



The Orchestral Music
of
**Meyer
KUPFERMAN**
Vol. XII

Czech National Symphony Orchestra
Paul Freeman, Conductor

**L
U
N
A
R

S
Y
M
P
H
O
N
Y**

**T
I
N
K
E
R

H
I
L**

DDD

Soundspells
CD130

TINKER HILL (1999)

for alto saxophone obligato & orchestra

The five movement orchestral conception for *Tinker Hill* has a central alto saxophone obligato that comes and goes as the work progresses. The abstract textures of the orchestration suggest to me the metallic configurations of iron sculpture. The contrasting dramatic tensions in the music emerge quite naturally, and confirm the idea of a revolutionary contemporary iron-work/design.

The opening movement unveils a contemporary ... "cathedral image". The saxophone focuses on an attenuated melody that is supported by a slow moving chant-like orchestral ostinato.

The second movement is composed around a motivic image of medieval wings soaring from a twentieth century edifice. An assembly of small motifs gradually feeds into the energy of the music and emerges with its own syncopation.

The 4/4 + 3/8 meter I chose for the third movement leads us into a humorous scherzo. There is lots of bite and accent throughout the instrumental assignments, with much playful percussion to ornament the lines.

The fourth movement is a simple chorale, which builds to a climax near the end of the movement.

The finale is marked *Allegro molto* and is based on the repetition of a small interval and its inversion, the third and the sixth. The pattern of eighth notes that

emerges is continued from the beginning to the very end of the movement – with one exception. There is a middle episode in very slow tempo, where the saxophone recapitulates the quasi-cathedral music of the opening. The closing action, however, quickly steams up energy and rushes to the end in great fire and fury.

Completed in 1999, *Tinker Hill* is an orchestral tribute to the great American sculptor David Smith. Tinker Hill itself is a place in Bolton Landing, New York, where David used to keep his ironworks sculptures on open exhibit for himself and his friends. Also, it enabled these iron pieces to take on the patina of natural exposure. Whenever I visited David there, he would point out the new pieces he had wrought and tell me about their meaning and design. Although his work was essentially abstract and expressionist, there were often recognizable hints of things, of nature, even of people, hidden in their design. David himself was a tall powerhouse of a man, with a deep, resonant voice and an overwhelming warmth and exuberance in his personality. I loved his work and I loved him, and I was deeply saddened when he died.

SOLOIST FOR TINKER HILL

Saxophone Jiri Kulisev

LUNAR SYMPHONY (1998)

Lunar Symphony is a very big work in three movements. I have been obsessed with images of the moon for many years and have dedicated a chain of symphonic and chamber works to impressions of the moon. I even have a new CD (Soundspells CD 129) called "Moon Music 2000", and all the pieces included in that group are based on my own special thoughts about the moon. This kind of thinking I believe began to emerge when I was a child and had fantasies about spaceships going to the moon, wars of the planets and tales of the gods. In trying to recall some of my recent titles based on moon images, I find that they vary greatly in style, instrumentation and form. Here, perhaps, is an all too generous reflection of my moon titles: *MOON-CHILD AND THE DOOMSDAY TROMBONE*; *MOON-FLOWERS, BABY!*; *A SOUL FOR THE MOON*; *A CRUCIBLE FOR THE MOON*; *MOONTREK FANTASY*; *MOONJAZZ, BABYFACE!*; *MOONFINGERS DEMON*; *MOONRISE*; *MOONSTICKS*; *THE WAXING MOON*; *O LUNA O SOL*; *TIGER MOON*; *MOONGAMES*; and *FIVE MOONS*.

The first movement of Lunar Symphony is a symphony in itself (27 minutes long!). The work begins with a series of soloistic cadenzas, which are supported by different types of curious ostinati in the orchestra. A variety of thematic materials are sequestered in these soloistic tunes, which are first heard in the clarinet and

the flute. These create an expository opening image for the symphony. The string orchestra emerges soon with an important lyrical restatement of these melodic ideas, establishing a tonal melodic image.

An explosive dance-like scherzando follows. This builds in power and reaches a point where a larger orchestral dimension is discernable. Since this movement was conceived as the longest of the three, it was designed to contain a plethora of materials in its changing modalities. The frequent alternations between fast and slow tempi are constantly in evidence. Also, there is much bouncing back and forth between tonal and atonal voicings, melodic and athematic phrases, soloistic and big orchestral passages.

