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# CONTEMPORARY GROUP

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8:00 PM

FEBRUARY 24, 1993

MEANY THEATER

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## PROGRAM

## SEXTET FOR WINDS AND PIANO, Op 39 (1975-76)..... James Beale

*Moderato* (b. 1924)*Allegro**Lento**Vivace*

Megan Lyden, *flute*; Taina Karr, *oboe*; Joel Barbosa, *clarinet*;  
Lorraine Fader, *horn*; Beatrice Kauffman, *bassoon*;  
Lisa Reedy, *piano*

7  
102 TROIS MÉLODIES D'APRÈS YVES BONNEFOY..... Joël-François Durand  
(1922) (6149) (b. 1954)*Très lent**Lent, souple**Animé*

Emilie Berendsen, *mezzo soprano*; Joel Barbosa, *clarinet*;  
Lorraine Fader, *horn*; Jonathan Graber, *viola*;  
Pat Pulliam, *contrabass*; Stuart McLeod, *percussion*;  
Joël-François Durand, *conductor*

6  
103 LA DANSE DU BALLADIN FOR SOLO FLUTE..... Ellen Ruth Harrison  
(1991) (6201)

Pamela Butler Ryker

9  
104 ZYKLUS FOR PERCUSSION SOLO (1959)..... Karlheinz Stockhausen

Ed Pias (b. 1928)

CASS SIDE A  
SIDE B

## INTERMISSION

26  
106 WIND QUINTET, Op. 48 (1924)..... Arnold Schoenberg  
40*Schwungvoll* (1874-1951)*Anmutig und heiter; scherzando**Etwas langsam**Rondo*

Soni Ventorum Wind Quintet:

Felix Skowronek, *flute*; Alex Klein, *oboe*;William McColl, *clarinet*; Arthur Grossman, *bassoon*;David Kappy, *horn*

The SEXTET FOR WINDS AND PIANO, Op. 39, was written during the year 1975-76, at a time in which the composer was living in Edmonds, Washington. The work is dedicated to the Soni Ventorum, who gave its first performance on November 11, 1976 at Meany Hall with Jane Beale on the piano.

The first movement serves as a prelude to the four-movement work, and features the upper winds in solo and ensemble interweaving. The second movement is a scherzo and trio. The piano comes more to the fore in the last two movements—the third movement serving as the slow movement, and the fourth, a bright finale.

Although there are several serial passages, they are combined or alternated with the composer's earlier tonal style. In the resultant mixture, tonality ultimately dominates.

JANE BEALE

TROIS MÉLODIES D'APRÈS YVES BONNEFOY were composed originally thirteen years ago. At that time (1979-80) they were written for counter tenor and harpsichord. In 1986 I decided to score them for mezzo soprano and small chamber ensemble, and in the process, rewrote entirely the second and third ones.

Yves Bonnefoy's poetry is often obscured by the choice of enigmatic images and unusual words. I had to rely at times on a very intuitive comprehension of the text, whose real meaning seems to escape a direct grasp. Each of the texts I chose follows a similar progression: from a hesitant, searching beginning, the narration reveals progressively a moment, however brief, of joy or union. In the first poem, we witness the time of day which precedes dawn, when the earth is still dark and cold from the night. There is a furtive promise of dawn at the high point of the poem, which then comes to an end on the image of what the light might disclose.

The second poem expresses at first a relentless frustration ("Being only the power of nothingness"), coming to a climax in the line "Je crie" ("I scream"). This time, the moment of joy follows the climax, in a quiet and peaceful way. In the third poem, as in the second one, the moment of joy—here a celebration of union—follows a dark climax. The text shows two persons searching for each other; the general mood is one of frustration again, as if the author knew this search to be meaningless. In the last phrase, however, we witness their possible union, and there is a glimpse of eternity granted to their desire.

The musical settings follow these literary progressions. I tried to render each time with different means the similar evolution from darkness to light which characterizes the texts. In particular, each song is set with a different group of instruments, taken from the ensemble. The five musicians join together only in the last one.

The first song starts with pale colors, leading progressively to the appearance of the first light of dawn.

In the second song, the initial feeling of anger and frustration is expressed in a very restrained manner by large intervals in the voice, rapid changes of dynamics and a variety of different techniques of playing for the double bass and viola. The use of non tempered intervals in the first part of this song increases the sensation of dissonance; after the violence of the short climax, the vocal line returns to the more cantabile style of the first song.

In each song the verses are separated by instrumental commentary. But in the last song, the instruments take a more important role, and dialogue more openly with the voice. They even introduce the last verse with a melodic unison, leading the voice into its longest melodic line, at the moment of final union of the hands.

