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NOTES ON FLUTE MUSIC OF BOEHM, MUCZYNSKI, TELEMANN, AND FELD

by

Anna Lisa Davidson

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
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of

DEPARTMENT HONORS

in

Music

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1997

Notes on Flute Music of Boehm, Muczynski, Telemann, and Feld

Theobald Boehm is most well known for his contribution to the structure of today's standard flute key system. He was born in 1794 to a goldsmith, who intended him to follow the trade. Boehm became skilled at gold smithing while also pursuing musical studies, using a flute to improve his weak lungs. He learned to play the flageolet and one-keyed flute in childhood. He grew unhappy with the construction of these and made himself a copy of a four-keyed flute by Grenser of Dresden. In 1812, he became principal flautist at the Isartor Theater. He was able to continue both his flute playing and gold smithing in this position. He established a factory of his own in 1828, and he produced instruments under the name of Boehm & Grève à Munich. Boehm traveled to Paris and London as a virtuoso in 1831 and met with considerable success. In 1832 the first actual Boehm flute was constructed. New innovations included a tapered bore larger than normal and a system of open holes controlled by interlinked keys. Although these contributed to the success of his flutes, the actual "Boehm system" refers to the size and placing of the tone holes and the resulting change in fingerings. Between 1833 and 1846, he oversaw improvements in the Bavarian steel industry, and did almost nothing in music. A few men saw fit to steal some of his unprotected designs during this time and improved certain features (Bate 840).

When Boehm returned to his flute designing, he turned to studying acoustics. Using his new knowledge, he determined by trial and error the dimensions and placing of the tone holes. He made two flutes, the first with no keys. He would cut sections off the end of this keyless instrument until it produced the desired pitch and then place a tone hole in the corresponding place on the second flute. To this day, our flutes show little deviation from his system, despite his feeling that his flutes were not perfect. He desired others to build upon and improve the system (Bate 840).

The music Boehm wrote for flute was meant primarily to show off the wonderful aspects of the new design in comparison to the conventional four-key flute (Boehm 22). R.S. Rockstro wrote:

“[Boehm’s] brilliant variations on “*The Swiss Boy*,” in the key of C, were at one time so frequently played in public by those who had adopted the new fingering, that many persons began to express their doubts as to the possibility of rapid passages being properly executed on the instrument in any other key. Boehm promptly replied by writing a difficult *Fantasia* on the “*Schneehuhn’s Waltz*” (attributed to Beethoven), in Ab . . . [which could not] be effectively played on the old flute” (618).

The variations being played today are one of these works written to show off the mechanism he developed, with large leaps, involved cadenzas, and long glissandos.

Robert Muczynski was born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1929. His musical training began at the age of five, with the piano. He studied piano with Walter Knupfer and composition with Alexander Tcherepnin at DePaul University in Chicago. There he received his Bachelor and Master's degrees in music. His dual talents in composition and piano were rewarded by the Polish Arts Club of Chicago. He has been a guest-soloist at the Cincinnati Composers' Symposium several times (Muczynski i). Mr. Muczynski has received two Ford Foundation grants; fourteen ASCAP awards; International Society for Contemporary Music awards, the Concord International prize; and the Distinguished Alumni award from DePaul University; as well as numerous commissions. His first commission was the *First Symphony*, for the Fromm Music Foundation. As one of the youngest composers to receive a commission from the Louisville Philharmonic Society, he performed his work, *Concerto No. 1* for Piano and Orchestra with the Louisville Orchestra at its world premiere. Mr. Muczynski was a professor of composition and composer-in-residence at the University of Arizona from 1965 until 1988, when he retired (Anderson 372).

Fragments, the work being performed today, can be described as pieces in someone's life. Our mentor, Dr. Morrison, often encourages us to feel certain emotions and to picture scenes in order to play with more feeling. The "Waltz" is just what it claims to be: a dance in 3/4 time, felt in one, and very promenading in nature. "Solitude" is extremely dissonant; one wonders what was being expressed

when Muczynski wrote it. Was someone close to him ill, or was he just pondering the mysteries of life, alone? The third movement is jovial and frolicsome, as anyone would feel on a holiday. The meter switches often from 2/4 to 3/8 or 5/8, making it seem as if the music were skipping. "Reverie" feels like a dream, slow and meandering. The last movement, entitled "Exit," makes one feel as if he were leaving an undesirable place with much jubilation, and with a snicker, slamming the door at the end.

