

The Broadway Symphony
George Shangrow, conductor

present their second

Musical Feast

November 18, 1989

Kane Hall, UW

Variations on a theme of Haydn, Op 56a

Johannes Brahms

Poco piu animato

Piu vivace

Con moto

Andante con moto

Vivace

Vivace

Grazioso

Presto non troppo

Finale: Andante

"American" Concerto for Piano and Orchestra

Gregory Short

In tribute to George Gershwin

In tribute to Henry Cowell

In tribute to Edward MacDowell

In tribute to Charles Ives

John Zielinski, piano

Intermission

Concerto for oboe and small orchestra

Richard Strauss

Allegro moderato - Andante - Vivace

Janet Harrington, oboe

Symphony No. 94 in G Major, "Surprise"

Franz Joseph Haydn

Adagio; Vivace assai

Andante

Menuet: Allegro molto

Finale: Allegro di molto

This concert is sponsored in part by Western Pianos & Organs

Johannes Brahms - Variations on a Theme by Joseph Haydn in B-flat Major, Op. 56A

Karl Ferdinand Pohl brought Brahms some Haydn manuscripts to examine in the fall of 1870. Among the pieces was a Divertimento for two oboes, two horns, three bassoons, and serpent, titled "Divertimento mit dem Chorale St. Antoni". It has never been established that the Chorale St. Antoni is an original melody of Haydn's, but Brahms obviously held to the assumption that it was.

Brahms actually composed two settings of the variations. One is the orchestral version you are hearing in this performance. The other is a setting for two pianos. It remains a mystery which of the versions preceded the other. Both were written in 1873. The orchestral version is listed first in catalogues of Brahms's works, but Brahms and Clara Schumann gave the premiere performance of the piano work for a group of friends in Bonn in August of 1873. The orchestral score was not heard until November of the same year.

The piece begins with a straightforward statement of the theme. Brahms preserves the original character of Haydn's effort by setting the theme, as did Haydn, in B-flat Major and 2/4 meter with a tempo indication of Andante. Except for replacing the serpent and third bassoon with a contrabassoon and reinforcing the bass line with the string bass, Brahms even adhered to the scoring Haydn used in his Divertimento.

There are eight variations on the theme. The first features embellishments on the original theme in the violins over a steady rhythmic accompaniment. Bassoons and clarinets take over the theme in the second variation. They present an altered version of the theme while the strings state a descending passage against them.

Oboes and bassoons set the melody lyrically in the third variation. Oboes are again featured in the fourth variation, assisted by the horns. The melody takes on a sensuous character over a descending line in the violas. The melody becomes fleeting in the sixth variation. It is set in the flutes, oboes, and bassoons to the accompaniment of the violas and cellos.

Horns and bassoons set a martial tone in variation six. Strict, stately rhythm provides the framework in which the melody is outlined. The flutes and violins turn the seventh variation into a piece of exquisite charm. Violas and clarinets provide counterpoint to the high melody with a descending scale line. Muted strings create a mysterious atmosphere for the final variation as the music assumes a filmy transparency, setting the stage for the finale.

Brahms ties the work together with a five-measure, ground bass treatment of the Haydn melody. This pas-sacaglia theme is repeated numerous times as the orchestral forces build the harmonic textures and change colors above the bass line. Momentum increases rhythmically as the sonic textures build. Finally the chorale melody is heard again in the woodwinds as originally stated. The

full orchestra then takes it up, leading to the abrupt ending in this rich orchestral sonority.

- Gary Fladmoe

Gregory Short - Concerto for Piano

The *Concerto for Piano* was written in June of 1965 and scored for full orchestra. A year later, I decided to re-score it for a chamber orchestra of jazz oriented musicians featuring saxophones and an electric bass guitar. However, the project sat on a shelf for 16 years, until the summer of 1982. Re-scoring, revisions and copying were all completed on September 30, 1983. In 1988 I changed it all back to full orchestra!

I. In tribute to George Gershwin

The first movement's main theme is stated immediately by solo winds, soon followed by the piano which begins a series of jazz-like variations. The polytonality of this theme leads to poly, pan, and sometimes atonal harmonies. The piano states the second theme, which is also lyric. The movement is cast in Sonata Allegro form.

