

BENNINGTON COLLEGE

presents

DAVID LEVINE, Pianist

Monday
December 10, 1973

8:15 P.M.

Carriage Barn

W. A. Mozart

ZEHN VARIATIONEN UBER "UNSER DUMMER POBEL MEINT"
VON GLUCK, K.455 (1784)

R. Schumann

HUMORESKE, OP. 20

Einfach; Sehr Rasch Und Lebhaft
Hastig
Einfach Und Zart
Innig
Sehr Lebhaft
Mit Einigem Pomp
Zum Beschluss

INTERMISSION

Anton Webern

VARIATIONEN, OP. 27

Sehr Massig
Sehr Lebhaft
Massig

L. V. Beethoven

15 VARIATIONS & FUGUE, "EROICA", OP. 35

THOUGHTS ON THE PROGRAM

BY DAVID LEVINE

W. A. Mozart Zehn Variationen uber "Unser dummer Pobel meint:
Von Gluck, K.455 (1784)

The impressive variety of the Variations on a Theme by Gluck, K.455 owes its origin to the even more impressive circumstances of its composition, or rather, improvisation; for this set of variations was improvised by Mozart, on demand from his audience, as an encore to one of his Vienna concerts of 1784. The then popular Pilgrim's March from Gluck's opera "Pilger aus Mekka" forms the basis of Mozart K.455, offering playfulness, elegance and profundity, affording the virtuoso a challenging vehicle, giving exceptional joy to Gluck (who was present at this occasion) and, no doubt, to Mozart himself.

R. Schumann Humoreske, Op. 20

Schumann's rarely heard (God knows why!) Humoreske is one of his greatest essays into the world of fantasy. Here in his Op.20, he confidently explores his inner voice with an originality never surpassed.

In roughly five "movements" all the elements of Schumann's mercurial personality are put into play.

Schumann writes to his beloved Clara: " I have been all week at the piano, composing, writing, laughing and crying, all at once. You will find this state of affairs nicely described in my Op.20."

Anton Webern Klavier Variationen, Op. 22 (1936)

A later day inner voice, perhaps also to be imagined is heard in the Webern Variations, exploring the pure phenomenon of sound with utmost sensitivity. Highly organized and perfect is a pure symmetry which is thoroughly explored, even exploited, one might say.

One hears criss-cross patterns, mirrors held up to the carefully selected images of tone, a high selectivity of dynamics and range, and serving to delight and expand the sensitivity of the listener as the Variations of Mozart 150 years earlier.

L. V. Beethoven Funfzehn Variationen und Fugue, Op. 35, "Eroica"

The "Eroica" Variations of Beethoven (considered by himself as "one of his greater works") is a misnomer, due to their being composed previous to the symphony of this title.

Rather they are a tribute to Beethoven's ballet "Die Geschopfe des Prometheus" (The creatures of Prometheus). One can almost hear the wooden creatures of the ballet scenario come to life in each successive variation. (Here "variation" takes on a more organic meaning).

And what life it is; seeming to overwhelm the music itself, culminating, in the final pages, with the emergence of a tone creature whose liberation of spirit, whose very defiance is truly Promethean and unconquerable!