

WILLIAM PENN

FANTASY

Karyl Louwenaar, harpsichord

FOUR PRELUDES for LEIGH HOWARD STEVENS

Leigh Howard Stevens, marimba

WILLIAM PENN (b. 1943, Long Branch, N.J.) studied at SUNY/Buffalo with Henri Pousseur, Mauricio Kagel, Allen Sapp, and Robert Mols, and received a Ph.D. from Michigan State University where he studied with H. Owen Reed, Paul Harder, and Richard Klausli. He has taught at Western Michigan University and at Michigan State University, and is currently (1977) Assistant Professor of Composition and Theory at the Eastman School of Music.

Among the grants Penn has received are three National Endowment for the Arts Grants (1974, 1975, and 1976) and seven ASCAP Standard Music Composition Awards.

Besides concert music and jazz, Penn has written several theatre and film scores, including the score to the feature film *Exit the King of Eugene Ionesco*, directed by David Quaid and Edward Berkeley, and scores for four New York Shakespeare Festival Productions produced by Joseph Papp. He has also scored five Shakespeare shows for the Folger Theatre in Washington, D.C., produced by Louis Scheeder, and has served as composer in residence for the Williamstown Theatre Festival (summer, 1975).

The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Michael Palmer, premiered Penn's *Spectrums* in 1974, and the Eliot Feld Ballet toured with his orchestration of *Consort* with the Indianapolis Symphony last season. Penn wrote *Cosmic Awakening*, a 52-minute planetarium score for the Smithsonian Institution's new Albert Einstein spacearium and is affiliated with Sounds Reasonable recording studios in Washington, D.C. His *ULTRA MENSURAM* appears on CRI SD 340. He writes:

“FANTASY for solo harpsichord was written especially for David R. Fuller of the SUNY/Buffalo faculty. The piece opens with a structure which I like to call the 'fantasy' chord, and which is sewn throughout the fabric of the work. The piece is by no means serialized; rather, FANTASY is based on certain basic motives, 'exotic' and newly composed scales, vertical structures (like the 'fantasy' chord), and clusters of various types (fully saturated, gap, pentatonic, and pandiatonic). The linear construction of the piece was partially conceived as an alternation between 'white note' (pandiatonic), 'black note' (pentatonic), and various mixtures of white and black notes. Of the many rhythmic figures that were used, the most notable to me are the straight sixteenths (reminiscent to me of a John Coltrane rhythm solo — a constant perpetual motion), the syncopated 'boogaloo' rhythm, the grace note figurations and the Morse code.

“FANTASY was recorded on a harpsichord built by Richard Kingston of Dallas, Texas and owned by H. Ross Wood of the Eastman School. The harpsichord was built in the 18th Century French Tradition (I: 8', 4'; II: 8', buff).

“FOUR PRELUDES for solo marimba was written especially for Leigh Howard Stevens as a virtuoso work. Mr. Stevens is one of the few marimbists in the world who concertizes and is also one of the few who has truly mastered four- and six-mallet technique.”

OLLY WILSON

ECHOES

Phillip Rehfeldt, clarinet; tape part realized at the Electronic Music Studio, University of California at Berkeley

OLLY WILSON (b. 1937, St. Louis) attended St. Louis public schools, Washington University, St. Louis, and received his Mus.M. degree from the University of Illinois, 1960, and Ph.D. degree from the University of Iowa, 1964. He studied composition with Robert Wykes, Robert Kelley, and Phillip Bezanson. He played jazz piano and bass with local groups in St. Louis, studied electronic music at the Studio for Experimental Music, University of Illinois, 1967, and was a member of several orchestras as a bass viol player. He has taught at Florida A & M University and the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. Presently (1977) he is Professor of Music at the University of California, Berkeley. The Dallas, San Francisco, Baltimore, Oakland, Minneapolis, and Atlanta Symphony orchestras, have performed his works. His electronic composition, *Cetus*, won the Dartmouth Arts Council Prize; his *Voices* was commissioned by the Boston Symphony and the Fromm Foundation at Tanglewood and his *PIECE FOR FOUR* is on CRI SD 264. He was a Guggenheim Fellow in 1971-2, studying African music, and in 1974 won the citation of the National Institute/American Academy of Arts and Letters which made this recording possible. The composer writes:

“ECHOES for clarinet and two-channel electronic tape was commissioned by the clarinetist Phillip Rehfeldt and the composer Barney Childs in 1974 as part of a project to stimulate the composition of contemporary chamber music 'for clarinet and friend' (i.e. clarinet and piano, clarinet and electronic tape, etc.). As the title implies, ECHOES is based on a continuous interaction between the clarinet and the electronic sound source which share common pitches, timbres, and musical gestures, while simultapeously developing a larger musical shape. The work contains three organically related sections which gradually evolve from one to the other in one continuous movement. The tape portion was generated electronically at the University of California, Berkeley, Electronic Music Studio. The output of the clarinet is amplified and mixed with that of the pre-recorded electronic tape which is then projected from multiple speakers placed around the hall. The work was given its premiere performance by Phillip Rehfeldt at Redlands University in January of 1975.”