Georg Philipp Telemann was born in Germany, March of 1681 and died in June of 1767. Born into the upper middle class, there were no musicians to be found among his forebears. His father and grandfather, as well as other relatives, were extremely religious; many of them held clerical positions. Therefore, he was largely self-taught. By ten years of age, he had learned to play the violin, flute, zither, and keyboard instruments with no formal instruction. He studied the compositions of cantor Benedikt Christiani, transcribed works of other composers, and tried his hand at composing arias, motets and instrumental works. His parents tried to steer him away from his musical path, but to no avail. Telemann continued, teaching himself composition and thoroughbass, and began to compose symphonies and other works. He went to Leipzig with the intent of studying law, leaving all his instruments behind, but still he attracted musicians and composers. In 1702 he founded a student *collegium musicum* which organized public concerts, a new idea at the time. He became musical director of the Leipzig Opera in 1702.

He served simultaneously in this position and as the organist for the Neue Kirche. He later then became Kapellmeister in Sorau, Lower Lusatia (now Poland) in 1705, and eventually moved to Eisenach. In July of 1721, he was asked to be cantor of the Johanneum and musical director of Hamburg's five main churches. This was a demanding position which required him to write many works: two cantatas each Sunday, a Passion each year, and an oratorio for the consecration of each new church. While at this post, he composed operas and once again organized public concerts with a *collegium musicum* in spite of strong opposition from city councilors who disliked his combination of activities in the church and theater.

Telemann was instrumental in helping break down the barriers of official duties and the barriers between secular and sacred music. Throughout his life, Telemann wrote music that was not always in line with his position. He never felt the need to limit himself to the single genre that reflected the official post. He used his time to compose pieces of both secular and sacred natures. Latin school dramas were mixed with oratorios, and violin concertos with cantatas. This was unusual during this period. Other musicians, such as Kuhnau, often complained of Telemann's break with tradition.

Telemann was an extremely prolific composer; his output surpassed that of his contemporary, J.S. Bach. His works include sacred music, chamber music, music for orchestra, solo repertoire, opera, incidental songs, school dramas, books

on music theory, and a few autobiographical works. He tried to avoid technical difficulty in his music in order to spread music among his family and the public. Some works are even pedagogical in nature. His instrumental works have a feeling of spirit and liveliness that make them enjoyable to play and listen to. His works for flute include the Suite in A Minor for flute and strings; a set of Six Sonatas (opus 2) for two unaccompanied flutes; the Methodical Sonatas; and the Twelve Fantasias for unaccompanied flute (Toff 211). These fantasias, the first of which is being played on this program, are light and in a rococo style (Telemann i). Each has two short movements.

During this period in musical history, composers often refrained from giving information on how a piece of music was to be embellished. It was left up to the performer to fill in the gaps, using improvisatory techniques and a knowledge of current popular performance techniques. Today, interpreting these works can be challenging, as few treatises are to be found on the specific techniques then employed. A performer must have a solid knowledge of the general performance practices of the time in order to present a composition in the style that the composer would have expected.

Jindřich Feld was born in Prague, Czechoslovakia, February 19, 1925, into a musical family. He received violin and viola lessons from his father, the famous violin professor Jindřich Feld, at an early age. His studies were interrupted by the German occupation of his city, but he later continued his education in composition

at the Prague Conservatory with E. Hlobil (1945-48) and the Prague Academy of Music with J. Řídký (1948-52) (Large 454). He received a Ph.D. in musicology from Charles University in 1952. His earlier compositions, such as The Concerto for Orchestra and Divertimento for strings, display the influence of Bartók, with their Czechoslovakian folk-like nuances (McClain 1). He has written successful music for children. The opera The Postman's Fairytale won a prize in the Prague Jubilee Competition in 1960 (Csillag 1). Later, his works followed a style like that of Stravinsky, with neoclassical elegance and lyricism. The flute Sonate, (1957) featured in this program, belongs in this category with its exuberance and wit. His instrumental music, which is his forte, displays his individual style founded on refinement of form and subtle instrumental coloring. He often uses serial and improvisatory techniques.

