

Brahms • Schumann • Prokofiev

William Ludwig, *bassoon*

Anne Epperson, *piano*



CRC 2130



Any bassoonist seeking to be expressive as a solo performer is faced with a daunting challenge - the bassoon literature. With a few exceptions the literature is lacking those masterworks that not only challenge the performer, but also attract and engage the audience. One must turn to transcription to develop a repertoire of significantly compelling literature. There is no better place to begin the search for works to transcribe than with compositions for which the composer provided an alternate version himself. This is the case in all three of the works recorded here.

Robert Schumann composed the *Fantasy Pieces*, Op. 73 for clarinet and piano in 1849 in Dresden and provided an alternate version (at the request of his publisher) for cello and viola. This proof of versatility and practical intention by Schumann has made this an often transcribed work and an ideal piece for the bassoonist to develop the intense and intimate nuances needed for expression of Romantic music.

With the Prokofiev *Sonata in D*, Op. 94 for flute and piano, we have an alternate version for violin and piano provided by the composer. The version for violin was at the urging and with the collaboration of David Oistrakh. While this work offers great challenges, it also gives the bassoonist access to one of the most beautifully lyric pieces in the duo chamber literature. Written in 1942 while Prokofiev was in the city of Perm in the beautiful Ural region, it reflects nothing of the tension of war or of political obligations. Indeed the Soviet critic Israel Nestyev described the piece as “the sunniest and most serene of Prokofiev’s wartime compositions.”

The two *Sonatas for Clarinet and Piano*, Op. 120, finished in 1894 in the mountain region of Ischl, Austria, were the last instrumental works written by Brahms. The works were published in 1895 with alternate parts for viola and a month later as a violin sonata. The translation to the bassoon of the *Sonata in F Minor* is surprisingly convincing, just

as performances on the viola are surprisingly flat. Brahms' lack of confidence in his work as a string sonata is shown in his statement to Joachim (October 17, 1894): 'I fear that as viola sonatas both pieces are very awkward and unenjoyable.' The bassoon sonority gives this tightly constructed yet highly varied sonata the needed wind texture.

The question of why these and other master composers have not written for the solo bassoon has several answers. Perhaps lack of contemporary artists such as Peter Mülhfeld, who inspired several of Brahms' compositions, is one answer. That the bassoon was slow to emerge from its dulcian bass support origins is perhaps another. But with these and other works the bassoonist can successfully build upon a core of literature to develop a vibrant solo voice.

William Ludwig

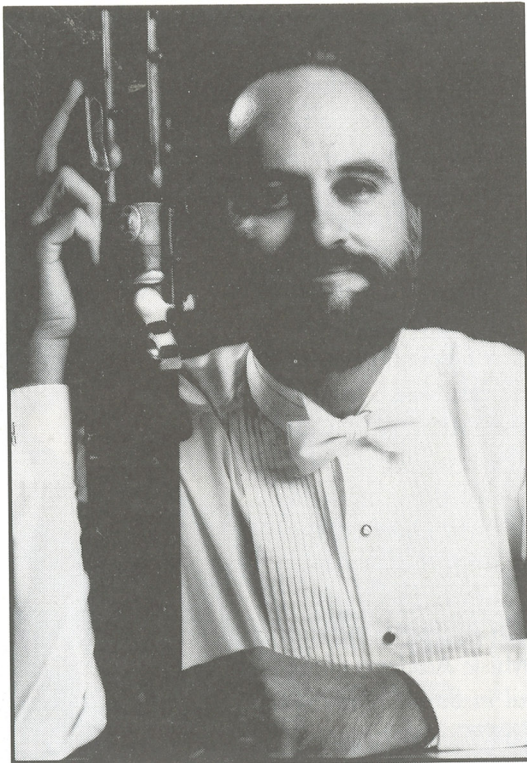
William Ludwig, bassoon

Over the past 15 years, Mr. Ludwig has developed an international reputation as both a performer and teacher of the bassoon. This development has centered around his expansion of the bassoon as a solo instrument - from his intense and dramatic performance style to his transcriptions and commissions for the instrument. Recipient of numerous awards and grants, including the 1991 Louisiana Artist Fellowship, his interest in expanding the bassoon literature has led to transcriptions of works by Bach, Brahms and Prokofiev. He has several editions and a performance workbook scheduled for publication, and has commissioned works for bassoon and jazz trio, bassoon and interactive computer, and solo bassoon.

Mr. Ludwig has performed solo and chamber music recitals throughout the United States and Europe, including performances with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and at the Prague Spring International Music Festival. He has been a

soloist with and principal bassoonist of the Florida Orchestra and the Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra, and holds concurrent faculty positions at the Louisiana State University School of Music and the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

In residence for several summers at the Sewanee Summer Music Center, he has presented master classes and recitals at many universities and colleges. He was co-host of the 1990 International Double Reed Society Conference and has been a featured speaker and performer at several IDRS conferences. A Yale School of Music graduate, he has studied with Christopher Weait, Arthur Weisberg, Bernard Garfield, Leonard Sharrow, and Sol Schoenbach. He has made a number of recordings.



William Ludwig

Anne Epperson, piano

Pianist Anne Epperson made her debut at the age of twelve with the New Orleans Philharmonic and was a scholarship student at the Juilliard School. She also attended Louisiana State University and the University of Southern California, where she was appointed staff accompanist for Jascha Heifetz' Master Class. A featured performer and coach at the Scotia Festival, the Garth Newel Summer Festival, the Kent Blossom Music Festival, the Taos Chamber Music Festival, Chamber Music Northwest and the Aspen Music Festival, she has also appeared in concert with the American String Quartet, the Orford Quartet, the Thouvenel Quartet and the Atlanta Virtuosi. Ms. Epperson is the newly-appointed Coordinator of Instrumental Accompanying at the Music Academy of the West Summer Festival in Santa Barbara, California. In recent year, Ms. Epperson has gained special recognition as a collaborative pianist, performing with distinguished soloists in North and South

America and in Europe. Ms. Epperson is director of the accompanying and piano chamber music program at The Cleveland Institute of Music. She has made a number of recordings.



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DDD

Robert Schumann (1810-1856): Fantasy Pieces, Op. 73

- | | | |
|-------|-----------------------|--------|
| 1 I | Zart und mit Ausdruck | [2:48] |
| 2 II | Lebhaft, leicht | [3:20] |
| 3 III | Rasch und mit Feuer | [4:11] |

Serge Prokofiev (1891-1953): Sonata in D for Flute (arr. William Ludwig)

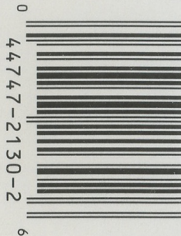
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|-------|--------------------------------|--------|
| 4 I | Moderato | [8:20] |
| 5 II | Scherzo: Allegretto scherzando | [5:30] |
| 6 III | Andante | [3:48] |
| 7 IV | Allegro con brio | [7:44] |

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897): Sonata for Piano and Clarinet, Op. 128

(arr. William Ludwig)

- | | | |
|--------|-------------------------|--------|
| 8 I | Allegro appassionato | [7:28] |
| 9 II | Andante con poco Adagio | [4:59] |
| 10 III | Allegretto grazioso | [4:15] |
| 11 IV | Vivace | [5:29] |

Total Duration: 58:10



Recorded March 5, 6, and 7, 1988 in Kulas Auditorium at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Produced by Elaine Martone. Engineered and Edited by Thomas Knab. Executive Producer: Victor E. Sachse. Cover Painting: Paul Cézanne: Mont-Sainte-Victoire, 1888-90.



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