As this first movement continues, the colors and moods change. Several slow contemplative sections follow. These begin with a weave of atonal fantasies between the winds and strings. A passionate sostenuto melody in the violins provides a high point in this area of the work. The line itself reaches out over long intervallic distances and is backed up by a gentle repeated note accompaniment in the lower strings. To me this is all like the reflections of the moon, reaching out over the endless space around us. Later on, this same "*moon cantabile*" is repeated in the oboe with harp accompaniment.

A return to fast tempo energies throws the work

directly into its structural recapitulation. Once again the dance spirit emerges, as in the earlier part of the symphony. I decided to attack the easygoing tonality of the scherzo this time with more trenchant harmonies – those of my Infinities twelve-tone row – thus ending the movement with a tremendous power blow!

The second movement begins with the twinkling of celesta laying the foundation for a huge French horn cadenza marked *Lirico espressivo*. After a brief transition, a melodious cello and clarinet cadenza follows. At this point, we hear motivic reflections on the opening tunes of the symphony's first movement. Suddenly and without warning, we are thrown into a Macedonian street festival. The music dances away happily in sevens, fives and threes in near elephantine tutti – “like all the Gods have gone crazy!”

Without transition, I revolved the movement back to its largo image. The tonalities remain essentially atonal and dissonant. Textures of orchestral chord clusters bound together with atonal contrapuntal lines provide the basic gamut for the rest of the movement. I call this episode... “My Moon Space”.

I also have a title for the third movement, but let's keep it between us... (“Blast Off on Four Notes!”). This finale opens with a tuba solo in a bouncy scherzo rhythm. The tuba solo reveals the notes B, C sharp, F, and G as being unusually important to their composer. He proceeds to whirl them around in an endless array of transpositions, just so that they don't get too cocky. The entire movement may be perceived as a rhythm machine, dancing frenetically from beginning to end. The original tuba tune goes through the ordeal of aug-

mentation, diminution, inversion and other fun instruments of torture too often used by composers of my generation. I must confess that I composed my very noisy finale to simulate a dreamer's voyage to an enticing planet, seductively distant. Thus, so far away, tiny but terrifying lunar thoughts may be seeking their own image... again and again... the music floats on... the mating of moons continues...

Music Notes by Meyer Kupferman

SOLOIST FOR LUNAR SYMPHONY

Concert Master Alexander Ballek
Principal Cello Milos Jahoda
1st Flute Robert Heger
1st Oboe Robert Vabincik
1st Clarinet Lubos Legenza
1st Bassoon Emil Polach
English Horn Jitka Tomsickova
1st Horn Zdenek Tylar
Tuba Lubomir Maryska

Jiří Gemrot, Producer
Jan Kotzmann, Engineer

PAUL FREEMAN, Conductor

Paul Freeman has distinguished himself as one of the world's pre-eminent conductors. Much in demand, he has conducted over 100 orchestras in 28 different countries including the New York Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony, L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, and major orchestras in London, St. Petersburg, Moscow and Berlin. Maestro Freeman has served as the Music Director of Canada's Victoria Symphony, Principal Guest Conductor of the Helsinki Philharmonic and Associate Conductor of the Detroit and Dallas

Symphony Orchestras. He is currently Music Director of the renowned Chicago Sinfonietta and simultaneously serves as Music Director and Chief Conductor of the Czech National Symphony Orchestra in Prague. With over 200 recordings to his credit, he has won numerous awards for his unique interpretations of the classical, romantic, and modern repertoire. Dr. Freeman, who studied on a U.S. Fulbright Grant at the Hochschule in Berlin, holds a Ph.D. degree from the Eastman School of Music and L.H.D. degrees from Dominican University and Loyola University.

Soon to be released (Soundspells CD131) are Dr. Freeman's new recordings of Kupferman's "FLIGHT ALONE" for strings; and "SPECULUM SYMPHONY" composed especially for the Czech National Symphony.



Paul Freeman

CZECH NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Since the Czech Republic's bloodless "Velvet Revolution" of 1989, the country has been riding a rapid wave of democratization, which has affected the music industry as well. Orchestras in order to survive must concern themselves with the procurement of foreign funds through recording contracts and overseas performances. These developments have necessitated the need for higher performance standards.