RUSSELL PECK

AUTOMOBILE

Diane Ragains, soprano; Peter Middleton, flute; David Johnson, percussion; Aventino Calvetti, bass

RUSSELL PECK (b. 1945, Detroit) was Ford Foundation composer-in-residence for the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, and has received dozens of performances by major orchestras, including the Buffalo Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony, and New Orleans Philharmonic. He has won several awards including the Koussevitzky Prize. His music is published by Jobert, E.B. Marks and Carl Fischer, Inc. His *Quotations From the Electric Chairman* is recorded on Advance Records. In 1977 he was visiting Assistant Professor of Composition at the Eastman School of Music, on leave from Northern Illinois University. He writes:

“In 1967, at 22 years old, I was very confused about what was modern — Stockhausen, Boulez? ... Beatles and Rhythm and Blues? But I knew what I liked! Ideas of the former, music of the latter.

“In the first movement of *AUTOMOBILE*, I postulated a lounge act in the year 2000, when supposedly Stockhausen-Boulez sounds will be *in*, as Chopin's are today. The soprano sings only one line — “et d'autres, corrompus, riches, et triomphants” — from *Correspondences of Baudelaire*. The line, describing incense and perfumes, here is a *moderno* vision of Pop music: corrupt, rich, and triumphant!

“Movement II is a '50s nostalgia number. Indeterminacy and R & B are combined into what George Rochberg called a “Borsch — Circuit Comedy Act.” Players are dealt cards with cues, vamps, monologues, solos and ensembles which interact across a chance grid of accelerating tempi.

“The meaning of the piece is discovered by the bassist when he ejaculates toward the end of the second movement, 'I thought this piece was supposed to go by itself!'”

KARYL LOUWENAAR, harpsichordist and pianist, has appeared as solo and ensemble recitalist in American and West German cities. Her many awards have included a two-year grant from the West German government for study at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik, Cologne. She studied harpsichord under George Hunter and Hugo Ruf and has played in the master classes of Gustav Leonhardt and Kenneth Gilbert. At present she is Associate Professor of Harpsichord and Piano at the Florida State University, Tallahassee. LEIGH HOWARD STEVENS is one of America's foremost marimbists. He has developed a new system of technique which allows him to perform solo marimba music considered impossible by many other fine players. His variety of rolls, strokes, and mallets have greatly expanded the textural and coloristic possibilities of the marimba. At the age of 23, Stevens has already premiered more than a dozen works for solo marimba. In addition to solo recitals, he appears as guest lecturer in colleges, universities, and schools of music throughout the United States. Stevens plays Musser Marimbas exclusively, and is also a clinician and endorser of Musser instruments, Division of Ludwig Industries. PHILLIP REHFELDT is known for his numerous performances of contemporary works for clarinet and his research into new techniques in woodwind performance. He has recorded on the Advance and Desto labels, is the author of a forthcoming book on new techniques on the clarinet, and teaches at the University of Redlands. DIANE RAGAINS made her debut with the Chicago Symphony in Orff's *Carmina Burana* and has since performed many 20th century works. She is also a violinist, and is on the faculty of Northern Illinois University (1977). PETER MIDDLETON teaches flute at Northern Illinois University (1977) and is a member of the Illinois Chamber Orchestra. DAVID JOHNSON is a member of the Blackearth Percussion Group, which specializes in performances of new works. He also plays in the Illinois Chamber Orchestra and the California New Music Ensemble. AVENTINO CALVETTI plays regularly with the Lyric Opera of Chicago and teaches at Northern Illinois University (1977). He has played and recorded with the Chicago Symphony under Solti, Guilini and Abbado.

Each year the National Institute/American Academy of Arts and Letters makes awards for outstanding contributions by four American composers. Olly Wilson was a 1974 winner, and this recording of *ECHOES* was a part of his award. The recording of Russell Peck's *AUTOMOBILE* was subsidized by a grant from Northern Illinois University.

(original liner notes from CRI LP jacket)