

MUSIC AT BENNINGTON PRESENTS...

"ROMANTIC AND BEYOND"

A PIANO RECITAL BY STEPHEN MANES

MONDAY, MARCH 15, 1999 - 8:00 p.m. -- DEANE CARRIAGE BARN

Quaderno Musicale di Annalibera (1952)..... LUIGI DALLAPICCOLA
(1904-1975)

1. Simbolo: Quasi Lento (Simbol)
2. Accenti: Allegro; con fuoco (Accents)
3. Contrapunctus primus: Mosso; scorrevole (First canon)
4. Linee: Tranquillamente mosso (Lines)
5. Contrapunctus secundus (Canon contrario motu): Poco allegretto; "alla Serenata" (Second canon, in Contrary motion)
6. Fregi: Molto lento; con espressione parlante (Friezes)
7. Andante amoroso e Contrapunctus tertius (Canon Cancrizanas): Resolutio (Third canon, in retrograde)
8. Ritmi: Allegro (Rhythms)
9. Colore: Affettuoso; cullante (Colors)
10. Ombre: Grave (Shadows)
11. Quartina: Molto lento; fantastico ((Quatrain)

Waldszenen, Opus 82ROBERT SCHUMANN
(1810-1856)

- Eintrit: Nicht zu schnell (Entrance)
Jäger auf der Lauer: Höchst lebhaft (Hunter in ambush)
Einsame Blumen: Einfach (Lonely flowers)
Verrufene Stelle: Ziemlich langsam (Haunted place)
Freundliche Landschaft: Schnell (Friendly landscape)
Herberge: Mässig (The Wayside Inn)
Vogel als Prophet: Langsam, sehr zart (Prophetiv bird)
Jagdlid: Rasch, kräftig (Hunting song)
Abschied: Night Schnell (The departure)

Nocturne and Toccata (1944)..... LIONEL NOWAK
(1911-1995)

INTERMISSION

Fantasia (1954).....NOWAK
Maestoso ma rubato - Allegro molto - Largo - Vivace - Tempo primo

Fantsie in C Major D. 760 ("Wanderer").....FRANZ SCHUBERT
(1797-1828)

Allegro con fuoco ma non troppo - Adagio - Presto - Allegro

Notes "Romantic and Beyond"

The word "romanticism" in music conjures up a number of images. For instance, we can think of music of both extreme intimacy and of extreme virtuosity. Lyricism, heightened expression, and programmatic references are also significant elements of romanticism.

The Schumann and Schubert works on this program are paradigms of this type of music. But the music for this recitals also contains three 20th century pieces which, though they use, quite rigorously, modern (non-tonal) compositional techniques, they manage to evoke most of the romantic elements mentioned above.

The Italian composer, Luigi Dallapiccola wrote "Quaderno Musicale di Annalibera" (Musical Notebook for Annalibera) for his daughter). A 12-tone work of unusual delicacy and intimacy, its short movements range from 20 seconds to just under 3 minutes. Each movement evokes a different mood and character, yet the material, based on a tone row, is all closely related. Movements 3, 5, and 7 explore three different types of canons—exact imitation, canon in contrary motion and a crab (retrograde) canon. The score is marked with many indications of "con espressione" or even con molto espressione. Only No. 10 ("Ritmi") displays extroversion.

The Schumann Waldszenen (Forest Scenes) continue the intimate atmosphere although some of these are more extroverted, (Jäger auf der Lauer, Freundliche Landschaft, and Jagdlied). The set is a musical portrait of romanticized scenes depicting a visit to the forest. Especially intriguing is No. 4 (Verrufene Stelle) with its accompanying ghoulish poem by Friedrich Hebbel, loosely translated here:

*The flowers grow so high,
They are pale here, like death
Only one in the middle
Stands out in dark red*

*It had nothing from the sun:
Which never affected its red glow;
It had it from the earth,
It drank human blood*

Also striking, with its flute-like bird calls, is Vogel als Prophet (No. 7), possibly the best known of the set.

Lionel Nowak was a pianist/composer and my piano teacher during my pre-college days (age 10-17). He taught at Bennington College for almost 50 years. A rather private person, he possessed a very powerful intellect, and his music is characterized by a strong rigor and control of structure. The Nocturne and Toccata (from 1944) could well have been written by Prokofiev. I see, for example, a stylistic resemblance between the Nocturne and Prokofiev's first Vision Fugitive.—that is a singing melody line with varied accompaniment. The Toccata too reminds one of Prokofiev's own Toccata.

