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Concert: New York Woodwind Quintet

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ITHACA COLLEGE CONCERTS 1991-92

NEW YORK WOODWIND QUINTET

SAMUEL BARON, Flute
RONALD ROSEMAN, Oboe
CHARLES NEIDICH, Clarinet
DONALD MacCOURT, Bassoon
WILLIAM PURVIS, Horn

assisted by

ITHACA WIND QUINTET

Quintet in D Major, op. 91, no. 3

Lento—Allegro assai
Adagio
Minuetto: Allegro vivo
Finale: Allegro

Kleine Kammermusik, op. 24, no. 2 (1922)

Lustig. Massig schnelle Viertel.
Walzer. Durweg sehr leise.
Ruhig und einfach.
Schnelle Viertel.
Sehr lebhafte.

ANTON REICHA (1770-1836)

PAUL HINDEMITH (1895-1963)

INTERMISSION
Wind Quintet (1986)  
Ronald Roseman  
(b. 1933)  

*Reflections on a question*  
Romanza: Andante  
Scherzo  
Chorale Prelude

Le Tombeau de Couperin  
Maurice Ravel  
(1875-1937)  
arranged by Gunther Schuller

*Prelude*  
*Fugue*  
*Forlana*  
*Rigaudon*  
*Menuet*  
*Toccata*

Octet in E♭ for Strings, op. 20  
Felix Mendelssohn  
(1809-1847)  
arranged by Samuel Baron

*III. Scherzo*

Walter B. Ford Hall Auditorium  
Tuesday, February 11, 1992  
8:15 p.m.

The New York Woodwind Quintet records for the Nonesuch and Musical Heritage labels.

Exclusive Management: John Gingrich Management, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1515  
New York, NY 10023
PROGRAM NOTES

Anton Reicha. *Quintet in D Major, op. 91, no. 3*

Anton Reicha, born in Prague, can add to his name as a composer, a magnificent theorist and pedagogue. At Bonn he was intimate with Beethoven, and in Vienna his pupils numbered such notable figures as Franz Liszt, Hector Berlioz, Charles Gounod, and Cesar Franck. The notable clarity of his mind is shown in his dextrous chamber music and in the brilliance of his theoretical works. Along with composer Franz Danzi, he pioneered in the development of the wind quintet, having written thirty-six works for this combination alone.

Paul Hindemith. *Kleine Kammermusik, op. 24, no. 2*

Hindemith composed his *Kleine Kammermusik*—literally "Little Chamber Music"—in 1922 for the Frankfurt Wind Chamber Music Society, whose members performed it for the first time in July of that year at the Second Rhine Chamber Music Festival in Cologne. The composer always had a healthy respect for classical and preclassical forms; and in this delightfully infectious little five movement suite for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, and bassoon, he seems to have been seeking to write a twentieth century counterpart to the informal serenades and divertimenti with which Mozart and his contemporaries entertained the wealthy aristocracy of their day.

This quintet has become, in its fifty-odd years of existence, a solid classic of the woodwind chamber music world. By the virtuosity of its writing, it seemed to integrate for the first time in one work all the advances made by the instruments in technique over the hundred year period prior to its appearance, and at the same time it boldly announced the self-sufficiency of the woodwind quintet as a chamber music ensemble. In his *Kleine Kammermusik*, Hindemith created a gripping composition which has in it depth as well as humor. It is no exaggeration to say that all modern quintet writing owes something to this work.

Ronald Roseman. *Woodwind Quintet*

The *Woodwind Quintet* was written for the Aspen Wind Quintet under a National Endowment for the Arts Consortium Commissioning Grant. The Aspen Quintet premiered the quintet at the 92nd Street "Y" in New York City on September 23, 1986. The *Woodwind Quintet* is in four movements which go right into each other without interruption. The piece begins with one long phrase in the flute marked "questioning and tentative" (similar to the opening of the last movement of Beethoven's *String Quartet, op. 135*). This is answered by a strong, almost brutal response from the rest of the quintet. The movement consists of the working out, juxtaposition and conflict of these two elements, culminating in a long flute cadenza. The second movement, marked *Andante*
**Maurice Ravel. Le Tombeau de Couperin**