II. In tribute to Henry Cowell

III. In tribute to Edward MacDowell

Both Scherzo and Lullaby (movements II and III) are based on the same melody. Polyrhythm and tone clusters giving way to subtle pandiatonic and modal harmonies, with a regular pulse.

IV. In tribute to Charles Ives

The finale opens with a quiet solo for harmonic piano plucking inside strings. The tune is *Sweet Betsy from Pike*. Then the piano rather rudely interrupts with a "let's get the show on the road" lively dance character. What follows is an Ivesian romp through American folk songs, including *In Bright Mansions Above*, *Victory Song* of the Winnebago Indians, and the hymn *Confess Jehovah*, with *Sweet Betsy* as the main ingredient.

My very special thanks to George Shangrow and the Broadway Symphony for the premiere of this concerto. This work is dedicated to tonight's soloist, John Zielinski.

-Gregory Short

Richard Strauss - Concerto for Oboe and Small Orchestra

One of Richard Strauss' most enchanting and airiest scores was written following one of the most tragic decades in the history of Europe.

In the Spring of 1945, one of the many soldiers stationed at Garmisch in southern Germany was John deLancie, who later went on to become principal oboist of the Philadelphia Orchestra. DeLancie was fortunate enough to spend some time with the 80 year old composer (who later referred to him as 'that oboist from Chicago') and

suggested to Strauss that he should write a piece for oboe.

Strauss set about to write the concerto and the first sketches were completed in September 1945. The first performance was given in Switzerland in February of 1946 by Marcel Saillet. The work was later revised for publication in 1948. The music rests harmonically on a simple diatonic basis. This is typical of Strauss' tendency in his later scores to get away from the constantly shifting harmony of the late Romantics. The small orchestra (only woodwinds, two horns, and strings) is often divided into many parts, creating a colorful texture. The concerto is in three connected movements.

The opening *Allegro moderato* has a loosely constructed sonata form with two principal subjects. The first subject is the rhapsodic, pastoral melody played by the soloist over murmuring strings and the second is a whimsical motif reminiscent of *Till Eulenspiegel*. The second movement, *Andante*, is a plaintive three part aria which ends with a cadenza. The third movement is a scherzo-like rondo in duple meter, followed by a cadenza, then an *Allegro* in graceful 6/8. The *Vivace* section underlines, with its leaps in fourths and its rushing triplets, the capricious character of the oboe as seen by Strauss.

We can be grateful for the unlikely conjunction of events which resulted in the fortuitous encounter between the 20 year old American GI and the 80 year old German composer, resulting in the marvelous concerto that you will hear tonight.

-John Einar Grant

Franz Joseph Haydn - Symphony in G Major, No. 94 ("Surprise")

Haydn wrote twelve symphonies for the London impresario, Salomon, six during each of his two visits to the British city. W. H. Hadow wrote of these symphonies:

"The twelve symphonies which he (Haydn) wrote for Salomon are not only the greatest of his orchestral works, but those also in which we can most clearly trace the effect of his intercourse with Mozart. Dr. Pohl especially notes the influence of the 'Jupiter Symphony' both in the richer orchestration and in the freer use of episode and incident."

"The minuets, far different from Mozart's courtly dance measures, have all his old rustic drollery and humor, the rhythms have all his old incisiveness of touch, the folk tunes that he loved grow thick along the wayside. The melodies of his own sowing are unmistakable in hue and shpeliness. And the music is all suffused with the sense of mellowness and maturity, of long experience and an old age honorably won; it is too serene for passion, too wise for sadness, too single-hearted for regret, it has learned the lesson of life and will question its fate no further."

In terms of its musical characteristics, the "Symphony in G Major" is not very different from the other

eleven of the "London" symphonies. A slow introduction, *Adagio cantabile*; opens the work. It leads to the two main themes of the movement, *Vivace assai*, both set forth by the strings. It represents an important example of the sonata form which Haydn was instrumental in developing.

