

BENNINGTON COLLEGE MUSIC DIVISION

Presents

VOX NOVA QUINTET

Wednesday
April 2, 1986

8:15 p.m.
Greenwall Music Workshop

Quintet in E^b Major
Lento, allegro moderato
Scherzo
Andante grazioso
Finale, allegro molto

ANTON REICHA
(1770 - 1836)

Three Pieces for Solo Clarinet

IGOR STRAVINSKY
(1882 - 1971)

Quintette
Andante tranquillo; Allegro assai
Presto
Tema con variazioni
Tempo di marcia francese

JEAN FRANCAIX
(1912 -)

----- INTERMISSION -----

Kleine Kammermusik für Fünf Bläser, op. 24
Lustig
Walzer
Ruhig und einfach
Schnelle viertel
Sehr lebhaft

PAUL HINDEMITH
(1895 - 1963)

Isoquinto *
(in 3 movements)

LOUIS CALABRO
(1926 -)

* World premiere

FUNDED IN PART BY A GRANT FROM THE WOOLLEY FUND.

ASSISTED BY A GRANT FROM MEET THE COMPOSER.

Reception to follow the concert.

PROGRAM NOTES

QUINTET IN E^b MAJOR by Anton Reicha. Anton Reicha, born in 1770 in Prague, spent the early years of his life in Bonn, where he met Beethoven. After living then for short times in many cities, including Hamburg, Paris, Wein, and Leipzig, he finally made his home in Paris, until his death in 1836. Through his uncle and teacher, Joseph Reicha, Anton had the opportunity to befriend important composers such as Haydn, Albrechtsberger, and Salieri, all of whom influenced his music. Later in his life Reicha worked with Liszt, Gounod, Berlioz, and Cesar Franck while he lived in Paris. Having written a number of chamber pieces, this quintet in particular, has become a classic in the quintet literature.

THREE PIECES FOR SOLO CLARINET by Igor Stravinsky. One of the most outstanding works for solo clarinet, is the Three Pieces by Igor Stravinsky. These are three short contrasting pieces which last for four stunning minutes. It's as though the composer has filled the clarinet with Stravinsky rhythms, intervals, melodic fragments, and accents.

The first piece is of a rather meditative character. It employs the chalumeau register of the clarinet and remains at a piano dynamics throughout. The second piece bears a ternary form with the extreme sections offering an improvisatory, animated material, while the middle part is of slower and calmer thematics. The third piece has an all through ringing quality which recalls the Stravinsky style of L'Histoire du Soldat. The appearance of this work in 1919 is connected with a Swiss industrialist amateur clarinetist and musical backer named Werner Reinhardt. He supported the first performance of L'Histoire du Soldat. The Three Pieces for clarinet were Stravinsky's "modest" way of saying thank you.

QUINTETTE by Jean Francaix. Jean Francaix dedicated his quintet of 1948 to the Woodwind Quintet of l'Orchestre National de Paris. This work, clearly illustrates Francaix's neoclassic style. Always spirited and effervescent, Francaix once commented: "My desire is to communicate joy rather than sorrow. Leave sorrow to silly people -- or the truly great."

KLEINE KAMMERMUSIK by Paul Hindemith. Born in 1895 Paul Hindemith was the leading German composer of the first half of the 20th century. Hindemith was not only a composer, but also a prominent music theorist. His work as a teacher brought him to the Berlin School of Music, Yale, and the University of Zurich. Hindemith's compositional trademark was his masterful extension of chromatic range, in a grand contrapunctal style. In this KAMMERMUSIK chromaticism is evident, and the aural demand is very high, for all the melodic modulation. But Hindemith uses familiar rhythms repeatedly which quite naturally make the chromatic lines less intense.

ISOQUINTO, for woodwind quintet
by Louis Calabro
1985-86

Isoquinto is the third (and probably last) in a series of my pieces that feature isorhythmic devices. It is preceded by Isotrio for viola, cello, and bass, and by Isoquarto for harp, viola, cello and bass.

Isoquinto was written for the Vox Nova Quintet, a group of extremely competent and sensitive performers, whose skills allowed me maximum freedom in pursuing my musical ideas. The work is in three movements with the first being the most extensive; in fact, it could stand alone. The tempos are fast, slow, fast in the first movement, and the pattern is repeated in the piece as a whole.

Besides isorhythms, the piece also features polyrhythms, ostinatos, isomelos, and whatever else I could think up. The melodic aspects of the work range from simple three-note figures to tone clusters; short lines and long lines. A predominant use of an eight-tone alternating half-step/whole-step scale allows for a strong tonal feeling which I think complements the use of these rhythmic devices.

Louis Calabro

VOX NOVA QUINTET

VOX NOVA QUINTET has established a reputation for their commitment to performance excellence and for their dedication to contemporary music. They have performed extensively on the east coast, including appearances at Carnegie Recital Hall. Many new works have been premiered and/or commissioned by the Vox Nova Quintet written by such esteemed composers as Louis Calabro, Gerald Gabel, Ronald Mazurek, William Holab, and Scott Eyerly. Their festival participation includes featured appearances at the 1985 Piccolo Spoleto Festival and the 1986 International Congress on Women in Music. The Vox Nova Quintet has been heard on engaging live radio broadcasts, both nationally and internationally. During the 1985-86 season, the Vox Nova Quintet is the Visiting Quintet-in-Residence at Bennington College, Vermont.

The musicians of the VOX NOVA QUINTET are:

DOMINIQUE SOUCY: Flutist Dominique Soucy received First Prize in flute and chamber music at the Conservatoire de Musique du Quebec. As a winner of the Montreal Symphony Competition and the Canadian Music Competition, Ms. Soucy has appeared as soloist with several prominent Canadian orchestras. Ms. Soucy was also awarded several Canadian Council on the Arts full scholarships to study in Canada and New York with Julius Baker and Jeanne Baxtresser.

MERYL ABT: Clarinetist Meryl Abt holds a B.M. from the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College and an M.M. from the Juilliard School, where she studied with David Weber. New York City freelance activities for Ms. Abt have included performances with the New York City Ballet Orchestra, as well as with the Queens Philharmonic. Ms. Abt has also appeared frequently in recital, including concerts at Carnegie Hall, the Bruno Walter Auditorium, and Paul Hall.

JENNIFER GRAHAM: Oboist Jennifer Graham received a B.M. at the Hartt School of Music and an M.M. at the Manhattan School of Music. Ms. Graham freelances with such ensembles as the American Composers Orchestra, the New Orchestra of Westchester, and the Prism Chamber Orchestra, among many others. Festival activities have included the Marlboro Festival Orchestra and the Florida Music Festival. Ms. Graham is also a visiting faculty member at Wilkes College.

DIANA JAENSCH: Bassoonist Diana Jaensch was graduated with honors from SUNY at Purchase, where she studied with Donald MacCourt and Leonard Hindell. Ms. Jaensch has performed with such orchestras as the Relache Contemporary Ensemble, the Westchester Symphony Orchestra, and the Ridgewood Symphony Orchestra. As well as her activities as a bassoonist, Ms. Jaensch is also a virtuoso accordionist, having competed extensively throughout the U.S.

ALEXANDRA COOK: French hornist Alexandra Cook received a B.F.A. at SUNY at Purchase, and has attended the Manhattan School of Music. Ms. Cook was a member of the National Orchestra of New York, and has performed with the New York String Orchestra under Alexander Schneider. Festival appearances include the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival and the New Mexico Music Festival at Taos. Ms. Cook's teachers have included Paul Ingraham and Willem Valkenier.