

Lover's War

Composed by Peter Evans

Text from "The Creative Process", by James Baldwin

India Cooke- violin

PE- trumpets

Kyle Bruckmann - oboe

Ritwik Banerji- tenor sax

Nava Dunkelman- percussion

Willy Wynant - percussion

Steve Schick - percussion.

"From the very beginning the fact that this piece of mine was supposed to be paired with Stravinsky's "Soldier's Tale" made me think that whatever I cooked up should involve text or narration. The more I thought about what to do, the more I felt it was a good opportunity not to really respond to the Stravinsky, more to contrast with it. Soldier's Tale is a classic piece but it's strangely light considering the subject of the folk tale and what was going on in the world when it was written. Turns out Kurt Vonnegut had the same reaction, and he eventually wrote a new text for the piece about the execution of Eddie Slovik, a draftee in WWII who was shot for desertion.

I wanted to involve text in my own portion, something that responded to the times and the circumstances we find ourselves in, however obliquely. I settled on this very beautiful, humanistic essay by James Baldwin called "The Creative Process". Despite the dry title, the language is very open, evocative, and poetic. Except for the opening piece, I took passages from this essay and dedicated some of them to people who in their own work, relate to and expand on the ideas contained therein. They will be read by Steve Schick, and each movement will feature a different combination of these fantastic creative musicians."

-Peter Evans

1. (PE solo)
- for Eddie Slovik

2. (Steve Schick, Nava Dunkelman, Willy Wynant)

“There are, forever, swamps to be drained, cities to be created, mines to be exploited, children to be fed. None of these things can be done alone. But the conquest of the physical world is not man’s only duty. He is also enjoined to conquer the great wilderness of himself. The precise role of the artist, then, is to illuminate that darkness, blaze roads through that vast forest, so that we will not, in all our doing, lose sight of its purpose, which is, after all, to make the world a more human dwelling place.”

-for Lewis Mumford

3. (Ritwik Banerji, Peter Evans, Kyle Bruckmann, India Cooke)

“This continent now is conquered, but our habits and our fears remain. And, in the same way that to become a social human being one modifies and suppresses and, ultimately, without great courage, lies to oneself about all one’s interior, uncharted chaos, so have we, as a nation, modified or suppressed and lied about all the darker forces in our history. We know, in the case of the person, that whoever cannot tell himself the truth about his past is trapped in it, is immobilized in the prison of his undiscovered self. This is also true of nations.”

-for Michelle Alexander

4. (Nava Dunkelman and Kyle Bruckmann)

“There is nothing stable under heaven.”

-for Sarah Kendzior

5. (India Cooke and Ritkiw Banerji solos + Steve Schick and Willy Wynant)

“The state of being alone is not meant to bring to mind merely a rustic musing beside some silver lake. The aloneness of which I speak is much more like the aloneness of birth or death. It is like the fearless alone that one sees in the eyes of someone who is suffering, whom we cannot help. Or it is like the aloneness of love, the force and mystery that so many have extolled and so many have cursed, but which no one has ever understood or ever really been able to control. I put the matter this way, not out of any desire to create pity for the artist—God forbid!—but to suggest how nearly, after all, is his state the state of everyone, and in an attempt to make vivid his endeavor. The state of birth, suffering, love, and death are extreme states—extreme, universal, and inescapable. We all know this, but we would rather not know it. The artist is present to correct the delusions to which we fall prey in our attempts to avoid this knowledge.”

- for Cecil Taylor

6. (Septet)

“Societies never know it, but the war of an artist with his society is a lover’s war, and he does, at his best, what lovers do, which is to reveal the beloved to himself and, with that revelation, to make freedom real.”