

Sunday, February 10, 2019
3:30 pm
Beckman Auditorium, Caltech



Coleman Chamber Music Association presents

Berlin Philharmonic Wind Quintet

Michael Hasel, *flute* Fergus McWilliam, *horn*
Andreas Wittmann, *oboe* Marion Reinhard, *bassoon*
Walter Seyfarth, *clarinet*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Three Fantasies for Mechanical Organ

(1756-1791) (Arranged for Wind Quintet by Michael Hasel)
Fantasie in F minor, "ein Orgelwerk
in einer Uhr," K. 594
Adagio - Allegro - Adagio
Andante in F Major, "eine Orgelwalze," K. 616
Fantasie in F minor, "eine Orgelwalze," K. 608
Allegro - Andante - Allegro

Paul Hindemith
(1895-1963)

Kleine Kammermusik, Op. 24, No. 2
Lustig. Mässig schnell Viertel
Walzer. Durchweg sehr leise
Ruhig und einfach
Schnell Viertel
Sehr lebhaft

I N T E R M I S S I O N

Henri Tomasi
(1901-1971)

**Five Sacred and Profane Dances for
Wind Quintet**
Danse agreste. Allegretto
Danse profane. Scherzando
Danse sacrée. Lent
Danse nuptiale. Scherzando
Danse guerrière. Sauvagement frénétique

Paul Taffanel
(1844-1908)

Quintet for Winds in G minor
Allegro con Moto
Andante
Vivace

Program Notes

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791) **K. 594, 608, 616**

As neither I (as the page-turning flautist of our ensemble) nor our audiences wished to deny ourselves further contact with Mozart's music, the use of transcriptions was an obvious step to take. Although, since we formed the ensemble in 1988, we have steadfastly refused to play arrangements (with the exception of a few display pieces and encores), we make an exception for Mozart, because his oeuvre includes certain works that cry out for a quintet arrangement if the transcription is carried out with due stylistic sensitivity. Moreover, as the mechanical organ and glass harmonica are not readily available for concert performances, I hope that my arrangements will make some of Mozart's masterpieces more easily accessible for a larger audience.

The starting point for my arrangements was the text of the *Neue Mozart Ausgabe* (published by Bärenreiter), which has been carried over unaltered except for certain octave and chord doublings that had to be changed for technical reasons, especially in K. 608, where chords of up to twelve notes occur. The instruments (except for the horn) are used in accordance with the customs and technical capabilities of Mozart's era. I have used the horn according to modern performance technique, not least in order to achieve a greater range of colour in the instrumentation, a point that Mozart evidently also considered important (see K. 452). To have restricted myself to the valve-less horn would have resulted in very sparing use of the instrument, especially in K. 594 and K. 608 with their wide harmonic range.

Mozart's three surviving works for mechanical organ all come from the last year of his life. They were written in response to a commission from Count Josef von Deym's Müllersche Kunstgalerie in Vienna. This art gallery contained a curious mixture of exhibits: plaster replicas of ancient statues, wax reliefs, paintings, copper engravings, and mechanical musical instruments. In March 1791 the Count mounted a memorial exhibition for Field Marshal Baron Gideon von Laudon, an

Austrian national hero, at which funeral music was to be played hourly. For this purpose Mozart wrote K. 594 (the last entry in his catalogue of works for December 1790) and K. 608 (dated 3rd March 1791). K. 616, dated 4th May 1791, was intended for performance elsewhere in the collection; furthermore, we can conclude from Mozart's letters and fragments that he wrote additional pieces for mechanical organ, works which have regrettably not survived.

Clockwork organ, or organ cylinder, are terms referring to a flute-playing musical clock, in other words a mechanical organ that is coupled to a clock mechanism in order to reproduce music at a given point in time. These flute-playing musical clocks, for which such composers as Joseph Haydn and Ludwig van Beethoven also composed a number of pieces, were then very popular instruments in high society art galleries and other curiosity chambers. They existed in a wide range of types and with differing ranges, as can well be seen from Mozart's scores. For the four-part texture of K. 616, for example, a high-pitched instrument with small pipes was sufficient, whilst K. 608 requires chords of up to twelve notes and a considerably larger range.

Mozart's compositions for organ cylinder were soon arranged for other instruments in order to make them accessible to a wider audience. The adaptations range from piano transcriptions to versions for orchestra. Several arrangements exist for wind quintet; the older ones (Meyer, Pillney) often take considerable liberties with the text, whilst the newer ones (Schottstädt, Schäfer) reproduce Mozart's music with much greater precision. In particular K. 608, an outstanding piece with fine contrapuntal passages, a fugue and a double fugue (a late flowering of Mozart's preoccupation with the music of Bach), rapidly became well-known. Beethoven made a copy of it for study purposes (he also possessed a copy of K. 594). Schubert's F minor Fantasy for piano four hands clearly shows its influence, and the Adagio from Franz Lachner's Wind Octet has obvious links with the Andante from Mozart's piece.

