

## **EARL KIM**

### **New World Records 80561**

The twentieth century yielded a powerful explosion of musical points of view. Many composers embraced increasing complexity as a way of capturing the statistical, overcrowded, ambiguous, and combative nature of modern life. But others, such as the late American masters Morton Feldman and Earl Kim, believed strongly in the power and poignancy of even a single sound; Rather than embracing chaos, they strove to reduce musical thought to a refined, precise essence. To Kim, a carefully shaped musical idea, heard and understood in all its aspects and implications, had the power to be as intricate as the most frenzied outburst.

Earl Kim was born on January 6, 1920, in Dinuba, California, the third son of immigrant Korean parents. His father, a poet, ran a fruit-and-vegetable market in Los Angeles; his mother was a master tailor and embroidery artist. Kim began his piano studies at the age of ten, and quickly developed an interest in composition. He studied in Los Angeles and in Berkeley; his main teachers formed an impressive triumvirate, all of them deeply knowledgeable about the European tradition: Arnold Schoenberg, one of the seminal figures of twentieth-century music; Ernest Bloch, the lyrical Swiss emigré; and Roger Sessions, a rigorously thoughtful and complex American pioneer.

Kim's compositional career was interrupted by the Second World War, during which he served as a combat intelligence officer in the U.S. Army Air Force. As an Asian-American, he was frequently taunted by his countrymen, and was once led at gunpoint back to base by an overzealous private who mistook him for a Japanese spy. The all-too-American tension of both belonging, with great pride, to the fabric of the country where he was born, and yet of being separate because of his ethnicity, informed Kim's spirit throughout his life. Twenty-four hours after the atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, he flew over the remains of the city. Years later, that voyage would give rise to *Now and Then*, his austere, quietly passionate protest against nuclear war. In the 1980s, he co-founded and served as president of *Musicians Against Nuclear Arms*, an organization that served as a focal point for peace activism among the musical community.

After the war, Kim eventually moved to the East Coast, where he taught at Princeton from 1952 to 1967. He then joined the faculty at Harvard, where he taught until his retirement in 1990. He achieved international stature as a composer, earning numerous honors, including commissions from the Fromm and Naumberg Foundations, grants from the Ingram Merrill and Guggenheim Foundations and the National Endowment for the Arts, and awards that included the Prix de Paris, the National Institute of Arts and Letters Award, the Brandeis Creative Arts Medal, and the Mark Horblitt Award of the Boston Symphony. He was composer-in-residence at a variety of international festivals, including those of Aspen, Marlboro, Tanglewood, Gaudeamus, and the Wellesley Composers Conference.

Kim was deeply attracted to the human voice; most of his output features it. He found frequent inspiration in the songs of Franz Schubert: Out of often spare means, with great harmonic sensitivity and minimal melodic embroidery, Schubert fashioned complete and compelling expressive statements. One or more volumes of Schubert songs

were inevitably open on Kim's 2 piano. For his texts, he turned most often to the works of Samuel Beckett. The reclusive writer was famously difficult about granting permission to composers to set his words to music; Kim was one of only a handful of composers to receive his consent. In Beckett's words—with their permuted repetitions, beautifully crystallized images, and subdued, enigmatic tone—Kim found an aesthetic parallel to his musical visions. Kim responded sympathetically to Beckett's life-view: that we strive to keep going, taking ourselves seriously in spite of our ephemeral, perplexing existence.

In 1960, Kim saw a reproduction of the stone garden of the Ryoanji temple in Kyoto, Japan. In the garden, the fifteen stones are spaced in such a way that it is impossible to see all of them at one time. Of this design, he wrote: "I realized then that such a tranquillity had to be my inner focus, and I must keep faith with it. . . . It summed up my theory of composing: discrete images not taken in by the eye or ear at once, but seen or heard consecutively. At the end, there is a whole that is somehow synthesized from all these separate pieces." Kim's musical landscapes are uncluttered, slowly progressing, often monophonic. Musical moments flourish briefly, and then rarely reappear. Continuity and silence are carefully balanced. Although the sound-world is very restrained, shocks and surprises still occur, such as the elaborate vocal cadenza in *Exercises en Route*. In traditional vocal settings, the singer's line is often doubled—that is, reinforced by another instrument. Kim turns the questions of doubling into a contrapuntal force: which instrument is doing it; for how long; in what register; does it align with, anticipate, or echo the voice? The weighing of all these factors yields vocal lines that are dexterously and richly colored. In this way, doubling becomes a crucial element of motion, contrast, and recognition.

