Graduate Recital

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GRADUATE RECITAL

BY

William Daniels Pack

Report of a recital performed in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS IN MUSIC EDUCATION

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Logan, Utah

1970
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

One of the most important considerations in anticipating a solo performance is the selection of and the rehearsal with an accompanist. Especially in the instances of the Copland Sonata for Violin and Piano, where the piano part is equal in importance to the violin, and in the Saint-Saens Concerto, where the piano part is a reduction of the orchestral score, many very difficult technical problems are encountered. In this area I was privileged to have the excellent services of Miss Debbie Schoonmaker.

I thank Vurvian Kaye Pack, my sister, for graciously accepting the role of page turner.

It is acknowledged that this recital would not have been successful without the efforts of competent and concerned teachers. Professor Ralph Matesky especially, has spent many hours helping me with the preparation of this recital and has made a great contribution to the amount of skill and knowledge I have as a violinist. For this I thank him. I am also indebted to Dr. Max Dalby who is responsible for my attending this University and for making numerous contributions throughout my studies here.

For their efforts, love, and many years of perseverance I thank and dedicate this recital to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Donald Pack.

William Daniels Pack
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INTRODUCTION

The scope of this recital was great in many ways. It included the Prelude and Fugue from the Sonata in g minor for unaccompanied violin by Johann Sebastian Bach, the Sonata for Violin and Piano by Aaron Copland, Concerto no. III in b minor by Camille Saint-Saëns, "On Wings of Song" by Felix Mendelssohn, and "Perpetual Motion" by Ottakar Novacek. Performed were works of composers from three musical periods and representing three of the western world's great musical countries -- the United States, Germany, and France. Stylistic demands ranged from the polyphonic form of the Bach Fugue, the lyrical singing style of the Saint-Saëns violin Concerto, to the percussive qualities of the final movement in the Copland Sonata. Almost all violinistic technics were involved including scales; arpeggios; great leaps; double stops; harmonics; dynamic contrasts and nuances in tone color and vibrato; bowings such as spiccato, sautillè, staccato, martelè, and detachè; as well as difficult pizzicato passages. The preparation of the performer has taken some twenty years and seven violin instructors at Utah State University.

With this in mind and considering the importance of the several parts of the recital, this paper has been organized into the following sections: 1. The Violin, 2. The Composers, 3. The Music, its historical implications and form, 4. The Recital, and, 5. Epilogue.

The Masters Recital is one of two options for partial fulfillment of a Master of Music or as in this case a Master of Arts degree in Music Education at Utah State University. The individual requirements
for the recital are set up by the graduate committee which in this case consisted of Professor Ralph Matesky, chairman of the graduate committee, Dr. Max F. Dalby, committee member, and Dr. Keith Checketts, committee member.
The word violin stems from the provencal word "viula" and comes to us through the French language (Finney, 1935). It is the most modern in a family of bowed string instruments whose first European ancestor was the rebec. This instrument developed finally into the viol family which was the immediate predecessor of the violin family. The development of the violin started in Brescia but reached its peak in Cremona beginning with the Amati family, of whom Nicholas (1596-1684) is the most famous. The violins of Antonio Stradivarius, a pupil of Amati, and a later Cremona maker, Joseph Guarnerius (Del Jesu) are the most famous of the violin makers art and, possibly, represent the finest examples of the violin family.

The acoustics of the violin are extremely complex. The vibration of the string, whose governing principles are well known by physicists and acousticians, is complicated by the effect of the bow which makes possible many nuances in tone quality and flavor. The problem is further complicated by an explanation of the construction of the resonating chamber which is the chief difference between the viol family and the violin. The results of the vibrations passing from the bridge into the top of the violin made of a soft wood, usually pine, and the consequent amplification of sound in the chamber and in the back of the violin which is made of hardwood, usually maple is difficult to explain scientifically. These are only the basic elements, however, since many other factors are important such as varnish composition and drying methods, thickness variations in the back, the curvature of the
top, dimensions and shape of the box, the placement and size of the F holes, etc. The early concepts of Stradivarius and Guarnerius are very important because they have not been changed up to the present time and violin makers of today are still trying to imitate (note the word "imitate" instead of surpass) the beauty of the tone quality in the instruments of these old Masters (Violin, Britannica, 1957).