The suite of pieces for piano entitled *Le Tombeau de Couperin* has in it some of Ravel's most elegant music, shaped to produce a self consciously "old-fashioned" flavor. The twentieth century master, Ravel, pays tribute to the eighteenth century master, Couperin, by employing Couperin's forms and mimicking his keyboard virtuosity. Of course, Couperin was justly recognized as the supreme harpsichord virtuoso of his age. Ravel captures the nimbleness, the fleetness, the ornamented quality, and the dryness of Couperin's sound, and he achieves this in very sophisticated piano writing. Some time after the appearance of *Le Tombeau de Couperin* as a piano work, Ravel himself orchestrated four of the pieces in the suite and created a virtuoso orchestral work which is extremely popular to this day (omitted were the Fugue and the Toccata). In this version the woodwind instruments took on a special prominence.

Ravel's mastery of orchestral resources has always been one of his most admired faculties, and it accounts for the great popularity of such works as the *Daphnis and Chloe* ballet suites and the *Rapsodie Espagnole*, not to mention *Bolero*, a work in which all other compositional features are subordinated to pure orchestration. But the public is not alone in enjoying Ravel's orchestral skill; composers too have drunk at his well. Gunther Schuller, the outstanding American composer (and, let it not be forgotten, wind player) has made a special study of Ravel's sense of translation of piano music into orchestral sounds, and has produced an exquisite distillation of *Le Tombeau de Couperin* for woodwind quintet. It is this version which the New York Woodwind Quintet plays at this concert: Ravel's view of Couperin's sound, seen through the eyes of Gunther Schuller as a wind chamber music work.

**Felix Mendelssohn. Octet for Strings, op. 20**

The *Octet for Strings* by Felix Mendelssohn has been a great favorite in the world of string chamber music ever since it was written. The roster of players needed to perform it consists of two string quartets; in other words, four violins, two violas, and two cellos. Samuel Baron's transcription of Mendelssohn's
Octet uses two woodwind quintets; in other words two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, and two French horns.

Transcriptions of string music into the woodwind world tend to need more players than the original complement. This is because of the double-stopping and chord-playing potential of the strings which has no analogue in the wind world. However, a virtue can be made from this necessity; the extra players may achieve a larger measure of contrapuntal flexibility. In a work like the Octet for Strings by Mendelssohn, where so many rapid ideas are tossed about, this may help the listener to sort out the patterns. There is also with winds the potential for increased variety of tone color. String chamber music starts with homogeneity; woodwind chamber music starts with contrast. From this it can be seen that every transcription involves a fresh interpretation of a familiar work, rather than just a mechanical rendering of its pitches and rhythms.

The Octet for Strings is a masterpiece of Mendelssohn's earliest period. The work is full of life in all four movements. Particularly winning is the Scherzo which rivals Mendelssohn's other great scherzo (from the Midsummer Night's Dream music) for lightness, sprightliness, and evanescence—and, one might add, an irresistible popularity.

THE ARTISTS

New York Woodwind Quintet

For over 40 seasons the New York Woodwind Quintet has maintained its position of preeminence in the field of chamber music through numerous concerts and workshops in the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia, and South America. The quintet has made invaluable contributions in the expansion of the repertoire for woodwinds. Over 20 compositions have been written for, and premiered by, the New York Woodwind Quintet; some have become classics of the repertoire. These works, many of which have been recorded by the quintet, include Samuel Barber's Summer Music and quintets by Gunther Schuller, Ezra Laderman, William Bergsma, Alec Wilder, William Sydeman and Wallingford Reigger. During its 40th anniversary season (1987-88), the quintet premiered several new works by Malcolm Forsythe, Ronald Roseman and jazz pianist Cecil Taylor, in a three-concert series presented at Merkin Concert Hall. These concerts also included premieres of transcriptions by member of the quintet: Mozart/William Purvis, String Quartet in g; and Brahms/Samuel Baron, Quartet, op. 25.