Kim was a scrupulous composer, working painstakingly to make precise his musical ideas. Getting the notes and rhythms right was only part of the process; a gesture was not complete until he had found the appropriate articulation and expressive markings. He agonized over the smallest details, with drafts and revisions continuing well into rehearsals. He brought the same fastidiousness to his teaching: At a time when conceptual thinking was very much in the air, with pre-composed systems to help make musical decisions, he was impatient with pure abstraction and demanded of his students that they never abandon their musical sensibilities—that is, that they hear every note they wrote. Many of Kim's students remember, with a mixture of pain and recognition, those moments when their intellectual shield would be pierced by Kim's probing question—"But why does the line cadence on E?"

Although he rarely performed in public, and shoulder ailments in his later life limited his range of motion, Kim was also a remarkable pianist. His colleague, the composer Leon Kirchner, befriended Kim when Kirchner bounded through a practice-room window in Los Angeles to find out who was playing so beautifully. Kim's remarkable touch and sense of rubato particularly distinguished his playing: He had an inimitable sense of phrase and structure. With the subtlest inflections of voicing and speed, he could shape a measure so that the greeting of a harmony sounded different from the leaving of it. When not composing and teaching, he relished coaching chamber music and working with singers. Kim worked productively well into his retirement, until his lung cancer was diagnosed in the spring of 1998. He passed away in November of that year, at the age of 78. This disc, the first dedicated solely to his music, was prepared and recorded under his supervision shortly before his death.

*Exercises en Route* was composed from 1963-70. The full work received its premiere in 1971 with Benita Valente and an ensemble conducted by the composer. It is scored for soprano/narrator, flute/piccolo, oboe, clarinet, violin, cello, and two percussionists, who perform an array of exotic instruments, including African and Japanese hand and stick drums and a Japanese bell and woodclapper. *Exercises* is one of Kim's most important Beckett settings. The work is divided into four parts, each one drawing on a different source: "dead calm" is from the addendum to *Watt*; "they are far out" from the novel *Malone Dies*; "gooseberries, she said" from the play *Krapp's Last Tape*; and "rattling on" from *The Unnameable*. The piece is clearly descended from Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, the landmark freely atonal work that used the singer as a flexible, feverish narrator and helped set twentieth-century music on its tradition-breaking course. Here, a variety of vocal techniques are incorporated, from straight singing to talking and different methods of musically inflected speech. In "rattling on," for instance, the violin mimics the singer's syllables, "I've forgotten, it doesn't matter," creating a "voice" that melds strings and tongue.

The use of palindromes in music guarantees that the future is constrained by what has already happened. Throughout *Exercises*, Kim makes use of symmetry as a way of mirroring the implacable, still quality of the texts. This is particularly pronounced in the first movement, "dead calm," in which almost every page of the score presents some form of palindrome. Sometimes the symmetry is precise, as at the very beginning, where the singer's words "dead calm" are framed on either side by the percussion. At other times, it is partial, or transformed, as when the singer's descending line "cold, calm sea" is mirrored by a slow ascent by the oboe. The singer's melody for "stealing, hastening, swelling, passing, dying" is itself a slightly distorted palindrome. Later, the first half of the vocalise in "rattling on" involves a series of melodic wedges, which converge from wide intervals into narrow ones; in the second half of the vocalise, the wedges symmetrically open up. The word *Exercises* in the title is evocative, and captures the chilly, emotionally distant quality of the work: These are abstract exercises—in living, remembering, feeling. The pacing of the text is crucial to the work's impact: Sometimes, the words progress haltingly; at other times, they rush by in a frantic flow. The texture is characteristically lean, with an abiding presence of dissonance. The violin's concluding gesture, in its regularity and tonal repose, is a resigned and irony-tinged release from the preceding bleakness.

*Now and Then* was commissioned by the Department of Music at the University of Chicago and was dedicated to the musical patron Paul Fromm in celebration of his seventy-fifth birthday. Kim completed an initial version for voice and piano in 1981. The present version for soprano, flute, harp, and viola received its first performance in Chicago on January 22, 1982, with Elsa Charleston, soprano, and the Chicago Contemporary Chamber Players, Ralph Shapey conducting.