The nature of violin playing with its physical measurements, the coordination between left and right hands in manipulating the bow, and the infinite tonal and dynamic nuances that can be produced with vibrato and bowing techniques make it one of the most difficult of all instruments to play artistically.

In addition to the difficulty of violinistic techniques there is an extensive amount of virtuoso masterpieces to add to the problems of the violinist. These works began to appear very soon after the development of the instrument reached its zenith. The following, from Blom, Vol. VII, p. 891 illustrates this:

A fine vigorous example is a Sonata in C minor for violin and figured bass by H.J.F. Biber, a Bohemian, said to have been first published in 1681. This consists of five movements in alternate slow and quick time. . . . The work is essentially a violin sonata with accompaniment and the violin part points to the extraordinarily rapid advance to mastery which was made in the few years after the instruments being accepted as fit for high class music. (Blom, 1955).

Since that early time the violin has played an important part in the compositions of most major composers. The number of works for solo violin are second only to those of the piano and to these must be added numerous chamber music compositions, the voluminous symphony orchestra literature and the orchestral accompaniment of opera, oratorio, etc.
Because of its significant place in history and the value of its magnificent aesthetic potential, the violin is one of the important instruments in the development of western music.
Johann Sebastian Bach

Johann Sebastian Bach was born on the 21st of March, 1685, in Eisenach, Germany. His parents died when he was very young and, while living with his brother, he received his early musical training in Ohrdruf from Elias Herder. The young Bach was a fine singer and was helped with that but indications show he received his first piano lessons from his brother. In order to have access to music he had to copy from his brother's library at night.

Bach began his career as a professional musician as a violinist in Weimar in 1703 but did not remain very long in this capacity. After that he worked as an organist consecutively at Arnstadt, Muehlhausen and Weimar. It was while at Arnstadt that he made his famous trek to Luebeck to hear Buxtehude and enraged his superiors because of his delay in returning to his post.

He wrote the unaccompanied violin sonatas and partitas in 1720 while he was at Coethen conducting the orchestra in the court of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Coethen. During this period he had no church duties whatsoever; consequently, it became the time when most of his chamber music and much of his instrumental music was written. Besides the partitas and sonatas for violin, his instrumental works in the Coethen period include six suites for cello, six sonatas and one suite for obligato clavier and violin, six flute and clavier sonatas, one sonata for two flutes and clavier, one sonata for two violins and clavier, four suites for orchestra and the six monumental Brandenburg
Concertos. Because of his intimate relations with his master, Prince Leopold, (who played in the orchestra himself) this must be considered one of the happiest and most fruitful periods of his life (Schweitzer, 1911).

In 1723 Bach left Coethen to become the cantor of the St. Thomas school in Leipzig and the musical director in the two main churches there. He remained at Leipzig until his death in 1750 at the age of 65.

Bach could not be considered an unknown composer in his lifetime, but he was not held in the same esteem as he is today. Works for organ and clavier, cantatas, the passions, chorales, and the instrumental works all represent the range of his enormous productivity. He is commonly named the greatest composer of all time (Blom, 1955; Finch, Americana, 1952).

Aaron Copland

Aaron Copland was born in Brooklyn, New York, November 14, 1900. He was the son of Jewish Russian immigrants and concerning the place of his boyhood he has remarked, "It fills me with wonder each time I realize that a musician has been born in this street." (Deri, 1968, p. 470).

After studies with Rubin Goldmark he enrolled as the first American student at the summer school in Fontainebleau and soon after began his studies with Nadia Boulanger. Upon returning to the United States in 1925 he carried a commission from Madame Boulanger for a symphony for organ and orchestra to be performed under Walter Damrosch with Madame Boulanger as soloist. Since then he has exerted a great
influence on the American school of composing. "One could state without exaggeration that the birth of American music dates from Copland's return from Paris to the states in 1925." (Deri, 1968, p. 470).

Copland's style of composition is very unique; as expressed by Arthur Berger:

Other composers, who must produce a big sound at almost every moment to satisfy their compulsions, cannot avail themselves of the refined and varied beauty that results from an extraordinary gift, such as Copland's, for sparing tones. (Berger, 1953, p. 71).

