

Sounds Modern

presents

Stellar Sounds

music celebrating the art of Frank Stella

Saturday, May 21, 2016, 2:00 pm
Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth

Program

Canzoniere da Scarlatti – elaborazione per quartetto di saxofoni (1998)

III. *Andante* L. 223 (K. 404)

Salvatore Sciarrino

Due Canoni (1994)

Aldo Clementi

Ave (1987)

Franco Donatoni

————— *intermission* —————

Canzoniere da Scarlatti – elaborazione per quartetto di saxofoni (1998)

IV. *Allegro* L. 428 (K. 209)

Salvatore Sciarrino

Sapporo (1962)

Toshi Ichiyangi

Fili (1981)

Franco Donatoni

Personnel

Toshiro Chun, trumpet

Christopher Deane, percussion

Andrew May (Assistant Director, Sounds Modern), violin

Elizabeth McNutt (Director, Sounds Modern), flute

Shannon Wettstein, piano

Mélange Saxophone Quartet:

Kyle Stec, soprano saxophone

Nick Allington, alto saxophone

Alexander Richards, tenor saxophone

Tony Barrette, baritone saxophone

Notes

According to Frank Stella, "If you were to be able to follow an edge of a given work visually and follow it through quickly, you'd get that sense of rhythm and movement that you get in music." Harpsichord works of Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757) – as studied, catalogued and performed by Ralph Kirkpatrick – inspired Stella's *Scarlatti K Series*. Stella has said, "The kick with Scarlatti was obvious. I mean, Scarlatti started writing sonatas when he was 66 and the idea that he ran off 500 or so after he was 66 was just too much for me to resist. It's just great, you know. I've still probably only done about 250." Italian composer Salvatore Sciarrino (born 1947) has arranged many Scarlatti keyboard works for instrumental groups – we chose the saxophone quartet both because Stella's mother was an amateur saxophonist, and because of Sciarrino's inventive and unusual treatment of this particularly modern ensemble.

Modern Italian composers Franco Donatoni (1927-2000) and Aldo Clementi (1925-2011) were very much influenced by Scarlatti's works. Stella's notion that the formula for art is pushing decoration to the point where it transcends itself is apparent in Donatoni's works, where accretion of seemingly ephemeral events and ornaments transforms into musical substance. Clementi's use of overlapping strict canons, repeated at increasingly glacial speed, is reminiscent of the strict iterative forms of Stella's early works.

In 1962, Stella provided costumes and set design for a Merce Cunningham dance piece, *Scramble*. The music, *Activities for orchestra*, was by Japanese composer Toshi Ichianagi (born 1933). Unfortunately, that score can't be found – Ichianagi's publishers, the Cunningham archive, and the David Tudor archive all came up empty-handed. However, we did find *Sapporo*, an evocative graphic score similar in period, style and concept to *Activities*. The notation consists of sparse symbols with strict rules of interpretation, yet leaving tremendous freedom for the interpreters.

Sounds Modern

Flutist Elizabeth McNutt conceived the Sounds Modern series as an invitation for modern art lovers to enjoy the best innovative modern music. Sounds Modern explores the sonic dimensions of the ideas represented in the galleries, bringing the artwork to life in the concert hall. Sounds Modern recently presented programs at the Chinati Foundation in Marfa, Texas, and the Dallas Museum of Art. In addition to directing Sounds Modern, McNutt is director of the Nova new music ensemble at the University of North Texas, where she teaches in the flute and composition areas. Sounds Modern assistant director Andrew May is on the UNT composition faculty.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Tina Gorski and John Nuckels of the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth for their collaboration and inspiration in bringing our sounds to the Modern. We also thank the University of North Texas College of Music. The next Sounds Modern event at the Modern will be on Saturday, December 3 at 2 pm, in conjunction with the exhibition of works by the artist KAWS.

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