UMS PRESENTS

BERLIN PHILHARMONIC WIND QUINTET

Michael Hasel, Flute
Andreas Wittmann, Oboe
Walter Seyfarth, Clarinet
Fergus McWilliam, Horn
Marion Reinhard, Bassoon

with
Martin Katz, Piano

Saturday Evening, February 9, 2013 at 8:00
Rackham Auditorium • Ann Arbor

40th Performance of the 134th Annual Season
50th Annual Chamber Arts Series

Photo: The Berliner Philharmonie, Berlin, Germany
PROGRAM

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart,
Arr. Michael Hasel
Fantasie in f minor, K. 608 (for “Mechanical Organ”)

Allegro — Andante — Allegro

Kalevi Aho
Kvintetto (Wind quintet)

Agitato
Vivace, leggiero
Marziale, pesante
Andante, con tristezza

INTERMISSION

Jacques Ibert
Trois pièces brèves

Allegro
Andante
Assez lent — Allegro scherzando

Darius Milhaud
La Cheminée du roi René

Cortège
Aubade
Jongleurs
La mousinglade
Joutes sur l’arc
Chasse à Valabre
Madrigal—nocturne

Francis Poulenc
Sextet for Piano and Wind Quintet

Allegro vivace
Divertissement
Finale

Mr. Katz

Tonight’s performance is supported by Penny and Ken Fischer.

Media partnership is provided by WGTE 91.3 FM.

The Steinway piano used in this evening’s performance is made possible by the Steinway Piano Gallery of Detroit.


The Berlin Philharmonic Wind Quintet (www.windquintet.com) records exclusively for BIS Records.
Evenings of chamber music for winds are less frequent on our concert calendars than piano trios or string quartets, which is understandable since the latter were central to the work of so many of our canonical masters for so many years. Wind music was long treated as a lighter genre: more often than not, wind ensembles played serenades, divertimenti, and other forms of musical entertainment. Although Mozart wrote some of his greatest music for winds (either sextets and octets, or else solo winds combined with other instruments), it was not until the 20th century that the wind quintet (flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, bassoon) became established as a stable formation worthy of the attention of major composers. Unlike a string quartet, whose four instruments belong to the same family and are able to achieve a perfect blend, in a wind quintet each instrument has a very different sound quality and maintains its individual character even when mixing its timbre with the other members of the group. The acoustic combinations are endless…

**Fantasie in f minor, K. 608**
(for “Mechanical Organ”) (1791)
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Born January 27, 1756 in Salzburg, Austria
Died December 5, 1791 in Vienna

**SNAPSHOTS OF HISTORY...IN 1791:**
- Joseph Haydn composes his first set of London symphonies
- The Brandenburg Gate is completed in Berlin
- Pierre Charles L’Enfant begins to design the future capital of the US
- Robert Burns publishes his poem *Tam o’Shanter*
- Revolutionary France adopts its first written constitution, inspired by the Constitution of the US

As neither I (as the page-turning flautist of our ensemble) nor our audiences wished to deny ourselves further contact with Mozart’s music, the use of transcriptions was an obvious step to take. Although, since we formed the ensemble in 1988, we have steadfastly refused to play arrangements (with the exception of a few display pieces and encores), we make an exception for Mozart, because his oeuvre includes certain works that cry out for a quintet arrangement if the transcription is carried out with due stylistic sensitivity. Moreover, as the mechanical organ and glass harmonica are not readily available for concert performances, I hope that my arrangements will make some of Mozart’s masterpieces more easily accessible for a larger audience.

The starting point for my arrangements was the text of the Neue Mozart Ausgabe (published by Bärenreiter), which has been carried over unaltered except for certain octave and chord doublings that had to be changed for technical reasons, especially in K. 608, where chords of up to 12 notes occur. The instruments (except for the horn) are used in accordance with the customs and technical capabilities of Mozart’s era. I have used the horn according to modern performance technique, not least in order to achieve a greater range of color in the instrumentation, a point that Mozart evidently also considered important (see K. 452). To have restricted myself to the valve-less horn would have resulted in very sparing use of the instrument, especially in K. 594 and K. 608 with their wide harmonic range.

