1967

Aion (Reseerches Into the Phenomenology of the Self)

Daniel Keith Conner
The University of Montana

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ION

(ASSOCIATIONS INTO THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE SELF)

A Musical Composition

By

Daniel Keith Conner

B.A., University of Chicago, 1966

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of
Master of Music

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

1967

Approved by:

Chairman, Board of Examiners

Dean, Graduate School
Aion

RESEARCHES INTO THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE SELF
BY
DANIEL CONNER
1967

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF
CARL GUSTAV JUNG

FOR
2 HORNS IN F
2 TRUMPETS IN C
2 TROMBONES
BASS TROMBONE
BASS TUBA
TIMPANI
VIBRAPHONE
GONG
SITAR
ORGAN
The title of this work is taken from a psychological treatise on the nature of mysticism by C.G. Jung. Aion was the name of a Mithraic god whose cult flourished about 200-300 A.D. The three movements of the piece are subtitled "SAMSARA," "VEDIC CHANT," and "SATURI" respectively. Samsara is a Sanskrit word that denotes the "wheel of life," the vicious circle of worldly existence in Hindu and Buddhist philosophy. A Vedic chant is a chant on a text selected from the Vedas, the most ancient holy scriptures of India. Satori is a Japanese word that refers to the "sudden enlightenment" of Zen Buddhist philosophy.

It is the belief of the composer that the enlightened musician of today should draw upon music of all cultures for ideas and inspiration. Hence, several melodies that the composer heard on a recent trip to India are incorporated into the work. The most prominent of these is the karuna (compassion) theme that dominates the second movement. Another theme borrowed from Indian sources is heard in the scherzo-like section of the second movement:

This theme is the basis of a well-known evening raga. The perceptive listener will also notice quotations from Bartok, Hindemith, and Ginastera, as well as a paraphrase of part of a Bruckner symphony.

The three-movement form of the work (fast-slow-fast) corresponds most closely with that of the sonata, although the traditional sonata form is not strictly observed in any movement. The work opens with a slow, ponderous introduction based on the following motif: \( \text{\textit{introduction motif}} \). This is immediately followed by the SAMSARA theme: \( \text{\textit{SAMSARA motif}} \). The SAMSARA theme is developed canonically at tritone intervals. The SAMSARA theme is developed until new material is introduced in 6/8 time in the scherzo-like section. The finale of the first movement, which utilizes both the introductory motif and the SAMSARA theme, follows the scherzo.

The second movement opens with the KARUNA theme played by the organ alone and is developed with the aid of a solo horn and the sitar. A brief scherzo-like section follows in which the theme alternates between the sitar, the organ and the kara. At the close of the movement the KARUNA theme is heard once again played by muted brass.

The third movement is introduced by a solo organ passage, against which the SATORI theme is gradually introduced in the brass.

The SATORI theme is then stated in full in march-like motion by both organ and brass, after which it is developed fugally. At the close of the development of the SATORI theme the KARUNA theme of the second movement is heard once again, played by muted organ and trumpet that opened the movement. This is followed by the finale in which the principal themes of all three movements are heard.

To the eye accustomed only to Western music, it will no doubt seem strange to hear an Indian instrument combined with the traditional Western medium of organ and brass. Nevertheless, Western audiences have recently been introduced to the subtleties of Indian music and Indian musical instruments, and there is no valid reason why widely diverse musical traditions should not profit by borrowing heavily from each other.
Like most musical instruments, the sitar is easy to play but extremely difficult to play well. Since Indian music is largely improvisatory, the sitar player is invited to improvise freely on the melodic basis provided in the second movement. For the inexpert performer, however, the part as written can be mastered with a minimum of difficulty. A few comments on notation for the sitar: whenever a slur is seen in the sitar part, this indicates that the portamento effect peculiar to the instrument should be employed. The melody on a sitar is always accompanied by a drone on strings tuned in open fifths. This effect is not notated in the score but should be freely used. If a sitar or sitar player is unavailable for performance, any melodic percussion instrument such as a xylophone may be used.

The organist will notice that occasionally notes are called for that are below the range of the organ keyboard. This will be found only where full organ is demanded however, and the organist will ordinarily play full organ passages with both hands an octave higher than notated, unless the organ being used is sufficiently bright even with the 16' couplers.

Horns in the bass clef sound a fifth lower than written.

The organist will pre-set the following pistons:

1. Ct. 8', 4', 2', mixtures
   Full organ, all manuals, coupled to Ct.
   Sw. 8', 1 1/3' or similar mutation stop, coupled to Ct.
   Ped. 16', 8', 4', 2', Ct. to Fed.

2. Full organ, all manuals.

3. Ch. Joan Dieste or other soft 8' string.
   Ped. soft 10', 8'.

4. Ct. 8', 4', 2', mixtures
   Sw. 8', 4', 2', coupled to Ct.
   Sw. 8', 4', 1 1/3' or similar mutation, coupled to Ct.
   Ped. 16', 8', 4', 2', Ct. to Fed.
I

SAMSARA

MAESTOSO, P. PRETO GRAVE (1-20)

HORN III

TRUMPETS III

TROMBONE III

TROMBONE I

BASS TROMBONE

TIMPANI

VIBRAPHONE

GONG

ORGAN

C.O.

H.H.

H.H.

BASS TROMBONE

TIMPANI

C.G.

ORGAN
VEDIC CHANT

ADAGIO (L = 100)

TIMPANI

SITAR

ORGAN

see sostenuto

barely audible

ppp sempre