While Dr. Feld has spent much of his career as a freelance composer gaining recognition for his compositions, he has also spent time teaching and lecturing as a professor of composition at the Prague Conservatory (1948-52), the University of Adelaide, South Australia, and Indiana University. He was a professor of composition and composer-in-residence at the University of Arizona from 1965 to 1988, when he retired. Since 1989, he has continued composing, serving on many musical and cultural committees in the Czech Association of Musicians, and since 1990, has been the music program director for Czech Radio (Feld 36).

The previous information was included as part of the program notes (shown on the inside cover of this thesis) for a flute recital given by the author. The musical works performed were chosen in compliance with the desire to give a diverse sampling of flute repertoire. Each piece required a unique pedagogical approach in order to prepare it for exhibition. While the Telemann Fantasie demanded historical improvisatory knowledge, the Feld Sonate dictated rhythmic accuracy. The study and preparation of these biographical notes gave additional insight needed in order to give a more successful and convincing recital performance.

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A Senior Recital

featuring

Anna Lisa Davidson

Flute

Saturday, the thirty-first Day of May
in the Year of our Lord
One thousand nine hundred ninety-seven
Eleven a.m.
Room 214
Utah State University

Program

Variations Brillantes Sur un Air Suisse Boehm

Introduction-Adagio

Theme-Andante

Var 1-Piu Lento

Var 2-Presto

Var 3-Piu Lento

Var 4-Allegro

Fragments Muczynski

Waltz

Solitude

Holiday

Reverie

Exit

The Caine Woodwind Trio

flute-Anna Lisa Davidson

clarinet-Eric Hatch

bassoon-Mary Bragg

INTERMISSION

Fantasie Telemann

Vivace

Allegro

Sonata Feld

Allegro Giocoso

Grave - Piu animato

Allegro vivace

Anna Lisa Davidson is a student of Professor Leslie J. Timmons

Performers

Anna Lisa Davidson will be graduating this summer with a Bachelor's degree in Music, with a flute pedagogical emphasis. She is principal flutist with the USU Symphony Orchestra and the USU Wind Orchestra. She is member of the USU Flute Choir, and has participated in the past with the USU Jazz Orchestra, the Pep Band, and the Cache Chamber Orchestra. Anna Lisa was a winner of the 1995 USU Concerto contest, and the 1996 Scholar's Day competition. She was a recipient of the 1995 Marie Eccles Caine Foundation Scholarship. After graduation, she plans to extend her already existent flute studio to include a group instruction class, theory classes, and to start an adult performing flute choir in the Cache valley.

Kelly B. Anderson is a junior in Piano Performance at USU and hails from Las Vegas, Nevada. He has studied piano for twenty years, and presently studies with Professor Gary Amano. He was USU's 1995 Concerto Winner, 1996 Accompanist of the Year, 1996 Composer of the Year, and a winner at the Kingsville International competition in Texas. He is a current recipient of a prestigious Robins Award and has earned a Presser Scholarship.

The Caine Woodwind Trio is an auditioned small ensemble which originally began as a quintet. It is graciously funded by the Marie Eccles Caine Foundation. It performs often including educational programs at elementary schools, with the Logan Canyon Winds, and as part of the Temple Square Concert Series. It is coached by Dr. Nicholas Morrison.

Eric Hatch is a sophomore Instrumental Music Education major at USU. He has studied clarinet for over eight years, and is presently studying with Dr. Nicholas Morrison. He is principal clarinetist in the USU Symphony Orchestra, plays in the USU Clarinet Choir, and the USU Wind Orchestra. Eric is a Marie Eccles Caine Foundation Scholarship recipient. He is from Logan, Utah.

Mary Bragg, from Salt Lake City, Utah, is a senior Biology major and will be applying to pharmacy school next spring. She has studied with Carolyn Jones and Christine Osborne for ten years. She has played with the USU Wind Ensemble, the USU Symphony Orchestra, and the Cache Chamber Orchestra. She also plays the tenor saxophone and piano. Mary finished a "Semester at Sea" during fall quarter where she toured ten countries closely studying culture. She also enjoys golf, traveling, and international politics; she was a student ambassador in Australia and New Zealand in 1994.