Mozart’s three surviving works
for mechanical organ all come from the last year of his life. They were written in response to a commission from Count Josef von Deym’s Müllersche Kunstabgalerie in Vienna. This art gallery contained a curious mixture of exhibits: plaster replicas of ancient statues, wax reliefs, paintings, copper engravings, and mechanical musical instruments. In March 1791, the Count mounted a memorial exhibition for Field Marshal Baron Gideon von Laudon, an Austrian national hero, at which funeral music was to be played hourly. For this purpose Mozart wrote K. 594 (the last entry in his catalogue of works for December 1790) and K. 608 (dated 3 March 1791); K. 616, dated 4 May 1791, was intended for performance elsewhere in the collection; furthermore, we can conclude from Mozart’s letters and fragments that he wrote additional pieces for mechanical organ, works which have regrettably not survived.

Clockwork organ or organ cylinder are terms referring to a flute-playing musical clock, in other words a mechanical organ that is coupled to a clock mechanism in order to reproduce music at a given point in time. These flute-playing musical clocks, for which such composers as Joseph Haydn and Ludwig van Beethoven also composed a number of pieces, were then very popular instruments in high society art galleries and other curiosity chambers. They existed in a wide range of types and with differing ranges, as can well be seen from Mozart’s scores. For the four-part texture of K. 616, for example, a high-pitched instrument with small pipes was sufficient, whilst K. 608 requires chords of up to 12 notes and a considerably larger range.

Mozart’s music for organ cylinder were soon arranged for other instruments in order to make them accessible to a wider audience. The adaptations range from piano transcriptions to versions for orchestra. Several arrangements exist for wind quintet; the older ones (Meyer, Pilleney) often take considerable liberties with the text, whilst the newer ones (Schottstädt, Schäfer) reproduce Mozart’s music with much greater precision. In particular K. 608, an outstanding piece with fine contrapuntal passages, a fugue and a double-fugue (a late flowering of Mozart’s preoccupation with the music of Bach), rapidly became well known. Beethoven made a copy of it for study purposes (he also possessed a copy of K. 594). Schubert’s f-minor Fantasy for Piano Four Hands clearly shows its influence, and the “Adagio” from Franz Lachner’s Wind Octet has obvious links with the “Andante” from Mozart’s piece.

Finally, we can only marvel at the way Mozart’s inspiration attained such elevated heights when tackling a task of which, as we know from his letters, he was not especially fond. As W. Hildesheimer points out in his biography of Mozart: Music of significance for a musical box, an almost tragic-comical combination, at any rate a triumph of the spirit over the material.


**Kvintetto** (Wind quintet) (2006)
Kalevi Aho
Born March 9, 1949 in Forssa, Finland

**SNAPSHOT OF HISTORY… IN 2006:**
- Former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is executed
- The film The Lives of Others, about the former East German secret police, is released
- Composer György Ligeti dies in Vienna at the age of 83
- Former Vice President Al Gore publishes his book *An Inconvenient Truth: The Planetary Emergency of Global Warming and What We Can Do About It*
- John Adams’ opera *The Flowering Tree* is premiered in Vienna, in honor of the 250th anniversary of Mozart’s birth
Kalevi Aho, one of Finland’s leading composers, studied at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki under Einojuhani Rautavaara and in West Berlin in Boris Blacher’s composition class. He has been a lecturer in musicology at Helsinki University and professor of composition at the Sibelius Academy.

