

**Boston Musica Viva**

**Richard Pittman, music director**

**with**

**Claire Bloom, narrator**

Dean Anderson, percussion

Scott Hartmann, trombone

James Orleans, bass

Nancy Cirillo, violin

Dana Oakes, trumpet

George Sakakeeny, bassoon

William Wrzesien, clarinet

Thursday Evening, October 28, 1993, at 8:00

Rackham Auditorium, Ann Arbor, Michigan

PROGRAM

*Die nachtegaal* (The Nightingale) . . . . . Theo Loevendie

*Dead Elvis*\* . . . . . Michael Daugherty

INTERMISSION

*L'histoire du Soldat* (The Soldier's Tale) . . . . . Igor Stravinsky

Part I

Part II

\* Tonight's performance marks the world premiere of *Dead Elvis*

Thanks to U-M Professor of Composition Michael Daugherty  
for tonight's Philips Educational Presentation

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## PROGRAM NOTES

### *The Nightingale* Theo Loevendie

Theo Loevendie (b. 1930) is an Amsterdam-born composer who has received continuous acclaim for his contributions to 20th-century music. The Dutch composer studied saxophone and composition at the Sweelinck Conservatory from 1955-60 and later joined Boy Edgar's big band in 1961. By 1968, Loevendie was the leader of this group, but left in favor of forming his own quartet, the T.L. Consort, in 1968. Currently, Loevendie lectures on modern music and conducts workshops in European countries in addition to his own writing and performing career.

Loevendie was a late starter in classical music as his career was originally rooted in jazz. In composing, however, Loevendie admits that he has always been "open to influences from wherever," indicating that it could be "Mozart, Japanese Chakushashi, or an African drummer." The two spirits that reign in his soul, the jazz musician and the composer, seem to agree with the contemporary musical scene as several of his works have achieved worldwide attention. *Flexio*, for instance, received the Koussevitsky Foundation prize and has been referred to as "one of the best orchestral works written in any country these last years." Successes such as this have earned Loevendie the reputation as one of the outstanding Dutch composers of his generation.

*The Nightingale* (1974-79), written for narrator and seven instruments, was the recipient of much serious acclaim earning an Edison prize in 1982 while a television version of the work has been shown in many languages throughout the world.

—Program Note Compiled by Sarah Hamilton

### *Dead Elvis -- World Premiere* Michael Daugherty



President Richard Nixon and Elvis

*Dead Elvis* (1993) was commissioned by the Boston Musica Viva and Chuck Ullery, principal bassoonist of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and is scored for clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, trombone, violin, double bass and percussion (one player). It is more than a coincidence that *Dead Elvis* is scored for the same instrumentation as Stravinsky's *Histoire du Soldat* (1918) in which a soldier sells his violin, and his soul, to the devil for a magic book. In *Dead Elvis*, the bassoon is Elvis (or perhaps an Elvis impersonator).

Does this rock star sell out his Southern folk authenticity to the sophisticated professionalism of Hollywood movies, Colonel Parker, and Las Vegas, in order to attain great wealth and fame?

*Dead Elvis* goes far beyond this romantic Faustian scenario. For me, the two clashing Elvis images (the hip, beautiful, genius, thin, rock-and-roll Elvis versus the vulgar, cheesy, fat, stoned, Las Vegas Elvis) serve as a *Sturm und Drang* compositional algorithm. Further,



Richard Pittman

larger works. In addition, chamber operas, music-theater pieces, dance works and other multi-media productions frequently involve collaboration with other performing artists and organizations.

BMV's adventuresome programming reaches far beyond that of a traditional chamber ensemble; staged productions and multi-media presentations are presented on a regular basis in an effort to embrace works that would otherwise not be heard and, at the same time, attract new and ever larger audiences to the music of our time. At the same time, BMV offers consistent and reliable support to living composers, mostly American, by performing their music. Given strong first performances, many of the works written for BMV have entered the repertoire, to be taken up throughout America and in Europe. BMV is particularly proud to have championed numerous composers who later won Pulitzer prizes, among them John Harbison, Donald Martino, Joseph Schwanter, and Ellen Taaffe Zwilich. To the extent of its

resources, BMV asks for pieces from both emerging and established composers. Under the direction of Mr. Pittman, the Boston Musica Viva has performed over 374 works by 168 composers, including 79 works written for BMV, 80 world premieres, and 42 Boston premieres. In 1991, BMV was awarded the American Composer's Alliance Laurel Leaf Award for "distinguished achievement in fostering and encouraging American music."

Each season, the Boston Musica Viva produces its own subscription series concerts in the Boston area. This series includes an annual Family Concert designed specifically for younger children. In addition, BMV regularly tours its programs. Recent engagements have brought the ensemble to California, New York, and Toronto. On four European tours and two special trips to European festivals, the Boston Musica Viva has performed American music almost exclusively; the group has introduced concert, radio, and television audiences in ten European countries to works by American composers. Touring plans for BMV's 25th Anniversary Season involve trips to New York and California, and tonight's Ann Arbor debut concert.

