

MEYER KUPFERMAN'S

The Moor's Concerto

for piano and
orchestra

The Moscow
Symphony

Konstantin Krimetz,
Conductor

Kazuko Hayami,
Piano

Wings of the Highest Tower

for orchestra

Soundspells
Productions

digital recording

CD 110 **DDD**

"THE MOOR'S CONCERTO"

THE MOOR'S CONCERTO for piano and orchestra was written under a grant from the National Endowment of the Arts. After fourteen years of working and reworking, Kupferman's one movement concerto was completed in the spring of 1993. Various keyboard passages, particularly the big cadenza near the end and most of the keyboard material of the finale, were redesigned for pianist, Kazuko Hayami, who had become interested in the piece a few years earlier. A long time exponent of Meyer Kupferman's piano music, Miss Hayami felt both the neo Romantic and highly dramatic virtuoso passages were especially suited to her artistic leanings.

According to the composer the inspiration of THE MOOR'S CONCERTO is taken from Shakespeare's OTHELLO. The dramatic nature of the opening music may suggest an amalgamation of forms: a tone-poem touching on the emotional high points of the Othello drama - and the classical-romantic underpinnings of concerto design. The polarization of tonal and atonal areas in Kupferman's music is clearly defined at first and presented as a series of alternating encounters. The interaction of romantic, melodic materials with dissonant or atonal harmonies evolves slowly, gradually creating a rich, evocative pattern of orchestral color which stays with the work until the end.

In a letter to a friend Kupferman wrote of his concerto: "I found myself confronted by those same traditions of Strauss, Liszt and Tchaikowsky which I had often rejected in the past - I was actually assigning themes to Desdemona, Othello and Iago and representing great scenes of battle and images of love, jealousy, torment, anger and death in different aspects of my orchestral textures while trying to achieve a passionately expressive piano commentary throughout the score." The composer adds, "I never intended the music of my concerto, however, to unfold as a 'real-time' parallel to the drama but to be perceived as a distant memory of a powerful story transformed freely into my own personal sound world."

Towards the latter part of the concerto Kupferman's 'sound world' emerges more visibly through his quick interplay of styles, his unusual handling of orchestral layering and his increasingly intense chromatic expression. THE MOOR'S CONCERTO often embraces the famous *B-A-C-H* motif, particularly in those

contrapuntal variations which represent the score's most powerful moments. While reaching forward and even backward in time Kupferman re-invents nineteenth century harmonic and stylistic gestures to serve the continuity of his overall design.

"WINGS OF THE HIGHEST TOWER"

A short symphony, WINGS OF THE HIGHEST TOWER was commissioned by the Chappaqua Symphony to commemorate the American constitution. The piece was completed in 1987 and premiered that same year by the Chappaqua Symphony with Jessie Levine conducting. At that opening performance texts by Thomas Paine, Walt Whitman and Benjamin Franklin were read between each of the three movements. Later the composer rescinded the idea of any texts because he felt the readings over-extended the duration of the symphony and weakened its impact. "The titles of each movement" says the composer, "are enough to titillate the imagination and tell the audience what the piece is about: THE FORGE OF FREEDOM, THE HEROS ARE FALLEN and THE FATHERS OF INVENTION". Kupferman adds, "'Wings' is essentially an abstract piece and should be listened to almost like a string quartet!"

The first movement (THE FORGE OF FREEDOM) clearly evolves from a bouncy staccato eighth-note motive based on the interval of a seventh which the composer claims, "...should suggest the hammer sounds of an anvil." The entire movement is filled with driving figures, often quite insistent in their ostinato-like repetitions. There is a quiet more lyrical middle section which features the solo woodwinds. The finale brings us back to the opening of the movement and reasserts the strong rhythms of the earlier material. The final bars are especially interesting because of the crashing Tam-tam which, when the orchestra has stopped, holds over for more than ten seconds by itself until it fades into silence.

The slow movement (THE HEROS ARE FALLEN) opens as an elegy with a viola theme which builds to a climax a few pages from the end of the movement.