Known principally as a composer of large-scale works, Mr. Aho has, to date, composed 15 symphonies, 19 concertos, four operas, and several vocal works. His chamber music includes several quintets, quartets, sonatas, and solo works. He initially came to fame with his first symphony (1969) and second string quartet (1970). His works of that time showed such neo-classical traits such as a preoccupation with counterpoint (particularly fugues), and stylized renderings of older forms, such as the waltz. In the following decade he wrote in modernist and post-modernist styles. His use of irony and juxtaposition of contrasting moods and musical styles and genres has been compared to Gustav Mahler and Alfred Schnittke. His work also shows the influence of Einojuhani Rautavaara, especially when evoking mysterious textures, and Dmitri Shostakovich. His music has been extensively recorded by BIS Records.

Mr. Aho’s Wind Quintet was commissioned by the Turku Philharmonic Orchestra (Finland) in 2006. It has four movements, the first three of which are each divided into two opposing halves. The first movement begins with a powerful “Agitato” but later gives way to a lyrical and singing cantando. The beginning of the second movement is playful and virtuosic but ends in a rhythmically accentuated and capricious Allegro marcato. The stylized march that begins the third movement (“Marziale”) is followed by a wild, virtuosic Furioso before the march returns. The final movement is a melancholy “Andante con tristezza,” which begins with the oboe and clarinet playing off-stage and ends with the horn and bassoon leaving and playing off-stage.

From the composer:

The wind quintet is difficult to write for. The character and tone production of the instruments are very different, making balance and intonation critical; the instrumentation tends to emphasize higher pitches, hence very quiet pianissimo nuances are difficult to achieve. Therefore I have often written unisono passages in which the instruments double each other. Sometimes I reduce the music to just one or two voices. On occasion the horn is often the bass voice, playing lower than the bassoon, whereas the oboe is sometimes the highest and most dominant voice. The softer flute and clarinet might then take over the middle voices. By having some instruments play off-stage in the last movement, not only are extremely quiet dynamics achievable, the work acquires new spatial dimensions.

Program note by Fergus McWilliam.

Trois pièces brèves (1939)
Jacques Ibert
Born August 15, 1890 in Paris
Died February 5, 1962 in Paris

SNAPSHOT OF HISTORY... IN 1939:
• The Spanish Civil War ends with the defeat of the Republican forces
• Nazi Germany invades Poland: World War II begins
• John Steinbeck’s novel The Grapes of Wrath is published
• Two of the most famous films of all time: The Wizard of Oz and Gone With the Wind are released
• Sigmund Freud dies in London at the age of 83
Jacques Ibert typifies the versatility of French composers in the early-20th century. Like Darius Milhaud, he too studied with André Gédalge as well as with Paul Vidal and Gabriel Fauré. The first-named may be less familiar today, but he was one of the most outstanding composition teachers in France at the time when there was an abundance of musical instructors.

Ibert fought in the front line for three years during the First World War; he was awarded the renowned Prix de Rome in 1919 and then lived for three years in Italy. He also chose to spend the period 1937–55 in Rome although his stay was interrupted by the Second World War; he was director of the French Academy in the Villa Medici.

Cynics have often held that a true genius could never win the Prix de Rome because it was reserved for mediocre composers. One may value Ibert’s music in different ways but mediocrity was never among its characteristics. His work is not the reason why his name did not become better known; this is more likely due to his reserved, sometimes simply shy personality — a comparison with his teacher Fauré here being obvious.

A significant portion of Ibert’s work was for wind instruments. It is piquant music in the best sense of the word, mostly from the 1930s and 1940s, flavored with a spark of Gallic humor. Ibert preferred unusual instrumental combinations and these three pieces, in the traditional fast-slow-fast order (the last one with a slow introduction) are among his rare pieces for normal wind quintet.

La Cheminée du roi René
(1939)
Darius Milhaud
Born September 4, 1892 in Aix-en-Provence, France
Died June 22, 1974 in Geneva, Switzerland

Darius Milhaud bore a strong similarity in one respect to his German colleague Paul Hindemith, who was three years his junior. Both had the ability to compose at any time and in any environment — resulting in each case a massive catalogue of works. Milhaud’s compositional foundation was an eminent technical skill, acquired from extremely assiduous studies with Paul Dukas, Charles-Marie Widor, and André Gédalge. The last-named may be less familiar today, but was one of the most outstanding composition teachers in France at a time when there was no shortage of musical instructors.

