

**Violet Archer
: A Composer's Life
*Farewell Concert***

**Saturday, April 25, 1998
at 8:00 pm**

**Convocation Hall, Arts Building
University of Alberta**

**Co-sponsored by the
Alberta Registered Music
Teachers' Association**

Program



**Department of Music
University of Alberta**

Program

Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano Violet Archer
David England, saxophone
Alexandra Munn, piano

"There are pigeons on the roof of the little chapel" Violet Archer
Chanteuses
Heather Bedford-Clooney, conductor
Celeste Best, mezzo-soprano
John Mahon, clarinet
Sarah Muir, soprano
Ann Nichols, piano

Kaleidoscopio Violet Archer
text from "Il fiore nel bicchiere" by Gisella Azzi
1. Il Sole
2. Valzer Musette
3. Casetta Cantoniera
4. Pulviscolo
Aliya Ahmad, soprano
Jessica Agrell-Smith, piano

Improvisations on "Veni Creator" Violet Archer
Stillman Matheson, organ

Intermission

Suite for Solo Flute *Phyllis Obst
Prelude
Allegretto
Adagio
Scherzo
Elizabeth Faulkner, flute

Trio No. 1 for Piano, Violin, Cello *Jessica Agrell-Smith
II Introspection
III Activation
Sheldon Person, violin
Adèle Bossé-Morgan, violoncello
Chrissie-Jane Cronjé, piano

Three Canadian Folk Songs
arranged for soprano and piano
Dedicated to Allison Nichols

*Ann Nichols

1. Rattle On The Stovepipe
2. I'll Give My Love An Apple
3. Old grandma

Alison Nichols, soprano
Ann Nichols, piano

Piano Sonata No. 2

Violet Archer

Charles Foreman, piano

* Students of Violet Archer

Everyone is invited to a birthday party for Dr Archer
in the foyer after the concert.

Kaleidoscopio

Il Sole - The Sun

I descend the hill in the sunset.

Scarlet flames, not trees, I behold; and the houses below are madly ablaze: each window, a miniature pyre (lively gnome-like glances!) and the roofs are scattered blazing red embers. My footsteps move in the sun and I feel enveloped in an amber eiderdown. The whole world is golden!

Valzer Musette - Waltz Musette

The sun does not shine in the lane but slides above on the roofs and splendidly inflames the tops of the roofs, staining with red color. Slinks on somber gables (gossamer film of gold and scarlet) odd red chimneys project dancing gestures and with envy are yawning in silent jest. The sun does not shine in the lane but slides up high and lights the ash tree at the end of the way.

Casetta Cantoniera - Roadman's Bower

She smiled at me and disappeared in an instant waving a wild salutation.

Honey-suckle, petunias, sunflowers;

on her little face, her eyebrows like festive vines; has been lowered a long, evanescent, ethereal veil of poplars.

Pulviscolo - Efflorescence

Whirling ballet dancers wearing yellow tutus, dash forward, dash, dash forward delirious with joy, in a close file on the floor of the attic. They dance in slippers that are feather light, light intertwining with ecstatic motion in a round dance beatific; they pause, a golden contrast to the grey stone floor. Birds applaud madly at the small open window, they have arrived for the great festival of April!

Jessica Agrell-Smith has studied composition with Dr Violet Archer since November 1996. In 1997, she represented Edmonton in the Provincial Kiwanis Music Festival in Composition. Studying with Eleanor Young, Jessica achieved her ARCT in Piano Performance (Royal College of Music) in June 1997 and won the Silver Medal for Alberta on her Grade X Piano (RCM). Having received the highest marks in Edmonton on her Counterpoint IV, Harmony V and History V (RCM) Examinations with Dorothy Buckley, she is now working on the Teacher's ARCT Pedagogy Diploma (RCM) with both Eleanor Young and Dorothy Buckley as well as teaching 19 piano students, and theory, harmony and history students. Since Jessica is interested in both the theoretical and historical components of music, composition was the next logical step. In this short period of study, Jessica has completed many works including a large scale Suite for Percussion, a Suite for Two Pianos, a Piano Sonata, *Night* (a 7-minute work for soprano, tenor and string orchestra), accapella choir pieces, a Trio No. 1 (presented here) as well as songs, children's pieces, duets and other works for piano. She is currently writing her first String Quartet.

