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The University of Washington
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

presents

THE SONI VENTORUM

UPCOMING CONCERTS

- February 11, Faculty Brahms Recital: Toby Saks (*cello*), Neal O'Doan (*piano*), William McColl (*clarinet*).
- February 18, The Wind Sinfonietta. Richard Byrnes, *conductor*.
- February 21, The University Symphony: All-Italian Program. Augusto Pagli-alunga (*tenor*), Frank Guarrera (*baritone*), Robert Feist (*conductor*).
- February 24, The Percussion Ensemble. Tom Collier, *conductor*. Roethke Auditorium.
- February 25, University Chorale Invitational. Joan Catoni Conlon, *director*. 7:30 performance.
- February 26, The Contemporary Group: ELECTRIC ZOO, featuring works by Stuart Dempster, John Rahn, and others to display the "technical prowess of Meany."
- February 27-March 2, Opera Double Bill: *The Feast of our Lady of the Dove* by Tomas Breton, and Monteverdi's *The Combat of Tancredi and Clorinda*.

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

February 10, 1986

8:00 PM, Meany Theater

PROGRAM

~~Tape 10.979~~

JEAN-MICHEL DAMASE (b. 1928)	Seventeen Variations for Wind Quintet (1951) 11:42
RICHARD RODNEY BENNETT (b. 1936)	Concerto for Wind Quintet (1983) Poco allegro Little Elegy: Andante 19:58 Capriccio: Vivo e ritmico

INTERMISSION

Tape 10.980

ANTON REICHA (1770-1836)	Quintet in E minor; Op. 100, No. 4 Adagio - Allegro Andante con variazioni 29:16 Minuetto: Allegro vivo Finale: Allegro vivace
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PROGRAM NOTES

Jean-Michel Damase, French pianist and composer, began his activities in both disciplines at an early age: at five he started piano study and at nine, after meeting the author Colette, composed settings to some of her poems. At fifteen he was unanimously awarded the first piano prize at the Conservatoire in Paris, and at nineteen won first prize in composition with a Quintet for flute, harp, violin, viola, and cello. He enjoyed an active career as a concert pianist all the while, appearing with leading French orchestras. His youthful compositional maturity enabled him to acquire a technical facility which has resulted in a great deal of music described as "attractive and elegant, remaining close to the traditions of the Conservatoire." His knowledge of the instruments and their possibilities is thorough, and the richness and variety of his orchestration is evident in numerous chamber works as well as concertant pieces and ballet scores. His engaging *Seventeen Variations for Wind Quintet* takes its departure from an upright C Major gavotte-like theme, moves through a clever array of ensemble pieces (the one exception being a rakish bassoon solo), and ends triumphantly in a blaze of contrapuntal display.

Meanwhile, across the Channel in England, another precocious composer-pianist talent was developing in the form of Richard Rodney Bennett, Damase's junior by eight years. Bennett composed a noteworthy string quartet while in his early teens and at the age of sixteen was working in the 12-tone technique at a time when it was largely ignored in Britain. Subsequent works called attention to their technical assurance and a refined feeling for line and texture; characteristics which have remained constants in his music. Following two years of study with Pierre Boulez in Paris, Bennett returned to London in 1959 and quickly became recognized as the most brilliant and versatile of the new generation of British composers. His facility and ability to compose convincingly in a variety of styles, from popular to intellectual, brought him entry into the world of film music with scores to "Far from the Madding Crowd," "Nicholas and Alexandra," and "Murder on the Orient Express" among his output in this medium. He has proved himself to be highly adaptable in his further development and has produced numerous works for instrumental ensemble, orchestra, voice, and opera. Bennett's "Concerto for Wind Quintet" was the response to a joint commission from the National Flute Association, the International Double-Reed Society, the International Clarinet Society and the International Horn Society. In keeping with this charge and the title of the work, Bennett has given prominent solo passages to all the instruments, particularly in the deft Capriccio finale.

Anton Reicha's wind quintets created a sensation in Paris and throughout Europe in the second and third decades of the 19th century. He wrote no fewer than 24 such works during these years for a bold new chamber ensemble composed of one each of the principal woodwind instruments plus French horn. The quintets were premiered in the foyer of the Paris Opera and these occasions bore a social and musical significance widely noted at the time. Reicha himself was highly regarded as a professor of composition and theory at the Paris Conservatoire, and his pupils included such names as Hector Berlioz, Adolphe Adam, Charles Gounod, and the young Cesar Franck. His stature was duly recognized by the French Academy, which elected him to membership a year before his death. Such recognition did not prove to be lasting however, as it has only been in the last 25 years or so that he and his music have undergone a revival, with the wind quintets leading the way.

The E minor Quintet, Op. 100, No. 4, is one of the monuments of his contributions to this genre. In it, one finds all the elements that show Reicha at his best: an abundance of melody and expanse of form (first movement); characteristic and idiomatic variations for each instrument (second movement); the wit and invention of his Scherzi as demonstrated here by a veritable kaleidoscope of modulations (third movement); and the breathless excitement and energy of his Finale movements, complete with fanfare flourish at the end. Running through the whole is the thread of virtuosic demand on instruments and performers alike; wind-writing unequalled in its day and still a source of wonder and challenge in ours.

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The Soni Ventorum's final performance in its current Meany Theater series will take place on Monday, April 21, 1986 at 8:00 PM. The program will consist of the Reicha Quintet in Eb major; Op. 88, No. 2 (in its complete and uncut version), and the Schoenberg Quintet, Op. 26.