

KEITH FITCH:

MEAN FIDDLE SUMMER (2011)

I. TWILIGHT AIRS

II. BELA'S BLUES

Duration: 10 min. *ca.*

PROGRAM NOTE

Many years ago, when I first moved to New York City, my first position was that of an Administrative Assistant at the Mannes College of Music. One summer day, I escorted some of our students to the Manhattan Children's Museum for a young people's concert. As I entered the museum, I saw a board upon which a young student had spelled the words "Mean Fiddle Summer" in magnetic letters. That evocative phrase stayed with me for years, as I began – and then scrapped – a work for solo violin. More than a decade later, I revisited the idea as I decided to write a new work for my dear friend, Lina Bahn.

The entire work is cast in two movements (slow – fast). *Twilight Airs* (marked *sempre flessibile* – "always flexible") is a lyric, aria-like movement which builds to a passionate climax before receding back into calm and quiet. The finale, *Béla's Blues* (marked "obsessively") is a virtuoso romp inspired by the fugue of the Bartók *Solo Sonata*. While the fugue subject's initial cell (up a major third, down a minor second) is omnipresent, there is only one actual quote – ironically, *not* part of the fugue proper, but some of my favorite music in the movement (and, which, coincidentally, occurs at a similar place in both works). The movement concludes in a flurry of chords, furious *glissandi*, and demonic leaps. *Mean Fiddle Summer* was composed during the winter of 2010-11 and is dedicated to Lina Bahn, "in friendship, admiration, and gratitude."

Other string music of Keith Fitch available from Non Sequitur Music:

<i>'Tho Night Be Falling</i> (2009) for string quartet	20 min. <i>ca.</i>
<i>This Rough Magicke</i> (2008) for flute/alto flute, clarinet (A), viola, and double bass	14 min. <i>ca.</i>
<i>To sleep, to dream</i> (2001, rev. 2004) for violin, viola, violoncello, double bass, and piano/celesta	19 min. <i>ca.</i>
<i>Come soon, come soon</i> (2000) for violoncello and piano	14 min. <i>ca.</i>
<i>Dancing the Shadows</i> (1994) for flute, clarinet, violin, violoncello, piano, and percussion (1)	12 min. <i>ca.</i>
<i>Todestanz</i> (1992) for viola and percussion (1)	15 min. <i>ca.</i>

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