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PRESS RELEASES

New CD: Piano Works of Ned Rorem Performed by Carolyn Enger

October 23, 2013 | By Nancy Shear Arts Services

On the occasion of composer Ned Rorem's 90th birthday (b. October 23, 1923), Naxos will release the recording of his collections, Piano Album I and Six Friends (8.559761), performed by American pianist Carolyn Enger, in its American Classics series. Many of these works are world-premiere recordings.

Primarily composed as gifts for Rorem's longtime companion Jim Holmes as well as other friends and colleagues (including singer Judy Collins, Sixty Notes for Judy), Piano Album I is a series of short piano compositions that date from 1978 to 2001. Also included on this release is a set of similar pieces, published in 2007 under the title Six Friends.

As a preface to the published collection, Rorem wrote: During the thirty-two years that Jim Holmes and I lived together, until he died in January of 1999, I would compose little pieces for him on special occasions. Each piece fits onto one page which I decorated in bright colors, and framed. I took to doing likewise for other friends and family too, and the present collection includes twenty-eight of these. Many of them I later incorporated into larger works.

Regarding Six Friends, Rorem wrote, They are Marian Seldes, the actress; Barbara Grecki, neighbor and confidante; Rosemary and Mary, beloved sister and niece; Don Julien, an intense pal; Jerome Lowenthal, great pianist who just turned 75. The pieces aren't meant to be portraits so much as modest gifts.

Ned Rorem has complimented Ms. Enger on a wonderful performance of my music.

Contents of the CD

NED ROREM (1923) PIANO ALBUM I SIX FRIENDS Carolyn Enger, piano Naxos (8.559761)

Piano Album I

Song Without Words (1978) (For Jim, to help him on his birthday. With all my faith and most of my love) *Carol-Pastiche (1984) (To the only Jim in the world, this Carol-Pastiche to thank him for giving a point to the past seventeen years.) *Serenade for Two Paws (1985) (On Christmas with love from Ned. For Jim to teach to Sonny on rainy afternoons.) *Nineteen Measures for Jim (1986) (Nineteen years already...These nineteen measures, with their two lean voices, must symbolize the richness of those years. With love forever.) *Golden Notes on Nearing Fifty (1986) (For Jim at forty-nine, this mirror-image of Christmas 1986 because any mirror into which he gazes turns to gold.) Another Little Song Without Words (1987) (For JH on another birthday. Since no words could even describe the depth of my feeling for you.) *This Serpentine Etude (1990) (Forever dear Jim: This Serpentine Etude is unrevised. But then, so is my feeling for you, which has merely augmented since first we met, 23 years ago this month.) *For a Perfect Friend (1991) (For Jim on Christmas Eve 1991) *Marriage Measures (1992) (To John Simon and Pat Hoag) *Snapshot of Jack (1992) (For Jack Mitchell) *For Jim (1993) (On Christmas Eve 1993 With love for longer than forever...) *A Little Waltz for Jim at Fifty-Five (1994) (For the only Jim in the world without whom I could not write this or any music.) *A Melody for Shirley (1994) (For Shirley with love from Ned today and forever. A note for every year.) *A Talisman for Jim on Christmas Eve (1994) (Who am I, presuming to embellish the mighty Tallis? Yet who is Tallis in the shadow of Jim, who lights my whole world?) *On His Birthday (1995) (O Jim, I will love you forever...) *Ah Jim... (1995) (The mere words that

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traditionally adorn these offerings can no longer explain my crucial feeling for you. So now, the two sonic parallel lines that become three, then four, modestly symbolize eternal hope within.) *A Berceuse for Jim at Christmas (1997) (And for the most crucial three decades of my life. I love you.) *A Christmas Card for Mary and Rosemary (1997) (With love forever) For a Perfect Sister (1997) (For Rosemary on Christmas Eve 1997) *A Sarabande for the Only Jim in the World (1998) (For Jim on his birthday with love forever.) Sixty Notes for Judy (1999) *Seventy-seven Notes for Rosemary (1999) Ninety-nine Notes to the Millennium (1999) (For Ben Yarmolinsky and the Friends and Enemies of Modern Music) *For Ben (1999) *Waiting to Get Well (2000) (To Eugene Istomin with love) *1 1 = 3 (2000) (Two people can make a third. This little Meditation consists of a 2-voice Invention of ten measures; a nine-measure Chorale Interlude; then the Invention again, now in 3 voices. With love for Jenny and Joel) *Forty Chords for Mark on April First (2001)

Six Friends For Marian (2006) For Barbara (2006) For Rosemary (2006) For Mary (2006) For Don (2006) 75 Notes for Jerry (2007)

Total Playing Time: 51:11

*Word Premier Recording

About Ned Rorem One of Americas most distinguished composers, Ned Rorem grew up in Chicago and was educated at Northwestern University, The Curtis Institute of Music, and The Juilliard School. He won the 1976 Pulitzer Prize for his orchestral suite Air Music and has composed numerous works in all genres. He has received particular acclaim for his over 400 art songs, many of which have become a part of the standard vocal repertory. He was hailed by Time magazine as the world's best composer of art songs. Beginning with the 1966 publication of The Paris Diary, Rorem has also produced a steady stream of prose publications (largely diaries and essays) and has received equal acclaim as both writer and composer. About his work, he said: I conceive all music vocally. Whatever my music is written for tuba, tambourine, tubular bells it is always the singer within me crying to get out.

www.nedrorem.com

About Carolyn Enger Lauded for her sensitive, nuanced playing, American pianist Carolyn Enger is a musician who consistently entrances her audiences. MusicWeb International praised her playing as thoughtful and sensitive& expressive& She plays with fine nuance and tone shading. Fanfare wrote, Enger's dynamic control and emotional sensitivity complement her keen sense of timing and proportion.

In the New York area, she has delivered her distinctly personal concerts at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center's Bruno Walter Auditorium, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, the Tenri Cultural Center, and the Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts.

Ms. Enger's debut album, In Evening Air, included music of Beethoven, Scriabin, Hanson, Copland, Liebermann and Ned Rorem. Recording In Evening Air inspired her to delve deeper into Rorem's pieces for piano; she instantly fell in love with these miniatures.

Committed to creating compelling programming, Ms. Enger performs concert repertoire ranging from European masterworks to fresh discoveries. With her keen interest in performing new works by American and Israeli composers, Ms. Enger's recital programs often feature music by Ned Rorem, Lowell Liebermann, Betty Olivero, Avner Dorman and Lior Navok.

Her interest in distinctive concert experiences has led Ms. Enger to explore a multimedia concert program about World War II, combining music, literature, and images that focus on the lives of Mischlinge half-Jews, in Germany, before, during and after the Holocaust.

Her dedication to bringing music to new audiences has led Ms. Enger to perform in settings such as Israels Bet Yad Lebanim in Nahariya, the Felicja Blumenthal Center in Tel Aviv and, in New York City, at St. Peter's Church and the Donnell Library Center. Ms. Enger's community engagement performances have left presenters and audiences in complete awe of her passion, skill and genuine warmth, according to Cheryl Wylen, Program Director, Backstage at the Y Concert Series.

Ms. Enger is a Steinway Artist.



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