

The cause of avant-garde music in the post-1945 years in Central and Eastern Europe was not particularly well served, as conditions there were not generally conducive (with the notable exception of Poland) to its official acceptance and support. Hungary, long a case in point, has in the past decade made up for lost time through the efforts of a highly talented and imaginative younger generation of composers as well as an aggressive promotional campaign by the state publishing entity, *Editio Musica Budapest*.

István Láng has successfully combined an assimilation of traditionally-derived Hungarian elements with a sense of textural clarity and invention that have proven highly effective in the developing and establishment of his contemporary expression. The *Wind Quintet No. 1* (he has since written two others) is an early work, displaying a particularly deft handling of the instruments, not to mention the risibility factor involved in his deference to classical form.

Beethoven's *Octet for Winds* was one of his last works of sizeable format written in Bonn, and in a sense one of the last works of its kind written by a major composer. The small band of paired oboes, clarinets, horns, and bassoons had held a firm place in musical life up to this time as an entertainment medium in both princely palace and public park. Every minor nobleman worth his title kept such a band as part of his establishment for evening concerts or dinner music as well as hunting expeditions. In the cities, groups of this kind could be heard in the streets playing arrangements from popular operas of the day. The serenades, divertimenti, partitas, and cassations of this genre were elevated to something beyond mere entertainment or background music by the octets of Mozart and Beethoven, but with the subsequent demise of much of Europe's royalty as well as a change in musical styles and economics, the ensemble faded from the scene. Beethoven's *Octet*, written in 1792, was unpublished during his lifetime and was eventually assigned arbitrarily as opus number 103. Beethoven himself had reworked and expanded the material in 1795 as the *String Quintet, Op. 4*, but the wind instrument version has remained the most popular and frequently-performed of the two.

UPCOMING CONCERTS

April 17, The Contemporary Group performs piano works by John Cage
 April 23, University Symphony
 April 25, Faculty Recital: Augusto Paglialunga, tenor
 April 30, University of Washington Wind Ensemble
 April 30, University of Washington Harp Ensemble (*Studio Theater*)

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 University of Washington
 SCHOOL OF MUSIC and PUBLIC PERFORMING ARTS

present

THE SONI VENTORUM

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

with guest artists

Tad Margelli, *oboe*
 Scott Wilson, *horn*

Edwin Rodriguez, *clarinet*
 Paul Rafanelli, *bassoon*

April 9, 1985

8:00 PM, Meany Theater

PROGRAM

Tape 10,807

FRANZ DANZI
 (1763-1826)

Quintet in Bb Major, Op. 56, No. 1
Allegretto
Andante con moto
Menuett: Allegretto 14:11
Allegro

BERN HERBOLSHEIMER
 (b. 1948)

Variations Ventorum for Woodwind Quintet (1983)
World premiere—work written for The Soni Ventorum 17:25

JACQUES IBERT
 (1890-1962)

Trois pièces brèves (1930)
Allegro
Andante
Assez lent - Allegro scherzando 6:54

INTERMISSION

Tape 10,808

ISTVÁN LÁNG
(b. 1933)

Wind Quintet No. 1 (1965)

Allegro: La forma obbligata della sonata classica

Andante: Il notturno dolciastro 10:32

Vivace: Scherzo satanico, attacca

Tranquillo: Intermezzo

Allegro giocoso: Il finale obbligato ottimista

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
(1770-1827)

Octet in Eb Major, Op. 103 (1792)
for 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 horns, 2 bassoons

