Senior Honors Recital

A Creative Project (ID 499)

by

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Project Director

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Muncie, Indiana

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December 10, 1987 marked the presentation of a variety of musical literature on my Senior Honors Recital. The evening was a culmination of months of hard work in not only learning the music, but working with others to create the cohesiveness that is necessary in any ensemble playing.

Although no performance is perfect, I am proud of my accomplishment. The goal of my recital was to choose a variety of literature that was challenging and would appeal to those whose musical background wasn't as advanced. This was quite successful from the comments I gathered from audience members. I was especially pleased when my grandparents inquired about the selections on the program and discussed what they liked and disliked.

In preparation for my recital I was given a selection of solo literature to choose two pieces. The "Adagio e Tarantella" by Ernesto Cavallini and the "Fantaisie Italienne" by Eugene Bozza were selected. I chose these pieces for their contrasting use of technical and melodic passages. Each piece contained huge cadenza-like phrases where the player is able to use creativity while advancing technical ability with the many notes and rapid passages. In contrast, the melodic phrases offered opportunity for expressive playing. Both pieces were quite effective in displaying the performer’s talents in each area.

"Symphonies et Danses" by Jean-Philippe Rameau was selected as the wind quintet piece. The quintet was used to show ensemble playing and to provide a different texture. This particular quintet is the Muncie Symphony Orchestra Student Quintet which travels to elementary schools twice a week during Fall and Winter Quarters. We provide instrument demonstrations and play a thirty minute concert. As a result, the quintet had the advantage of knowing stylistically how to play together. The "Ritournelle" and "Chaconne" from the "Symphonies et Danses" were very difficult. I should note that there are three graduate students in the quintet who were helpful in deciding styles and tempos due to their advanced music history and theory backgrounds. The nature of the piece, because it was written in the eighteenth century, provided a musical change from the rest of the program. The quintet piece was the oldest piece of literature on the recital.

My concern to better myself to teach all styles of music led me to choose my first new piece of twentieth century music. "Refractions for Clarinet and Tape" is quite an interesting solo. The tape provides cues which the performer responds. The piece is played according to how the performer interprets the music within the cues. In the second movement the tape sustained a chord. I played what was written, but I had to add an improvised line to musically finish the phrase. In this regard, the piece was a fusion of the composer’s ideas and my interpretation. "Refractions", like many other twentieth century works, exhibits a unique performance according to the player.
"Pie Jesu", taken from Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Requiem", is a simple melody with chordal accompaniment. Rod Smith, on synthesizer, aided the clarinet duo on this piece. I discovered the idea from listening to Richard Stoltzman, jazz clarinetist, on his "New York Counterpoint" tape. Rod Smith listened to the tape and memorized the chord progression. The arrangement was fairly simple; however, the emotional impact should certainly be considered. "Pie Jesu" offered an opportunity for personal interpretation of a simple melody. I was fortunate to share this with two friends during the recital. I must admit that "Pie Jesu" was the most musically satisfying to perform on my recital.

My Senior Honors Recital was the result of months of preparation. The ability to play a musical instrument and share music with friends is truly an exhilarating experience. The preparation, time, and learning was certainly worthwhile. The conclusion of my recital left me feeling very satisfied not only with my accomplishment that night, but with the culmination of musical learning I have received at Ball State University.
PROGRAM NOTES

Melanie Wright, clarinet
SENIOR HONORS RECITAL
PRUIS HALL - Thursday, December 10, 1987 - 8:00 P.M.

ERNESTO CAVALLINI

Ernesto Cavallini, an Italian clarinettist, was often termed as the "Paganini of the clarinet". He began studying at the age of ten at the Milan Conservatory and eventually returned to teach there. Cavallini's performances included playing for the London Philharmonic and soloing with the St. Petersburg court. He wrote many studies and concert pieces for the clarinet. Today these pieces are played quite frequently although Cavallini played a six-keyed clarinet.

"Adagio e Tarantella" actually contains material that would be found in Cavallini's clarinet studies. The opening section is a cadenza-like passage that gives the performer ample opportunity for interpretation. The tarantella then proceeds at a stable tempo to a rather majestic section emphasized by triplets. The ending gains great speed and ends in a flurry. Cavallini has tested the technical ability of the player with this piece!

JEAN-PHILIPPE RAMEAU

Jean-Philippe Rameau was a French composer and theorist. Although his father was a musician, his parents wanted him to choose law as a profession. However, he was so preoccupied with composing that his studying suffered severely. After his father consented for Rameau to pursue a career in music, Rameau continued his work vigorously. Ironically, he thought his fame would derive from publications on music theory. Instead he is more famous for his achievements as a composer. Rameau held many posts as an organist, wrote books, published articles, and composed music. Although he loved music and devoted much of his life to the art, he unfortunately kept to himself throughout his life. He died just before reaching his 81st birthday.

"Symphonies et Danses" is actually a suite of dances written for an elegant pageant. The pompous air of the piece suggests images to the mind. Rameau used his innate ability to communicate ideas through music quite effectively in this quintet.

MORRIS KNIGHT

Morris Knight, currently a Ball State University faculty member, received his Bachelor of Fine Arts at the University of Georgia. He attained a Masters of Music at Ball State. Knight has written over 100 compositions including symphonies,
an opera, and various chamber pieces. He often utilizes electronic equipment to produce rather unusual effects. Knight has been the recipient of many awards for his composing ability. "Refractions" was written in Athens, Georgia in 1962. The unique piece, assembled in radio studios, creates a conversation between the tape and the clarinet. Each movement elaborates on a different part of the instrument. The tempo marking at the beginning indicates for the performer to use absolute freedom. Although the piece has a basic structure, the individual can adapt the music personally by changing dynamic levels and the tempo of some passages. In some places the clarinettist must use creative endeavors to enhance the piece. "Refractions" is a highly individualized composition and very pleasing to perform.

ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER

Andrew Lloyd Webber, a newcomer to the music world, has made quite a successful career at a rather young age. He has written music for such Broadway plays as "Jesus Christ Superstar", "Evita", and "Cats". Andrew Lloyd Webber has the uncanny ability to capture the essence of the play with his compositions. Among the awards he has received are three Tony Awards, three Drama Desk Awards, and a Grammy Award. "Pie Jesu" is a melody from Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Requiem". Although simple in character, the melodic line stirs sensitivity within the soul. The transcription performed tonight places the melody in the clarinet while using a synthesizer as accompaniment. After stating the entire theme as a solo line, a second clarinet joins to add harmonic flavor. In the final presentation of the theme, an embellished line decorates the melody which is now played by the second performer. "Pie Jesu" represents music that utilizes the performer's feelings and speaks to the audience.

EUGENE BOZZA

Eugene Bozza, French composer and conductor, studied at the Paris Conservatory. He has won many awards for his violin playing, compositions, and conducting. Many of his larger works have been performed in France; however, internationally his reputation rests on his chamber music for winds. Bozza is especially sensitive to the idiosyncrasies of each instrument in his compositions. "Fantaisie Italienne" captures many moods of the clarinet. The piece is introduced by a huge cadenza which emphasizes dynamic levels and technical speed. A soft and gentle melodic line follows and sets the stage for various articulated passages. The piece concludes at a bright tempo and covers nearly the entire range of the clarinet.
The information used in the program notes is taken from *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* and the playbill from the Broadway musical "Cats".

This recital is dedicated to my parents for their never-ending support and to Sue Finger and Rolf Legbandt for their exceptional and influential teaching abilities.
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