The Sonata for violin and piano which was completed in 1943 represents part of a unique turn in Copland's composing style at a time when he was turning out mostly program music based on American Folklore, i.e., Billy the Kid, Rodeo, and Appalachian Spring. It has been said that he tired of the commercial aspects of his craft and saw a chance to rise above this commercialism in writing the Piano Sonata and the Sonata for Violin and Piano. Certainly he was highly motivated in this serious direction because these two works rank very high among his finest compositions.

Felix Mendelssohn

Jakob Ludwig Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy was a man as interesting as his name. He was born in Hamburg February 5, 1809, and grew up in a very prosperous family. This prosperity might be reflected in one of his letters: "I do not in the least concern myself as to what people wish or praise or pay for; but solely as to what I myself consider good." (Geare, Americana, 1952, p. 623). One of the significant things about Mendelssohn was his great interest in Johann Sebastian Bach.
He was instrumental in reviving Bach compositions that had remained obscure. A famous example of this occurred on March 11, 1829, when he conducted the Passion according to St. Matthew for the first time since Bach's day.

Mendelssohn's life as a composer was filled with success. One of his compositions was performed by the Singakademie in Berlin when he was ten years old. By 1826 when he was seventeen years old two of his masterworks, the octet for strings and the overture to a Midsummer Night's Dream were written. Seventy-two of his compositions were published before his death and forty-seven later. He was the conductor of the famous Gewandhaus Orchestra in Leipzig at the time of his death, January 4, 1876.

Ottakar Novacek

Novacek was born in Hungary on May 13, 1866. He was a violinist and a composer. His early studies as a violinist were with Dont in Vienna, Schradieck and Brodsky in Leipzig. When he graduated from the Leipzig Conservatory he won the Mendelssohn prize in 1885. He played in the Brodsky Quartet (which published one of his string quartets) and the Gewandhaus Orchestra and then came to the United States. In the United States he played in the Boston Symphony, the Damrosch Orchestra and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. He had to retire in 1899 with a weak heart.

There is record of only 20 compositions by Novacek. Most of them are singular forms except for one piano concerto and three string quartets (Thompson and Sabin, 1964).
Camille Saint-Saëns was born in Paris, October 9, 1835, and died December 16, 1921. He was a French nationalistic composer of first rank and championed instrumental music in France when the French school was badly in need of his influence. There was a time when he stood up for French music and was a co-founder of the Société Nationale de Musique whose object was to produce new works of the French school.

Infinite variety governs his musical writing. Not only did he write operas, keyboard pieces, symphonies, concertos, etc., but he wrote within an amazing diversity of style. Sometimes he was influenced by Wagner, sometimes by Liszt. If it pleased him he wrote in the style of the old masters or translated personalities of foreign lands, i.e., Persian songs with uncommon authenticity (Ewen, 1965). He directed a great deal of his prodigious output to the violin. He composed four concertos, two sonatas, The Introduction and Rondo Capricioso, at least six other larger works, and several short pieces.

The third violin concerto ranks as one of his finest works. It was written for the celebrated Spanish virtuoso, Pablo de Sarasate, and in his Outspoken Essays in Music, Saint-Saëns wrote, "During the composition of this concerto (Sarasate) gave me valuable advice to which is certainly due the considerable degree of favor it has met with on the part of the violinists themselves."

From the middle of the 1860's until his death in 1921 he enjoyed almost uninterrupted success and created a great number of musical compositions for almost any combination of players and singers. In 1893 he received an honorary Music Doctorate from Cambridge. He was
composing up until his death as three compositions, a short piece for violin, a sonata for oboe and piano and a sonata for bassoon and piano, are credited to him in the last year of his life.
Musical form

Through the historical periods of music the design of overall musical structure and its definition in various forms have been an important part of composition. Even though some composers and musicologists of the late 19th and 20th century attempt to discount the importance of formal analysis and even try to create discrepancies in form in their compositions, the importance of form in composition has been a reality to the great majority of composers especially in the earlier periods (Appel, 1958).