The cycle is divided into five movements, with the second song reprised as the fourth movement. It took thirty years for Kim to distill his memories of the flight over Nagasaki into these terse, devastating settings. He wrote: "The texts which I finally settled on cover a range of poetic images dealing with the death of friends, the innocence and vulnerability of daffodils, the loneliness of one's final moment, and Chekhov's prophetic image of an earth which for thousands of years has borne no living creature." The contrast from song to song is striking: the beautifully arching vocal line of "On the

meadow,” followed by the spiked, isolated moments of “thither,” leading to the somber, hypnotic continuity of “Roundelay.” Static elements, such as the viola *ostinato* in “Roundelay” and the repeated notes of the flute and viola in “Among the Deepening Shades,” are counterpoised against exquisitely flexible and delicate vocal writing.

*Three Poems in French* was composed in 1989, and received its premiere later that year with Dawn Upshaw and the Lydian String Quartet. It is in three movements: *En Sourdine*; *Recueillement*; and *Colloque Sentimental*. Ever since the intensely experimental period of the 1950s and '60s, many leading composers have been preoccupied with the question of how strongly their music should reflect that of previous eras. Some composers have kept the windows of their music shuttered from the light of the standard repertoire, continuing on radically new paths. Others have allowed that light in cautiously, so that their interior spaces glow with the refracted colors of the past. Composers have claimed contrasting traditions as their own, or turned to popular culture. The question of communion with older music has become an intensely personal issue.

The *Three Poems in French* is Earl Kim's most direct meditation on this question. All three poems were set by Debussy, and *En Sourdine* was also set by Fauré. Kim's settings are not bold departures, but rather careful and masterly commentaries and distillations. *Recueillement*, for instance, opens with the words “Be wise, O my sorrow.” Later in the poem, the words “my sorrow” return. Debussy reprises the introductory measures of the piece, creating a clear reference. Kim reprises the opening *harmony*, but with a new voicing and vocal line. Thus, an association that is direct in the Debussy becomes oblique and evasive in the Kim.

A “French essence” permeates Kim's harmonies, but his textures are more spare, and his rhythms less forward-moving. In *Recueillement*, Debussy sets the opening lines mysteriously and simply, but highly continuously. Kim, on the other hand, sets off each phrase with an instrumental commentary, or *fermata*, intensifying the feelings of despair and stasis. In *Colloque Sentimental*, Debussy ends with the more animated version of the opening with which he characterized the lovers' past affair—their passion still stirs in the atmosphere. By contrast, Kim returns with full force to the desolate opening. The effect is to reinforce the notion that the icy environment in which the ex-lovers speak remains unmoved by their conversation. So the disagreements are subtle, the inflections and emphases carefully rethought. Stripped of its luxury and reduced to a more resigned presence, Kim's evocation of Impressionist music seems to express the bitter loss of past pleasure. When, in *Colloque Sentimental*, the narrator asks, “Do you remember our former ecstasy?” the muted reply and the narrator's agonized reaction are a quintessential example of Kim's reflective yet potently emotional writing.

*Dear Linda* was co-commissioned by the Boston Musica Viva, the California E.A.R. Unit, and the Atlanta Chamber Players. It is scored for flute/piccolo, cello, piano, percussion, and narrator. The work was premiered in 1993 by the Boston Musica Viva, directed by Richard Pittman, with Karol Bennett as narrator.

Of the work, Kim wrote: “*Dear Linda*, a letter written by Anne Sexton to her daughter in the spring of 1969, bears the date Wed. 2:45 p.m. It is a letter of advice, confession, and love. The musical narrative consists of several episodes that depict what might have been the shifting turmoil of Anne Sexton's life. The closing measures take the form of a simple canon when the mother speaks to her daughter of her own mother.”

*Dear Linda* continues Kim's experiments with spoken voice and music, adopted in earlier works such as *Eh, Joe* and *Cornet* and the melodramas from *Happy Days* and *Enough*. He composed the work in a quasi-spatial notation so that the pacing of the speaker's part, though unrhythmicized, is suggested by the graphic appearance of the score. The cello and bass drum introduction creates an uneasy psychological context for the rest of the work; the apparent calm, which settles in later, reverberates from the anxious and aggressive opening. The poet took her own life five years later. For the letter's terse close—"XO, Mom"—Kim conjures up a hauntingly conclusive musical image.

