

James C. Lebens, *tenor, alto and bass trombone*
in a

DOCTORAL RECITAL

assisted by
Kevin Aanerud, *piano*
Richard Stout, *viola*
Terry Cook, *'cello*

Compad Disc
L42
1989
3-4
Dub

CDFF 15,010

March 4, 1988⁹ 8:00 p.m.

Brechemin Auditorium

Concerto for Alto Trombone
I. *Con Discretionem*
II. *Allegro assai*

9:50

Georg Christoph Wagenseil
(1715 - 1777)

Sonata Breve for Bass Trombone Solo (1969)
I. *Allegro moderato*
II. *Presto*

4:08

Walter S. Hartley
(1927 -)

Romance for Trombone and Piano

7:44

Carl Maria von Weber
(1786 - 1826)

Thoughts of Love for
Trombone and Piano (1889)

6:15

Arthur Pryor
(1870 - 1942)

INTERMISSION

Solo for Sliding Trombone (1957-1958)

6:38

John Cage
(1912 -)

Three Sketches for Trombone and Piano (1967)

I. *Con moto*
II. *Allegro*
III. *Andante*

8:03

Andrew Imbrie
(1921 -)

Serenade No. 6 for Trombone,
Viola and Cello, Op. 44

I. Prologue
II. Barcarole
III. Chorale Prelude
IV. Dialogue
V. Intermezzo
VI. Song
VII. Dance

15:08

Vincent Persichetti
(1915 - 1987)

Side B

Vittorio Monti

Encore:

Isardas 4:28
Mr. Lebens is a student of Stuart Dempster.

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in Trombone Performance.

Concerto for Alto Trombone
I. *Con Discretionem*
II. *Allegro assai*

Georg Christoph Wagenseil
(1715 - 1777)

Viennese composer **Georg Christoph Wagenseil** was probably the most important pupil of the great Baroque master Johann Josef Fux. From the time of his appointment in 1739 until his death in 1777, he was considered the leading composer at the Imperial Court. Among those acquainted with his compositions was the young Mozart, who played one of Wagenseil's concertos before Maria Theresa in 1762 and several keyboard pieces at the English court in 1764. The Concerto was composed sometime between 1751 and 1763 for the court trombonist Leopold Christian, Jr. who was considered the premier virtuoso of the day on the instrument, receiving the inflated salary of 800 florins. (In comparison, Wagenseil's salary when he was first engaged as court composer was only 360 florins). Wagenseil did not participate in the full flowering of the Classical idiom, but his numerous contributions to most of the forms then current and the international dissemination of these works assure him a central position in the transitional middle decades of the 18th century.

Sonata Breve for Bass Trombone Solo (1969)

I. *Allegro moderato*
II. *Presto*

Walter S. Hartley
(1927 -)

American composer **Walter S. Hartley** studied with Bernard Rogers and Howard Hanson at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester New York. He taught at the National Music Camp in Interlochen from 1956-1960 and was chairman of the music department at Davis Elkins College beginning in 1960. In his works he cultivates the wind instruments, his Sonata Breve for Bass Trombone Solo being no exception to this, written in the twelve-tone style with technique so inherently idiomatic for the bass trombone that it soon became a standard piece in the bass trombone repertoire.

Romance for Trombone and Piano

Carl Maria von Weber
(1786 - 1826)

Celebrated German composer, **Carl Maria von Weber**, is considered by many to be the founder of the German Romantic school. A little known fact about him is that Constanze Weber, Mozart's wife, was his niece, so Carl Maria von Weber was Mozart's first cousin by marriage, and Mozart was constantly the family's ideal to follow. Weber himself was an excellent pianist: his large hands gave him an unusual command of the keyboard - he could stretch the interval of a twelfth. The Romance for Trombone and Piano occupies a unique place in the history of the trombone. The valve was invented in 1815 by the Saxon Heinrich Stölzel, first being used on the french horn and trumpet, but eventually leading to the creation of the so-called tenor-bass trombone (tenor trombone in B flat with the valve depressed lowering it to F, extending the lower range) which is the trombone most commonly in use today. It is for this instrument specifically that the Romance was written. It becomes apparent very early on in the piece that Weber is making full use of the new technical capabilities of the instrument with a dazzling three octave display of pyrotechnics. The work soon settles down into the melodic richness that is characteristic of Weber's music; steeped with melancholy and yearning that are so effectively portrayed on the trombone.

