JOHN PERRY, piano

A concert celebrating
Steinway & Sons'
Landmark 500,000th Piano

Wednesday, October 4, 1989
8:00 p.m.
Gus S. Wortham Theater Center
Lillie and Roy Cullen Theater

RICE UNIVERSITY
PROGRAM

Sonata in C Minor, K. 457
Molto allegro
Adagio
Allegro assai


Sinfonia for solo piano * (World Premiere)
Tempestoso
Mesto
Volando

INTERMISSION

Sonatine
Modéré
Mouvement de Menuet
Animé

Romanze in F# Major, Op. 28 No. 2

Sonata No. 32 in C Minor, Op. 111
Maestoso - Allegro con brio ed appassionato
Arietta - Adagio molto semplice e cantabile

* Commissioned by John Perry
in celebration of the 500,000th Steinway piano.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Frédéric Chopin
(1810-1849)

Paul Cooper
(b. 1926)

Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)

Robert Schumann
(1810-1856)

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

In consideration of the performing artist and members of the audience, those who must leave before the end of the performance are asked to do so during intermission. The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are prohibited.
PROGRAM NOTE

Sinfonia for solo piano ............................................ Paul Cooper

In mid-February, John Perry approached me with the idea of commis­
sioning a work in celebration of Steinway's 500,000th piano. Immediately, I posed two questions: how long a composition was desired, and what was the proposed premiere date. I flinched slightly when John Perry asked for a 21-minute work, and more than flinched when informed that the first perfor­
mance would be in mid-October at the latest.

Clearly, to compose a large-scale work for solo piano in less than four months was both a stimulating and an intimidating assignment. Equally clear was the fact that it needed to be a work that extensively explored the ranges, dynamics, and coloristic possibilities of the keyboard as well as providing for markedly contrasting tempos.

I discarded the options of character pieces, the five-part arch form, and through-composed variations in favor of the classical three-movement fast - slow - fast structure. Similarly, I rejected several working titles to finally choose that of Sinfonia, which seemed to me to embrace the totality of the work with its sharp contrasts of tempi, moods, and emotions. The work might be compared to a three-act drama with a few principal characters whose identities gradually unfold, entwine with each other, and together explore the aspects of sorrow and joy, of anger and love.

-- Note by Paul Cooper

BIOGRAPHIES

JOHN PERRY, distinguished artist and teacher, was educated at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. Recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship, he continued studies in Europe with Wladyslav Kedra, Polish concert artist and professor at the Akademie für Musik in Vienna, and Carlo Zecchi, renowned conductor and pianist at Santa Cecilia Academy of Music in Rome.

In addition to appearances with major symphony orchestras, John Perry is also a respected chamber musician. He has performed with oboist Ray Still, violinist Steve Staryk, bassoonist Milan Turkovic, cellist Paul Olefsky, and tenor Seth McCoy.

John Perry is the winner of numerous awards including Special Honors
at the Marquerite Long International Piano Competition in Bolzano, Italy, and the Viotti International Piano Competition in Vercelli, Italy. His repertoire is broad, and while he is well known for interpretation of Beethoven and Mozart, his performances of the Romantic concerti have been highly praised. He has successfully introduced several important new works to the piano literature.

As a teacher, he enjoys an enviable reputation and is in constant demand at universities and conservatories throughout the U.S. His students have won prizes in the Queen Elizabeth, Van Cliburn, Naumburg, and Rubinstein Competitions. In fact, during recent Cliburn and Naumburg Competitions, more of the candidates were former students of John Perry than of any other teacher in the world.

Currently on the faculty of The Shepherd School of Music and the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, John Perry is a frequent guest artist at many of the prestigious music festivals including Aspen, Austin Music Festival, the Gina Bachauer International Festival, and Sarasota, to name a few. His recordings are available on the Telefunken, Musical Heritage Society, and Vox labels.

PAUL COOPER made his professional debut as a composer as a result of a commission from the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra in 1953, and since that time has built an impressive reputation as a composer, author, critic, and teacher. He has received virtually every award and honor offered in the United States: a Fulbright Fellowship to Paris, two Guggenheim Fellowships to London, and awards or grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, Ford, Rockefeller, Rackham, and the National Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, as well as yearly awards from ASCAP since 1966.

Educated at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, and at the Conservatoire National and the Sorbonne in Paris, his illustrious teachers included Ingolf Dahl, Ernest Kanitz, Roger Sessions, Halsey Stevens, and the famed Nadia Boulanger.

The music of Paul Cooper includes six symphonies (the fifth commissioned by the Houston Symphony) four large oratorios, six concertos for various instruments, and a large variety of chamber and vocal music. He is recorded on the CRI, Crystal, and Lyrichord labels.

Paul Cooper is presently Lynette S. Autrey Professor of Music and Composer-in-Residence at The Shepherd School of Music.
STEINWAY & SONS’
LANDMARK 500,000th PIANO

Steinway & Sons’ 500,000th piano is attracting great attention as it is displayed in major musical centers throughout the world. Only three occasions have warranted the crafting of a landmark instrument during the company’s 136-year history. In 1903, having built 100,000 pianos, the Steinway family created their first commemorative piano. It was presented to the American people and installed in the White House during the Theodore Roosevelt administration. Thirty-five years later, Steinway & Sons created its second commemorative instrument having produced 300,000 pianos. This piano was also presented to the American people and installed in the White House during the administration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. To make room for the new Steinway, the first commemorative Steinway was transferred to the permanent collection of the Smithsonian Institution where it still resides. Both instruments have subsequently been declared National Artifacts by the Smithsonian Institution.

The 500,000th Steinway contains the same design and construction features found in regular production Steinway concert grands. Its dramatic looking case was designed by the noted American furniture designer, Wendell Castle. Crafted out of rare East Indian ebony and dyed Swiss pear, and trimmed with Bubinga wood and Gaboon ebony, it is adorned with the hand-etched signatures of over 800 living Steinway artists, including John Perry’s. The instrument has the distinction of being the most valuable piano ever made. It is provided for this evening’s concert by Forshey Piano Company, Houston’s exclusive Steinway dealer.