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New Music Concerts

Poland: Canada

The Connection

Sun October 22/89

New Music Concerts

Poland: Canada *The Connection*

Sunday, October 22, 1989

Guest composers
ZYGMUNT KRAUZE (Poland)
WALTER BUCZYNSKI (Canada)
PETER PAUL KOPROWSKI (Canada)

PROGRAM

ZYGMUNT KRAUZE
QUATUOR POUR LA NAISSANCE (1984)*
Marie Bérard - *violin*
Stanley McCartney - *clarinet*
David Hetherington - *cello*
Zygmunt Krauze - *piano*

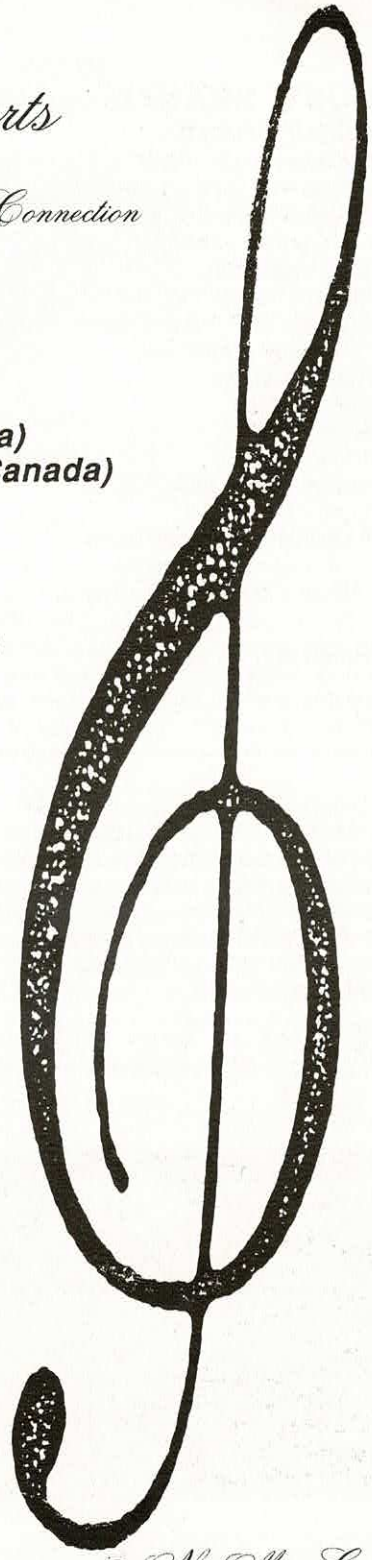
TOMASZ SIKORSKI
*ZERTREUTES HINAUSCHAUEN**

ZYGMUNT KRAUZE
MUSIC BOX WALTZ (1977)
GLOVES MUSIC
Zygmunt Krauze - *solo piano*

PETER PAUL KOPROWSKI
STRING QUARTET NO. 1 (1967)
Accordes Quartet:
Fujiko Imajishi - *violin*
Marie Bérard - *violin*
Kent Teeple - *viola*
David Hetherington - *cello*

INTERMISSION

WALTER BUCZYNSKI
CAMEO (1981)
Robert Aitken - *flute*
Fujiko Imajishi - *violin*
Kent Teeple - *viola*
Simon Fryer - *cello*



New Music Concerts

ZYGMUNT KRAUZE

ARABESQUE (1983)*

Zygmunt Krauze - *solo piano*
Douglas Stewart - *flute, melodica*
Nancy Bourdon-Nelson - *oboe, melodica*
Stanley McCartney - *clarinet*
Peter Lutek - *bassoon*
Joan Watson - *french horn, melodica*
James Spragg - *trumpet, melodica*
Gordon Sweeney - *trombone*
Fujiko Imajishi - *violin*
Marie Bérard - *violin*
Kent Teeple - *viola*
Mark Childs - *viola*
David Hetherington - *cello*
Simon Fryer - *cello*
Roberto Occhipinti - *double bass*

Robert Aitken - *conductor*

**North American Premiere*

FILM SERIES

New Music Concerts' North American Premiere of the film series *"Sound & Silence"*, a set of 20 composer portraits, ranging from up & coming composers from across the globe to established artists such as Berio, Xenakis and Penderecki. The films, produced by Poland TV and Katharine Adamov Films, were directed by Andrzej Kostenko amd hosted by Rolf Liebermann. Zygmunt Krauze acted as artistic director in the series, in which John Cage appears as special commentator.