**Thoughts of Love for
Trombone and Piano (1889)**

Arthur Pryor
(1870 - 1942)

The legendary trombonist **Arthur Pryor** received most of his early musical training on the valve trombone and often appeared with his father's group, "Pryor's Military Band" being billed as the "boy wonder" on the valve trombone. He began playing the slide trombone quite by accident when his father received a slide trombone from a transient in payment for a debt and young Arthur was told to go out to the barn and "...learn to play the thing!" He was self taught and only used two positions until he found out in a pool hall that there might be as many as seven positions. He often bragged that he played the thing for two years before he knew that you should oil the slide. He had no idea that alternate positions were "wrong" and so was able to develop a technique that was freer than ever before. When the great bandmaster John Philip Sousa formed his new band, he chose Pryor to be his trombone soloist, playing alongside trombonist Frank Holton who would soon step down to become a musical instrument maker, a company which still bears his name today. Pryor appeared as soloist over 10,000 times with Sousa's band, mostly playing his own compositions and transcriptions. The charming little waltz, Thoughts of Love, is the first solo Pryor performed with the Sousa Band. The trombone used for this performance is a period instrument and was made, incidentally, by the Frank Holton Band Instrument Company. The bell section dates from 1928 and was made in Elkhorn, Wisconsin. The slide section dates from before 1918 and was hand-made in Chicago by Frank Holton himself. It is similar in dimension to the Pryor trombone having a .458 inch bore. The 6 1/2 inch bell is slightly larger, Pryor using a remarkably small 6 1/4 inch bell. The instrument is on loan from the private collection of Mr. D. Monroe Holmes. Special thanks are to be extended to him for making this performance possible.

INTERMISSION

Solo for Sliding Trombone (1957-1958)

John Cage
(1912 -)

American composer of ultramodern tendencies, **John Cage** studied composition with Henry Cowell and Adolph Weiss. Cage initiated a procedure which he called 'prepared piano', the 'preparation' consisting of placing on the piano strings a variety of objects, such as screws, coins, rubber bands and the like which alter the tone color of individual keys. He is a consummate showman, and his exhibitions invariably attract music-lovers and music-haters alike, expecting to be exhilarated or outraged, as the case may be. In many such public happenings he departs from the norm in favor of a free exercise of surrealist imagination, often instructing the audience to participate actively, as for instance going out in the street and bringing in garbage pails needed for percussion effects, with or without garbage. Cage is a brilliant writer, much influenced by the manner, grammar, syntax and glorified illogic of Gertrude Stein. *The Solo for Sliding Trombone* has become a classic in its own time and is the first truly avant garde piece for solo trombone. *The Solo* is actually pages 173-184 of the orchestral parts of the *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra* (1957-58), and the first paragraph of the rather lengthy instructions tell a great deal about the work:

The following 12 pages for a trombone player may be played with or without other parts for other players. It is therefore a trombone solo or a part in an ensemble, symphony, or concerto for piano and orchestra. Though there are 12 pages, any amount of them may be played (including none).

The piece was a collaborative work with Frank Rehak, who had distinguished himself as a fine jazz trombonist with Miles Davis, among others, and received its premiere on May 15, 1958 in Town Hall, New York.

Three Sketches for Trombone and Piano (1967)

Andrew Imbrie
(1921 -)

- I. *Con moto*
- II. *Allegro*
- III. *Andante*

American composer **Andrew Imbrie**, as well as studying piano, studied composition with Roger Sessions for approximately ten years. Imbrie is often called an academic composer who does not write academic music. Critics feel that his music is grounded in something beyond what is considered to be run-of-the-mill professorial abstraction (whatever that is). Indeed, Imbrie is a composer of music that succeeds in being rigorous while maintaining intuitive and contextual spontaneity. About the *Three Sketches* the composer writes:

The Three Sketches were commissioned by Stuart Dempster and completed on April 28, 1967, in Berkeley. Stuart had demonstrated his astonishing repertory of special effects on the trombone. If I had tried to use them all, or even a large number, I would have had to write a huge piece - and even then there would have been little chance to exploit the lyricism and fire of which he is capable, using the ordinary resources of the instrument. So I chose only those devices that seemed most immediately suggestive, musically and dramatically.