I. TERRE DU PETIT JOUR

L'aube passe le seuil, le vent s'est tu  
Le feu enclos dans la laure des ombres.

Terre des bouches froides, ô criant  
Le plus vieux deuil par tes secrètes  
clues,

L'aube va reflleurir sur tes yeux de  
sommeil,

Découvre-moi souillé ton visage  
d'orante.

(Hier régnant désert 1958)

II.

N'étant que la puissance du rien,  
La bouche, la salive du rien,  
Je crie,

Et au-dessus dans la vallée de toi, de moi  
Demeure la cri de joie dans sa forme  
pure.

(“Dans le leurre du seuil, La Terre” 1975)

III.

Et nos mains se cherchant  
Soient la pierre nue  
Et la joie partagée  
La brassée d'herbes

Car bien que toi, que moi  
Criant ne sommes  
Qu'un anneau de feu clair  
Qu'un vent disperse

Si bien qu'on ne saura  
Tôt dans le ciel  
Si même eut lieu ce cri  
Qui a fait naître,

Toutefois, se trouvant,  
Nos mains consentent  
D'autres éternités  
Au désir encore.

(“Dans le leurre du seuil, La Terre” 1975)

I. THE LAND AT DAYBREAK

Dawn crosses the threshold, the wind  
has stopped,  
the fire enclosed in the aura of  
shadows.

Land of cold mouths, o crying out  
The oldest mourning through your  
hidden glens,

Dawn will reflourish on your sleepy  
eyes,

Disclose to me your soiled face of  
prayer.

II.

Being but the power of nothingness,  
The mouth, the spittle of nothingness,  
I cry out,

And above the valley of you, of me  
Remains the cry of joy in its pure  
form.

III.

And our hands searching for each other  
Be the bare stone  
And the shared joy  
The armful of grass.

For though you and I  
Crying out, are but  
A ring of bright fire  
Scattered by the wind

So that soon no one  
Will know, in the sky,  
Whether there even was the cry  
Which led to birth,

However, finding each other,  
Our hands consent  
Other eternities  
To the desire, again.

JOËL-FRANÇOIS DURAND

Ellen Harrison began composition studies with Thomas Fredrickson and Paul Zonn at the University of Illinois-Urbana and continued them at the Musikhochschule in Stuttgart, Germany, where she studied with Milko Kelemen. Upon completing her degree in Stuttgart, she continued graduate studies at the University of California, Berkeley, studying conducting with Michael Senturia and composition with Edwin Dugger, Richard Felciano, Andrew Imbrie and Olly Wilson. Ms. Harrison has received numerous awards, including a DAAD grant and, most recently, the George Ladd Prix de Paris. Her works have been performed throughout the United States and Europe. She currently resides in Paris.

LA DANSE DU BALADIN follows a twisting and turning path through differing landscapes of sound. It explores areas characterized by trills, wide leaps and rapid flourishes, intertwined with slow, sinuous passages that start and stop, moving hesitantly from one fragment to the next. Throughout the piece the pitch and timbre of the sound are inflected through glissandi and various trills and fingerings. Yet, with all the glittering display of technique the mood is lyrical, singing.

ELLEN RUTH HARRISON

ZYKLUS (CYCLE) - For solo Percussionist, owes its title to the cyclical nature of the piece. The instruments are set up in such a way that you cycle around the set up. You may begin anywhere in the score, and proceed clock-wise or counter clock-wise. The instruments are grouped together, the skin instruments to the back, the metal instruments on the right, and wood instruments on the left. The piece is ended in the same place, both within the set-up, and within the score where you began.

ED PIAS

Arnold Schoenberg's impact on modern music is a subject of great depth and continuing discussion and can be dealt with elsewhere by those interested in the saga. Suffice it to say that his formulation and application of the so-called "12-note" or "12-tone" technique of composition changed the face of music and was something of a mixed blessing. This new set of rigid "rules" governing a series of notes and their order provided a futuristic toolbox for the craft of composition, but led to an ever-increasing gap between the works created by it and the ability of audiences to comprehend them. That such a development was inevitable is still being debated today. The advancement of chromaticism had reached such a point by 1914 that something had to happen: either a dramatic "breakthrough" into a new technical dimension, or a reversion to earlier and simpler concepts. Schoenberg's "12-note" technique was the logical step of progress: since chromaticism was obliterating the function of tonality anyway, why not do away with it altogether and put all 12 notes of the scale on an equal footing? With his WIND QUINTET, OPUS 26 Schoenberg put this new technique together systematically and completely in a large-scale fashion for the first time. The intellectual importance of the work was immediately recognized, and since its composition it has been heavily analyzed, atomized, dissected and subjected to all manner of study—but only infrequently performed. Wind-players have looked at it with a mixture of reverence and revulsion, and the work has retained its reputation as an impregnable fortress to be invested only at great physical and mental cost—an undertaking surely reserved only for the worthy few of great courage and pure heart.