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PROGRAM NOTES

by Alexander Rapoport

ZYGMUNT KRAUZE

Tonight's concert features works by the Polish composers **Zygmunt Krauze** and **Tomasz Sikorski** and the Canadian composers of Polish extraction **Peter Paul Koprowski** and **Walter Buczynski**. Both Koprowski and Buczynski have strong ties to Poland: Koprowski was born in Lodz and studied in Krakow before emigrating to England and later to Canada. Buczynski, who was born in Toronto, studied in Warsaw. He also views his studies in Paris with Nadia Boulanger as part of his connection to Poland, since some of the leading composers in Poland today also studied with Boulanger.

The question naturally arises, do the works on this program show significant common traits; is there such a thing as "Polish music"? Of course there is a "Polish School", sometimes called the "Polish avant-garde", and new music audiences, indeed serious listeners in general, will almost certainly have heard some of the works of Lutoslawski and Penderecki. The two much-discussed and much-imitated trademarks which are thought to distinguish this school are, firstly, the use of non-synchronized passages, also called "indeterminate" or, somewhat inaccurately, "aleatoric"; and secondly, the exploration of new sonorities based on unconventional ways of playing instruments and singing.

However, if we take the rather facile course of merely identifying such devices in the works on the programme, whereupon we can exclaim, "Aha! Polish School!" we will not gain any real appreciation of the music. In the first place, the devices have long been internationalized and no longer give any evidence of one specific influence, and in the second place thay are only tools which a composer takes up and discards as the situation warrants without necessarily changing his "style". Many a composer has an anecdote about being forced by reasons of practicality in rehearsal to change an "aleatoric" passage into a synchronized one, (or, albeit more rarely, the other way around) whereupon he discovered that the effect of the passage was not significantly different.

In other words we would be hard pressed to identify any specific compositional devices which define the style of all the works on the programme in a meaningful way. However, on a more fundamental level, there is one common trait which does merit discussion, and this is the attitude of continuity of tradition and innovation.

Following World War II there was a great deal of enthusiasm for the creation of a "new music" in Europe. In Germany this developed quickly into a sense of iconoclasm, a desire on the part of composers to distance themselves from the illiterate diatribe of the Nazis against modern music and from the Romantics and post-Romantics who were - in some cases understandably - associated with Nazi ideology.

In Poland the situation was fundamentally different. In the last two centuries the country had disappeared twice from the map of Europe, for much of its history the use of Polish in official communications was banned. In Poland, cultural traditions are associated not merely with spiritual well-being but with national survival. In no other country has a composer achieved the status of a national hero quite to the extent that it is enjoyed by Chopin. Accordingly, the innovations of the "Polish avant-garde" were not directed "against" anything, and the composers have displayed a refreshing sense of responsibility for the preservation of comprehensibility. In a general way, we may assert that every innovation should be compensated by some kind of simplification.

An important example of this principle is the treatment of tonality. The Polish composers have not been concerned with "replacing" tonality with another system which the public would in turn dutifully assimilate, but rather with finding new ways of expressing tonality, ways which are discernible to the listener. Then there is the willingness of the Polish composers to use direct, easily understandable elements which can be remembered and, just as importantly, recognized even after structural modification: triads, chromatic and diatonic scales, simple rhythms and characteristic melodic gestures can be found in tonight's programme without very extensive study, and these elements are always presented in novel contexts.