The works on this album, which span thirty-five years of his creative life, show Kim to be a master of interior passion, with an exacting sense of sonority, harmony, and pacing. His music combines elusiveness, ambiguity, and ellipses with a restrained romanticism, yielding works of troubled stillness and abiding beauty. —*Anthony Brandt*

Anthony Brandt studied composition with Earl Kim at Harvard University. He is currently Assistant Professor of Composition at the Shepherd School of Rice University.

**Exercises en Route** (1963-70)  
(based on texts by Samuel Beckett)

**dead calm**  
(from Addenda to *Watt*)

dead calm, then a murmur, a name, a  
murmured name,  
in doubt, in fear, in love, in fear, in doubt,  
wind of winter  
in the black boughs, cold calm sea whitening,  
whispering  
to the shore, stealing hastening, swelling  
passing, dying  
from naught come to naught gone—

**they are far out**  
(from *Malone Dies*)

This tangle of grey bodies is they Silent,  
dim perhaps clinging to one another, their  
heads buried in their cloaks, they lie together  
in a heap, in the night. They are far out in the  
bay Lemuel has shipped his oars, the oars trail  
in the water. The night is strew with absurd  
absurd lights, the stars, the beacons, the  
buoys, the lights of earth and in the hills the  
faint fires of the blazing gorse. Macmann, my  
last, my possessions, I remember, he is there

too, perhaps he sleeps, Lemuel

Lemuel is in charge, he raises his hatchet  
on which the blood will never dry, but not to  
hit anyone, he will not hit anyone, he will not  
hit anyone any more, he will not touch anyone  
any more either with it or with it or with it or  
with or

or with it or with his hammer or with his  
stick or with his fist or in thought in dream I  
mean never he will never

or with his pencil or with his stick or  
or light light I mean  
never there he will never  
never anything  
there  
any more

**gooseberries, she said**

(from *Krapp's Last Tape*)

—Gooseberries, she said I said again I  
thought it was hopeless and no good going  
on, and she agreed. Without opening her  
eyes (*Pause*) I asked her to look at me  
and after a few moments—(*Pause*)—after a  
few moments she did, but the eyes just  
slits, because of the glare. I bent over her  
to get them in the shadow and they  
opened. (*Pause. Low*) Let me in  
(*Pause*). We drifted in among the flags  
and stuck. The way they went down  
sighing, before the stem! (*Pause*) I lay  
down across her with my face in her  
breasts and my hand on her. We lay there  
without moving. But under us all moved  
and moved us, gently, up and down, and  
from side to side.

**rattling on**

(from *The Unnameable*)

What do they want, let them say what they want,  
give me something to do.  
poor devils, they can't, they don't know,  
they're like me, more and more,  
no more need of them,

no more need of anyone,  
no one can do anything,  
it's I seek, find, lose, find again, lose again,  
seek in vain, seek no more, let it stand,  
in the ice, and in the furnace,  
you feel nothing strange,  
you don't feel your mouth on you,  
you don't feel your mouth any more,  
no need of a mouth,  
the words are ev'rywhere, inside me,  
outside me, I hear them, impossible to stop them,  
impossible to stop, I'm in words, made of words,  
others' words, what others, the place too, the air, the walls, the floor,  
the ceiling, all words, the whole world is here with me, I'm the air,  
the walls, the walled-in one, ev'rything yields, opens, ebbs, flows like  
flakes, I'm all these flakes, meeting, mingling, falling asunder,  
where ever I go I find me, leave me, go towards me,  
come from me, nothing ever but me, a particle of me,  
retrieved, lost, gone astray,  
I'm all these words, all these strangers,  
this dust of words, with no ground for their settling,  
no sky for their dispersing, coming together to say,  
fleeing one another to say, that I am they,  
all of them, those that merge, those that part,  
those that never meet, and nothing else,  
yes, something else, that I'm something quite different,  
a quite different thing, a nameless thing in an empty place,  
a shut, hard, dry, cold, black place,  
where nothing stirs, nothing speaks,  
and that I listen, and that I seek,  
like a caged beast born of caged beasts  
the words fail, the voice fails,  
so be it, I know that well.  
It will be the silence, full of murmurs,  
distant cries, the usual silence, spent list'ning,  
spent waiting, waiting for the voice,  
the cries abate, like all cries, the murmurs cease,  
they give up, the voice begins again, it begins, trying,  
again, quick now before there is none left, no voice left,  
nothing left, but the core of murmurs, distant cries,  
it's I who seek, find, lose, find again, lose again,  
seek in vain, seek no more, it's I who seek, find, lose, ah . . .  
perhaps I went silent, no, I say that in order to say something,  
in order to go on a little more,  
if I could remember what I have said I could repeat it,  
if I could learn something by heart I'd be saved,

