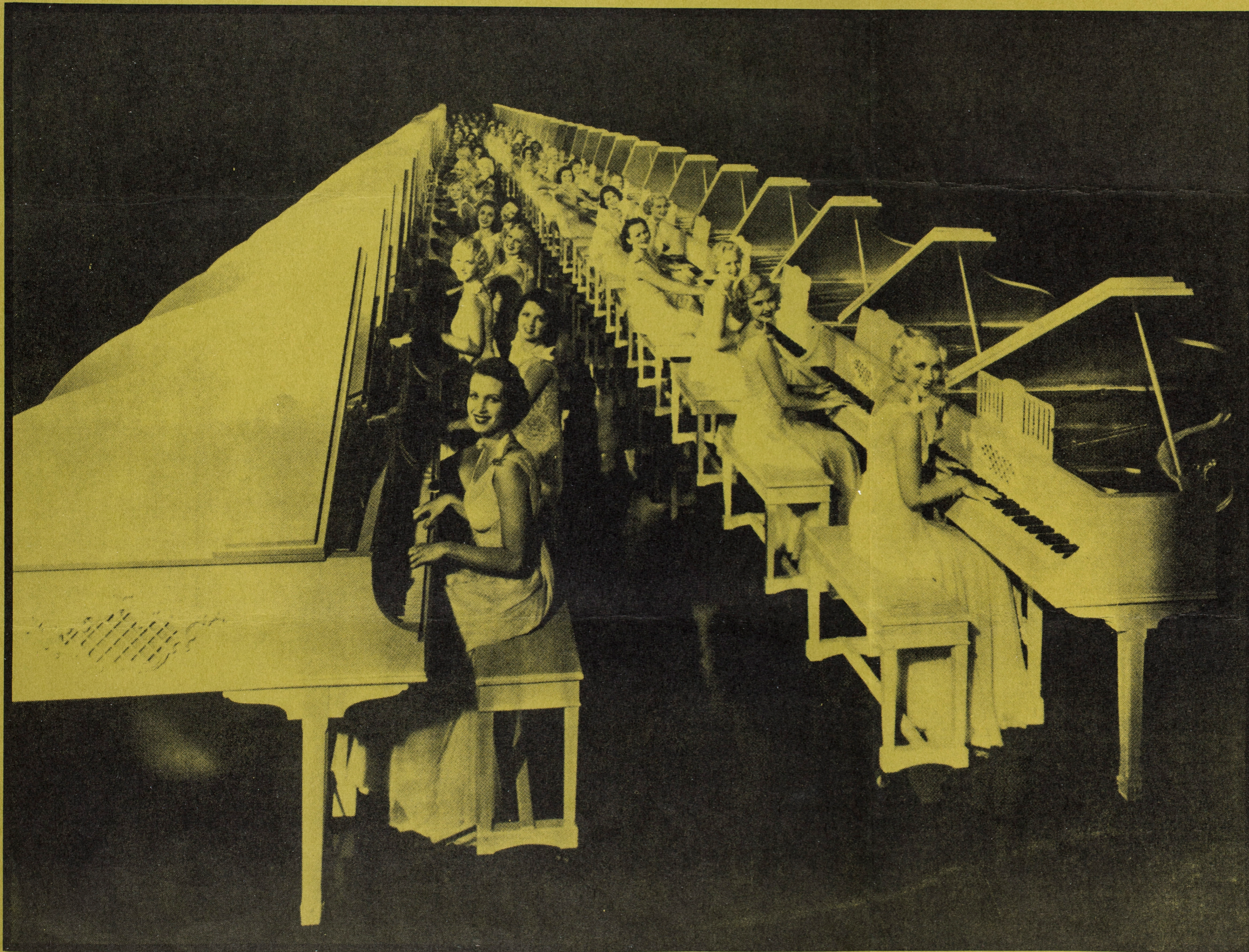


# A marathon presentation of Erik Satie's VEXATIONS



The area premiere of VEXATIONS, a work for piano by Erik Satie which must be repeated 840 times will be performed by U.B. Creative Associate Joseph Kubera and 20 guest pianists including Stephen Manes, Tom Constanten, Robert Moog, and Yvar Mikashoff, who will assist for intervals throughout the marathon presentation. The event will begin at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, November 6 in Room 100 Baird Hall, SUNYAB and will end at approximately 8 a.m. Thursday, November 7.

