

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

The School of Music and the Office of Lectures and Concerts

present

867

1981

1-31

DUB

THE SONI VENTORUM

Felix Skowronek, flute Laila Storch, oboe, English horn
William McColl, clarinet David Kappy, French horn
Arthur Grossman, bassoon

with guest artist

Montserrat Alavedra, soprano

Saturday, January 31, 1981

Meany Theatre, 8:00 P.M.

TAPE 10,052

PROGRAM

BEETHOVEN
(1770-1827) ≈ 20
(trans. F. Skowronek)

no
uniform
title

Five Pieces for Mechanical Organ (1799)

Allegro
Menuett: Allegretto 19:06
Adagio assai
Scherzo: Allegro
Allegro non più molto

JOSEPH GOODMAN
(b. 1918) ≈ 19

no
uniform
title

Four Songs on Poems of Juan Ramón Jiménez
for Soprano and Wind Quintet (1980)*

Ocaso
Una gota triste 19:24
Anteprimavera
Anunciación

INTERMISSION

*Premiere performance of a work written for Montserrat Alavedra and the Soni Ventorum Quintet.

ANTON REICHA
(1770-1836)

≈ 11 12:10

[Adagio and Andante, flute, English horn,
clarinet, horn and bassoon]
Adagio in D Minor "pour le
Andante in F Major cor anglais" (1819)

CARL NIELSEN
(1865-1931)

≈ 26
25:58

Quintet, Op. 43 (1922) [Quintet, wood-winds &
Allegro ben moderato
Menuett horn, op. 43]
Praeludium: Adagio,
Tema con variazion

Program notes--

Count Josef Deym, the enterprising proprietor of a wax museum in late 18th century Vienna, commissioned both Mozart and Beethoven to compose "background music" for various of his historic or solemm tableau displays. The pieces were performed on a unique contrivance of the time: a mechanical organ housing a set of pipes and small bellows actuated by a rotating pinned cylinder and powered by a weight or spring-driven clockworks. The particular instruments have not survived, and their music must therefore be heard in transcriptions, most appropriately for organ or wind ensemble. Beethoven was well aware of Mozart's contributions to the genre as copies of the Fantasies K. 594 and K. 608 were found in his estate. The most substantial in concept of Beethoven's five pieces, the Adagio assai, is perhaps a reflection of the stately character of the two Mozart examples cited and may also have been an inspiration for the Adagio cantabile theme of his celebrated Septet, Op. 20, composed in the same year.

Soni Ventorum has enjoyed a long and fruitful relationship with the New York composer Joseph Goodman. A student of Hindemith, Piston, and Gian Francesco Malipiero, Goodman has for many years been on the music faculty of Queens College of the City of New York. His compositions include numerous anthems and motets for chorus, organ works including a concerto with orchestra, and a body of chamber music including the following works for winds: A Wind Quintet, Quartet, Trio, a duo for flute and bassoon, and a Concertante for Wind Quintet and Orchestra. Goodman's interest in Spanish poetry dates from a period of residence in Mexico in the late 1940's when he made several choral settings of verses of Garcia Lorca, Gabriella Mistral, and Carlos Blanco. More recently, during a sabbatical leave in Madrid in 1975, he was attracted to poems of Juan Ramon Jimenez and considered the possibility of setting some of these lyrics to music as well. A few years later, after hearing a taped performance of Montserrat Alavedra and members of the Soni Ventorum, he responded readily to the suggestion that he compose a work for them, and the "Four Songs on Poems of Juan Ramon Jimenez" were the result. The set was completed on the first day of October, 1980, and tonight marks its world premiere performance.

Juan Ramón Jiménez (b. 1881, Moguer, Spain; d. 1958, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico). Spanish poet, Nobel Prize in 1956. His first major success, the prose-poetry volume "Platero y yo" (1912) became regarded as a modern classic as one of the best-known literary works in the Spanish-speaking world. His private symbolic style was one of the most important influences in the development of 20th century lyric Spanish poetry, having had a major impact on the poets of the Garcia Lorca and Rafael Alberti generation. Jimenez left Spain in 1936 and came to the United States where he lectured and taught at the University of Maryland for a number of years. In 1951 he assumed a similar position at the University of Puerto Rico, which has remained a major repository of his works.

Text and translation of the "Four Poems"--

(from the book BELLEZA, a collection of poems from 1917-1923)

OCASO

¡Oh, qué sonido de oro que se va,
de oro que ya se va a la eternidad;
qué triste nuestro oído, de escuchar
ese oro que se va a la eternidad,
este silencio que se va a quedar
sin su oro que se va a la eternidad!

SUNSET

Oh what sound of gold which sinks,
of gold which now is sinking into
eternity;
what sorrow to our ears, to listen
to this gold which is sinking into
eternity,
to this silence which will remain
without its gold
which is sinking into eternity!