The finale (THE FATHERS OF INVENTION) is a relentless scherzo based on a three-note basso ostinato figure. A string of new tunes and instrumental configurations is suspended over the entire design pounding away happily in a dance-like frenzy straight through to the end.

KAZUKO HAYAMI

"Kazuko Hayami chose this demanding Sonata (Schubert's Sonata In D, Op. 53) as the major work on her program and justified her brave decision... the playing was



remarkably incisive and logical."

The New York Times

"Ms. Hayami clearly defined the character of each work, with both polished sensitivity and keen rhythmic sense, and with dramatic vision on the one hand and subtle lyricism on the other."

Ongaku no Tomo, Japan

"...vibrant, virtuostic performance..."

The Los Angeles Times

"Kazuko Hayami (is) an unusually virtuostic pianist whose lines were, by turns, delightfully fluid and passionately intense."

The Berkshire Eagle

"She gave the work a polished reading, one that danced and glittered deliciously. Few pianists define texture and sonorities of Ravel's Miroirs with the kind of digital clarity that Ms. Hayami brought to the score."

The New York Times

Pianist KAZUKO HAYAMI has won an international following, performing regularly in Japan and the United States, concertizing in Great Britain, and recording in Russia. For ten seasons Ms. Hayami has been presented in recital in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall and in Merkin Hall under the auspices of Artists International.

Ms. Hayami is in demand as an orchestral soloist, with recent engagements including Beethoven's Fifth Piano Concerto with the Tokyo Symphony in Suntory Hall, the Beethoven Triple Concerto with members of the Laurentian String Quartet, and appearances as guest soloist with the Crimea State Philharmonia at the Yalta International Festival. She is a frequent guest artist of such series as the Inter-America Festival (Washington, DC), the Arcady Music Festival (Maine), the Washington Chamber Music Society (Washington, CT and Lenox, MA) and the Laguna Beach Festival (CA).

She was featured along with New York Philharmonic clarinetist Stanley Drucker in a PBS telecast, has given numerous master classes and lecture recitals, and served as a judge for a nationwide piano competition in Japan.

Conductor **Konstantin Krimetz** was born in 1939 in a little village near Kiev. His school years were spent at the Kiev Conservatory Special High School where he studied flute, piano and choral conducting. During the years 1958-63 he studied and graduated from Kiev Conservatory as an opera and orchestral conductor. From 1966 to 1968 Mr. Krimetz was a doctorate student at Moscow Conservatory. While in Moscow, he attended special conducting classes taught by Igor Markevitch.

During his studies and after graduation Mr. Krimetz conducted many different orchestras in USSR, as well as abroad. His concert tour took him to Austria, England, Germany, Spain, Turkey, Finland, Yugoslavia and other countries. His programs include almost every piece of the world's standard orchestra repertoire as well as pieces of the leaders of avant garde: Schnittke, Kasparov, Artemov and others. He spent the years 1969-90 as a conductor of the USSR State Cinematography Orchestra and recorded music for more than 400 movies.

In 1990 maestro Krimetz founded and became principal conductor of the Moscow Symphony Orchestra. He has created many recordings and CD's. He has worked with many famous musicians and singers such as Beresovsky, Petov, Gilels and others. Among his unique works is the film series "Music Maestro" produced in cooperation with Cromwell Productions (England).

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 Saldenberg 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 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 Dorn Publications. His "Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra" was commissioned by the Orquesta de Baja California and premiered in Mexico in 1994 with Roberto Limon 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 Limon.



KAZUKO HAYAMI

**The Moor's Concerto
and
Wings of the
Highest Tower**

**by Meyer
Kupferman
The Moscow Symphony,
conducted by
Konstantine Krimetz**

- I. The Moor's Concerto
Kazuko Hayami, Pianist
1. (37:50)
- II. Wings of the Highest Tower (18:41)
2. I. The Forge of Freedom (8:12)
3. II. The Heroes are Fallen (4:57)
4. III. The Fathers of Invention (5:16)

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

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supervised recording.
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