The first Sketch is really an introduction, yet it contains within its brief span a strong contrast between two textures: the first restless with explosive energies that are quickly suppressed, the second reflective.

The second Sketch provides for the release of the subterranean energies already suggested: it moves at a furious pace and allows the soloist to demonstrate the trombone as a virtuoso instrument. It also features the trill in a number of forms, including the trill-like effect of the beats created when the trombonist sings and simultaneously plays a note very close to the one that he is singing. After the point of highest intensity, the final collapse of energy leaves the trombone producing another (slow) trill-like sound as he plays the same high A while changing from one slide position to another. The strings of the piano echo this blur of sound, which dies out slowly slowly as the last Sketch begins.

The trombone now begins to play a melody, using a slight vibrato, in the Tommy Dorsey manner. As this melody develops, the accompaniment becomes increasingly active, and eventually the old restlessness returns. But the two moods, restless and contemplative, now seem merged into a new cooperative unity. After a culmination, the tension is slowly resolved, and the work comes to a peaceful close, with the chords in which the trombonist again sings and plays simultaneously. This time, however, he sings notes that reinforce the notes he plays, so as to enrich the euphony.

**Serenade No. 6 for Trombone,
Viola and Cello, Op. 44**

Vincent Persichetti
(1915 - 1987)

- I. Prologue
- II. Barcarole
- III. Chorale Prelude
- IV. Dialogue
- V. Intermezzo
- VI. Song
- VII. Dance

The outstanding American composer, Vincent Persichetti, was throughout his long life a consummate musician. He began at an early age studying piano, organ, double bass, tuba, theory and composition, and began his career as a professional musician when he was only 11 years old. He studied conducting with Fritz Reiner, composition with Roy Harris and piano with Olga Samaroff. He joined the faculty of the Juilliard School of Music in 1947 and in 1963 was named chairman of the composition department there. His music is remarkable for its polyphonic skill in fusing the ostensibly incompatible idioms of Classicism, Romanticism and stark modernism, while the melodic lines maintain an almost Italianate diatonicism in a lyrical manner.

Trombonist James C. Lebens is a holder of a Bachelor's and Master's Degree from The Juilliard School in New York. Having completed two years as an artist in residence at The Banff Centre, School of Fine Arts, Mr. Lebens is currently a candidate for the Doctor of Musical Arts in Trombone Performance at the University of Washington where he is studying with and teaching assistant to Stuart Dempster. He has been a member or supernumerary of several outstanding orchestras in New York, Mexico and Canada, and has appeared often as a recitalist and clinician, recently at the Conservatoire de Paris in France.

Native Seattle pianist Kevin Rhys Aanerud is a graduate of the University of Washington and the College Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati. He has been the principal accompanist of master classes with Dorothy Delay, Eva Heinitz, Donald McInnes, Stuart Dempster and Christopher Leuba among others. He can be heard as accompanist on recordings with Christopher Leuba and Stuart Dempster on Crystal and New World Records.

Violin phenomenon and more than capable violist Richard Stout is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. He is currently on leave of absence from the violin section of the Utah Symphony in order to continue his studies on the violin with Steven Staryk at the University of Washington, for whom he is also serving as assistant. This concert marks the first time in which Mr. Stout has played chamber music with any instrument so philistine as a trombone.

Cellist Terry Cook is a graduate of Northern Illinois University where he studied with Raya Garbousova. While studying at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, he was principal cello and appeared as soloist with the Eastman Symphony. Mr. Cook is originally from Seattle where he received his early training on the cello from Eva Heinitz.

Members of the audience are cordially invited to a reception following the concert in the faculty lounge.