

QUINTETS OF MEYER KUPFERMAN

**Quintet for Bassoon
and Strings
Quintet for Clarinet
and Strings
&
O Harlequin
for solo flute**

**Performed by
BRONX ARTS ENSEMBLE**

William Scribner - bassoon

**MUSIC IN THE
MOUNTAINS FESTIVAL**

Peter Alexander - clarinet

Marcia Gates - flute

**Soundspells
Productions**

digital recording

CD 108

DDD



MEYER KUPFERMAN was born in Manhattan in 1926. He received his education at the High School of Music and Art and at Queens College. He is entirely self-taught in music composition. He has been Professor of Chamber Music and Composition at Sarah Lawrence College since 1951, where he also served as chairman of the music department for five terms. Mr. Kupferman has been awarded grants and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. He is a virtuoso clarinetist who has premiered over sixty solo and chamber works composed especially for him. Kupferman is an unusually prolific composer and has an impressive output of work in all forms: 7 operas, 12 symphonies, 9 ballets, 7 string quartets, 10 concertos and hundreds of chamber works. His strong interest in jazz has been abundantly shown by such "classical-jazz" compositions as "Concerto for Cello and Jazz Band," "Sonata on Jazz Elements," "Tunnels of Love," "Adjustable Tears," "Jazz Infinities Three," "Jazz String Quartet," and "Moonflowers Baby," a solo clarinet jazz work which has received international acclaim as a result of Charles Neidich's spectacular performances throughout the Soviet Union, Europe, Japan, and the USA, all an integral part of his "Cycle of Infinities," a series of concert works evolved from the same 12-tone row begun in 1962. He has received commissions from the Saitenberg Little Symphony for his "Little Symphony," from the Hudson Valley Philharmonic for his "Jazz Symphony" in 1988 and "Symphony No. 10, FDR" in 1982, the Chappaqua Symphony for "Wings of the Highest Tower," commemorating the Centennial of the U.S. Constitution, the Nassau Symphony for "Double Clarinet Concerto" and the Louisville Orchestra, which commissioned and recorded his "Fourth Symphony" in 1956. His cantata, "Comicus Americanus" was commissioned by the Kansas City Philharmonic in 1970. The American Composers Orchestra premiered his "Challenger" in 1984 and the Pro Arte Orchestra of Boston recorded his "Clarinet Concerto" for CRI.

A forty year retrospective of his keyboard music was performed during a nine concert tour by pianist Christopher Vassiliades. Some of his experimental works in tape-gestalt form includes such pieces as "Celestial City," "Angel footprints," "Superflute" and "Illusions." Among his film scores are such pictures as "Black Like Me," "Halleluja The Hills," "Blast of Silence" and the Truman Capote film "Trilogy," which includes the famous, "A Christmas Memory."

In the summer of 1990 the Lithuanian National Symphony recorded his "Jazz Symphony" and "Challenger" (Soundspells Productions CD 104). Mr. Kupferman made the heroic trip to Lithuania for that purpose during the time of the Russian blockade. In the 1991-92 season he celebrated his 65th year with the premiere of his seventh opera, "The Proscenium" and several piano retrospectives with pianists Morton Estrin, Kazuko Hayami, Svetlana Gorokhovich and Christopher Vassiliades. Kupferman's book, *Atonal Jazz*, a two volume, in-depth study of new chromatic techniques in contemporary jazz was released in 1992 by Dom Publications. His "Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra" was commissioned by the Orquesta de Baja California and premiered in Mexico in 1994 with Roberto Limón as guitar soloist and Eduardo Garcia Barrios, conductor.

Most recent commissions are his new "Chaconne Sonata" for flute and piano, written for Laurel Ann Mauer, "Pipe Dream Sonata" for solo guitar commissioned by Robert Phillips, "Ice Cream Concerto" and "Flavors of the Stars" both for the virtuoso ATRIL 5 Contemporary Ensemble of Mexico, "Hot Hors D'oeuvres" for the Hudson Valley Philharmonic and "Hexagon Skies" for guitar and orchestra commissioned by the Orquesta de Baja California and guitarist Roberto Limón.