I have to keep on saying the same thing and each time it's an effort,  
the seconds must be all alike and each one is infernal,  
what am I saying now, I'm saying I wish I knew.  
And yet I have memories, I remember Worm,  
that is to say I have retained the name, and the other,  
what is his name, what was his name, in his jar,  
I can see him still, better than I can see me,  
I know how he lived, now I remember, I alone saw him,  
but no one sees me, nor him, I don't see him anymore,  
Mahood, he was called Mahood, I don't see him anymore  
I don't know how he lived anymore, he isn't there anymore,  
he was never there, in his jar, I never saw him,  
and yet I remember, I remember having talked about him,  
I must have talked about him, the same words recur  
and they are your memories. It is I invented him,  
him and so many others, and the places where they passed,  
the places where they stayed, in order to speak, since I had to speak,  
without speaking of me. I couldn't speak of me, I was never told I had  
to speak of me, I invented my memories, I knew I had memories, pity  
they are not of me, and the stars, and the beacons, and the lights  
of the buoys, and the mountain burning, quick now and try again,  
with the words that remain, try what, I don't know, I've forgotten,  
it doesn't matter, I never knew, it's too late,  
perhaps it's too late, perhaps it's the door, perhaps it's I,  
I don't know, I've forgotten, it doesn't matter, I never knew,  
you must say words as long as there are any, until they find me,  
until they say me, strange pain, strange sin, you must go on,  
perhaps it's done already, perhaps they have said me already,  
perhaps they have carried me to the threshold of my story,  
before the door that opens on my story, that would surprise me,  
if it opens, it will be I, it will be the silence where I am,  
I don't know, I'll never know, in the silence, you don't know,  
it's too late, perhaps it's too late, perhaps it's the door,  
perhaps it's I, I don't know, I've forgotten, it doesn't matter,  
I never knew, I can't go on, you must go on, I'll go on . . .

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**Now and Then** (1981)

**On the meadow**

(from *The Seagull* by Anton Chekhov)

all living things,  
all living things,  
all living things,  
having completed their cycle of sorrow are extinct. . . .

For thousands of years the earth has borne no living creature  
on its surface and this poor moon lights its lamp in vain.  
On the meadow the cranes no longer waken with a cry,  
and there is no sound of the May beetles in the lime trees.

**thither**

(Samuel Beckett)

thither  
a far cry  
for one  
so little  
fair daffodils  
march then

then there  
then there

then thence  
daffodils  
again  
march then  
again  
a far cry  
again  
for one  
so little

**Roundelay**

(Samuel Beckett)

on all that strand  
at end of day  
steps sole sound  
long sole sound  
until unbidden stay  
then no sound  
on all that strand  
long no sound  
until unbidden go  
steps sole sound  
long sole sound  
on all that strand  
at end of day

**Among the Deepening Shades**

(from *The Tower* by William Butler Yeats)

The death of friends, or death  
Of every brilliant eye  
That made a catch in the breath—  
Seem but the clouds of the sky  
When the horizon fades,  
Or a bird's sleepy cry  
Among the deepening shades.

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### **Three Poems in French (1989)**

#### **En Sourdine**

(Paul Verlaine)

(from *Fêtes Galantes, 1st Collection*)

Calmes dans le demi-jour  
Que les branches hautes font,  
Pénétrons bien notre amour,  
De ce silence profond.

Fondons nos âmes, nos coeurs  
Et nos sens extasiés,  
Parmi les vagues langueurs  
Des pins et des arbousiers.

