

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

The School of Music and the Office of Lectures and Concerts

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THE SONI VENTORUM

Felix Skowronek, *flute*
William McColl, *clarinet*

Laila Storch, *oboe*
David Kappy, *horn*

Arthur Grossman, *bassoon*

Saturday, February 21, 1981

Meany Theatre, 8:00 P.M.

TAPE 10,086

PROGRAM

Koch
CHARLES LEFEBVRE
(1845-1917)

Suite, Op. 57

[Suite, woodwinds & horn, op. 57]

Canon: Moderato

11 10:55

Allegretto scherzando

Finale: Allegro leggiero

PIERRE GABAYE
(b. 1930)

Sonatine pour flûte et basson (1962)

[Sonatine, flute &
bassoon]

Modéré sans lenteur

Andante

Rapide et brillant

10 1/2 10:24

SAMUEL BARBER
(1910-1981)

no estab. uniform title "Summer Music," Op. 31 (1955)
uniform title for Woodwind Quintet

12 11:52

TAPE 10,087

INTERMISSION

* EUGENE BOZZA
(b. 1905)

no estab.
uniform
title

Variations on a Free Theme, Op. 42 (1943)

Theme: Andantino

Allegretto

Andantino

Allegro - Vif

Calme

Allegro

Allegro vivo

Lento (Chorale)

Final: Vivo

16 15:07

[Quintet, woodwinds & horn, op. 91, no. 3, D major]

ANTON REICHA
(1770-1836)

Quintet in D Major; Op. 91, No. 3

Lento - Allegro assai

22:26

Adagio

Menuetto: Allegro vivo

Finale: Allegretto

Program notes

Charles Edouard Lefebvre, a son of the French painter Jules Lefebvre, studied law before entering the Paris Conservatoire. In 1870, he won the Prix de Rome, returning three years later to Paris where he spent most of his life teaching and composing. In 1895, he succeeded Benjamin Godard as professor of ensembles at the Conservatoire. Although he was not an innovator, Lefebvre was highly regarded by French critics during the late 19th century. He himself was a great admirer of Mendelssohn, to whose works the style and texture of his instrumental pieces might be compared. In his own words, he worked in pastels rather than oils. The Suite, Op. 57 for wind quintet has been a favorite in the repertoire since its composition; one of the few French quintets from that time to have endured.

French composer Pierre Gabaye was born in Paris in 1930, attended the Conservatoire, obtained a Prix de Rome in 1956, and later became an assistant director for O.R.T.F., the national radio and television broadcast service. His Sonatine for flute and bassoon is a good representative of the duo-instrumental genre popular with many French composers, as its contents display the engaging lyricism and jaunty humor often associated with the Gallic spirit. Overall, a rather cinematic aura pervades the duo, with several scenarios coming to mind but noteworthy throughout for the highly "conversational" exchanges between the two protagonists.

Samuel Barber attended the famed Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, and first gained recognition for his Adagio for Strings (1936) and his First Essay for Orchestra; both among the first works by an American composer programmed by Toscanini. The Summer Music, commissioned by the Chamber Music Society of Detroit was first performed on March 20, 1956 at the Detroit Institute of Arts. The mood of the single-movement work is immediately established by the hazily-languid introduction, marked "slow and indolent" in the score. Contrasting staccato sections alternate with nostalgic sonorities, culminating in an expansively expressive passage marked "slightly broader, exultant." A brief reprise of the opening motives leads to a final flurry, with the piece ending as in an upward wisp of smoke.

Eugene Bozza, born in Nice, France, has enjoyed an active career as a violinist, conductor, and composer. He is best known in the United States through his numerous study and ensemble works, mostly for woodwinds and brass, written in a bravura-virtuoso style. The Variations on a Free Theme, one of his substantial chamber works, shows many of his stylistic earmarks: a strong usage of scale and arpeggio writing in a melodic manner, a witty preoccupation with motivic energy and construction, and above all, a particularly deft handling of the instruments themselves. The "free theme," a melody reminiscent of early ecclesiastic chant, is put through six variations culminating in the somber intonation of a repeated chorale phrase before propelling itself into the vigorous Finale conclusion.

Anton Reicha was born in Prague, spent much of his youth in Bonn (where his uncle was the director of the court orchestra), and eventually settled in Paris where he became a professor of theory and composition at the Conservatory. Among his pupils there were Adolphe Adam, Cesar Franck, Charles Gounod, Franz Liszt, and Hector Berlioz. Another claim to fame was his set of 24 wind quintets written for the recently-formed ensemble of flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, and bassoon -- the largest number of such works written by a single composer -- establishing him as the "Beethoven of the wind quintet." (The parallel is of more than passing interest, as Reicha and Beethoven were friends and colleagues in the orchestra in Bonn; Reicha as flutist and Beethoven in the viola section.) Reicha's quintets were considered experimental in many ways, and several are quite sizeable in scope and development, with all showing a remarkable knowledge of and writing for the winds rather in advance of anything else being composed at the time. The D Major Quintet, Op. 91, No. 3 is one of his lighter and more conventional quintets, yet abounds in instrumental sonority and virtuosity as well as thematic invention and exposition.

The Soni Ventorum's next concert in this series will take place on April 17, 1981 in Meany Theatre at 8:00 P.M. The program will include works of Danzi, Onslow, Krenek, and Francaix.

The music world was saddened by the news of Samuel Barber's death on January 23, 1981, following a long illness. The "Summer Music" received its final performance for the composer at a bedside recital organized by his friend the young American flutist, Ransom Wilson.