

Ned
ROREM
(b. 1923)
Chamber Music with Flute

Mountain Song for flute and piano (1949) **3:09**
1 Andantino

Romeo and Juliet for flute and guitar (1977) **19:46**
2 I ne're saw true beauty till this night 2:34
3 Queen Mab hath been with you 2:30
4 How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night 2:44
5 O serpent heart... 1:30
6 ... sad hours seem long 1:14
7 ... it was the nightingale 2:42
8 Come weep with me 1:40
9 ... empty tigers 1:51
10 ... never was a story of more woe 2:59

Trio for flute, cello and piano (1960) **16:53**
11 Largo misterioso – Allegro 4:53
12 Largo 3:50
13 Andante 3:39
14 Allegro molto 4:31

Book of Hours for flute and harp (1975) **18:28**
15 Matins (Nocturne) 2:19
16 Lauds (Sunrise) 2:44
17 Prime (6 a.m.) 1:09
18 Terce (Mid-morning) 3:54
19 Sext (Noon) 2:43
20 None (Mid-afternoon) 2:51
21 Vespers (Evensong) 0:37
22 Compline (Nightfall) 2:09

Four Prayers for flute and piano (2006) **12:36**
23 First Prayer: without expression 2:22
24 Second Prayer 3:31
25 Third Prayer: Loud and fast (a palindrome) 3:42
26 Last Prayer 3:01

Ned Rorem (b. 1923)
Chamber Music with Flute

Is the flute the most seductive of the winds for all budding composers? Certainly for me that breathy gold wafting through the French forests of the Faun's syrinx, of Roussel's spider, of Ravel's Daphnis and of Varèse's *Density*, whetted a pre-adolescent hunger for the flute long before I was aware that oboes and clarinets and bassoons were also individuals. Among my opus-minus-one notebooks are many a flute solo, unused but not forgotten.

My first real work for the instrument is *Mountain Song*, for flute and piano, written in 1949 as background for a play by Iris Tree. To evoke the décor of the drama, which unfolded in rural Kentucky, I paraphrased a half-remembered southern folksong. The music was eventually published separate from the play, in a version suitable also for oboe, violin, or cello.

The *Trio for flute, cello and piano*, comes from the summer of 1960, through a commission from Bernard Goldberg, flutist with the Pittsburgh Symphony, who was also the founder of the Musica Viva Trio, which gave the première of the work.

Book of Hours, composed in 1975 for Ingrid Dingfelder, was first performed by her the following year, with the French harpist, Martine Geliot. *Romeo and Juliet*, also commissioned by Ingrid Dingfelder (in 1977), was first performed by her with guitarist Herbert Levine.

Four Prayers, composed 2006, was commissioned by Frederick Peters in honor of his wife, Alexandra, on the occasion of their thirtieth anniversary as part of the *Flute Book for the Twenty-first Century*, a project founded by Marya Martin and developed through Meet the Composer's New Music, New Donors initiative.

I am not much one for describing my own music, either technically or esthetically. And since the subtitles for these various pieces amply illustrate their intentions, I herewith close the program note by stating that Fenwick Smith is a Faun and a Daphnis both in one, and I am honored to be so dazzlingly represented as by him

and his colleagues. (For the sake of completion, there is a fifth chamber work for flute – a quintet that includes three strings and piano, called *Bright Music* – written in 1988.)

Ned Rorem

Ned Rorem has written, "I conceive all music... vocally. Whatever my music is written for – tuba, tambourine, tubular bells – it is always the singer within me crying to get out." Rorem is, of course, renowned for an outpouring of vocal music unmatched by any other American art-music composer. Many share *Time* magazine's assessment of him as "the world's best composer of art songs." At the same time, his instrumental music has achieved widespread acclaim; it was his orchestral suite *Air Music* that won him the 1976 Pulitzer Prize. His dozens of chamber and instrumental works are widely performed and recorded. Among the distinguished conductors who have performed his music are Bernstein, Maazel, Mehta, Ormandy, Reiner, Rostropovich and Stokowski; the Atlanta Symphony recording of the *String Symphony*, *Sunday Morning* and *Eagles* received a GRAMMY® Award for outstanding Orchestral Recording in 1989.

Ned Rorem's music strives for clarity. He distrusts the convoluted, the pompous, the grandiose. To some degree this is a legacy of his years in Paris and his exposure to such figures as Poulenc, Auric, and Cocteau. However, Rorem treated the neoclassical aesthetic not with French irony and emotional distance, but with American openness and first-name intimacy, adding clarity of emotional expression to intelligibility of means.

For Rorem, tonal music provides the only harmonic language that can support such intelligibility and clarity. Having carried the banner of tonality faithfully throughout his career (despite a brief flirtation with tone-rows in the late 1960s), he has expressed chagrin at

the publicity given those who returned to tonality. "I feel like the Prodigal Son's brother," he has said.