Finally, we can only marvel at the way Mozart's inspiration attained such elevated heights

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when tackling a task of which, as we know from his letters, he was not especially fond. As W. Hildesheimer points out in his biography of Mozart: “Music of significance for a musical box, an almost tragicomical combination, at any rate a triumph of the spirit over the material.”

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PAUL HINDEMITH (1895-1963)

Kleine Kammermusik, Op. 24, No. 2

The *Kleine Kammermusik*, Op. 24, No. 2 (1922) dates from Paul Hindemith's early period as a 'musical enfant terrible.' In contrast to its big sister from the same period, the *Kammermusik*, Op. 24, No. 1, which shocks us with its dissonant trumpet calls, wild xylophone runs, and howling sirens, or indeed the Sonata for Solo Viola, Op. 25, in which one movement is tellingly labelled: *rasendes Zeitmaß - wild - Tonschönheit ist Nebensache* (lunatic tempo - wild - beauty of tone is incidental), the *Kleine Kammermusik* is quite a relaxed work. With its humorous and parodist nature and its exploitation of the virtuoso and tonal possibilities of the five instruments, it remains a highlight of the twentieth-century wind quintet repertoire. Hindemith, who was at that time leader of the Frankfurt Opera Orchestra, wrote the piece for his colleagues in the Frankfurt Wind Chamber Music Society (Frankfurter-Bläser-Kammermusikvereinigung), an ensemble made up of the solo wind players of the opera orchestra, who gave the first performance of the work at the second Rhine Chamber Music Festival in Cologne on 12th June 1922.

HENRI TOMASI (1901-1971)

Cinq Danses Profanes et Sacrées (Five Sacred and Profane Dances)

Henri Tomasi received his first composition prize, the Prix Halphen, in 1925 for a work for wind quintet, the *Variations sur un thème corse* (Variations on a Corsican Theme). Overall we can observe a predilection for wind instruments in his instrumental oeuvre; among his solo concertos are pieces for flute, oboe,

clarinet, saxophone, bassoon, horn, trumpet, and trombone. As well as the *Cinq Danses*, he composed a further wind quintet in 1952.

Both Tomasi's mother and his father, a simple postal clerk but also a great music-lover and amateur flautist, came from La Casinca on Corsica. Tomasi received tuition in music theory from an early age; he won first prize in this subject at the age of ten, followed by a first prize for piano playing when he was thirteen. The First World War initially prevented Tomasi from undertaking proper studies in Paris, and he had to earn a living in Marseille as a pianist in hotels, restaurants, brothels, and cinemas. In 1921 a scholarship enabled him to commence studies at the Paris Conservatoire, where his teachers included Gaubert (the star pupil of Paul Taffanel), d'Indy, Caussade, and Vidal. In 1927 he won second prize in the Prix de Rome with his cantata *Coriolan*, and was awarded a first prize for conducting.

This prize marked the beginning of Tomasi's career as a conductor; he later became chief conductor of the French National Orchestra and of the Monte Carlo Opera as well as being in great demand as a guest conductor all over Europe. In 1957, however, health considerations – including deafness in one ear – put an end to his conducting career, and he devoted himself entirely to composition.

His production includes numerous operas and ballets, solo concertos, orchestral works, chamber music, and a few sacred works. His music betrays various influences, not only from West European art music—Gregorian chants, neo-classicism and dodecaphony—but also from the folk music of Corsica and Provence, as well as exotic sonorities from Cambodia, Laos, Tahiti, and the Sahara. “Although I have not shied away from the most modern modes of expression, I remain at heart a melodist. I cannot stand systems and sectarianism. I compose for the public at large. Music that does not come from the heart is not music.”

The title of the *Cinq Danses Profanes et Sacrées* alludes to the dances for chromatic harp and strings written in 1904 by Claude Debussy with the title *Danse sacrée et Danse profane*. Tomasi expands this contrasted pair by adding a pastoral dance, a wedding dance, and a war dance. The movements

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are very concise and sharply characterized, and they demonstrate many of the above-mentioned influences. The ensemble is required to produce an enormous palette of tone colors, and each instrument is given virtuosic passages that are a pleasure to play. The War Dance, with its frenetic bassoon solo, is a perfect ending.

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CLAUDE PAUL TAFFANEL (1844-1908) **Quintet in G minor for Winds)**

Paul Taffanel is regarded as the founder of the modern French flute school. The *Méthode complète de flute* that he wrote in collaboration with his pupil Philippe Gaubert remains to this day one of the major tutors for every flautist.