Out of this chaotic scene Jan Hasenöhrl, an outstanding solo trumpet player, sensed the acute need to reshape the Czech orchestral scene and, in 1993, invited the top musicians from Prague's major orchestras to form a new orchestra, the Czech National Symphony Orchestra. The Orchestra gave its first concert, conducted by Vladimír Valek, in November 1993 in Prague's Rudolfinum Dvorak Hall. In 1994 the Czech music world's national treasure, Zdeněk Kosler, was named chief conductor. The first recording was made at the beginning of April 1994. Maestro Kosler died in August 1995.

In January 1996 the brilliant American Conductor and Music Director of the Chicago Sinfonietta, Paul Freeman, was appointed Music Director and Chief Conductor. Under Maestro Freeman's leadership, the Czech National Symphony Orchestra has shown stunning development. Already he has made over 30 compact discs with the orchestra and has toured Italy and Great Britain. So successful was the November 1997 United Kingdom tour of 19 concerts under Paul Freeman and Libor Pesek that IMG Concert Management has recently signed a 5-year contract to tour the Czech National Symphony Orchestra in Europe, Asia, and America. Through its many recordings, concerts and television productions it is fast becoming one of the most important ensembles in the Czech Republic.

MEYER KUPFERMAN



Meyer Kupferman's father, Elias Staff-Cooperman, was born in Romania in 1900. A runaway youth, he fled from his stepfather and traveled throughout Europe as a gypsy folk singer, street musician who played the accordion, wrestler, cook and baker. He was conscripted into the Austrian-Hungarian army and wounded in World War I. Elias settled in the United States with his sister Clara in the early 20's. He joined the baker's union while living in New York City and changed his name to Elias Kupferman, thus severing all connection with his hated stepfather. He married a young Russian émigré, Fanny Hoffman, whose family had been decimated by Cossack raids and pogroms in Nemirov, a little Jewish village moving on the "Pale" between Kiev, Odessa and Eastern Poland. Fanny's flight to America first brought her to the mid-west where she worked in the mills and factories of Kansas. Later she joined her aging aunt in New York where she found work as a seamstress. Fanny and Elias were introduced by some friends at a wedding where Elias was hired as singer and entertainer. They fell madly in love and were soon married.

Meyer Kupferman was born on July 3rd, 1926 in New York City. The little family soon moved to Brooklyn because there were more and better jobs available for bakers. Also landlords had lowered their rents on all apartments; they were, in fact, giving away three month rent-free concessions on all new leases. Through the Depression nearly the next ten years Kupferman's family moved to a new apartment each year. Thus as a child he had to attend a different school each year and make new friends as well as abandon old ones very often.

At age five he was given the violin, a study that was so premature and uncomfortable he has little memory of it. At age ten, almost as a joke or a dare while fooling around with his friends already in the school band, Meyer Kupferman began taking clarinet lessons. Music soon became an important part of his life and he became good at it. The idea of writing music grew more and more fascinating for him. Eventually he began teaching himself the piano, which provided a basis for his curiosity about composing and arranging music for his friends. As he grew older he worked as a young jazz musician in clubs and bars in the Coney Island area of Brooklyn. He lived through the "Big Band Era" which provided a source of rich stimulation for him as well as all budding musicians interested in composing or arranging jazz.

Although Meyer Kupferman was entirely self-taught in music composition he received his education in theory, chamber ensemble and orchestral music at the High School of Music and Art. He also studied at Queens College. Kupferman's father encouraged his son in music and taught him many East European, gypsy and Hebrew melodies. The flavor of these tunes not only stayed with Meyer Kupferman for the rest of his life but influenced his compositional style from time to time.

As a young composer still in his twenties Kupferman became Professor of Composition and Chamber Music at Sarah Lawrence College in 1951. He continued as a member of the faculty until his retirement forty three years later in 1994. During his tenure at Sarah Lawrence College he was chairman of the music department for five terms, conducted the orchestra, chorus and chamber improvisation ensemble, taught theory and music for film and wrote many experimental theatre and dance works for performing arts students at Sarah Lawrence.

Mr. Kupferman has been awarded grants and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Aaron Copland Fund, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the National Endowment of the Arts, the Library of Congress, the US State Department and 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 and his "Music By My Friends" ensemble.