Some other aspects of Rorem's work deserve special mention. Despite a late start in the medium, he has become one of the foremost American composers of organ music. Ecumenical in viewpoint, he has made an invaluable contribution to American sacred choral music. Through his writings – twelve books and innumerable articles – he has been a tireless advocate of the composer and his or her rightful place in our society's musical culture. The easy charm and

occasional flippancy of Rorem's prose disguised what becomes, in his music, something of a moral imperative: to create that which can come only from one's unique being. Characteristically, Rorem writes: "Anyone can be drunk, anyone can be in love, anyone can waste time and weep, but only I can pen my songs in the few remaining years or minutes."

Notes by Boosey and Hawkes
(used with permission)

Fenwick Smith



Photo: Ben Watkins

Fenwick Smith's Boston-based performing career began in 1975 when he joined the contemporary-music ensemble Boston Musica Viva, and the New England Woodwind Quintet. After winning his BSO audition in 1978 he has continued active participation in recitals, radio broadcasts, chamber music performances, and teaching. He retired from the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 2006, after a distinguished 28-year career as second flute. As a concerto soloist Fenwick Smith introduced to Boston audiences Lukas Foss's *Renaissance Concerto* and concertos of John Harbison and Christopher Rouse. He has taught at the New England Conservatory since 1976, joined the Boston Chamber Music Society in 1983, and has enjoyed a long and fruitful collaboration with the area's finest chamber-music musicians. His discography includes première recordings of works by Cage, Copland, Dahl, Foote, Gaubert, Ginastera, Harbison, Koechlin, Pinkham, Reinecke, Rorem, Schoenberg, Schulhoff, and Schuller.



Guitarist David Leisner is a versatile musician with a career as a performer, a composer and a master teacher. His career as a guitarist began auspiciously with top prizes in both the 1975 Toronto and 1981 Geneva International Guitar Competitions. In the 1980s a disabling hand injury, focal dystonia, interrupted his performing career in mid-stream and plagued him for twelve years. Through a pioneering approach to technique based on his understanding of the physical aspects of playing the guitar, he gradually rehabilitated himself. Now completely recovered, he has once again resumed an active performing career, earning acclaim wherever he plays.



The cellist Ronald Thomas enjoys an active and varied career as performer, teacher and artistic administrator. He is the co-founder and Artistic Director Emeritus of the Boston Chamber Music Society, Principal Cellist of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and Artistic Director of the Chestnut Hill Concerts in Madison, CT. He has appeared as soloist and in recital with orchestras throughout the United States, Europe and the Far East and has performed with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center both at Alice Tully Hall and on tour. Other appearances include the Seattle Chamber Music Festival, Bravo! Colorado Chamber Music Festival, Spoleto Festival, Blossom Festival, Chamber Music Northwest Festival, La Musica, Music@Menlo, Sarasota Festival, Music from Angel Fire, Music in the Mountains, Yale at Norfolk Festival, and the festivals of Dubrovnik, Edinburgh, Amsterdam and others. While he was a member of the Boston Musica Viva and the Aeolian Chamber Players, he gave premières of countless new works.



The Korean-born pianist Mihae Lee has been captivating audiences throughout North America, Europe, and Asia in solo recitals and chamber music concerts with her poetic lyricism and scintillating virtuosity. She is an artist member of the Boston Chamber Music Society, a founding member of the Triton Horn Trio, and the Artistic Director of the Essex Winter Series in Connecticut. She has appeared at numerous international festivals including Dubrovnik, Amsterdam, Medellin Festicamara, Seattle, OK Mozart, Mainly Mozart, Music from Angel Fire, Chamber Music Northwest, Rockport, Bard, Norfolk, Monadnock, Music Mountain, and Chestnut Hill Concerts. She has been a guest artist with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, St Paul Chamber Orchestra, Bargemusic, and Speculum Musicae and has collaborated with the Tokyo, Muir, Cassatt, and Manhattan string quartets. A graduate of The Juilliard School and the New England Conservatory, she has released recordings on the Bridge, Etcetera, EDI, Northeastern, and BCM labels.



After forty years with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the legendary principal harpist, Ann Hobson Pilot, retired at the end of the Tanglewood 2009 season. She was a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music under Alice Chalifoux. She became principal harp of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1980, having joined the BSO in 1969 as assistant principal harp and principal with the Boston Pops. Before that she was substitute second harp with the Pittsburgh Symphony and principal harp of the Washington National Symphony. Ann Hobson Pilot has had an extensive solo career. She has performed with many American orchestras as soloist, as well as with orchestras in Europe, Haiti, New Zealand, and South Africa. She has several recordings available on the Boston Records label, as well as on the Koch International and Denouement labels. In September 1999 she traveled to London to record, with the London Symphony Orchestra, the *Harp Concerto* by the young American composer Kevin Kaska, a work that she commissioned.



Ned ROREM

Chamber Music with Flute

Fenwick Smith, Flute • David Leisner, Guitar
Ronald Thomas, Cello • Mihae Lee, Piano
Ann Hobson Pilot, Harp

