RICHARD BROWN, percussion
with guest artist
LEONARD RAVER, organ

Wednesday, March 8, 1978
8:30 P.M.
First Methodist Church
PROGRAM

TAPE I

Offertoire, from Mass for the Parishes

Francois Couperin
(1668-1733)

*Requiem, for organ and percussion (1978)
  I: Summa tranquilitate
  II: Celerrime
  Coda: Placide

Paul Cooper
(b. 1926)

Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C, BWV 564

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Divertimento for Number Three (1977)
in three movements
for organ, percussion and assistant

Elliott Schwartz
(b. 1936)

Intermission

TAPE II

Requiem, for organ and percussion

Paul Cooper
(b. 1926)

Fantasia in F Minor, K. 608

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Bright Angels (1977), for organ, percussion and tape
  1. Messengers
  2. The Trumpet
  3. Hosannas

Ronald Perera
(b. 1941)

*World premiere.
NOTES

OFFERTOIRE SUR LES GRANDES JEUX
(from MASS FOR THE PARISHES)
Francois Couperin

Seventeenth century French organ music was crowned in 1690 with the appearance of Couperin's two organ masses, one for secular churches ("paroisses pour les fêtes solennelles"); the other for abbey churches ("couvents de religieux et religouses"). The custom of playing extended pieces at the offertory of the mass led Couperin to compose two of his greatest organ works; without question the one for the Parish Mass is unequalled.

Comprising three main sections in the style of a French overture, the OFFERTOIRE begins nobly in C major and is skillfully varied with many changes of texture: polyphonic flourishes; a brief trio with pedal, solo lines alternately for both treble and bass on the GRAND ORGUE accompanied on the POSITIF, and a fine peroration to conclude the section. A restrained fugue in C minor follows, heard twice: first in trio style for two manuals and pedal, and then in four voices more fully expanded on a single keyboard, ending abruptly in C major and marking the final section which is yet another fugue, full of rollicking gigue-like rhythms in 12/8 meter.

Leonard Raver

REQUIEM (1978) for organ and percussion
Paul Cooper

REQUIEM utilizes the idea of a proportional structure of diminishing dimensions (I SUMMA TRANQUILLITATE = 3, II CELERRIME = 2, III PLACIDÈ (CODA) = 1) and in this way is related to a number of Cooper's latest works, notably the CELLO CONCERTO, SIXTH STRING QUARTET, and the CONCERT FOR THREE. The inspiration for the piece was drawn from the requiem mass text, hence the title. The work is introduced by wind chimes, and this coupled with the predominance of metal percussion in the score also reflects another aspect of the composer's recent compositions: his concern with and interest in the sounds of bells. The first movement is built with repeating patterns, varying densities from full clusters to single pitches, and maintaining a soft, lyric quality throughout. The second movement is extremely fast, a ghostly scherzo filled with surprising dynamic contrasts. Its entropic conclusion leads quite logically to the sustained, meditative mood of the coda movement, which again uses subtle changes from soft clusters single pitches, inexorably making their way towards the tonal center D and the final sound of wind chimes.

Arthur Gottschalk

TOCCATA; ADAGIO, AND FUGUE IN C MAJOR
Johann Sebastian Bach

This work, also known simply as the TOCCATA IN C MAJOR, is one of the first results of Bach's study of Italian music. In it are combined the style of the German toccata with the Italian concerto. The overall shape of the work is in the fast-slow-fast of the concerto; the ADAGIO, following a typically bravura toccata; contains the kind of cantilena melody usually found in the second movement of a concerto, and all the sections of the piece contain references to almost rondo-like structures of individual concerto movements. The fugue has the character of a scherzo, utilizing a skipping theme interspersed with amusing silences.
The TOCCATA IN C MAJOR stands out as an almost isolated experiment in this particular type of fusion of Northern and Southern styles. In BWV 541 Bach made a similar attempt by separating an organ prelude from its fugue with a middle movement, but this movement was eventually not included in the final version, and instead appears later as the finale of his SONATA IV.

Arthur Gottschalk

DIVERTIMENTO NUMBER THREE (1977)  
First performance: Bowdoin College, March 17, 1977

Elliott Schwartz

Elliot Schwartz's latest work for the organ with percussion and assistant involves the three performers in a variety of ways. The percussion instruments are divided into three "stations" where the player, upon cues, goes from one group to another playing the glockenspiel, two timpani, and tam-tam at station A, tubular chimes at station B, and various drums, woodblocks, cymbals, and xylophone at station C. The assistant helps not only with the changing of stops but also with key-weights for several notes which form extended chords. At the conclusion of the piece all three performers become percussionists, while the organ "plays itself".

