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The American Brass Quintet

Gerard Schwarz Trumpet
Illinois State University

John Eckert Trumpet

Arnold Fromme Tenor Trombone

Robert Biddlecome Bass Trombone

Edward Birdwell French Horn

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THE ENTERTAINMENT BOARD
ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

presents

*The American
Brass Quintet*

GERARD SCHWARZ
Trumpet

JOHN ECKERT
Trumpet

ARNOLD FROMME
Tenor Trombone

ROBERT BIDDLECOME
Bass Trombone

EDWARD BIRDWELL, French Horn

Monday, February 5, 1968

Stroud Auditorium

8:15 p.m.

PROGRAM

I

Desperavi *Michael East*
Triumphavi (c. 1580-1648)

Desperavi and *Triumphavi* are "Fancies," an Elizabethan word meaning Fantasia, for five instruments. The Fancy, one of Renaissance England's most important contributions to instrumental music, being written essentially for the enjoyment of the performers—usually only a small group of players. Not too much is known of the composer, Michael East, except that he composed madrigals and church music in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These two pieces are polyphonic works with several themes and with contrasting sections. They are much more stately and serious character than is usually found in the "Fancy," and is part of a cycle of related works, one of the earliest instrumental cycles on record. They are also first examples of "program music" as the pieces trace a sinner's progress from "Despair" through "Belief" and "Love" to "Triumph."

Quatuor En Forme De Sonatine, Op. 23, No. 1 *Anton Simon*
Allegro Grazioso; Andantino Tranquillo; (1851-1916)
Scherzando quasi Presto; Allegro Moderato
(a la Russe)

Anton Simon's *Quatuor en Forme de Sonatine* is a typical example of an as yet unexplained category of works that originated in Petrograd, Russia, at the turn of the century. Modern scholarship has not yet been able to unearth the reasons for this unusual proliferation of romantic chamber works for small brass ensembles. They were mainly by minor composers, like Simon, yet even Glazounov wrote a short quartet for brass.

Anton Simon, a Franco-Russian composer, pianist, and conductor, was born in France but migrated to Russia in his twenties spending the rest of his life there composing, performing, and teaching. He composed operas as well as choral and chamber works, the latter including over forty works for brass.

His *Quatuor en Forme de Sonatine* is typical of the best of these works; both lively and lovely, it is a thoroughly traditional nineteenth century work in the romantic style with classic undertones. The work is characterized by plentiful melody, sequential development, modulatory harmonic development and Sonata Allegro form in the first movement. The second and third movements are the traditional slow movement and scherzo, while the final movement, subtitled "a la Russe," is a lusty finale based on Russian dance themes and rhythms.

Battle Suite *Samuel Scheidt*
(from "Paduana, Galliarda, Couranta,
Allemande ..." Hamburg 1621)
(1587-1654)

Intrada
Courant
Galliard Battaglia

Samuel Scheidt (1587-1684) was one of the famous quartet of 'S's, the others being Sweelinck, Schein, and Schuetz, all of whom were highly influential in the development of German music during the period following the Thirty Years War. Primarily a composer of instrumental music, Scheidt's compositions are characterized by lively rhythmic inventiveness that is advantageously displayed by performance on brass instruments.

From Clement Jannequin's (c. 1500-1560) composition, "La Guerre" to Beethoven's "Wellington's Victory" and Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture," 'Battle' pieces have always found popularity. They have ranged from musical imitations of battle sounds to the actual use of cannon, muskets and church bells. Scheidt's "Galliard Battaglia" is not of the programmatic variety, but is abstract music taking its title from the trumpet-like character and antiphonal (answering) effects of the flourishes in the upper voices. The trumpeters of the American Brass Quintet employ small D trumpets in this work, to enhance the natural brilliance of the piece.

Intermission

II

Contrapunctus No. 3 (The Art of Fugue) *Johann Sebastian Bach*
(1685-1750)

The Art of Fugue was composed by Bach from his death bed ... much of it being dedicated to his children. It consists of 18 fugues, 4 canons, and uncompleted fugue and probably every contrapuntal technique known.

It is truly an overwhelming summation of Bach's life work. Written for instrumental performance, Bach never specified an ensemble. It has been performed on keyboard, by string quartets, and many other combinations, but many of the fugues in the collection, and particularly *Contrapunctus No. 3*, lend themselves particularly well to performance by the Brass Quintet. The sound of Brass instruments give a fitting majesty to the nobility of this last great document of the age of polyphony.

Six Seventeenth Century Dances	<i>Johann Pezel</i> (1639-1694)
Intrada	
Sarabande	
Courante	
Bal	
Sarabande	
Gigue	

The name Johann Pezel (1639-1694), more than that of any other composer has become associated with the term "Tower Music." As the Stadt-pfeiffer, or municipal musician of Leipzig he was a contemporary of Buxtehude and though of lesser stature, was one of the many little-known musicians, better than competent and lesser than great, that kept German music alive during the Thirty Years War. "Tower Music" refers to the festive and ceremonial music played in Germany during this period, usually by groups of brass instruments and often performed from a tower, hence the name. Pezel's duties consisted of writing and performing music for all civic ceremonies as well as for daily concerts. He thus left behind a large amount of this music, mostly written for brass quintet, among which were found these spirited dances so typical of the era.

Music for Brass Instruments	<i>Ingolf Dahl</i> (1912-)
Chorale Fantasy (on Christ Lay in Bonds of Death)	
Intermezzo	
Fugue	

Music for Brass Instruments by Ingolf Dahl is recognized as one of the first important contributions to the brass quintet literature. Mr. Dahl, an outstanding American composer, is a Professor of Music at the University of Southern California, and very active in the furtherance of contemporary music on the West Coast. This work, first performed in 1944 at a Contemporary Music Festival in Los Angeles, astonishes one with the unusually wide palette of sounds, colours and musical effects possible in the brass quintet. The first movement, Chorale Fantasy, is based on the chorale, "Christ Lay in Bonds of Death." The second movement, Intermezzo, uses short rhythmic figures reminiscent of the American folk song and utilizing the precise biting effect of Staccato brass playing. The Finale is a highly dramatic Fugue, using the brass instruments in their most exciting style.

Program notes by Arnold Fromme