(The next three poems are all from SEGUNDA ANTOLOGÍA POÉTICA (1898-1918). In a personal orthographic usage, Jiménez frequently spelled words with a "j" rather than a "g" as would normally be the case.)

UNA GOTA TRISTE

Una gota triste
me he encontrado en ti.
¿Lágrima de quién,
rosa blanca, di?

A SAD TEARDROP

A sorrowful drop
I found within you.
Whose teardrop was it,
white rose, do you know?

Pensabas oculta
=¿quién te encontró a ti?=
Por decirte algo,
mi mano tocó tu
tallo carmesí.

You were thinking to yourself
"Who has found me?"
Wanting to say something to you
I touched your crimson stem.

¿Adonde fue la
gota que vi en ti?
¿Lágrima de quién
rosa blanca, di?

What happened to the dew drop
I saw within you?
Whose teardrop was it,
white rose, do you know?

ANTEPRIMAVERA

Llueve sobre el río ...
El agua estremece
los fragantes juncos
de la orilla verde ...
¡Ay, que ansioso olor
a pétalo frío!

Llueve sobre el río ...
Mi barca parece
me sueño, en un vago
mundo. Orilla verde!
¡Ay, barca sin junco!
¡Ay, corazón frío!
Llueve sobre el río ...

ANUNCIACION

¡Trasunto de cristal,
bello como un esmalte de ataujía!

Desde la galería,
esbelta, se veía
el jardín. Y María
virgen, tímida, plena
de gracia, igual que una azucena,

se doblaba al anuncio s celestial.

Un vivo pajarillo
volaba en una rosa.
El alba era primorosa.
Y, cual la luna matinal,

se perdía en el sol nuevo y
sencillo,
el, ala de Gabriel blanco y tri nfal.
Memoria de cristal!

BEFORE SPRINGTIME

Rain on the river ...
The water rustles the fragrant rushes
of the green bank ...
Oh the anxious scent of cold petals!

Rain on the river ...
My little boat is like
a dream in an uncertain
world. Green bank!
Oh little boat without a reed!
Oh - cold heart!
Rain on the river ...

ANNUNCIATION

Just like a crystal
beautiful as a damascened
enamel!
From the narrow gallery the
garden could be seen. And Mary,
maiden, timid, full of grace,
as lovely as a lily,
bowed before the celestial
message.
A lively little bird flew into
a rose.
It was a fine dawn.
And, just as the morning moon,
Gabriel's wing disappeared into
the newborn sun, glistening
and
triumphant.
Memory of crystalline beauty!

(trans. Joseph Goodman)

Anton Reicha was long assumed to be the originator of the wind quintet with the instrumentation of flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, and bassoon. Although recent research has shown that this was not entirely the case, there is little doubt that he was the first to write quintets in which the oboe was replaced by the English horn, and only some 10 composers since have followed this example (in contrast to the 700-plus composers who have written for the "standard" quintet instrumentation). Reicha's three movements utilizing English horn are subtitled simply "Pour le cor anglais" and remained in manuscript until very recently. The two heard this evening were composed in 1819 and it is supposed that the entire set was written as a group of "test pieces" for the changes and improvements undergone by the English horns being built in Paris at the time. In these pieces, the English horn is clearly the soloist throughout, with the other instruments of the quintet providing a discrete but sonorous accompaniment.

Denmark's Carl Nielsen, world-famous as a symphonist, was also the composer of numerous chamber-music works. Of these, one of the best-known and most frequently-performed is his Wind Quintet, Op. 43. The work owed its inspiration to the Copenhagen Wind Quintet, which Nielsen heard in performance at a friend's house in 1922. Impressed with the group, he promised them a quintet which he duly delivered. Apparently, the work itself provided the impetus for a further project -- a concerto for each of the instrumentalists of the quintet -- which was only partially realized with the writing of those for flute and clarinet. Nielsen's Quintet is both a romantic throwback as well as a "modern" work displaying his own idiosyncratic twists. The opening movement is rather pastoral in nature, while the Minuet with its Mahler-like theme is strictly classical in form. With the Praeludium to the Finale, however, we begin to view "through a glass darkly" as it were, as the somber voice of the English horn (replacing the oboe) intones an anguished melody interrupted first by a calming flute cadenza and then by agitated convolutions in the clarinet. The disturbance passes with an arrival of a simple chorale theme upon which are based eleven variations. It is said that Nielsen had the individual temperaments of the original quintet members in mind when he conceived his concerto-project, and those of the flutist (fastidious) and the clarinetist (mercurial) -- already noted in the Praeludium -- are again encountered in the variations and later in the two concerti. With all said and done, the Quintet ends with the forgivingly-reassertive reprise of the chorale, Nielsen's own melody to the Nordic hymn, "My Jesus, make my heart to love Thee."

The next Soni Ventorum concert in this series will take place on Saturday, February 21, 1981 at 8:00 P.M. in Meany Theatre. Program includes works of Lefebvre, Barber, Bozza, and Reicha.