

13, 1974 at the hands of Professors Skowronek and Grossman, and tonight's recreation of that historic event will be appropriately staged to the fullest extent possible.

Rossini's six quartets for wind instruments (they are also widely known in a version for strings) date from his student days at the Liceo Communale in Bologna. At the time, his devotion to the chamber works of Haydn and Mozart earned him the nickname *Il tedesco* (the little German) among his classmates, but the Italianate operatic melodies with which the quartets abound give a clearer indication of the direction Rossini would follow. The quartets, though uncomplicated musically, are a virtuosic assignment to wind players and a delight to audiences.

Of the many students of Cesar Franck (who himself had been a young pupil of Anton Reicha), Vincent d'Indy was the one most decisively attracted to the music of Wagner during the 1880s. As that decade ended, however, d'Indy changed course and began a systematic study of French musical tradition. He may not have realized that he was contributing to one himself: his *Chanson et Danses* for seven winds was part of a *fin de siècle* movement among both French and German composers to recreate the "divertimento" or "serenade" genre enjoyed by wind instruments in noble courts across the continent a century earlier. Such composers as Richard Strauss, Carl Reinecke, Charles Gounod, and Georges Enesco contributed works of this nature and these are again finding an audience as we near our century-end. d'Indy's Op. 50 opens with a lovely melody in a sonorous setting in what seems to be a nod to Wagner's "Siegfried Idyll," with the following dances casting a bacchanalian solo line over a chortling accompaniment. The ending, this time a cyclic nod to Franck, brings the work to a tranquil close with its reprise of the *chanson* melody.

Notes by Felix Skowronek

Clarinetist MARY KANTOR received her Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Washington and graduated from the Academy of Music in Vienna with highest honors in clarinet performance. She has studied with David Atkins, William McColl and Rudolf Jettl. Kantor is a founding member of the Johann Strauss Trio and the Mazeltones, both of which have toured widely and have appeared on television and radio. As a soloist, she has performed the Mozart concerto with the Philharmonia Northwest. She has also performed with the Seattle Symphony, Seattle Opera, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and the Northwest Chamber Orchestra.

PAUL RAFANELLI, Seattle Symphony bassoonist, is a native of Seattle. In 1986 he moved to New York City where he performed with the Satori Wind Quintet, a group which had its New York debut at Carnegie Hall in March 1990. During this time he was also principal bassoonist with the Binghamton Symphony in New York. Prior to his appointment to the Seattle Symphony Orchestra in 1992 he was the second bassoonist with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra in South Carolina. He has performed with the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, the Festival Dei Due Mondi in Italy, the Waterloo Festival in New Jersey, and the Grand Teton Music Festival. Rafanelli received his education at the University of Washington (where he twice won the School of Music's Brechemin Scholarship), the Manhattan School of Music, and The Juilliard School.

University of Washington
THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC
presents

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1994
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25TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT

THE SONI VENTORUM

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

with guest artists
Mary Kantor, *clarinet*
Paul Rafanelli, *bassoon*

DAF#12,318

CASS#12,319

March 2, 1994

8:00 PM, Meany Theater

PROGRAM

DAF
ID 2
MASQUERADE for Wind Quintet (14'44) William Bergsma
(1986) (b. 1921)

Introdu: Giusto
Aria: Andante con moto
March: Allegro pesante

ID 3
QUINTET IN D MINOR, Op. 88, (26'13) Anton Reicha
No. 4 (ca. 1814) (1770-1836)

Larghetto - Allegro assai
Andante
Menuetto: Allegro
Finale: Allegro

INTERMISSION

ID 5
STRAWS for Flute and Bassoon (10'36) William O. Smith
(1974) (b. 1926)

ID 6
QUARTET NO. 5 IN D MAJOR (12'45) Gioacchino Rossini
(ca. 1807-09) for Flute, Clarinet, (1792-1868)
Horn and Bassoon
Allegro spiritoso
Andante assai
Rondo

ID 7
CHANSON ET DANSES, Op. 50 (15'18) Vincent d'Indy
(1898) for Flute, Oboe, (1851-1931)
2 Clarinets, Horn, 2 Bassoons

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→ CASS 12,319 SIDE A

← CASS 12,319 SIDE B

Soni Ventorum joined the University of Washington School of Music faculty in September 1968; in an unusual move at the time, the ensemble was engaged in its entirety rather than being assembled piecemeal as is usually the case with "faculty wind quintets" at American colleges and universities. It was a decade of expansion in music schools across the nation, and here at the University of Washington, the School of Music under the directorship of William Bergsma grew apace with the introduction of the Contemporary Group, the Philadelphia String Quartet, and Soni Ventorum—several new faculty all arriving within the span of a few years.