WBFO (88.7 FM) will pre-empt its regular schedule to broadcast live the entire performance of VEXATIONS for those who would like to listen in their own beds.

Satie wrote the work somewhere between 1893 and 1895. It is nine bars of music for piano solo, over which Satie has written: "In order to play this motif 840 times in succession, it would be good to prepare in advance, and in great silence, through serious stillness."

Couches will be brought into the performance room for people planning to attend the entire performance and people are encouraged to bring sleeping bags. Refreshments will be available.

For more information, call: 831-4507 or 831-5393.

## Vexations

6 p.m. Wednesday, November 6  
thru 8 a.m. Thursday, November 7

Baird Hall Rm. 100

Admission : free

WBFO • Public Radio in Stereo

# Vexations

ERIK SATIE

*NOTE DE L'AUTEUR:*

*Pour se jouer 840 fois de suite ce motif, il sera bon de se préparer au préalable, et dans le plus grand silence, par des immobilités sérieuses*

♠ Très lent

The first system of the musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and contains a complex, repetitive melodic line with many accidentals. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a simpler, more rhythmic accompaniment. The music is marked 'Très lent' and begins with a diamond-shaped symbol.

The second system of the musical score is identical in notation to the first system, featuring two staves with complex melodic and rhythmic patterns. It also begins with a diamond-shaped symbol.

♠ A ce signe il sera d'usage de présenter le thème de la Basse

**THÈME**

The 'THÈME' section is a single staff in bass clef, showing a short, rhythmic melodic fragment that serves as the bass line for the piece. It begins with a diamond-shaped symbol.

Center of the Creative and Performing Arts

presents

CREATIVE ASSOCIATE RECITAL II

November 6-7, 1974

TIME SCHEDULE: ERIK SATIE'S VEXATIONS (subject to minor changes)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1974:

PM 6:00-6:30 Joseph Kubera  
6:30-7:00 Lejaren Hiller  
7:00-7:30 Joseph Kubera  
7:30-8:00 James McKinnon  
8:00-8:30 Claudia Hoca  
8:30-9:00 \*Leo Smit  
9:00-9:30 Stephen Manes  
9:30-10:00 Robert Moog  
10:00-10:30 Leila Melandinidis  
10:30-11:00 Norma Sapp  
11:00-11:30 Steve Radecke  
11:30-12:00 Neal Hatch

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1974:

AM 12:00-12:30 David Cohen  
12:30-1:00 David Cohen  
1:00-1:30 Steve Radecke  
1:30-2:00 Neal Hatch  
2:00-2:30 James Calabrese  
2:30-3:00 Tom Constanten  
3:00-3:30 James Calabrese  
3:30-4:00 Tom Constanten  
4:00-4:30 Martin Kalve  
4:30-5:00 Mark Brooks  
5:00-5:30 Martin Kalve  
5:30-6:00 Joseph Kubera  
6:00-6:30 Mark Brooks  
6:30-7:00 Joseph Kubera  
7:00-7:30 Richard Schulman  
7:30-8:00 Joseph Kubera  
8:00-? Joseph Kubera, or pianists on call

\* by amplified telephone connection from The Cleveland Institute  
of Music, Cleveland, Ohio.

Telephone hookup by George Ritscher.  
Amplification setup by Ralph Jones.

Creative Associate Recital II  
November 6, 1974

Quotes from Erik Satie

"We cannot doubt that animals both love and practice music. That is evident. But it seems their musical system differs from ours. It is another school. ...We are not familiar with their didactic works. Perhaps they don't have any."

"They will tell you I am not a musician. That's right. ...Take the Fils des Etoiles or the Morceaux en forme de poire, En habit de cheval or the Sarabandes, it is clear no musical idea presided at the creation of these works."

"It's a large stairway, very large.  
It has more than a thousand steps, all made of ivory.  
It is very handsome.  
Nobody dares use it  
For fear of spoiling it.

The King himself never does.  
Leaving his room  
He jumps out the window.  
So, he often says:  
I love this stairway so much  
I'm going to have it stuffed.