Allegro

Andante 22:59

Menuetto

Finale: Presto

PROGRAM NOTES

Franz Danzi, German born, of Italian descent, was of Mozart's generation but musically he belongs to a later period—he lived on almost twenty-five years after Mozart. Danzi was a child of Mannheim, where he was born and where for many years his father was a cellist in the famous Mannheim orchestra. The stamp of Mannheim is curiously upon Danzi's music, even though its style, as exemplified by his wind quintets, is of a later time, paralleling early Beethoven and Carl Maria von Weber. The stamp of Mannheim is on his quintets in two ways. First, of course, is the suave polish and perfection of the writing, the matchless ease of expression, the fluent, graceful thematic ideas. Secondly, and perhaps even more typical, is the almost conscious "lack" of profound content in these little works. One must tread carefully here, among mere words; for the Danzi expression was deliberate, and desirable at the time. The tradition of woodwind music was still strongly that of the divertimento, the cassation—music for casual entertainment, if of a refined sort—as we know not only from Mozart but even from Beethoven, whose early works abound in that sort of expression. In his time, Danzi was very much preoccupied with those newly sweet twists of lushly chromatic harmony which then intrigued all composers, but to our ears now often sound more sentimental than significant. The very opening of the Bb Quintet, Op. 56, No. 1 sums up the whole sound of that day, with its honeyed diminished seventh chord, turned as blandly as a raised eyebrow, as polished as a hostess' smile. Danzi was immensely skillful at this then-new harmony, as many a succeeding passage will show. Even so, Danzi waxes serious in spite of himself, impelled by a musical language that is innately emotional, reflecting the newest expressive fashions of his time—those same elements with which Weber, Beethoven and Schubert were building the Romantic movement.

--(From notes by Edward Tatnall Canby)

Variationes Ventorum contains nine variations on the Appalachian spiritual, *Changing Season*. Each of the five odd-numbered variations (quartets) features a different instrument in a solo role. In the four even-numbered variations (trios) the previously featured instrument passes the primary material onto the next. Thus, all nine variations have different instrumental combinations as well as different characters. The finale consists of a passacaglia and canon before the last statement of the theme.

Variationes Ventorum was written for the *Soni Ventorum* in 1983 and was made possible by the Seattle Arts Commission's Original Works Program. **Bern Herbolsheimer** received his M.M. from the University of Washington and currently teaches at the Cornish Institute and the University of Washington. Among his other recent works are *Aria da Capo*, a chamber opera, winner of the National Opera Association's New Opera Competition, which will be produced in Louisville in October, 1985; *Songs and Dances from Sophocles*, commissioned by the Seattle Men's Chorus, which received its premiere in March 1985; *Sonata for Piano*, premiered in Barcelona in December, 1984, by Alberto Ráfols; *Dark Song*, premiered by the Atlanta Ballet in 1984 and subsequently taken to New York; *The Visitation of the Priory of St. Michael the Archangel without Stamford*, chosen by the Washington Composers Forum for its inaugural concert in May, 1985; *Divertimento for Three Pianos*, to be heard at the Cornish Institute in May, 1985; and *Phoenix Variations*, commissioned by the Pacific Northwest Ballet and performed at the Bergen International Music Festival.

Jacques Ibert, one of France's most popular 20th century composers, was the son of a comfortable bourgeois and musical Parisian family: his father was an amateur violinist and his mother, a distant relative of Manuel de Falla, was an accomplished pianist. Despite early exposure to both instruments, the young Ibert showed little interest in pursuing them beyond a certain point, but instead began to explore the world of composition, eventually abandoning brief careers as a businessman and naval officer to devote himself to his chosen field. After winning the *Prix de Rome* in 1919, his activity and fame as a composer gradually increased, resulting in a steady stream of commissions. Francis Eugene Timlin, in his doctoral thesis on the flute works of Ibert, describes the composer's wind quintet thusly:

"The *Three Short Pieces* is Ibert's only work for the standard woodwind quintet—flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and horn—and was composed at the height of one of Ibert's busiest and most prolific compositional periods. The work is a staple of the woodwind quintet repertoire and for ample reason; it is the perfect concert opener, the perfect *finale* piece and an excellent *encore* piece. The three movements are often performed singly or in reverse order with little apparent damage to the integrity of the work, so adaptable and flexible is the style."