As a principal representative (alongside Arthur Honneger) of the group Les Six, Milhaud soon became a focal point of attention. As a diplomat engaged by Paul Claudel he had already spent two years in Brazil, and he was later to live for a long time in the US. He soon became famous internationally, although he remains almost unknown in Germany even today — a state of affairs attributable partly to the theory set out above and partly to the way in which music by Jews was frowned upon in the Third Reich.

Like Hindemith, Milhaud liked to write playful music in which, with the superiority of a master, he could often perpetrate polytonal witticisms. Another sign of his mastery was not only that he wrote music with breath-taking speed but that this velocity never led to a mechanical aridity, simply because his fantasy was so abundant.
The title La Cheminée du Roi René (King René’s Chimney) indicates this wind suite’s origin as program music. It derives from the score for the film Calvacade d’Amour, which Milhaud wrote together with Roger Désormière (known principally as a conductor) and Arthur Honneger. The cavalcade of love mentioned in the title ran through three different periods, the Middle Ages, 1830, and 1930, each composer depicting one of these periods in music. Milhaud chose the Middle Ages and conjured up its atmosphere with especial success. In 1939 he combined seven movements to form the suite performed here; despite the individual titles the suite can be regarded as absolute music.

Sextet for Piano and Wind Quintet (1939)
Francis Poulenc

Poulenc had his first major successes as an 18-year-old composer without a single composition lesson. Despite some study, he remained largely self-taught. In fact, his music is so individual, it’s difficult to imagine what anyone could have taught him. The music is eminently tuneful — his major strength — and he can be regarded as a melodist fit to keep company with Franz Schubert and Wolfgang Mozart. As a French songwriter, he is the great successor to Fauré.

Poulenc behaved like a sophisticated eccentric (he once chatted up a stupefied Cannes bartender about an ingenious harmonic progression he managed to pull-off that morning), and the eccentricity, not surprisingly, showed up in his music. Many have called attention to his split artistic personality, “part monk, part guttersnipe,” but really he was more multi-faceted. Like most French composers of his generation, he fell under the influences of Stravinsky and Satie. Yet he doesn’t imitate either. You can identify a Poulenc composition immediately with its bright colors, strong, clear rhythms, and gorgeous and novel diatonic harmonies. He is warmer and less intellectual than Stravinsky, more passionate and musically more refined than Satie.

In the 1920s, Poulenc was part of Les Six, an informal confederation of French composers who wanted to divorce both Impressionism and Germanicism from French music and create an amalgam from Igor Stravinsky, Eric Satie, and popular forms (Poulenc loved French vaudeville, especially Maurice Chevalier; Darius Milhaud, another member, liked American jazz and Brazilian dances). Artistically, they allied themselves with Cubism; in literature, with the French surrealists Cocteau, Eluard, and Apollinaire. Poulenc’s works around this time include the brilliant Rapsodie negre, in which a baritone chants the “Madagascan” word “Ho-no-lu-lu” over and over, the surrealist opera Les Mamelles de Tirésias, a classic ballet for Diaghilev, Les Biches, about flirtatious girls, and the Concert champêtre for harpsichord. In the last two works, the neoclassic influence stands out clearly, but it’s Poulenc’s own brand of classicism, recalling 18th-century France rather than Mozart’s realm.

The composer called his Sextet for Piano and Wind Quintet of 1932–39 “a homage to the wind instruments which I have loved from the moment I began composing.” If Poulenc deliberately sets out to write music which is entertaining, that does not preclude moments that touch the heart as well. Initially lightweight in style, the death of a close friend in 1935 brought a new depth to his work.
in general.

Poulenc, like Haydn and Schubert, is one of the few great composers not only content with, but modestly amazed at being human. The music doesn’t strive for the extraordinary, not even his religious music. Humanity is extraordinary enough. It possesses a sincere simplicity of effect.