Ferme les yeux à demi,  
Croise tes bras sur ton sein,  
Et de ton coeur endormi  
Chasse à jamais tout dessein.

Laissons-nous persuader  
Au souffle berceur et doux  
Qui vient à tes pieds rider  
Les ondes des gazon roux.

Et quand, solennel, le soir  
Des chênes noirs tombera,  
Voix de notre désespoir,

Le rossignol chantera.

### **Muted**

Calm in the half-light  
That the high branches make  
Let our love be penetrated  
By this profound silence.

Let us fuse our souls, our hearts,  
And our ecstatic senses,  
Amid the vague languors  
Of the pines and the arbutus.

Close your eyes halfway,  
Cross your arms on your breast,  
And from your sleepy heart  
Chase forever all design.

Let us be persuaded  
By the cradling and soft wind  
That comes to your feet to ripple  
The waves of russet grass.

And when, solemnly, the evening  
Falls from the black oaks,  
Voice of our despair,  
The nightingale will sing.

### **Recueillement**

(Charles Baudelaire)

Sois sage, ô ma Douleur, et tiens-toi plus tranquille.  
Tu réclamaï le Soir, il descend; le voici:  
Une atmosphère obscure enveloppe la ville,  
Aux uns portant la paix, aux autres le souci.

Pendant que des mortels la multitude vile,  
Sous le fouet du Plaisir, ce bourreau sans merci,  
Va cueillir des remords dans la fête servile,  
Ma Douleur, donne-moi la main; viens par ici,

Loin d'eux. Vois se pencher les défuntes Années,  
Sur les balcons du ciel, en robes surannées;  
Surgir du fond des eaux le Regret souriant;

Le Soleil moribond s'endormir sous une arche,  
Et, comme un long linceul traînant à l'Orient,  
Entends, ma chère, entends la douce  
Nuit qui marche.

### **Meditation**

Be wise, O my Sorrow, and be quieter.  
You called for the Evening: it descends; here it is!  
A gloomy atmosphere envelops the city,  
To some bringing peace, to others worry.

While the vile multitude of mortals,  
Under the whip of Pleasure, that executioner without mercy,  
Goes to gather remorse at the servile feast,  
My Sorrow, give me your hand; come here,

Far from them. See the dead Years leaning  
Over the balconies of the sky, in old-fashioned robes;  
See smiling Regret rising from the depth of the waves.

And the dying sun going to sleep under an arch,  
And, like a long shroud trailing toward the East,  
Hear, my dear, hear the gentle  
Night walking.

### **Colloque Sentimental**

(Paul Verlaine)

(from *Fêtes Galantes*, 2nd Collection)

Dans le vieux parc solitaire et glacé  
Deux formes ont tout à l'heure passé.

Leurs yeux sont morts et leurs lèvres sont molles,  
Et l'on entend à peine leurs paroles.

Dans le vieux parc solitaire et glacé  
Deux spectres ont évoqué le passé.

—Te souvient-il de notre extase ancienne?  
—Pourquoi voulez-vous donc qu'il m'en souviennne?

Ton coeur bat-il toujours à mon seul nom?  
Toujours vois-tu mon âme en rêve?—Non.

—Ah! les beaux jours de bonheur indicible  
Où nous joignons nos bouches!—C'est possible.

—Qu'il était bleu, le ciel, et grand l'espoir!  
—L'espoir a fui, vaincu, vers le ciel noir.

Tels ils marchaient dans les avoines folles,  
Et la nuit seule entendit leurs paroles.

### **Sentimental Colloquy**

In the old park, solitary and icy,  
Two forms have just passed by.

Their eyes are dead and their lips are slack,  
And one hardly hears their words.

In the old park, solitary and icy,  
Two specters have evoked the past.

“Do you remember our former ecstasy?”  
“Why do you want me to remember it?”

“Does your heart still beat merely when hearing my name?  
Do you still see my soul in your dreams?” “No.”

“Ah! the lovely days of inexpressible happiness  
When we used to join our lips!” “It is possible.”

“How blue it was, the sky, and how great the hope!”  
“Hope has fled, vanquished, toward the black sky.”

Thus they walked in the wild oat-grass,  
And only the night heard their words.