It is the second movement, *Andante*, which gives the symphony its subtitle, "Surprise". According to what is now largely ascribed to legend, Haydn observed that concert-goers frequently became drowsy, or even fell asleep, during the slow movements of longer works such as symphonies. A gentle tune for the strings provides the so-called soporific inducement, only to have the drowsy listeners jarred back to consciousness by a shockingly loud chord stated by the full orchestra at the end of this melody. The movement is really a delightful set of five variations on the original melody. the last of which is never fully realized.

The third movement, *Menuetto*, is a charming minuet and trio in strict form. The finale, *Allegro di molto*, is a rondo, centered in two vivacious themes. Its mood is so carefree as to almost suggest abandonment, yet so carefully structured as to dispell any thought that such abandonment might be reckless.

This symphony, like others of the "London" sets, was written for the largest and best orchestral forces with which Haydn came into contact during his career. Much rich speculation has taken place among students of music history concerning what might have resulted during Haydn's early years had he been able to compose for the same orchestral resources that he had available to him in London. The emotional import which Haydn's disciple, Beethoven, was able to impart to the symphonic form might very well have become evident in the mature Haydn if the instrumental riches he enjoyed in London had been a part of his experience at an earlier point of his career. The formal perfection he achieved provided a marvelous base from which Beethoven could build.

- Gary Fladmoe



The Composer Speaks - Gregory Short

My earliest musical recollections — beginning about age four — were of my mother teaching my sister and me to sing. My father taught tone above all else in my piano training. Chopin was everything to him — and to me. It is no wonder that I developed an intense love for singable melodic lines. This caused no trouble until I went to college (off and on between 1956 and 1974) and was told that the atonal style was "THE language of the twentieth century". I wrote wildly with the rest of them, but also composed 24 TONAL PRELUDES. I found the avant garde fascinating, but the further it went from melody, the closer I embraced melody. Thus my natural dedication to folk song appeared early in my musical development.

A composer must have an advanced understanding of structure, a critical sense of psychological time, and the desire to create music that communicates ITSELF to the listener. Verbal or technical gymnastics will never stand as substitutes. As all gifts come from our Creator, we must develop what we have in every possible way, or at least try. Like Ives and Hovhaness, if I need it, I develop my own use for it. I do not care what "IT" is as long as it makes sense in my context. As the old saying goes: "It is not the technique, but how the technique is used". Everything exists for our benefit, make use of all things — wisely.

John Zielinski is a native of Seattle and has performed as recitalist, chamber musician and Concerto soloist throughout the Pacific Northwest. He made his concerto debut at age 17, performing Schumann's Piano Concerto, and the following year toured British Columbia with the Seattle University Chamber Ensemble in performances of the Third Piano Concerto by Beethoven.

During his studies in piano performance and composition with Gregory Short, John Zielinski began performing numerous works by Washington Composers. He was chosen to be in the Washington Centennial Catalog of Performing Artists. His compositions include a song cycle, string quartet and other chamber works plus an organ "Tocatta and Fugue" and various piano pieces including his "Two Blues" and "Sea Pieces".

He is the co-founder and principal performer of the Washington Composer's Alliance.

Presently, Mr. Zielinski lives in Boston, Mass. where he is an accompanist at the Boston Conservatory. His concerts on the east coast include Washington composers. He now studies piano with Leonard Shure at the New England Conservatory.

Oboist **Janet Harrington** is a native of Washington who received a Bachelor of Music in oboe performance from Western Washington University and her M.A. from Pacific Lutheran University. She also received musical training from Indiana University where she studied with renowned oboist, Jerry Sirucek. Ms. Harrington also credits Alice Putnam, Roger Cole, and Allan Vogel with being influential in her playing. Janet is a sought-after ensemble member and soloist throughout the Northwest. She has appeared with the Broadway Symphony, the Tacoma Symphony, the Olympia Symphony, Tacoma-Pierce County Opera, and the Northwoods Wind Quintet, among others. Her solo repertoire includes the Bach Concerto in c minor for violin and oboe, Handel's Concerto in Bb, and the Salieri Concerto for Flute and Oboe. Ms. Harrington plays a Patricola oboe which she purchased at the oboe maker's shop south of Milan, Italy.



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