

Cedille Records
5255 N. Lakewood Ave.
Chicago, IL 60640
(773) 989-2515
www.cedillerecords.org

Press contact: Nat Silverman
Nathan J. Silverman Co./PR
1830 Sherman Ave., Suite 401
Evanston, IL 60201-3773
Phone (847) 328-4292
Fax (847) 328-4317
Email: natsilv@aol.com

News

For Release: June 2006

UNIQUE U.S. ORCHESTRA OFFERS WORKS BY FIVE CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN COMPOSERS ON NEW CD

Conductor Carlos Kalmar and the Grant Park Orchestra in World-Premiere Recordings of Music by Kolb, Kernis, Corigliano, Hersch, and Harbison

Chicago's Grant Park Orchestra, the last of a breed, and Principal Conductor Carlos Kalmar headline a new Cedille Records release comprising world-premiere recordings of works by contemporary American composers Barbara Kolb, Aaron Jay Kernis, John Corigliano, Michael Hersch, and John Harbison.

American Orchestral Works (Cedille Records CDR 90000 090) includes Kolb's *All in Good Time* (1994), Kernis's *Sarabanda in Memoriam* (1997-arr. 2003), Hersch's *Ashes of Memory* (1999), Corigliano's *Midsummer Fanfare* (2004), and Harbison's *Partita for Orchestra* (2000).

The Grant Park Music Festival, founded in 1935, is the nation's only remaining free, municipally funded outdoor classical music series. The Grant Park Orchestra, formed in 1943, is the Festival's orchestra in residence. The Festival has a long history of promoting American music and artists.

"The Orchestra has always presented fine conductors (Leonard Slatkin, Hugh Wolff among others) and adventuresome but audience-friendly contemporary music," wrote *Chicago Sun-Times* music critic Wynne Delacoma.

James W. Palermo, the festival's artistic and general director, told Cedille Records, "Perhaps it's because there isn't a ticket gate, but yes, there is less pressure to program only the chestnuts. The audience also seems more willing to experiment and try on new works because the price right."

- more -

Maestro Kalmar, in an interview for Cedille, called the selection of works on the new recording “a fantastic reflection and representation of what American music is in our day. Rhythm, color, depth, accessibility — it’s all there in tremendous variety. There is something for everybody.”

Kolb’s *All in Good Time* is a work of great charm and ingenuity. “Permutations of rhythm are at the heart of this short, intense composition,” writes Andrea Lamoreaux in the CD notes. Propulsive outer sections of rhythmic regularity surround a slow, almost cool-jazz middle section featuring saxophone and vibraphone, where time seems to stop altogether. The *Hartford Courant* (Kolb is a Hartford native) called the piece “visceral and evocative.”

Kernis’s *Sarabanda in Memoriam* is a post-9/11 resetting of the slow movement from his Pulitzer Prize-winning String Quartet No. 2. Reviewing a Grant Park Orchestra performance, the *Sun-Times*’ Delacoma said “the music’s gentle contours and phrases that often melted into misty silence offered a sense of hope, illogical perhaps, but heartbreakingly irrepressible.”

Hersch’s dramatic and deeply emotional *Ashes of Memory* is the breakout composition that propelled the gifted young composer (b. 1971) into the spotlight. His most frequently performed work “incorporates fragments of his earlier pieces and earlier experiences that have persisted in time and memory,” Lamoreaux writes in the CD notes. “This sense of ongoing recollection is the source of the work’s title.” A critic for London’s *Financial Times* wrote, “This 20-minute two-movement essay [is] as gripping as anything I’ve heard written in the last decade.”

Corigliano’s brief, two-part *Midsummer Fanfare* was commissioned by the Grant Park Music Festival to celebrate the 2004 opening of its new outdoor venue, the Frank Gehry-designed Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park. That same year, Corigliano was the subject of a season-long perspective by the Grant Park festival. The first part of *Midsummer* is an introduction that provides fragmentary hints of the ensuing fanfare for brass. The *Chicago Tribune*’s John von Rhein described *Midsummer* as “a suitably jubilant piece d’occasion . . . built out of washes of sound.”

Harbison has described his ingenious *Partita for Orchestra* as “a merging or collision of two baroque types in each movement. These encounters seem to me to make their ancient impulses very

contemporary.” Harbison pairs a prelude with a fantasia, a rondo with a capriccio, an aria with a sarabande, and a courante with a gigue. Harbison’s Partita is both an engaging musical game and a concerto for orchestra, spotlighting the virtuosity of each symphonic section.

American Orchestral Works was recorded live in concert in the new Harris Theater for Music and Dance in Chicago’s Millennium Park, during periods when Grant Park Orchestra performances were moved indoors due to other events in the vicinity.

This is Cedille’s fourth recording with the Grant Park Orchestra under Kalmar. Their 2004 CD *Symphonic Works by Robert Kurka* was nominated for a Grammy Award and was favorably reviewed in *The New York Times*. Other CDs include *American Works for Organ & Orchestra*, with organist David Schrader, and *Portraits: Violin Concertos by Szymanowski, Martinu & Bartók*, with violinist Jennifer Koh, released last month.

Cedille Records (pronounced say-DEE’) is dedicated to showcasing the most noteworthy classical artists in and from Chicago. The nonprofit label is an arm of The Chicago Classical Recording Foundation. For a free catalog and the locations of local retail outlets, contact Cedille Records, 5255 N. Lakewood Ave., Chicago, IL 60640-2220, call (773) 989-2515; E-mail: info@cedillerecords.org. On the Net: www.cedillerecords.org.

###

American Orchestral Works
(Cedille Records CDR 90000 090)

Barbara Kolb: *All in Good Time* (1994) (10:36)
Aaron Jay Kernis: *Sarabanda in Memoriam* (1997-arr. 2003) (17:34)
Michael Hersch: *Ashes of Memory* (1999) (19:29)
John Corigliano: *Midsummer Fanfare* (2004)(5:49)
John Harbison: *Partita for Orchestra* (2000) (22:00)

Grant Park Orchestra
Carlos Kalmar, conductor