California-born **Benita Valente** first collaborated with Earl Kim in 1966 at the Marlboro Music School and Festival, performing *Dead Calm*, a work that was subsequently expanded by the composer, with Ms. Valente's voice in mind, into *Exercises en Route*. This began a long musical partnership and friendship which lasted until Mr. Kim's death in 1998. He also composed *Where Grief Slumbers*, a work for soprano, harp, and string orchestra, for Ms. Valente. She premiered it with the Cincinnati Symphony and has performed it with other ensembles, including the Philadelphia Orchestra. Ms. Valente's career began in 1960, and over the next four decades encompassed a wide range of repertoire, from early music to the music of her contemporaries. She has premiered numerous works, many of which were written for her, by composers including Stephen Albert, William Bolcom, David Del Tredici, Alberto Ginastera, Libby Larsen, John Harbison, and Richard 14 Wernick. Ms. Valente is well known for her interpretations and

recordings of lieder, oratorio, and chamber music, and for her long operatic career at the Metropolitan Opera and other leading opera houses.

Soprano **Karol Bennett** has been heard worldwide in lieder, oratorio, opera, and new music. Her honors include the Pro Musicis International Award, a fellowship from the Bunting Institute of Radcliffe College, an Artistic Ambassadorship, and a Duo Recitalist Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. She has been a participant at the Marlboro and Roundtop International Music Festivals, and was artist-in-residence at the International Festival of Music in Morelia, Mexico. Her extensive contemporary repertoire includes numerous world premieres, many written especially for her. Ensembles with whom she has appeared in modern works include the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the New York New Music Ensemble, the Metamorphosen Chamber Orchestra, Da Camera of Houston, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Orchestra X of Houston, Dinosaur Annex, the Boston Musica Viva, the Griffin Music Ensemble, and Collage New Music. She has recorded for the Bridge, Archetype, Newport Classic, and Koch labels.

#### **SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY**

*Earthlight*. Merja Sargon, soprano; Martha Potter Kim, violin; Earl Kim, piano. New World Records 80237-2.

*Two Bagatelles*. Robert Helps, piano. CRI 875.

*Violin Concerto*. Itzhak Perlman, violin; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Seiji Ozawa, conductor. Angel/EMI DS 38011.

*Where Grief Slumbers*. Dawn Upshaw, soprano, and ensemble. Elektra Nonesuch N 79262-2.

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Buning, Marius and Oppenheim, Lois, editors. *Beckett On and On*. . . . Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996.

Kyr, Robert. "Searching for the Essential: An Interview with Earl Kim." Boston: League of Composers-International Society for Contemporary Music, Boston Chapter, 1990.

Producers: Earl Kim and Scott Yoo

Engineer/Digital mastering: Joel Gordon

Production Assistant: Erica Hurwitz

Recorded May 21-23, 1996, at Jordan Hall at the New England Conservatory, Boston.

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EARL KIM (1920-1998)

*Exercises en Route* (1963-70)  
(publ. Theodore Presser Co.)

1. *dead calm* 5:24
2. *they are far out* 6:37
3. *gooseberries, she said* 5:04
4. *rattling on* 11:44

Benita Valente, soprano; Scott Yoo, violin; Alexis Pia Gerlach, cello; Jean deMart, flute/piccolo; Peggy Pearson, oboe; Mieko Take-Mendez, clarinet; Jurij Konje, Robert Schulz, percussion

*Now and Then* (1981)  
(publ. Theodore Presser Co.)

5. *On the meadow* 1:44
6. *thither* :39
7. *Roundelay* 3:03
8. *thither* (reprise) :39
9. *Among the Deepening Shades* 1:53

Karol Bennett, soprano; Henry Lee, viola; Jean deMart, flute; Erica Kritzer, harp

*Three Poems in French* (1989)  
(publ. Theodore Presser Co.)

10. *En Sourdine* 3:38
11. *Recueillement* 4:00
12. *Colloque Sentimental* 5:35

Karol Bennett, soprano; Jennifer Gilbert, Scott Yoo, violins; Henry Lee, viola; Alexis Pia Gerlach, cello

13. *Dear Linda* (1993) 10:03 (ms)

Eva Kim, narrator; Alexis Pia Gerlach, cello; Jean deMart, flute/piccolo; Melvin Chen, piano; Jurij Konje, percussion

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