buffalo Philharmonic, the American Symphony Orchestra, and the Pittsburgh Symphony, and in opera and oratorio productions at Carnegie Hall. This was Mr. Herford's recording debut.

ROBIN BOWMAN, pianist, is a native of London; he studied with Alan Rowlands and Thomas Rajna. He has served as assistant to both Pierre Bernac and Gerard Souzay at the Academie Maurice Ravel in St. Jean-de-Luz.

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Preliminary rounds of the 1982 Competition were held in San Francisco, Chicago, Washington, D.C., New York, and London. The judges were Elaine Bonazzi, William Parker, Thomas Paul, Lucy Shelton, and Paul Sperry.

The semifinal and final rounds, held at Carnegie Hall, were judged by Maurice Abravanel, Phyllis Bryn-Julson, Carlisle Floyd, Sir Peter Pears, Judith Raskin, Elizabeth Schwarzkopf, and William Warfield.

There was a tie for second prize between Margaret Cusak and Diana Walker-Leuck; no third prize was awarded.

**SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**John Corigliano**


For further information on John Corigliano, see Selected Bibliography from NW 80309-2.

**Arthur Shepherd**


**Conrad Susa**


**Ben Weber**


**SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY**

**John Corigliano**


Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra. Burt Lucarelli, oboe; American Symphony; Kazuyoshi Akiyama conducting. RCA 60395-2-RG.

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra. James Tocco, piano; Louisville Orchestra, L. L. Smith conducting. Louisville LCD 008.


Arthur Shepherd
Sonata for Violin and Piano. David Cerone, violin; Grant Johannesen, piano. Golden Crest GC-201.  
*Triptych.* Betsy Norden, soprano; Emerson String Quartet. New World 80453-2.

Conrad Susa
*The Chanticleer's Carol.* New York City Gay Men's Chorus, Gary Miller conducting. Pro Arte PAD 159.

Ben Weber
*Concert Aria After Solomon.* Bethany Beardslee, soprano; wind ensemble, Frank Brief conducting.  
Desto 6422E.

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra. William Masselos, piano; Royal Philharmonic, Gerhard Samuel conducting. CRI S-239.

*Consort of Winds.* Boehm Woodwind Quintet. Orion 75206.

*Sonata da Camera.* Alexander Schneider, violin; Mieczyslaw Horszowski, piano. New World NW 281.  
String Quartet 2. New Music Quartet. CRI CD 750.

*Symphony on Poems of William Blake.* Warren Galjour, baritone; orchestra, Leopold Stokowski conducting. CRI SD-120.

*Variazioni quasi una fantasia.* Robert Black, piano. CRI S-481.

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THE CLOISTERS 80327-2
VOCAL MUSIC BY JOHN CORIGLIANO, ARTHUR SHEPHERD, CONRAD SUSA, and BEN WEBER
Henry Herford, baritone
Robin Bowman, piano

ARTHUR SHEPHERD (1880-1958)
1  TO A TROUT (Oliver St. John Gogarty) (© Grazella P. Shepherd)  1:50
2  GOLDEN STOCKINGS (Oliver St. John Gogarty) (© Grazella P. Shepherd)  1:57
3  VIRGIL (Oliver St. John Gogarty) (© Grazella P. Shepherd)  4:42

BEN WEBER (1916-1979)
THE WAYS (Pauline Hanson) (publ. Mobart Music Publications)
4   I   2:37
5   II  2:05
6   III  2:07
7   IV  1:37
8   V  2:02
9   VI  2:02
10  VII 4:00

JOHN CORIGLIANO (b. 1938)
THE CLOISTERS (William M. Hoffman) (publ. G. Schirmer, Inc.)
11  Fort Tryon Park: September  1:57
12  Song to the Witch of the Cloisters  2:31
13  Christmas at the Cloisters  2:02
14  The Unicorn  3:26

CONRAD SUSA (b. 1935)
HYMNS FOR THE AMUSEMENT OF CHILDREN (Christopher Smart) (publ. E. C. Schirmer Music Co.)
15  For Sunday  1:30
16  At Dressing in the Morning  2:21
17  Against Despair (Old Ralph in the Wood)  1:22
18  For Saturday  1:04
19  At Undressing in the Evening  4:17
20  The Conclusion of the Matter  2:38

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