

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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HARRISON - WEBER, COMPOSERS' SHOWCASE CONCERT AT MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Music by Lou Harrison and Ben Weber will be featured in the third Composers' Showcase concert of the season at the Museum of Modern Art on Thursday, March 1, at 8:30 p.m. Margaret Hillis will conduct. The program will include Ben Weber's "Serenade for Strings," op. 46 (1955-56), performed for the first time by a string orchestra (it has been played heretofore by string quintet); and Weber's "Rapsodie Concertante" for viola and small orchestra, op. 47 (1957), with Walter Trampler as violist. The "Rapsodie" was written for Mr. Trampler, who has performed it previously in New York with piano, but not with orchestra. Lou Harrison will be represented by the "Prayer Scene" aria from Act III of his opera "Rapunzel" (1952), with the distinguished soprano Adele Addison as soloist; and the music from his ballet "Solstice" (1950), originally written for Jean Erdman and her dance group. This will be the first concert performance of the work in New York. Composers' Showcase, now in its fifth year, is under the direction of Charles Schwartz.

Harrison and Weber, both born in America (Harrison, 1917, Weber, 1916), have established international reputations. Both have received many awards, including the "Twentieth Century Masterpiece Prize" (1954) at the International Cultural Congress in Rome, at which they were the only American recipients.

Weber's music is usually considered conservatively atonal; although freely chromatic, it is not generally twelve-tone music in the strictest sense. The exotic atmosphere of Harrison's work shows a strong influence of Oriental music. Although Harrison is most widely known for his many percussion pieces, especially those using such unusual instruments as automobile brake drums, washtubs and garbage pails, it is in his primarily non-percussive work, with its subtle blend of the Orient and the West, that his distinctive musical personality is most apparent.

Margaret Hillis, conductor of the program, has a strong affinity for contemporary music. Her consistently fine musicianship and extensive choral and instrumental experience have made her one of the most active of conductors. She is the founder and director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Chorus, and conductor of the Kenosha Symphony Orchestra. She has been actively involved with the NBC-TV Opera Company, Santa Fe Opera, New York City Opera, New York Chamber Soloists, and the American Opera Society. She has conducted recordings for Bartok, Columbia, Epic, Everest, Vanguard, R. C. A. Victor, and Vox Records.

On April 5, Composers' Showcase will present a memorial tribute to Theodore Chanler. Nadia Boulanger, Aaron Copland, Walter Piston and Virgil Thomson will participate.

Further information available from Herbert Bronstein, Associate Publicity Director,
Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York City. CI 5-8900.