Beyond the concert hall, the Boston Musica Viva hosts a variety of educational outreach programs. Pre-concert discussions, special events, lecture-demonstrations and workshops at area schools and cultural institutions provide children and adults with enlightening educational opportunities in an intimate setting. To quote one subscriber, "We look forward to feeling close to the performers and conductor, whom we feel we've gotten to know over the years." Recent events have brought guest composers to the Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School, the Boston and Newton Public Libraries, Boston University, and New England Conservatory, among others. All of group's educational activities, in addition to its concerts and publicity efforts, focus on audience development for the music of our time.

The Boston Musica Viva has made fourteen commercial recordings, including those available on the Northeastern, Neuma, and Delos labels. Upcoming projects include recordings of works by Henry Brant, William Kraft, and Kurt Weill on Newport Classic and Harmonia Mundi labels. Live performance recordings of the Boston Musica Viva are broadcast throughout the season on WGBH's noontime series, *Off the Record* (89.7 FM).

Richard Pittman founded the Boston Musica Viva in 1969 and continues as its music director and conductor. Although he has built his career on 20th century repertoire, the

my use of *Dies Irae* (a 13th century medieval Latin chant for the Day of Judgment) as the principal musical theme of *Dead Elvis* signifies yet another aspect to the Elvis myth: some people believe Elvis is dead while others believe Elvis is alive and well in Kalamazoo. Perhaps the question is not whether Elvis is alive or dead, but why does the phenomenon of Elvis endure beyond the grave of Graceland?

Elvis, for worse or better, is part of American culture, history, and mythology. If you want to understand America and all its riddles, sooner or later you're going to have to deal with (Dead) Elvis.

– Program Note by Michael Daugherty

### *The Soldier's Tale*

Igor Stravinsky (1882 - 1971)

Igor Stravinsky's long career was subjected to some of the most significant musical directions of the early 20th century and while the musical environment around him shifted, his own focus evolved making him one of the most innovative composers of our time. The idea for *The Soldier's Tale* came to Stravinsky in early 1917. At the time, the composer was receiving no royalties from his publishers and was cut off from his family's estate in Russia. Furthermore, there were only infrequent performances of his music at all, so the collaboration with librettist Ramuz made perfect sense as both were suffering the effects of the First World War. Stravinsky imagined the work as simple to understand and easy to produce under adverse conditions. The economy of the piece, then, is easily explained; it requires few musicians, little scenery, and the music recycles motives and textural ideas. Furthermore, the short, self-contained musical numbers made for a score that could be presented independently as a concert suite.

Stravinsky's view of composition was one that held control of the "infinite possibilities" of musical combinations in the highest regard. It was only through this control that the composer felt that a musical idea could truly be liberated. In his own words, a composer's purpose was "to sift the elements he receives from imagination... The more art is controlled, limited, worked over, the more it is free." Details such as the certain color achieved by pairing solo instruments, for example, is an inseparable part of the music itself. Each individual element (such as instrumentation, rhythm, and harmony) of *The Soldier's Tale*, then, can be heard in its own separate context so as to fully perceive the independent function of each. Stravinsky preferred using smaller ensembles since composition of *The Rite of Spring* (1913) for their clarity and sound imagery and *The Soldier's Tale* is no exception. The instruments he chose represent the high and low registers of several instrumental families: clarinet and bassoon, coronet and trombone, and violin and double bass. The work's irregular rhythm patterns (for instance, the shifting pulse of the march tune colliding with the consistent one-two-one-two accompaniment of the double bass) illustrate Stravinsky's long-time obsession with freeing rhythm from the "tyranny of the barline."

The work evolves into a reflection of the vulgar and empty outside world as it explores the demonic struggle for possession of the soldier's soul. The music of Part I is mostly incidental, with the narrator and soldier freely talking during the three numbers that make up this first half. Once Part II begins, the practice of repeating numbers ceases (after the initial march) and the music becomes continuous with no interruptions from the narrator or characters. As the play reaches its climax, the music seems to take over, finally imposing itself on the work as a whole. Throughout the piece, Stravinsky gave the percussion a predominant role, perhaps reflecting the composer's interest in jazz, but more likely the composer had in mind the importance the percussion would have in concluding the work. As the Devil carries the Soldier off, the drum plays on alone as if the spirit of the music leaves its body and only a skeleton remains.

–Program Note Compiled by Sarah Hamilton

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS



**Claire Bloom** was born in London and made her first appearance on the stage with the Oxford Repertory Company at the age of 16. Her first major role came a year later, when she played Ophelia at Stratford-Upon-Avon opposite the alternating Hamlets of Paul Scofield and Robert Helpmann. Her first London appearance was as Alizon Eliot in John Gielgud's production of Christopher Fry's "The Lady's Not for Burning" opposite Richard Burton. Her performance in Peter Book's production of Jean Anouilh's "Ring Round the Moon," also starring Paul Scofield, led to the role of Teresa in Charles Chaplin's 1952 film "Limelight."