The Trio No. 1 for violin, cello and piano was written in January 1998. In the second movement, Introspection, each instrument has its own theme upon which to reflect. The airy violin, sostenuto cello and choral piano cause a shifting effect highlighting each instrumental color. In the third movement, Activation, the driving rhythm, a 3+3+2 feel, carries a perpetual motion under the violin's cross-rhythm and disjunct melodic material. The work pauses at two cesuras which calm this "arenaline movement". The violin's dynamic recitative passages lead into the final chorus. Jessica has found it exciting to work with these musicians and to hear her work realized. Violet Archer's presence will be missed, but her care, enthusiasm, knowledge and drive will always be remembered and greatly valued.

Aliya Ahmad is graduating this year from the University of Alberta with a Bachelor of Music degree with a major in Voice. Two years ago she sang the role of Cherubino in the Department's very successful full-length production of Mozart's opera *The Marriage of Figaro* and has performed as soloist with orchestra and chamber ensembles. She is a recipient of the Vienna Opera Ball Society Award and the Seven Arts Group Scholarship. She intends to continue postgraduate studies in performance.

Mezzo-soprano **Celeste Best** has a Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Alberta and is an Associate of the Royal Conservatory of Toronto in Vocal Performance. She has served a Chair of the Archdiocesan Music Committee, and is a soloist at St John's Catholic Church. She has given many liturgical music workshops throughout the Edmonton area.

Adèle Bossé-Mogan is a graduate of the University of Alberta with a BMus in cello performance. She has been teaching in the community for over ten years and is actively involved in solo and chamber performance in Edmonton. She is a member of Quartette des Muses.

Chanteuses, one of the Edmonton Columbian Choirs, was founded in 1990. It is conducted by Heather Bedford-Clooney. *Chanteuses* has performed with the Edmonton Symphony, Alberta Ballet, and Dance Alberta, as well as recording for CBC and ITV. They recorded the *Mater Admirabilis Chapel* by Violet Archer on the *Northern Landscapes* compact disc. *Northern Landscapes* is a recording released in 1997 by soprano Sarah Muir, and is dedicated to Dr Archer.

Chrissie-Jane Cronjé is in the fourth year of her Bachelor of Music program at the University of Alberta, studying with Marek Jablonski. She is interested in composition and has composed music for dance, recently a soundscape for the Brian Webb Dance Company.

David England has just completed his Master of Music in saxophone performance at the University of Alberta, where he studied with Dr William Street. A recipient of grants from the Canadian Arts Council and the Saskatchewan Arts Board, he has been a semi-finalist at the Fishcoff International Chamber Music Competition, and has twice been a finalist at the CIBC National Music Festival. Mr England recorded his first compact disc as a member of the Laurier Saxophone Quartet in 1994, and as a soloist has performed throughout Canada, the United States and Europe.

Pianist **Charles Foreman** was born near Chicago, where he was a scholarship student of Rudolf Reuter at the American Conservatory. His undergraduate degree, awarded with high distinction, is from Indiana University, where he studied piano with Abbey Simon and Joseph Battista and conducting with Julius Herford and Fiora Contino. He also holds the Artist Diploma and Master of Music degrees from the University of Toronto, where he studied with Anton Kuerti and Katharina Wolpe. Foreman has done postgraduate work with William Aide, and also at the Juilliard School with Abbey Simon.