Isn't the King right?"

"Show me something new; I'll begin all over again."

"When I was young, people told me: You'll see when you're fifty. I'm fifty. I've seen nothing."

"I am in complete agreement with our enemies. It's a shame that artists advertise. However, Beethoven was not clumsy in his publicity. That's how he became known, I believe."

Creative Associate Recital II  
November 6, 1974

I have always wanted to write a lyric drama on the following specific subject:

At that time I was going in for alchemy. Alone in my laboratory one day I was resting. Outside, a leaden sky, livid and sinister--a horror!

I was feeling mournful, without knowing why; almost afraid, though for no apparent reason. It then occurred to me to amuse myself by counting on my fingers, slowly, from one to 260,000.

This I did, but only succeeded in becoming more and more bored. Rising from my chair I went to take a magic nut and put it carefully in a casket of alpaca bone studded with seven diamonds.

Immediately a stuffed bird flew out; a monkey's skeleton ran away; a sow's skin climbed up the wall. Then night descended, covering everything up and abolishing shapes.

But someone is knocking on the door-- the door nearest to the Median talismans, the talismans which were sold to me by a Polynesian maniac. What can it be? Oh God! do not abandon thy servant. He has certainly sinned, but now he repents. Pardon him, I beseech thee. Now the door is opening, opening-- opening like an eye; a silent, shapeless creature is coming nearer, coming nearer, coming nearer.... Not a single drop of sweat remains on my terrorised skin; moreover I am extremely thirsty, extremely thirsty.

Out of the shadows comes a voice: 'Sir, I think I must have double sight'.

I do not recognize this voice. It goes on: 'Sir, it is I, it is only I'. 'Who are you?' I mutter in terror. 'It's I, your servant. I think I must have double sight. Did you not place with care a magic nut in a casket of alpaca bone studded with seven diamonds?' Suffocated, I drew nearer, gliding darkly through the night. I could feel him trembling. No doubt he was afraid I was going to shoot him. Then, with a sob, like a little child, he murmured: 'I saw you through the key-hole.'

Erik Satie

Excerpts from "Erik Satie",  
an article by John Cage

Taking the works of Satie chronologically (1886-1925), successive ones often appear as completely new departures. Two pieces will be so different as not to suggest that the same person wrote them. Now and then, on the other hand, works in succession are so alike, sometimes nearly identical, as to bring to mind the annual exhibitions of painters, and to allow musicologists to discern stylistic periods. Students busy themselves with generalized analyses of harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic matters with the object of showing that in Socrate all these formal principles are found, defined, and reunited in a homogeneous fashion (as befits a masterpiece). From this student point of view, Pierre Boulez is justified in rejecting Satie. Le bon Maître's harmonies, melodies, and rhythms are no longer of interest. They provide pleasure for those who have no better use for their time. They've lost their power to irritate. True, one could not endure a performance of Vexations (lasting [my estimate] twenty-four hours; 840 repetitions of a fifty-two beat piece itself involving a repetitive structure: A,A<sub>1</sub>,A,A<sub>2</sub>, each A thirteen measures long), but why give it a thought?

An artist conscientiously moves in a direction which for some good reason he takes, putting one work in front of the other with the hope he'll arrive before death overtakes him. But Satie despised Art ("J'emmerde l'Art"). He was going nowhere. The artist counts: 7,8,9, etc. Satie appears at unpredictable points springing always from zero: 112,2,49, no etc. The absence of transition is characteristic not only between finished works, but at divisions, large and small, within a single one. It was in the same way that Satie made his living: he never took a regular (continuity-giving) job, plus raises and bonuses (climaxes). No one can say for sure anything about the String Quartet he was on the point of writing when he died.

Creative Associate Recital II  
November 6, 1974

Excerpts from "Erik Satie",  
an article by John Cage  
(continued)

To be interested in Satie one must be disinterested to begin with, accept that a sound is a sound and a man is a man, give up illusions about ideas of order, expressions of sentiment, and all the rest of our inherited aesthetic claptrap.

It's not a question of Satie's relevance. He's indispensable.

(The Center of the Creative and Performing Arts is supported in part by funds from the New York State Council on the Arts)