Leonard Raver

FANTASIA IN F MINOR, K. 608  
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Mozart's last three organ works have always posed special problems for performers since they were composed, as the original title indicates, "for a mechanical organ in a clock." Such pieces for mechanical instruments were quite common in the 18th century, as we know from examples by Handel, Haydn, and Beethoven among other composers who wrote music for these elaborate musical toys. What sets Mozart's works apart from their contemporaries is their high quality and depth of imagination. Far from being casual music box ditties, all three compositions are mature Mozart dating from the last two years of his life: K. 594 was completed in December 1790, K. 608 on March 3, 1791, and K. 616 on May 4 of that same year, as Mozart's own catalogue of his works verifies.

Fashioned as a fantasia, K. 608 opens with commanding Mozartian flourishes leading into the first fugal section of rhythmic vigor and harmonic variety. A lyric andante follows without pause, its melody treated to variations ending with an elaborate cadenza. The transitional flourishes modulate back to the home key where the fugue theme is heard again, this time with its own counter-subject, and then again in a final brilliant stretto leading to a rousing conclusion.

Leonard Raver

BRIGHT ANGELS (1977) for organ, percussion, and tape  
First performance: Hartt College, June 6, 1977

I. MESSENGERS  
Ronald Perera

A melodic cell of tritone plus whole step unfolds gradually in the tape, marimba, and organ. Growth and intensification of this cell leads to an agitated central section with a "cluster cadenza" for the chimes and marimba, breaking off and subsiding back into the floating, suspended mood of the opening.
II. THE TRUMPET

Six episodes for the organ’s solo trumpet stop are set against a background of continuous delicate bell-like rising arpeggios and scale figures in the tape, and soft organ clusters. The percussion mediates between organ and tape.

III. OSANNAS

The tape presents a continuous crossfading of two materials: a heterophonic B flat music which sounds as an aggregation of many keyboard instruments, and a driving pattern music centering around the E minor hexachord. Onto this music of overlapping and shifting patterns the organ and percussion overlay their own repetitive patterns. The effect is cumulative as both the loudness and the amount of layering of patterns intensifies. The B flat music with which the movement began reasserts itself at the end, while the organ and percussion intone a repeated harmonic progression like a great AMEN.

Ronald Perera

RICHARD BROWN’S credentials include a full gamut of musical styles. He is presently percussionist with the Houston Symphony Orchestra, and Assistant Professor of Percussion at Rice University’s Shepherd School of Music. He received his Bachelor of Music degree from Temple University and his Master of Music degree from Catholic University. He has played with the Chamber Symphony of Philadelphia, the United States Army Band in Washington, D. C., and the orchestras of both Wolf Trap Farm and the Kennedy Center Opera House. During the summer he is principal percussionist with the Grand Teton Music Festival in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. In addition to his classical work he has played for a number of Broadway shows and for artists including Peggy Lee, Steve Lawrence and Edie Gorme, Vicki Carr, Johnny Mathis, Rich Little, and many more.

LEONARD RAVER, official organist of The New York Philharmonic, is on the organ faculty of The Juilliard School in New York. In addition to his many recitals and concerts of the standard repertoire, he specializes in the music of contemporary composers and has premiered many new works composed for him by – among others – Richard Felciano, Ronald Perera, Vincent Persichetti, Daniel Pinkham, Ned Rorem, Elliott Schwartz, and Paul Cooper.

During the 1976-77 season, Leonard Raver was organist with Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic in Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center in performances of Saint-Saëns’ Third “Organ” Symphony and the Haydn Lord Nelson Mass which they have also recorded for Columbia Records. Mr. Raver also played the Saint-Saëns with Daniel Barenboim and the Orchestre de Paris in their concerts in the Kennedy Center and in Carnegie Hall and organist for the Mahler Festival with James Levine and the New York Philharmonic also in Carnegie Hall.
A featured recitalist in The Third International Congress of Organists in Philadelphia in August, 1977, Leonard Raver also played the opening recital on the 1977 Summer Recital Series at the Methuen (Mass.) Memorial Music Hall and was soloist for the seventh consecutive season at the annual International Contemporary Organ Music Festival at Hartt College.

Dr. Raver studied with D. Robert Smith at the University of Puget Sound, Arthur Poister at Syracuse University and Vernon de Tar at Union Theological Seminary School of Sacred Music. As a Fulbright scholar to the Netherlands, Mr. Raver studied for two years with Gustav Leonhardt at the Amsterdam Royal Conservatory specializing in organ, harpsichord and the performance practice of baroque music.

Leonard Raver is an active member of The American Guild of Organists for whom he has served as National Secretary and as a member of the National Council. Many of his solo recitals, master classes and workshops are sponsored by local A.G.O. chapters.

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