This sense of continuity of tradition and innovation is evident in the works of the composers on tonight's programme, so that the title of the concert, *"Poland - Canada: The Connection"* is justified even though the works sound very different and yield different results when analyzed.

WALTER BUCZYNSKI was born in Toronto in 1933. As a student he won prizes in the CAPAC competitions of 1952, 1953 and 1954, and he went on to study composition with Milhaud (Aspen, 1956) and Nadia Boulanger (Paris, 1960-61) and piano with Rosina Lhevine and Zbigniew Drzewiecki.

For more than twenty-five years, Buczynski has been a leading composer, pianist and teacher in the Toronto musical community, a teacher at the Royal Conservatory and the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto. He has composed works for a wide range of media; as a pianist he records and performs modern music as well as traditional repertoire.

CAMEO for flute and string trio was composed in 1981 and premiered by Robert Aitken in the concert series "The Virtuoso" presented by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The music is certainly suited to the occasion; brilliant passagework characterizes the string parts as well as the flute part. The three movements combine to form a large ternary form with the concluding chorale section as a quiet coda.

PETER PAUL KOPROWSKI was born in 1947 in Lodz, where he received his early training. He studied at the Higher School of Music in Krakow from 1966-69. During this time he was the music director of the new music organization "Ars Nova". From 1969-1971 Koprowski studied with Nadia Boulanger and in 1971 he moved to Canada. He received the Doctorate of Music from the University of Toronto in 1977.

Koprowski's STRING QUARTET No. 1 was composed in 1967, before he left Poland. The work has two movements entitled "Antecedent" and "Consequent". These are the terms used to denote the two complementary phrases of a simple period. The use of a single formal idea to govern a work of more than one movement is very old, but it is also a particularly important aspect of the compositional practice of this century. This technique appears most notably in Bartok's String Quartets. Koprowski's Quartet may be seen as a further development of this principle, in the sense that the simplest of all musical constructions, the period, can be expanded to the proportions of an entire cyclic work.

TOMASZ SIKORKSI was born in Warsaw in 1939 and died earlier this year. His father Kazimierz was a distinguished composer and teacher of composition; among his students were Tadeusz Baird and Zygmunt Krauze. Tomasz Sikorski studied composition with his father and piano with Drzerwiecki.

ZERTREUTES HINAUSCHAUEN is the German title of the work on tonight's program, dating from 1981. The English title suggested by Mieczeslawa Hanuszewski in the "New Grove" is "View from the Window Seen Absentmindedly". The title suggests alienation and a good deal of Sikorski's music seems to deal with this complex and fascinating psychological state. The work utilizes simple patterns which are varied over a period of time, suggesting the style of the Minimalists. Whether the term is an apt description of the music, however is moot: the artistic intent of the work seems to contrast sharply from those of the American Minimalists.

ZYGMUNT KRAUZE was born in Warsaw in 1938. He studied piano with Maria Wilkomirska and composition with Kazimierz Sikorski and Nadia Boulanger. He has received several awards as a pianist and a composer, including the First Prize of the International Competition for Performers of New Music, Utrecht, 1966, the Silver Cross of Merit of Poland, 1975, a knighthood of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, France, 1984, and the Prize of the Polish Union of Composers, 1988. Krauze has travelled extensively as a pianist, composer, teacher and lecturer. He is currently the President of the International Society for Contemporary Music.

Krauze's ARABESQUE for amplified piano and chamber orchestra (1983) is a daring re-evaluation of the relationship between the soloist and the tutti. For most of the work the pianist plays tremolos with a metal stick on the strings. This constitutes one layer of the unique texture of the work. Another consists of triads which have the function of pedals. These are played either by melodicas - the winds are asked to double - or by the brass, supported by the left hand of the piano, now playing on the keyboard while the right hand continues the tremolos on the strings. The third layer is produced by a contrapuntal element based on motivic cells with short notes, first heard in the strings and later in the woodwinds.