Bronx Arts Ensemble String Quartet

Gerald Tarack, violin I
Alice Poulson, violin II
Sally Shumway, viola
Eliana Mendoza, cello

Music In The Mountains String Quartet

Carol Cowan, violin I
Emily Faxon, violin II
Valentina Charlip, viola
Susan Seligman, cello

All the music on this recording is published by Soundspells Productions (ASCAP)

Other Kupferman recordings available on Soundspells

- CD 10 Kazuko Hayami plays Kupferman
- CD 102 Stanley Drucker and Naomi Drucker play Meyer Kupferman
- CD 103 Images of Chagall (with the Bronx Arts Ensemble)
- CD 104 Jazz Symphony and Challenger (Lithuanian National Symphony)
- CD 105 Cello Music of Meyer Kupferman, Laszlo Varga, cello
- CD 107 The Proscenium (a chamber opera in one act)
- CD 109 Ice Cream Concerto and Flavors of the Stars (Atril 5)
- CD 110 The Moor's Concerto and Wings of the Highest Tower (The Moscow Symphony, Kazuko Hayami, piano and Konstantin Kremetz, conductor)

PROGRAM NOTES:

QUINTET FOR BASSOON AND STRINGS

(performed by William Scribner, bassoon and the Bronx Arts Ensemble String Quartet)

Begun during his twentieth year, Meyer Kupferman's early "QUINTET FOR BASSOON AND STRINGS" was completed in 1947. The piece reflects characteristics still indicative of Kupferman's style, even today. His generally free approach to atonality, tonality and expressive melodic design have been central to his unique musical forms throughout his career. Clearly that same freedom and imagination have been apparent in his unusually colorful orchestration.

The quintet's opening movement suggests a bouncy dialogue between the bassoon and strings, with most of the material cast in a perky 6/8 rhythm. After a brief development a cadenza for the bassoon provides a surprising gesture near the end, almost creating an illusion that this quintet is, in the composer's words, "...a disguised mini concerto rather than a mere chamber piece!"

The second movement is lyrically expressive throughout and is conceived as a chromatic song for the bassoon with muted string textures floating quietly around it. The finale is a light-hearted scherzo based on staccato tunes and figurations. "...with sneaky, mischievous intent!" The crass "Oompah" devices of the strings provide just the right touch of humor.

O HARLEQUIN

(performed by Marcia Gates, flute solo)

"O HARLEQUIN" reveals something of Meyer Kupferman's kinetic imagination. Conceived as a work for solo flute, the artist is called upon to wear a harlequin costume, utilize special lighting effects and move or dance through five stage positions during the performance. The three movements are sharply contrasting in mood and temperament. For example, they require totally different stage and light settings, each focusing on certain props, suggesting circus images.

The piece opens with the 'harlequin' moving quickly through all five stations swinging a flute around humorously like a mime caught up in a "...slightly

grotesque, happy-sad fantasy." The mysterious middle movement envelopes the "harlequin" in darkness while the finale suddenly bursts into a playful counterfoil of bright virtuosity, which the composer calls..."my Ballet of the Lights."

QUINTET FOR CLARINET AND STRINGS

(performed by Peter Alexander, clarinet and the Music In The Mountains String Quartet)

Meyer Kupferman's "QUINTET FOR CLARINET AND STRINGS" is a work in four contrasting movements. Commissioned by Peter Alexander in 1987 the work, according to the composer, is Meyer Kupferman's "...private odyssey into that special universe of the clarinet." Kupferman himself a virtuoso clarinetist, is the perfect voyager for such a journey.

The work opens with a flurry of strident passages in the clarinet with accented commentaries by the strings. A quick turn-around reveals a set of quiet, moody episodes. An alternation, between intensive lyrical phrases and explosive syncopated episodes, provides us with the key to Kupferman's form. To close the movement, a pianissimo coda, unusually atmospheric and tranquil...fades into silence.

The short second movement is essentially a solo clarinet cadenza with rhythmic, percussive figurations gradually intruding into the action of the strings. The third movement ("*Interlude*") is a lyrical fantasy filled with quiet, floating phrases. As this movement closes, warm ecstatic lines in the clarinet become more searching and fade away over a gentle ostinato.

The finale opens as a scherzo, introduced by the E flat piccolo clarinet. Composer Kupferman says "...As I found myself insinuating some 'wicked licks' into the tunes of the clarinet I decided to switch back and forth from the B flat clarinet to the more playful E flat instrument." A gentle waltz appears in the middle and an extended, passionate crescendo drives the finale to its ultimate climax.

-John Yannelli

MARCIA GATES, principal flutist with the Hudson Valley Philharmonic, began her study of music at the Eastman School and is a graduate of Ithaca College. She is a member of the Hudson Valley Wind Quintet, soloist with the Pone Ensemble, soloist with the Music in the Mountains Festival Chamber Players, and has been principal flutist of the Music in the Mountains Festival Orchestra since its creation in 1982. She has appeared in several seasons as a soloist with the Music in the Mountains Festival Orchestra, as recently as July 1993, with a performance of the Lukas Foss "Renaissance Concerto." An active chamber musician and teacher in the Hudson Valley, Ms. Gates performs frequently with her partner in the Brennand/Gates Harp and Flute Duo. Ms. Gates premiered Hudson Valley composer Meyer Kupferman's work for solo flute, "O Harlequin," at Columbia University's Bache-Miller Theatre. She has been selected by the renowned Julius Baker as a soloist and prize-winner in his master classes.