Program note by Fergus McWilliam.

ARTISTS

The BERLIN PHILHARMONIC WIND QUINTET (Philharmonisches Bläserquintett Berlin) was founded in 1988, during the era of Herbert von Karajan, the first permanently established wind quintet in the famous orchestra’s rich tradition of chamber music.

With four original members since inception (Marion Reinhard succeeded founding bassoonist Henning Trog in 2009), they are living musical witnesses to the hugely productive and influential musical partnerships of the Berlin Philharmonic not only with Karajan, but also with its two most recent Musical Directors: Claudio Abbado and Sir Simon Rattle. Naturally, as members of the Berlin Philharmonic, they have also enjoyed important collaborations with every other major conductor of their times, including Leonard Bernstein, Carlos Kleiber, Sir John Barbirolli, Günter Wand, Carlo Maria Giulini, Bernard Haitink, Riccardo Muti, James Levine, and Daniel Barenboim.

The Berlin Philharmonic Wind Quintet continues to astonish audiences worldwide with their range of expression, their tonal spectrum, and their conceptual unity. Indeed many listeners and critics agree that the ensemble has succeeded in virtually redefining the sound of the classic wind quintet. Their repertoire covers not only the entire spectrum of the wind quintet literature but also includes works for enlarged ensemble, i.e. the sextets of Janáček and Reinicke or the septets of Hindemith and Koechlin. In addition, collaboration with pianists such as Lars Vogt, Stephen Hough, Jon Nakamatsu, and Lilya Zilberstein have intensified in recent years.

The ensemble’s commitment to the wind quintet repertoire is passionate and in 1991 they found the perfect partner for their recording plans, the Swedish company BIS Records, already well known in its own right for its uncompromising standards. The results of this long and exclusive collaboration have received critical accolades worldwide — indeed many of these recordings are already widely held to be “definitive” or “reference” performances. In addition to their concert appearances throughout Europe, North and South America, Israel, Australia, and the Far East, the Berlin Philharmonic Wind Quintet are also popular guests at international festivals such as the Berliner Festwochen, the Edinburgh Festival, the London Proms, the Quintette-Biennale Marseille, the Rheingau Festival, and the Salzburg Festival. Their television productions and radio broadcasts are seen and heard throughout Europe, Asia, and North America.

In recent years the members of the Berlin Philharmonic Wind Quintet have intensified their teaching and coaching roles with youth; they give chamber music workshops and instrumental instruction in many countries, with a particular commitment, for example, to the youth orchestra program of Venezuela.
MARTIN KATZ has been dubbed “the gold standard of collaborative pianists” by The New York Times. For four decades, his performances on five continents have been in partnership with the world’s vocal luminaries. Marilyn Horne, Frederica von Stade, Kathleen Battle, David Daniels, Karita Mattila, and Jose Carreras are among his regular partners, and he has recorded for RCA, CBS, BMG, EMI, and Decca labels. His many recordings, feature songs, and arias in 10 languages reflect his immense repertoire. His first book, The Complete Collaborator, published by Oxford University Press, is fast becoming the standard guide for appreciating this specialized niche in the music world. In addition to his work at the keyboard, Mr. Katz has been lauded for his appearances on the podium. His editions of Handel and Rossini operas have been performed at the Metropolitan, in Ottawa, Houston, and Tokyo. Finally, the profile of Martin Katz is completed by his commitment to teaching. He has chaired the collaborative piano program at the University of Michigan for 25 years, and is honored to hold the Artur Schnabel Professorship. Guest teaching appearances also fill his schedule year after year, including Songfest in Los Angeles, the National Theatre of Tokyo, San Francisco Opera’s prestigious Merola program, and the Santa Fe Opera.

UMS ARCHIVES

Tonight’s performance marks the Berlin Philharmonic Woodwind Quintet’s appearance under UMS auspices. The Quintet made its UMS debut in March 1995 at Rackham Auditorium.

This evening’s concert marks Martin Katz’s 34th appearance under UMS auspices.