

"2001: A Space Odyssey" composer lectures here

March 6, 1972

Hungarian-born avant-garde composer Gyorgy Ligeti, whose work "Atmospheres" was used in the film "2001" will give a lecture-concert at the University of California, San Diego Thursday, March 9. at 8:30 p.m.

The program, to be held in the Music Gallery, Bldg. 408, on the Matthews Campus, is free and open to the public.

The program will include "Atmospheres," "Lotano," recently performed by the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, and his "Ten Pieces for Wind Quintet."

Ligeti is currently composer-in-residence at Stanford University until June. Born in Transylvania, Ligeti studied with Sandor Veress and Ferenc Parkas at the Budapest Music Academy and later taught at the academy from 1950-56. After the revolution in 1956 he left Hungary and worked for two years at the Studio for Electronic Music in Cologne, West Germany. Since 1959 he has taught composition during the summer at the International Courses for New Music in Darmstadt. His home is in Vienna.

Hungarian and Romanian folk music, plus the neoclassicism of Bartok and Stravinsky influenced Ligeti's early style. In the fifties, drawn to the newly emerging electronic sound technology, he became more and more experimental. He developed a musical style, "micropolyphony," a very dense and complex polyphonic web made up of a large number of individual voices or parts. The voices melt together so completely that one bears no harmony and no rhythm, but rather a continuous flow of music that has an unusual sound quality.

The first work in the "micropolyphonic" style was the orchestra piece "Apparitions" (1958), consisting of a musical web of 63 voices. "Atmospheres" (1961) has 87 instrumental parts. Ligeti's piece "Requiem" (1964) uses a 20-part chorus and orchestra.

In the mid-sixties Ligeti developed his style further, introducing polyrhythmic grid-like structures in his "continuous" musical forms and first appearing in his "Poeme Symphonique for 100 Metronomes" (1962) which created a sensation at the Buffalo Festival of the Arts Today in 1965. Also in the sixties he began composing non-semantic, phonetic musical poetry such as "Aventures" (1962), and reducing the multi-voice micropolyphonic webs to more transparent musical structures. Reducing the number of voices produced a kaleidoscopic effect in which now rhythmic and melodic patterns appeared. The mainworks of this period are the "Cello Concerto" (1966), the "2nd String Quartet" (1968), and the "Chamber Concerto for 13 Players" (1969).

Presently Ligeti's musical experiments are progressing toward a non-tampered, microtonal musical language as in "Harmonies" (1967) for organ, and "Ramifications" (1969) for string orchestra, and toward new possibilities of composition with melodic shapes as in "Melodien" (1971) for orchestra.

Ligeti's works have been widely performed at international festivals of modern music, and, during the past decade, he has grown to be one of the major composers and stimulators of innovative contemporary music.

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