Musical forms can be defined in two broad categories: 1. Singular and, 2. Compound. Under singular musical forms we find such things as binary and ternary "song" forms, sonata allegro form, rondo form and any others that consist of single movements. Compound forms are multi-movement works such as sonatas, concertos, symphonies, suites, and any others that have two or more related movements. In this recital there are three examples of compound form: the sonatas of Bach, and Copland, and the concerto by Saint-Saens. There are two examples of singular forms: the Mendelssohn, "On Wings of Song" and the Novacek, "Perpetual Motion."
The sonatas

The word sonata is a conjugation of the Italian word "sonare." In its original meaning it is a "sounded piece" in contrast to the word cantata which is a "sung piece." The development of sonata form began in the 16th century. It must be distinguished from the sonata allegro form which is a singular form consisting of an exposition, development and recapitulation. Sonata form is a compound form usually for one or two instruments. In its early development it was contrasted to the suite form because the movements do not follow the dance forms common to the suite and the contrasting movements are structured primarily on key relationships. The degree and manner in which these requirements are filled may vary within the widest limits but in so far as they are fulfilled it is described as sonata form (Blom, 1955).

Both of the examples of sonata form which are part of this recital deviate from the classical sonata form as it is used by Mozart and Beethoven. One precedes these composers; the other follows them by many years.

The g minor sonata of Bach is the first of six sonatas and partitas written for unaccompanied violin in 1720. The three sonatas consist of four contrasting movements designated by tempo markings such as allegro, adagio, presto, etc. The three partitas have a varying number of movements designated as dance forms such as chaconne, courante, bourée etc. The movements of the g minor sonata are designated adagio, fugue, siciliana, and presto. One curious thing about the sonata is that in spite of the clearly identifiable key of g minor, it is written with one flat, thus being in the dorian mode.
Throughout the entire work the craftsmanship of Bach is unsurpassable. The first movement, for example, contains only rare examples of rhythmic or melodic repetition and these are always approached and resolved differently. The entire feeling is of a single motion through the various closely related keys to the final masterful resolution to g minor. There are four sections built around the tonic, dominant, subdominant and tonic tonal relationships. The form could be said to be through composed in the manner of a fantasia.

The second movement is a four voice fugue in the true sense with double triple and even quadruple parts being created through the use of multiple stopping. The theme moves from the tonic g minor through sequence and episodes to the dominant d minor through sequence, episodes and pedal point to the subdominant c minor, through episodes to the mediant B♭ Major, through pedal point and sequences back to the tonic g minor and ends with a dramatic coda.

This and the other fugal movements in the Bach sonatas represent the full extent of this polyphonic style of composition for solo violin (Appel, 1958). After the time of Bach polyphonic solo violin writing disappeared until the early part of this century, when the works of such composers as David, Bloch, Hindemith, Honegger, Persichetti, Prokofiev, Reger, Ysaye, and many others marked the return of this magnificent style (Farish, 1965).

Duets for violin and piano designated as sonatas have been one of the most common and popular combinations of all time (Blom, 1955). There are enough composers that have deviated from the definition of sonata form but have retained the name, that many modern sonatas share only the seriousness of purpose and a superficial outline resembling the
original form. This explains why the given definition of sonata form is so broad and part of the reason why some modern musicologists want to depart from the traditional classification (Appel, 1958; Blom, 1955).

The sonata for violin and piano by Aaron Copland represents many of these deviations. Sonata allegro form is not present in the first movement as it is used by the composers of the classical era. For example instead of using the traditional form Copland uses an adaptation of the Italian sonata of Vivaldi, Corelli, etc., in that one theme forms the basis of the first movement. Throughout the movement modern devices such as seizing upon new or foreign keys, arbitrary improvised scales, meter and rhythm changes, etc., are common.

There is a relationship of key signatures at the beginning of each movement: the first has two sharps, the second one sharp and the third no sharps or flats. The ending, however, returns to the original key. The second movement is a type of a-b-a, simple song form. The final movement could be described as a modern adaptation of the sonata allegro form, i.e., two themes predominate and undergo development. The movement ends in cyclic style. The entire sonata is held together structurally by means of intervallic relationships of thirds, fifths, and fourths, initially set forth in the theme of the first movement.

The concerto

As is true with sonata form the concerto has developed from a rigid form in earlier time to a point where it simply means a solo for one or more instruments with orchestra. The term was first used as early as the beginning of the 17th century for vocal compositions
supported by instrumental accompaniment (Concerto, Britannica, 1957). By the time of Bach, however, it had evolved to the point where it was well established as a purely instrumental form but was usually used in compositions where unequal forces are brought into opposition, i.e., full orchestra v.s. one violin or orchestra v.s. a string quartet, etc., Some of the great changes in the concerto up to the present day have been undertaken by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. One of the important parts of the Mozart Concerto is the long tutti passage or ritornello at the beginning and the fact that he always introduces the key and thematic subjects. This device was extensively used by many later composers.