Mr. Kupferman, an unusually prolific composer 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 these works an integral part of his "Cycle of Infinities" – a series of concert and jazz works evolved from the same 12-tone row begun in 1962. He has received commissions 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, and the Nassau Symphony for his Double Clarinet Concerto. 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 on 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 include such pieces as Celestial City, Angel Footprints, Superflute and Illusions. Among his many film scores are such pictures as Black Like Me, Hallelujah the Hills, Blast of Silence and Truman Capote's film classic, "Trilogy," which includes the famous "A Christmas Memory."

In the summer of 1990 the Lithuanian National Symphony recorded his "Jazz Symphony" and "Challenger" (Soundspell 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 Limón as guitar soloist and Eduardo Garcia Barrios, conductor. Kupferman's brand new "Concerto for 4 Guitars and Orchestra" (1988) commissioned by David Starobin, Rose Augustine and the Manhattan School of Music - has already been released by Soundspells (CD 124).

Recent commissions are his new "Chaconne Sonata" for flute and piano, written for Laurel Ann Maurer, "Pipe Dream Sonata" for solo guitar commissioned by Robert Phillips, "Ice Cream Concerto" and "Flavors of the Stars" both for the virtuoso ATRIL 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. In 1976 Itzhak Perlman gave the New York premiere of Kupferman's "Fantasy Sonata" and Martha Graham created a new ballet based on the same violin score called "O Thou Desire," which her company took on a European tour the following year. During this period cellist Laszlo Varga premiered Kupferman's "Concerto for Cello, Tape and Orchestra" which he later recorded on a Vox CD (VoxBox CDX5158). Other recent commissions are his "A Faust Concerto" for french horn and chamber orchestra, "Moonfinger's Demon" for orchestra and "Acrobats of Apollo" for marimba, guitar and chamber orchestra, all three works composed for the Orquesta de Baja California, with Eduardo Garcia Barrios, conductor. Flutist Laurel Ann Maurer commissioned a work for the Utah Contemporary Chamber players for flute, clarinet and piano called "O North Star." Mr. Kupferman has also written a solo guitar piece for the Mexican guitarist, Roberto Limón, called "O Luna O Sol." The composer's latest project, "Percussion Symphony," was premiered by the Ithaca Percussion Ensemble in 1998, conducted by Gordon Stout.

Meyer Kupferman's most recent recordings are his Winter Symphony (1997) and his Concerto Brevis (1998) for flute and orchestra, both of which were recorded for Soundspells on CD125, by the Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo with the composer conducting.

Kupferman Notes by Valentine Fabian

THE ORCHESTRAL MUSIC OF MEYER KUPFERMAN, VOL. XII

- 1. TINKER HILL (1999)**
for alto saxophone obbligato & orchestra
Jiri Kulisev, alto saxophone solo
Paul Freeman, conductor
Lento espressivo (02:41)

2. Moderato (04:13)

3. Scherzando (02:16)

4. Doloroso (02:16)

5. Allegro molto (06:56)

Tinker Hill total: 19:57

- 6. LUNAR SYMPHONY (1998)**
Paul Freeman, conductor
Lento (27:03)

7. Ostinati (12:25)

8. Medium bounce (09:08)

Lunar Symphony total: 48:48

COMPLETE CD DURATION: 68:57



Meyer Kupferman

**CZECH NATIONAL
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**
Paul Freeman, conductor
Jiri Kulisev, alto saxophone solo



Paul Freeman

CD Producer: Meyer Kupferman; Cover art: "Lunar Image IV" (2000), oil painting by Meyer Kupferman; Cover Design: Charles Carlson; A&R: Meyer Kupferman and Peter Aglinskis; Recorded by: ICN Polyart, Pod vinici 21, 140 00 Praha 4 – Jan. 2000; Recording director: Jiří Gemrot; Engineer: Jan Kotzmann; Mastered by Jan Kotzmann



© 2000 Soundspells Productions

DDD

CD 130

The music and CDs of Meyer Kupferman are available at
86 Livingston Street, Rhinebeck, NY 12572, tel/fax (914) 876-6295
e-mail: mkupferman@webpc.dellnet.com

**Soundspells
Productions**



7 61793 13032 8