Charles Foreman made his debut in 1972 with the Chicago Civic Orchestra conducted by David Gilbert, playing the Brahms B-flat Concerto. Since then, he has won prizes in Canadian and US piano competitions, received two Canada Council grants for study and performance in Europe, performed numerous times with orchestras in North America (including five repeat engagements with the Calgary Philharmonic), and played over four hundred solo and chamber recitals in Austria, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, Canada and the USA. He has been equally praised for his superb musicianship, his formidable technique, his vast repertoire and his imaginative programming.

John Mahon graduated from the Bachelor of Music program at the University of Alberta in 1976. Since then, he has performed as a clarinetist with all of Edmonton's major performing ensembles. Mr Mahon is also a graduate of the Royal College of Music (London England). In 1984, he graduated with a Master of Business Administration from the University of Alberta and has been an active concert producer and promotor in the Edmonton region since then.

Stillman Matheson, a native of St Stephen, New Brunswick, has studied at Mount Allison and McGill Universities and at the University of Alberta, which granted him a Doctor of Music degree in 1997. He has received numerous awards, including a New Brunswick Arts Award, a University of Alberta Dissertation Fellowship and grants from the Department of External Affairs and the Alberta Foundation for the Arts which enabled him to perform in Poland. At the present time he is the Director of Music at Robertson-Wellesley United Church in Edmonton and a member of the Alberta Baroque Ensemble, and is frequently heard both as a solo performer and accompanist

Sarah Muir has been studying voice since 1984 with Heather Bedford-Clooney. She received a Performance Diploma from the Royal Conservatory of Music as well as a Licentiate Music Diploma from the Western Board of Music, in which she won the Gold Medal. Through the summer of 1996 she participated in the University of Miami's summer opera performance program in Salzburg, Austria. In 1993 she won the Alberta College Concerto Competition and has been a soloist in Choralfest, Unifest and Musicfest Canada. In addition to being a member of the music ensemble *Chanteuses*, she is also a member of the Edmonton Opera chorus and the *Voices of the Prairie* ensemble. In 1996 she received her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Alberta.

Alexandra Munn was born in Calgary, Alberta and studied with Dr Gladys McKelvie Egbert. She is a graduate of the Juilliard School of Music as a student of Irwin Freundlich. Further study was with Guido Agosti at the Accademia Chigiana, Siena, Italy. She was pianist for seven years with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, opera coach and later Musical Director of the original Music Theatre Division program at The Banff Centre. In 1962 she was invited to the faculty of the Department of Music, University of Alberta (Edmonton) and was appointed Professor Emeritus in September 1991. As choral conductor, Professor Munn directed the Da Camera Singers, the Edmonton Opera Chorus and the Richard Eaton Singers, the latter successfully competing in festivals during their 1970 tour of England. Her considerable performance experience of vocal and instrumental chamber music continues through broadcasts on CBC radio, and she has presented numerous television programs as performer and commentator on CBC and CTV national and regional networks. She has performed with many outstanding artists including singers Bernard Diamant, Huguette Tourangeau, Donald Bell, and saxophonist William H Street. Teaching is of prime importance to her and her students have been recognized in national and international competitions. She is active as festival adjudicator throughout Canada, and is presently associated with the Alberta College Conservatory of Music, Edmonton.

Professor Munn recalls that she gave the first performance of the Sonata for Saxophone and Piano with Jeremy Brown for the Violet Archer Festival Edmonton May 1985, and again with Dr William Street. "The late Professor Richard S Eaton invited Violet and me to join the faculty of the then Music Division, Faculty of Arts in September 1962 and it is a privilege to share in this tribute, having given first performances of several of her compositions. A remarkable, dedicated musician, Violet you deserve a rewarding future!"

Allison Nichols began vocal studies with Heather Bedford-Clooney in 1989. She has studied speech arts with Dr Walter Kassa since 1989. Allison is completing her third year in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Alberta, and will graduate with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1999. In the summer of 1997, Allison was a finalist in the *Search For Talent Showcase*. Allison was an invited soloist at Dr Violet Archer's eightieth birthday celebration.