The Concerto no. III in b minor by Saint-Saens shows many characteristics of other concerto examples of the Romantic Era. The first movement opens with a strong statement from the solo violin with a light background from the strings. It is in an abbreviated sonata allegro form since the second theme is not repeated in the recapitulation. The second movement is said to be an Italian ritornello (two part song form a-b-a-b and coda). One interesting and unique part of the movement is the coda which is made up of arpeggiated false harmonics in the violin. The third movement starts with a cadenza like statement for the violin and then turns to an expanded sonata allegro form. The exposition has four themes, there is a short development in which the violin shows off technically then returns to the four themes in the tonic Major key (B Major). A short, brilliant coda ends the work.
Singular forms

The singular forms often show how simplicity can be beautiful. A good example of this is On Wings of Song by Mendelssohn (freely transcribed by Joseph Achron). Mendelssohn's melody is cast in a simple binary form but it is expanded by the arranger into two varied statements exploiting tonal and technical possibilities for solo violin. The first time it appears in the key of D Major, the second time in B♭ Major and then it returns to D Major for the final statement.

The Perpetual Motion of Novacek has some unique qualities. Perpetual Motion means consistent forward motion so there is but one rhythmic value through the piece until just before the end. The form seems to be binary but contains interesting bridges into new sections. It is designed as a "show-piece" for the violinist.
THE RECITAL PROGRAM

On the evening of July twelfth, 1970, in the concert hall of the Chase Fine Arts Center on the campus of Utah State University in Logan, Utah, William Daniels Pack presented a Masters Recital. The Recital Program read as follows:

Sonata for Violin and Piano • • • • • Copland

Andante semplice
Lento
Allegretto giusto

Sonata No. 1 in g minor • • • • • Bach
for unaccompanied violin

Prelude
Fugue

Concerto No. 3 in b minor • • • • • Saint-Saens

Allegro non troppo
Andantino quasi allegretto
Allegro non troppo

On Wings of Song • • • • • Mendelssohn-Achron

Perpetual Motion • • • • • Novacek
There are difficulties and experiences concerned with performance that cannot be classified with musical forms or related to history or defined in a musicological dictionary. These fall in the realm of musical aesthetics or feeling (Haydon, 1941).

For this writer the most important aspect of aesthetics is individuality. Both the individuality of experience and the individuality of person. Statements that could be made about the feelings of others at the recital would be conjecture, hence abstinence seems wiser. The aesthetic responses experienced in that recital seem to divide themselves into two categories: 1. the multiplicity of feelings which occurred during the course of the evening and 2. the overall feeling which is left after the experience is finished -- the degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, success or failure, despair and/or hope.

In the first category one encounters such things as anxiety before the program starts, maintaining emotional control in projecting the music and establishing rapport with the audience. In addition there is silent communication between soloist and accompanist, the job of creating beauty and the fear in the all too frequent human error.

In category two the feeling is one of challenge. The growth and learning in the recital have made a new base from which to begin another similar project. The realization of the capacity to create even a small amount of beauty has whetted the appetite to be able to create a great deal of beauty. The solution of some problems provides a certain motivation to solve all problems. This feeling of challenge must be considered the most desirable possible. It denotes accomplishment without extreme egotism and hope and direction for the future.
EPILOGUE

In retrospect there are some ideas which seem to float to the top in importance and they require expression here.

I am very thankful to the teachers who have taught me correct and useful principles. I regret the others.

It is the opinion of some that all musicians are teachers of music in one way or another. If this statement is true, it is increasingly important, in an art* whose very existence is being threatened because of its complex structure and its financial needs, that all musicians become competent teachers. Competent teaching is not a spontaneous product, however, and musicians must have a place to go where they can learn the art of teaching. Just as there are musicians who are not good teachers there are music teachers who are not good musicians. It follows also that teachers need places to go where they can learn to become competent musicians. In my opinion the greatest contribution institutions of higher learning can make to the art of music is to create a place which can produce these teacher musicians who would then be in a position to best perpetuate their art.

*The art of serious music as it is distinguished from commercial or "popular" music.
LITERATURE CITED