Since then she has divided her career between England and the United States. Her films include "Limelight," "The Man Between," "Richard III," "Look Back in Anger," "The Spy Who Came in From the Cold," "Charley," "A Doll's House," "Islands in the Stream," "Clash of the Titans," "Sammy and Rosie," and Woody Allen's "Crimes and Misdemeanors."

Her most notable stage roles have included Juliet, Ophelia, Viola, Miranda and Cordelia at the Old Vic; in London's West End she has appeared as Sasha in "Ivanov," Nora in "A Doll's House," Rebecca West in "Rosmersholm," and Mme. Ranyeskvya in "The Cherry Orchard" and, at the Almeida in 1990, as Irena in "When We Dead Awaken." In 1974, for her London portrayal of Blanche de Bois in "A Streetcar Named Desire," she won the three major English theatrical awards.

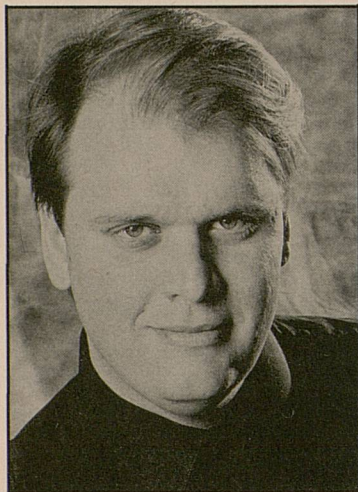
In New York Miss Bloom has been seen in leading roles in "A Doll's House," "Hedda Gabler," "Rashomon," "Vivat! Vivat! Regina!," and the stage version of Henry James' "Turn of the Screw." Miss Bloom also appeared as Katherine of Aragon in "Henry VIII," as Queen Gertrude in "Hamlet," as Lady Constance in "King John," and as the Queen in "Cymbaline" for the BBC Shakespeare television series. Her many other television appearances include "Brideshead Revisited," in which she and Laurence Olivier played Lord and Lady Marchmain, Philip Roth's "The Ghost Writer," and "Shadowlands," for which she won Britain's BAFTA Award for the best television actress of the year.

*Limelight and After*, an autobiographical book, was published in 1982 by Harper and Row.

Miss Bloom is currently appearing as narrator with major symphony and chamber orchestras and also tours the U.S. extensively with her one woman performances. Tonight's concert marks Claire Bloom's UMS debut.

**The Boston Musica Viva** champions music of the 20th century. Established in 1969 by music director **Richard Pittman**, the ensemble is one of the oldest, most distinguished new music ensembles in the United States. With rare exceptions, a new work is premiered at each concert, usually one that Richard Pittman requests of an American composer. Concerts feature the seven-musician core ensemble, but this core is often augmented for

scope of his activity belies this specialist's image. A former member of the conducting faculty for both orchestra and opera at the Eastman School of Music, where he was the founder-director of the Eastman Musica Nova, he has also taught orchestral conducting at the New England Conservatory. His own conducting teachers have included Laszlo Halasz, Sergiu Celibidache and Pierre Boulez. In Europe he has conducted all four BBC symphony orchestras, the London Sinfonietta, and the Frankfurt Radio Symphony. In the United States, he has conducted the National Symphony, the Concerto Soloists in Philadelphia and just recently, assisted Zubin Mehta with the New York Philharmonic. Mr. Pittman is also the music director of the Concord Orchestra in Massachusetts.



**Michael Daugherty's** music has been performed throughout America and abroad by the New York Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Tonhalle-Orchester Zurich, the symphony orchestras of Baltimore, Detroit, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Pasadena, St. Louis, Memphis, Richmond and Albany; the St. Paul, Concordia, Baltimore Pro Musica, and Cleveland chamber orchestras, and ensembles including Lontano, Boston Musica Viva, Netherlands Winds and the Kronos Quartet. His compositions have been featured at the Aspen, Bang on a Can, Tanglewood, Grand Tetons, Warsaw Autumn and Holland festivals.

In the past decade, Daugherty has received numerous awards for his music, including recognition from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and a Friedheim Kennedy Center Award.

Born in 1954 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Daugherty is currently Associate Professor of Music Composition at the University of Michigan. After early training as a jazz pianist and composer, he spent a year as a Fulbright Fellow composing computer music at IRCAM in Paris and collaborated with jazz composer Gil Evans in New York. Subsequently, Daugherty received a doctorate in music composition from Yale University, studying in New Haven from 1980-82 with composers Earle Brown, Jacob Druckman, Bernard Rands and Roger Reynolds, and in Hamburg, Germany from 1982-84 with Gyorgy Ligeti. His music is recorded on Opus One and published exclusively by Peer-Southern Concert Music, New York.

**UPCOMING UMS EVENTS INCLUDE:**

**Christopher Parkening, guitarist**

Wednesday, November 3, 8pm

Rackham Auditorium

**Uptown String Quartet**

Saturday, November 13, 8pm

Rackham Auditorium

For tickets or more information call

**313-764-2538**

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