Ann Nichols received her early musical training in Edmonton. After graduation from high school, she studied in Toronto with Pierre Souvarin. Ann studied with Boris Roubakine in Calgary and graduated with a BMus degree (piano performance). She is a music specialist with the Edmonton Public School Board and in 1993 received an Excellence in Teaching Award. She directs the Leo Green Singers and two Handbell Choirs within the Knights of Columbus Columbian Choirs. In the summer of 1997 she recorded a number of Violet Archer's vocal works with soprano Sarah Muir. Ann has been a composition student of Dr Archer since the fall of 1994.

Phyllis Obst recalls her first contact with Dr Archer: "I phoned her in the spring of 1996, asking if I could take composition lessons with her. She agreed to take me on as a student starting in the autumn, upon returning from her trip to Italy that summer. So in September 1996 I started studying composition. The first year involved mainly the instrument I was familiar with, the piano. The result was a set of six bagatelles and a sonatina. I also created three vocal pieces to be sung to children. The following year, 1997-98, Dr Archer encouraged me to begin composing for different instruments. To date this year I have written a fugue for violin, viola and cello, a percussion piece for eight instruments, a suite for solo flute, and am now working on a sonata for oboe and piano. Through Dr Archer, I have acquired a wealth of information which I will use for the rest of my life. Among them: the importance of rhythm; exploring new sounds, textures and instruments, and opening my mind to infinite possibilities. I have also learned to appreciate the notion of hiding pencils from cats. [Her cats] Sonatina and Fugeta are masterful at packing off with them if I don't constantly keep on my guard. By now they must have an impressive collection! I am very fortunate to have been able to study with Dr Archer I will miss her."

This *Suite for Solo Flute* was written for flute essentially for two reasons. The first was the result of having met a flutist in my area who availed her knowledge and expertise to me. The second reason was my interest in creating a whole piece using simply a melodic line. Dr Archer introduced me to the scale (one that she has told me Bartok was fond of using) that I have used which seems to lend itself well to the flute. Rhythmic development became an essential element as well, as I was dealing solely with a melody. The challenge in composing this work was giving the entire suite a sense of unity, and also giving each movement its own individual character.

Sheldon Person is a student in the Bachelor of Arts' program at the University of Alberta and studies with Martin Riseley. He is Concertmaster of the Edmonton Youth Orchestra and Principle Second Violin of the University of Alberta Symphony Orchestra.

This message comes to Dr Archer with love and good wishes for the future from John Butler (BMus '65, MMus '69), Judith Butler (néé Short) (BMus '69) and their daughter, Kaitlin. "My wife, Judith, and I had the privilege of being the guests of Miss Archer when this sonata was performed by Paul Brodie at the World Saxophone Congress in Toronto. While we were sitting and waiting for the concert to begin, Miss Archer and I overheard a man behind us who had obviously been reading the biographical note in the program about her. His comment to his friend was, "Studied with Béla Bartók and Paul Hindemith! I'll bet! She probably just sat in row forty-eight for some two hour workshop." Miss Archer and I just winked at each other. It was with great delight that I watched him shrivel up in embarrassment, when I turned and gave him a big smile as Miss Archer stood up to take her bow at the end of the performance. Lesson learned? If you don't know what you are talking about, keep your mouth shut; you never know who's listening!"

A LASTING TRIBUTE

**As a lasting tribute to Dr Archer
the Alberta Registered Music
Teachers' Association is pursuing
with
Black Cat Publishing
the printing of one of Dr Archer's
as yet unpublished works for piano**

Call ARMTA at 467-0779 for details



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For further information,
please contact the
Department of Music

Fine Arts Building 3-82

University of Alberta

Edmonton, Alberta

Canada T6G 2C9

Telephone (403) 492-3263

Fax (403) 492-9246

World Wide Web address:

<http://www.ualberta.ca/~music/home.html>