The second half of the program consist of two Fantasies. Nowak's Fantasia, written ten years later, is quite a different work from the Nocturne and Toccata. Much more atonal and acerbic, it still, nevertheless, contains expressive elements. Three chords are declaimed at the opening, which encompass a total of 11 pitches (with one overlap). Missing is the 12th pitch "F" which he strongly emphasizes at the end of the first part of the piece and again at

the end of the whole work. This serial work is constructed in five main sections. The harmonies and pitches of the original chords form the basis of all the thematic material in the work. After the introductory section, each section has a different character to it, moving from lyrical to rhythmically jagged to a scherzando and finally back to the opening material in a kind of recapitulation.

The "Wanderer" Fantasy of Schubert stands as one of the most virtuoso works in the piano literature. There are more difficult works written after Schubert and, indeed, many of Beethoven's piano works are very taxing for the pianist, but for its time, the "Wanderer" occupies a unique position in the piano repertoire. The four movements of this cyclical work, performed without a break, are based on the same rhythmic pattern (repeated notes in a quarter note plus two eighth notes pattern, long, short-short, with a slight variant of this in the third movement). This pattern, in turn, derives from a phrase in Schubert's song "Der Wanderer" — a quotation from this song forming the melody of the second movement. The first movement, in C Major, consists of several strung together sections which alternate between rhythmic statements and more lyrical material. The general character of the movement is strong and animated. There is gradual slow-down at the end as it leads to the second movement (in C sharp minor). After the song theme, this movement develops as a kind of loose set of variations, slipping back and forth between minor and major mode and increasing in activity and virtuosity. The ending is at the same time quiet and disquieted and harmonically ambiguous as well. The scherzo/rondo-like third movement (now in A flat Major) starts with a broken chord motive followed by the repeated note pattern (slightly altered from the other movements in a dotted rhythm of long, short-long). As in the first movement, Schubert moves back and forth from virtuoso figures to lyrical motives, although the dotted rhythm is persistent. The conclusion is very flashy abounding with fast arpeggio figures. After a strong dominant chord (G Major chord) and a brief pause, the last movement (back in C) starts as a fugue subject based directly on the original motive as stated in the first movement. Four different voices introduce the subject before the fugue breaks off, once again, into a display of virtuosity. Several modulations take place before Schubert returns to C Major with a variation of the fugue subject. This leads to the coda which is all bombast and pianistic thrills. Throughout it all, one is almost always aware of the original rhythmic motive.

.....Notes by Stephen Manes

About the Artist...

Pianist Stephen Manes is equally distinguished for his formidable technique and interpretive refinement. A native of Vermont, where he received his early training with Lionel Nowak (at Bennington College), he has appeared with the New York and Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestras and the Boston (Esplanade), Pittsburgh, National, Detroit, Baltimore and Denver Symphonies, under conductors including Michael Tilson Thomas, Sergiu Comissiona, Brian Priestman, Neville Marriner, Arthur Fiedler, Christopher Keene, Semyon Bychkov and Maximiano Valdes. In 1997 He made his concert debut in Chicago playing with the Ars Viva Symphony Orchestra under Alan Heatherington. John von Rhein, reviewing his concert for the Chicago Tribune wrote about Manes' "robust and spontaneous reading of the 'Emperor'." He further wrote: "...the pianist brought firm rhythm, a resilient attack and a largeness of vision to Beethoven's most brilliant piano concerto."

Mr. Manes has concertized in most major U.S. cities as well as in such European centers as London, West Berlin, Amsterdam, the Hague and Vienna. He is Professor of Music at the State University of New York at Buffalo where he has twice presented the complete cycle of Beethoven Piano Sonatas in a series of eight recitals, given a cycle of four recitals of Schubert piano music and has also performed the solo piano music of Schoenberg, Berg and Webern.

His affinity for chamber music has led to performances with the Cleveland, Tokyo, Kronos and Rowe String Quartets, and to appearances at the Marlboro and Chautauqua Music Festivals, he is on the faculty of the Chamber Music Conference and Composers Forum of the East held each summer on the campus of Bennington College in Vermont, and he is resident pianist at the Sebago-Long Lake Region Chamber Music Festival in Maine where he also served as co-Music Director from 1982-85. He was a member of the Baird Piano Trio in residence at SUNY at Buffalo.

A graduate of the Juilliard School where he was a student of Irwin Freundlich, Mr. Manes has been a prize winner in the Leventritt, Kosciuszko, and Michaels Competitions. He has recorded works of Tchaikovsky and Busoni for Orion Master Recordings and has made frequent radio appearances both in this country and abroad. With his wife, pianist Frieda Manes, he also performs regularly in programs of four-hand and two-piano music. Together, they have performed throughout the United States including Puerto Rico. They recorded the complete piano, four hand music of Beethoven for Spectrum Records. In the spring of 1995, they gave their first concert tour in Australia.

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