Soni Ventorum began performing under that name in 1962 when it formed as a faculty group at the Conservatory of Music of Puerto Rico, part of the Festival Casals organization on that enchanted Antillean isle. Prior to that, the three "core" members; Felix Skowronek, William McColl and Arthur Grossman, were part of a wind quintet during their service time with the U.S. Seventh Army Symphony Orchestra in Germany. Stretching back further, Skowronek and Grossman were entering freshmen together in 1952 at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and were members of the same woodwind class. One last historical footnote: the name Soni Ventorum (Sounds of the Winds) was thought up by Felix Skowronek while daydreaming one afternoon in Latin class at Franklin High School in Seattle's Rainier Valley.

Rather than delve here into other multifarious details of Soni Ventorum history (surely a dissertation subject awaiting an enterprising and patient DMA candidate), suffice it to say that Soni Ventorum is one of the longest-lived U.S. wind quintets active today, and its membership has been remarkably stable over the years. Here at the UW, David Kappy replaced Christopher Leuba in 1979, and Alex Klein is the most recent arrival following Laila Storch's retirement two years ago.

Tonight's Soni Ventorum program features representations of three elements that have marked the group's tenure here: 1) works written for the ensemble, especially by faculty composers (Bergsma, Smith); 2) works recorded by Soni Ventorum as part of its discography of over two-dozen releases (Reicha, Smith, Rossini); and 3) expanded-ensemble pieces including student performers (tonight with School of Music alumni Mary Kantor and Paul Rafanelli).

It can be said that traditions with wind quintets are relatively rare, but certainly a 25th Anniversary Concert can be considered a good start!

William Bergsma's *MASQUERADE* was premiered here in Meany Theater on October 27, 1986, and the composer himself wrote the following program notes for the occasion:

The title, *MASQUERADE FOR WOODWIND QUINTET*, came after I finished the composition, and noticed the amount of playing my wind quintet did on alternate instruments: piccolo; alto flute; English horn; bass clarinet; (optional) contrabassoon.

I spared myself, the performers, and the audience bass flute, *e*^b clarinet, bassett horn, and waldhorn. Next time, perhaps.

Like my *Concerto for Woodwind Quintet* (written in 1959 for the New York Wind Quintet, commissioned by the Coolidge Foundation in the Library of Congress), *MASQUERADE* calls for virtuoso solo and ensemble players. In this case, fifteen of them: under a consortium grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, three wind quintets:

The Aspen, Clarion and Soni Ventorum, will each give me a premiere, the Soni getting first whack. *MASQUERADE* is in three movements, lasting about fifteen minutes.

The name of Anton Reicha figures prominently on Soni Ventorum programs for three very good reasons: 1) his 24 wind quintets were the first serious body of works written expressly for what was then a new ensemble and are in fact the basis of its classic repertoire; 2) the challenges presented in the performance of these works have remained undiminished over a century and a half, and 3) not many other groups own the entire set of these 24 quintets as they were out of print for many years. Reicha, a prestigious professor of composition and theory at the Paris Conservatoire, was considered a great experimenter as well as something of an eccentric. As such, he readily responded to a request by five of Paris' virtuoso wind players to help establish an ensemble of woodwinds that might rival, equal, and even perhaps (blasphemous thought) surpass the string quartet as the reigning chamber music medium for, after all, the winds were the closest of all instruments to the human voice. Reicha's quintets did in fact enjoy a great vogue for a time, undoubtedly propelled by the virtuosity of their performance. This popularity waned, however, and interest in the ensemble languished until the early 20th century. Critics scored Reicha for his prolixity and sometime substitution of invention for inspiration while nonetheless allowing for flashes of genius: his writing for the winds was recognized as superior to anything current at the time. The meteoric rise and fall of his quintets left a rich legacy but few performance traditions, and it is no great exaggeration to aver that these are yet to be formed in our day. Reicha's first set of six quintets, Op. 88, dates from the years immediately following 1810, and the D Minor Quintet is the strongest display of the characteristics found in these early essays; solemnity and sonority, energy and excitement, impetus and invention, vibrancy and virtuosity. His later quintets would tend toward the problematic with their abundance of themes and increasing length and even greater demands on the performers, but with the D Minor Quintet the die had been cast, and there was no turning back.

Clarinetist, composer, and professor of composition William O. Smith joined the faculty of the University of Washington in 1966 and has been a director of the Contemporary Group since its inception that same year. He has explored the realm of "theater" music ever since, writing a number of works in this style and performing in prodigious manner many written by others. Essentially, "theater" pieces involve the performers in such extra-musical activities as speaking, mime, dancing, outright acting, etc. *STRAWS*, for flute and bassoon, was conceived with theatrical overtones, not the least of which is the recitation of various lines from the writings of Theodore Roethke, outstanding mid-century American poet and professor at the University of Washington from 1948 to 1963. The selected material is set in an evocative avant-garde texture utilizing extremes of both instruments in addition to technical devices such as multiphonics and hummed double-stops. The recitation itself must be considered a technical element as well, since apart from the measured intoning of lines by musicians unaccustomed as they are to public speaking, one must take into account those lines said immediately before or after a musical passage, usually with embouchure formed and at the ready. *STRAWS* received its premiere performance at the University of Washington on November