The members of the quintet—Samuel Baron, flute; Ronald Roseman, oboe; Charles Neidich, clarinet; Donald MacCourt, bassoon; William Purvis, horn—are well-known artists who are frequently heard in solo and chamber music capacities as well as recording artists. Recently released were two recordings: The Brahms Quintets on Musical Heritage and Works by Irving Fine, on Nonesuch featuring the quintet in Partita. The quintet has received world-wide
acclaim not only for its recordings but also for frequent performances on radio and television. Their orchestral affiliations have included some of the country's most distinguished ensembles—The New York Philharmonic, "Y" Chamber Orchestra, Bach Aria Group, Orpheus, and the New York City Ballet Orchestra. Added to their busy performance schedules are associations with Yale University, Mannes College of Music, Columbia University, SUNY Purchase, SUNY Stony Brook, and the Eastman School of Music. In the 1989-90 season the quintet became an ensemble-in-residence at the Juilliard School. On many occasions the quintet has collaborated with string quartets and pianists at summer festivals and during university residencies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, SUNY Binghamton, and SUNY Stony Brook. Having pioneered in educational concerts with its initiation of the wind program for Young Audiences, the New York Woodwind Quintet continues to offer a wide variety of educational events, including workshops, masterclasses, and mini-residencies.

The United States Department of State has honored the New York Woodwind Quintet on five occasions with invitations for overseas tours. In 1956 the quintet spent 10 weeks in South America and was one of the few ensembles invited to perform at the American Pavilion of the 1958 Brussels World's Fair. During the summer and fall of 1962 the quintet embarked on a highly praised tour of 11 countries in the Orient. Central and South America were toured in 1969 and in 1972 the ensemble toured for four weeks throughout the Soviet Union. On these tours the quintet not only performed numerous concerts, but also held workshops and masterclass sessions for both student and professional musicians.

Ithaca Wind Quintet

Founded in 1963, the Ithaca Wind Quintet is the resident faculty woodwind ensemble for the Ithaca College School of Music. The members of the quintet are Wendy Herbener Mehne, flute; Mark Hill, oboe; Michael Galván, clarinet; Lee Seibert Goodhew, bassoon; and John Covert, horn. In addition to performances in Ithaca, the ensemble regularly tours across the state and throughout the Northeast, presenting clinics and demonstrations and performing for concert series, children's concerts, universities, and high schools. The Ithaca Wind Quintet has been heard at major music conventions for the New York State School Music Association and the Music Educators National Conference, in Philadelphia, Boston, Washington, D.C., New York City, and in dozens of concerts for young audiences. The quintet's repertoire ranges from Reicha and Cambini to Hindemith and Berio to Joplin and the music of today.
CONCERT CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

15  8:15  Faculty Chamber Recital, Susan Sobolewski, Piano
16  3:00  Faculty Recital, Randie Blooding, Baritone
16  8:15  Guest Recital, Blair Bollinger, Bass Trombone
18  8:15  Wind Ensemble, Rodney Winther, Conductor
21  8:15  Vocal Jazz Ensemble, Dave Riley, Arranger/Director
24  8:15  Contemporary Chamber Ensemble, Dana Wilson, Director
25  8:15  Symphonic Band, Henry Neubert, Conductor
26  8:15  and Chorus, Alan Gumm, Conductor
27  8:15  Guest Lecture, Karel Husa, Composer
28  8:15  Women's Chorale, Janet Funderburk-Galván
29  8:15  and Concert Band, Mark Fonder, Conductor
29  8:15  Faculty Recital, Harold Reynolds, Trombone

MARCH

1  3:00  Choir, Lawrence Doebler, Conductor
3  8:15  Percussion Ensemble, Gordon Stout, Conductor
16  8:15  Faculty Recital, J. William Greene, Organ
18  8:15  Faculty Recital, Deborah Montgomery, Soprano
19  8:15  and Randie Blooding, Baritone
21  8:15  Ithaca College Concerts 1991-92*
22  3:00  Marian McPartland Trio
24  8:15  Faculty Recital, Angus Godwin, Baritone
27  8:15  Flute Ensemble, Wendy Mehne, Conductor
28  8:15  Faculty Recital, Jonathan Sokasits, Piano
29  3:30  Guest Recital, Syracuse Symphony Youth Orchestra

In addition to the concerts listed above, music students give solo and chamber recitals, which are free and open to the public. The Concert Line (274-3356) provides supplemental information about these performances.

*admission charge

ITHACA COLLEGE CONCERTS 1991-92*

September 4  New York Chamber Orchestra
October 22    Kalichstein/Laredo/Robinson Trio
February 11   New York Woodwind Quintet
March 21      Marian McPartland Trio