

THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC  
of  
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

presents

A Recital of Music by  
RON HANNAH

Wednesday, November 6, 1974 at 8:00 p.m.

Convocation Hall, Arts Building

THREE AFRICAN SONGS

Come Away, My Love—Joseph Kariuki  
Love Apart—Christopher Okigbo  
Be Not Amazed—Leopold Seughor

Nigel Lemon, tenor  
Julie Lemon, piano

BAROQUE VARIANTS — SUITE

Prelude  
Allemande  
Courante  
Sarabande  
Minuet  
Gigue

Alan Clarke, alto flute  
John Barnum, viola  
Sandra Erdman, harpsichord

THE DINNER PARTY (Song Cycle based on a text by Amy Lowell)

Elsie Achuff, soprano  
Elaine Dobek, piano  
JoEllen Harris, clarinet

I N T E R M I S S I O N

SONATA FOR VIOLONCELLO AND PIANO

Peter Rudolphi, cello  
Ron Hannah, piano

---

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Music degree for Mr. Hannah.

---

COMING EVENTS:

Friday, November 8, 1974 at 8:00 p.m. in Convocation Hall—pianist Janet Scott will present her graduate recital. The program will consist of Berg's Sonata, Op. 1; Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 111; and Schumann's Phantasie, Op. 17. There is no charge.





## TEXTS AND PROGRAM NOTES

All of the compositions heard tonight were written between September of 1973 and April of 1974 for Music 660, with the exception of The Dinner-Party, which was an independent work written during the summer of 1973. They were not written solely with the intent to entertain (though I trust they are pleasing to the ear), but to express my own personal feelings and reactions to life. These feelings, if sincere, must contain certain universal elements such that similar feelings will be evoked in the listener. I hope that no one leaves this hall tonight feeling indifferent. Listening to music is an intimate and terrifying experience.

The Three African Songs reflect my recent discovery of and fascination with African poetry. Here is a poetry of virility and wonder, of expansiveness and humility before the gods, poetry reflecting a sense of oneness with the universe that we have lost among our technological play-things.

The first song is on a poem by Joseph Kariuki, a Kenyan broadcaster and civil servant:

Come away, my love, from streets  
Where unkind eyes divide,  
And shop windows reflect our difference.  
In the shelter of my faithful room rest.

There, safe from opinions; being behind  
Myself, I can see only you;  
And in my dark eyes your grey  
Will dissolve.

The candlelight throws  
Two dark shadows on the wall  
Which merge into one as I close beside you.

When at last the lights are out,  
And I feel your hand in mine,  
Two human breaths join in one,  
And the piano weaves  
Its unchallenged harmony.

The second is by Christopher Okigbo, a Nigerian poet and officer in the Biafran army who was killed in action in the civil war of 1967:

The moon has ascended between us  
Between two pines  
That bow to each other

Love with the moon has ascended  
Has fed on our solitary stems

And we are now shadows  
That cling to each other  
But kiss the air only.

The third of the African songs is on words by Leopold Sedar Senghor, one of Africa's most renowned poets and President of Senegal:

Be not amazed beloved, if sometimes my song grows dark,  
If I exchange the lyrical reed for the Kalam or the tama  
And the green scent of the ricefields, for the swiftly  
galloping war drums.

I hear the threats of ancient deities, the furious cannonade  
of the god.

Oh, tomorrow perhaps, the purple voice of your bard will be  
silent forever.

That is why my rhythm becomes so fast, that the fingers bleed  
on the Kalam.

Perhaps, beloved, I shall fall tomorrow, on a restless earth  
Lamenting your sinking eyes, and the dark tom-tom of the  
mortars below.

And you will weep in the twilight for the glowing voice that  
sang your black beauty.

\* \* \* \*

There is not a great deal to be said about the Baroque Variants. They are just that--whimsical variations and twists on an old theme. Not that I have chosen a specific melody to tamper with, but I have merely tried to capture the feel of the Baroque style in a more modern idiom.

\* \* \* \*

The Dinner-Party is more difficult to explain. Amy Lowell, the writer of the strange poems to follow, was a Boston Lowell, i.e. a member of one of the richest families in the United States. She never felt comfortable among people of her own class, however, feeling moved to better things than wallowing in leisure. A glandular disorder, causing her to be highly obese, may have contributed to this mutual rejection. Be that as it may, the poems represent a withering attack on pretention, wherever it is found:



## I. Fish.

"So..." they said,  
With their wine-glasses delicately poised,  
Mocking at the thing they cannot understand.  
"So ..." they said again,  
Amused and insolent.  
The silver on the table glittered,  
And the red wine in the glasses  
Seemed the blood I had wasted  
In a foolish cause.

## II. Game

The gentleman with the grey-and-black whiskers  
Sneered languidly over his quail.  
Then my heart flew up and laboured,  
And I burst from my own holding  
And hurled myself forward.  
With straight blows I beat upon him,  
Furiously, with red-hot anger, I thrust against him.  
But my weapon slithered over his polished surface,  
And I recoiled upon myself,  
Panting.

## III. Drawing-Room

In a dress all softness and half-tones,  
Indolent and half-reclined,  
She lay upon a couch,  
With the firelight reflected in her jewels.  
But her eyes had no reflection,  
They swam in a gret smoke,  
The smoke of smouldering ashes,  
The smoke of her cindered heart.

\* \* \* \*

The Sonata for Violoncello and Piano is a twelve-tone composition, built upon a tone row which allows elements of of tonality to show through. For example, the first four notes are C, G, F#, Eb, spelling out a C minor triad having an additional note of some dissonance. This pattern is then repeated beginning on E. From this, I have derived as a basic unit of harmony for the sonata, the triad (major or minor) containing one added note one semitone away from any of the chord members. Melodic materials are always drawn from the row or one of its inversions, retrogressions, or transpositions.

The first movement is in strict sonata form, containing an introductory passage, a first and second theme, a development section with a cadenza, and a recapitulation of the themes.

The second movement is the most strict in its adherence to the tone-row. It is a theme and variations in arch form, meaning that some of the variations heard at the beginning are heard again at the end in reverse order.

The third movement is the most free in its treatment of the row. It could, in fact, be analysed in the key of G, up to a point. It is a fast-moving rondo with the sections between repetitions of the theme suggesting portions of the previous movements or the row itself. One of these interludes is long and flowing and (I think) quite Brahmsian.

## IV. Coffee

They sat in a circle with their coffee-cups.  
One dropped in a lump of sugar,  
One stirred with a spoon.  
I saw them as a circle of ghosts  
Sipping blackness out of beautiful china,  
And mildly protesting against my coarseness  
In being alive.

## V. Talk

They took dead men's souls  
And pinned them on their breasts for ornament;  
Their cuff-links and tiaras  
Were gems dug from a grave;  
They were ghouls battenning on exhumed thoughts;  
And I took a green liquor from a servant  
So that he might come near me  
And give me the comfort of a living thing.

## VI. Eleven O'Clock

The front door was hard and heavy.  
It shut behind me on the house of ghosts.  
I flattened my feet on the pavement  
To feel it solid under me;  
I ran my hand along the railings  
And shook them,  
And pressed their pointed bars  
Into my palms.  
The hurt of it reassured me,  
And I did it again and again  
Until they were bruised.  
When I woke in the night  
I laughed to find them aching,  
For only living flesh can suffer.