Taffanel received his musical education from his father and appeared as a flautist from an early age. During his studies at the Paris Conservatoire he was engaged first at the Opéra-Comique (1862-64) and later at the Grand Opéra where - as also in the Conservatoire orchestra - he was the solo flautist. In 1879, to promote wind playing, he founded the Société des Instruments à Vent for which he commissioned many new compositions (such as Charles Gounod's *Petite Symphonie*). In 1893 Taffanel became the conductor of the Paris Opera,

and at the same time he was appointed professor of flute at the Paris Conservatoire.

In Taffanel's catalogue of works, as one might expect, we find principally positions for flute and piano, written for use at his own and his pupils' concerts. His one and only Wind Quintet (1878) is a typical example of his late-Romantic style of composition: themes that are melodically and rhythmically concise, plus the opportunity for every player to display virtuosity as well as *cantabile* qualities, have made it one of the best-loved works in the Romantic quintet repertoire.

The first movement is in classical sonata form: a gloomy, mysterious first theme is contrasted with a swinging, waltz-like second idea. After both themes have been worked out in a large-scale, dramatic development section, followed by the recapitulation and coda, the movement vanishes with an arabesque from the flute. The second movement grows entirely from a songful horn theme, and offers all of the instruments the chance to display *cantabile* playing. The finale is a tarantella that places the utmost demands on the musicians - and - with only brief interruptions from a chorale-like theme - chases towards the witty, unexpected conclusion. Barely ten years after Taffanel wrote this piece, Paul Dukas copied this ending exactly (intentionally, or not?) in his brilliant orchestral scherzo *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, based on Goethe.

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Some of today's repertoire have been performed previously in the Coleman series:

Mozart Three Fantasies for Mechanical Organ

All performances by the Berlin Philharmonic Wind Quintet, as follows:

November 2002 K. 594

October 2007 K. 594, K. 608

March 2014 K. 594, K. 608, K. 616

Hindemith Kleine Kammermusik, Op. 24, No. 2

March 1953 Fine Arts Winds

March 1975 Danzi Woodwind Quintet

April 1989 Chicago Pro Musica

Premiere performances at Coleman Chamber Music Association Concerts:

Tomasi Five Sacred and Profane Dances for Wind Quintet

Taffanel Quintet for Winds in G minor

Berlin Philharmonic

Wind Quintet

The Berlin Philharmonic Wind Quintet (Philharmonisches Bläserquintett Berlin) was founded in 1988, during the era of Herbert von Karajan, the first permanently established wind quintet in the famous orchestra's rich tradition of chamber music. With four original members since inception (Marion Reinhard succeeded founding bassoonist Henning Trog in 2009), they are living musical witnesses to the hugely productive and influential musical partnerships of the Berlin Philharmonic not only with Karajan, but also with its two most recent Musical Directors: Claudio Abbado and Sir Simon Rattle.

The Berlin Philharmonic Wind Quintet has astonished audiences worldwide with their range of expression, their tonal spectrum and their conceptual unity. Indeed many listeners and critics agree that the ensemble has succeeded in virtually redefining the sound of the classic wind quintet. Their repertoire covers not only the entire spectrum of the wind quintet literature but also includes works for enlarged ensemble, e.g. the Sextets of Janáček and Reinicke or the Septets of Hindemith and Koechlin. In addition, collaboration with pianists such as Lars Vogt,

Stephen Hough, Jon Nakamatsu and Lilya Zilberstein have intensified in recent years.

The ensemble's commitment to the wind quintet repertoire is passionate and in 1991 they found the perfect partner for their recording plans, the Swedish company BIS Records, already well known in its own right for its uncompromising standards. The results of this long and exclusive collaboration have received critical accolades worldwide - indeed many of these recordings are already widely held to be "definitive" or "reference" performances.

In addition to their concert appearances throughout Europe, North and South America, Israel, Australia, and the Far East, the Berlin Philharmonic Wind Quintet are also popular guests at international festivals such as the Berliner Festwochen, the Edinburgh Festival, the London Proms, the Quintette-Biennale Marseille, the Rheingau Festival, and the Salzburg Festival. Their television productions and radio broadcasts are seen and heard throughout Europe, Asia, and North America.

In recent years the members of the Berlin Philharmonic Wind Quintet have intensified their teaching and coaching roles with youth; they give chamber music workshops and instrumental instruction in many countries, with a particular commitment, for example, to the youth orchestra program of Venezuela. 2019 will mark their final tour of North America, as several members of the ensemble will soon be retiring from the Orchestra. The Quintet will continue to give occasional performances in Europe.