THE MUSIC IN THE MOUNTAINS FESTIVAL which began in 1982, was founded to foster 20th century American Music by presenting a series of summer concerts. Its performances, given at The College at New Paltz-SUNY, have been broadcast nationwide by National Public Radio and it has received funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts. Dozens of contemporary composers have visited the Festival to work with musicians and introduce their compositions to Festival audiences. The Festival Chamber Players are the resident chamber ensemble. During the winter months, these ensemble musicians perform separately as the Bardavon String Quartet, the Hudson Valley Wind Quintet and with the Hudson Valley Philharmonic.

PETER ALEXANDER is Dean of the School of Fine and Performing Arts at The College at New Paltz/SUNY. Dr. Alexander has degrees from Columbia University, the University of Wisconsin and the Eastman School of Music. He is principal clarinetist with the Hudson Valley Philharmonic and has often appeared with them as soloist. He has performed before congresses of the International Clarinet Society and has recorded the works of Meyer Kupferman for Soundspells Productions. His recording of Kupferman's "Clarinet Concerto" with the Pro Arts

Chamber Orchestra for CRI has garnered considerable acclaim. In 1984 he was a National Endowment for the Humanities Visiting Scholar at Harvard University. He has received grants and awards for a variety of educational and creative projects. Dr. Alexander is the Artistic and Executive Director of the Music in the Mountains Festival.

CAROLE COWAN, Assistant Professor of Music at The College at New Paltz-SUNY, is Concertmaster of the Hudson Valley Philharmonic, since 1978. She is an active performer in a wide variety of musical venues including the New York City Opera and the American Composers Orchestra. For the last nineteen summers Cowan has performed at the Aspen Music Festival in chamber music concerts, and as solo violinist in the premiere of numerous contemporary works. She is Associate concertmaster of the Aspen Festival Orchestra. Cowan holds the Doctor of Musical Arts Degree from Yale University.

EMILY FAXON, violin, currently the Assistant Concertmaster of the Hudson Valley Philharmonic has made appearances including the Clarion Concerts, Pro Arts, the American Symphony and the Bach Cantata Series at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in New York City. She holds an M.A. from the Juilliard School of Music.

VALENTINA CHARLAP-EVANS, viola, recieved her B.A. at SUNY Albany while performing with the Albany Symphony Orchestra and the Sarasota String Trio. In addition to her post as the principal violist of the Hudson Valley Philharmonic she also performs with the St. Cecilia Chamber Orchestra, Pone Ensemble, Amadeus Chamber Orchestra and the baroque ensemble La Grande Ecurie.

SUSAN SELIGMAN, cello, is the principal cellist of the Hudson Valley Philharmonic. Ms. Seligman has performed chamber music extensively in the Pone Ensemble, the New Paltz Chamber Music Society and has participated in festivals throughout Europe. She earned her M.A. at Yale University.



WILLIAM J. SCRIBNER
Founder and Artistic Director
of the Bronx Arts Ensemble.

An active freelance bassoonist in the New York area, Mr. Scribner is principal bassoonist with the Long Island Philharmonic, Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, and the New Jersey State Opera Orchestra. He has performed with such groups as the New York Philharmonic, the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, New Jersey Symphony, the American Symphony Orchestra and in numerous Broadway productions. He is a member of the Con Brio Ensemble and the Leonia Chamber Players, and has been a faculty member at the University of Connecticut (Storrs), Queens College, Rutgers University at Newark, and the Bloomingdale House of Music. Mr. Scribner is a Board member of the Bronx

Council on the Arts, the Advisory Board of Hostos Community College, and the Arts Consortium of Bronx Community College. In addition he is orchestra manager of the Colonial Symphony, Madison, New Jersey and former treasurer of the American Symphony Orchestra.

Produced and recorded by John Yannelli / Assisted by David Porter
Edited by John Yannelli at New York Digital Recording Inc.
Cover Art by Meyer Kupferman

This is a composer supervised recording.
© © Copyright 1994 Soundspells Productions



Quintets of Meyer Kupferman

I. Quintet for bassoon and strings (1947)

1. Allegro (6:23)
2. Adagio Tranquillo (6:58)
3. Allegro Burlesco (5:14)

II. O Harlequin - for solo flute (1988)

4. Fast (4:01)
5. Trancelike (4:05)
6. Speedy (4:42)

III. Quintet for clarinet and strings (1988)

7. Prelude: Agitato con Brio (8:45)
8. Cadenza: Postlude (5:50)
9. Interlude (8:52)
10. Scherzo (8:19)

Total Duration: 63:15

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

Produced by John Yannelli

This is a composer supervised recording

© © 1994 Soundspells Productions

Soundspells
Productions