Naturally, upon our *Soni Ventorum* arrival at the UW in 1968, we felt ourselves to be just such an ensemble and set out to face the Schoenberg. This we did, and with a gratifying measure of success. We first performed the work locally in February 1969 at the HUB Auditorium on campus, and the following month presented it in concert at the Carnegie Recital Hall in New York City. It was an auspicious occasion, with many notables in the audience, including some of the city's best-known wind players, members of the Moscow State Symphony, and members of the Danzi Quintet of Holland who were in town and who themselves had toured extensively with the Schoenberg and who were to record it. In addition, we received a telegraphic "blessing" from Felix Greissle, Schoenberg's son-in-law, who had conducted (sic) the *QUINTET, OP. 26* at its world premiere in Vienna. We even received a great press review—Donal Henahan wrote in the *New York Times*:

*"To an astonishing degree, the five chamber music experts solved the problems of balancing the score and made increasingly more sense of it as they went along...one rarely hears woodwind quintet precision, ensemble and intonation to match what the Soni Ventorum produced in the Schoenberg."*

Heady stuff indeed! We performed the *QUINTET* a couple of times locally afterwards and took it on a short tour in Canada the following season; a total of 8 concerts in all. Now, 24 years after that New York concert we're revisiting the work, the aged among us wiser and more mature, infused with the vitality of younger blood as we assemble our collective resources for the Herculean task. A number of anecdotes remain in our minds from that first set of performances years ago: the audible groan from the Edmonton audience when I suggested that people make themselves comfortable since the work took 40 minutes to perform; the post-concert reception at which a woman accosted us proclaiming that every time she heard the piccolo she wanted to scream. Our favorite, however, came from the New York concert where an intense, bespectacled young man sitting in the front row was following our performance. At the conclusion of the 3rd movement he inadvertently uttered sotto voce in a thick but clear New York accent, "My Gawd—it's bee-yoo-tee-ful." We hope you'll agree.

Schoenberg's *WIND QUINTET, OP. 26*, for all its complexities and life-time listening demands, is not devoid of recognizable and accessible elements even on first hearing. Indeed, these elements become "signposts" along the course of the work on repeated hearing, with gradually more landscape filled in over time. For example, "familiar" or quasi-tonal cadences and sonorities are often heard, especially at phrase, section or movement ends.

Ex. 1a                      1b.                      Ex. 2a                      Ex. 2b

Ex. 3a                      Ex. 3b

Basic to the entire composition is the "12-tone row" shown as Ex. 1. Schoenberg deftly arranged its two halves to be as nearly symmetrical as possible. (Ex. 1a and 1b.) The bracketed four notes in each half, when put together, form a scale of sorts (Ex. 2b), while the end notes of each half are often arranged as a chord in fourths (Ex. 2a), a sonority reminiscent of his *Chamber Symphony, Op. 9* (1913), his last work with a printed key-signature. In accordance with his early principles of the "12-note" technique, the basic row can be inverted, run backwards, with this inverted in turn, giving four different sequences of note order. Interval displacements are found throughout, giving the overall texture an angular quality even when legato.

Example 3 above shows the first statement of the basic row by the flute at the beginning of the work. This "melody," especially the first half (Ex. 3a) is quite noticeable throughout the work and is perhaps at its most effective in a poignantly reminiscent direct quote just before the end of the Rondo (some 40 minutes after its first appearance)—a symbolic suggestion from *Pierrot Lunaire* perhaps? ("O Alter Duft aus Märchenzeit").

Schoenberg cast his *WIND QUINTET, OP. 26* into clearly classical forms: sonata, scherzo (an Expressionist Viennese waltz), 3-part song form, and rondo. Each of the four movements begins with the straight-up basic series of the row, sometimes all in one instrument, sometimes divided between two or more. The row always begins with Note 1 (E-flat), and in a master stroke, the entire work telescopes into itself at the end, with the entire ensemble meeting with a snap on a unison final E-flat.

FELIX SKOWRONEK

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February 26, Festival: **Pacific Northwest Jazz Band Concert and Festival**, Meany Theater, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM.

March 1, **University Studio Jazz Ensemble**, Meany Theater, 8:00 PM.

March 2 & 3, **Jazz Combos**. Brechemin Auditorium, 8:00 PM.

March 7, **Soni Ventorum Wind Quintet**. Brechemin Auditorium, 3:00 PM.

March 8, **Collegium Musicum**. Brechemin Auditorium, 8:00 PM.

March 8, **Percussion Ensemble**. Meany Studio Theater, 8:00 PM.

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