

Acknowledgments

Producer: Gordon Hibberd

Concert performances were unedited. All were recorded on cassette, and transferred to a digital format by Joseph Chilorio at Mechanics Hall, Worcester, MA, who also engineered sonics.

Sonata for clarinet and piano recorded at SUNY Binghamton, Casadesus Recital Hall, November 18, 1976.

Sextet for woodwind quintet and piano and Romance for flute, clarinet, and piano recorded at Siena Campus Center Theatre, October 25, 1987.

Spring Sonata for flute and piano recorded at University of Albany (NY) Performing Arts Center, November 6, 1985.

Duo for oboe and piano recorded at 541 Hudson Avenue, New York, New York, Spring 1973.

Second Sextet for woodwind quintet and piano recorded at Weill Hall, New York, New York, November 6, 1989.

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FENNIMORE



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Music for Winds and Piano
(archival recordings)



Joseph Fennimore



My professional musical course has been wayward. Conservatory training having become restrict-edly narrow, (1950s?) either one performed, wrote or became an academic. The music industry such as it was, demanded concentration. If a writer, musical careers became a matter of being “mentored” to obtain recommendations for grants and prizes. Writing and playing was always my bent. In youth, I won grants and competitions as a pianist but

have had little or no notice from the monolithic compositional establishment beyond some publication. A sensible person would have retired his quill but performers and audiences have given my music a thumbs up often enough. I probably would have carried on even if they hadn't. A habitual contrarian consistently noting that dogmas, from no matter how high, are as wrong as right, this propensity has driven me to explore and enjoy professional avenues from composer, concertizing pianist, teacher, founder and impresario of a New York City American Music series, sometime writer on music, one-time playwright, and a couple well-paying Broadway jobs along the way.

Born in New York City in 1940, I earned degrees with distinction from the Eastman and Juilliard Schools. To two teachers at the former, I owe an inestimable debt, Cecile Genhart and Elvera Wonderlich, whose example and counsel I still draw

upon some 60 years afterward when teaching. From Juilliard, friendship with Martin Canin proved significant. A couple years' association with Virgil Thomson proved an unhappy if informative and instructive experience; I could not muster the enthusiasm for his music he required. While name dropping, let me add Aaron Copland, Nadia Boulanger, Howard Hanson and James Levine as having been warmly encouraging. Countless contemporaries or near contemporaries too numerous to name have bright-ened decades of professional musical collaboration.

When I was eight or nine, hearing Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* birthed my lifelong love for wind instruments. As with singing, their expression comes from the flow of breath itself; the player is the instrument. Winds marry better with piano than strings. Once a piano tone is struck, its timbre in decay is indiscernible on the same pitch from a clarinet's equally measured diminuendo. Strings have their undeniable place in the instrumental Pantheon given the repertory they command but it takes at least three of them in unison to mitigate one player's monotonous vibrato. Not believing the best music for their instruments has already been written, wind players are more adventuresome in repertory and generally better humored than most string players who understandably smart their lives long over the cost, driven up by specu-lators, of a fine instrument.

The flute sonata was written when, co-incidentally much taken with Turgenev's *Torrents of Spring*, I assumed an emotive association. Turgenev's novel and the third movement's epigraph is

Days of gladness,

Days of glee,

Like torrents of spring,

They flee, they flee.


Joseph Fennimore*Sonata* for clarinet and piano (1968)

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|--------|
| 1 | Moderately fast | [3:54] |
| 2 | Moderate | [2:50] |
| 3 | Fast | [4:35] |

David Niethamer, clarinet
Charles Schneider, piano

Sextet for woodwind quintet and piano (1985)

- | | | |
|---|----------------------|--------|
| 4 | Moderately slow | [5:56] |
| 5 | With vigor and sweep | [7:22] |

Chelsea Chamber Ensemble
Joseph Fennimore, piano

Spring Sonata for flute and piano (1977)

- | | | |
|---|---|---------|
| 6 | Moderately easygoing | [4:33] |
| 7 | Scherzo: Puckish | [3:59] |
| 8 | Torrents of Spring: Gentle, vulnerable,
virginal | [10:04] |

Gary Schocker, flute
Dennis Helmrich, piano

- | | |
|---|---|
| 9 | <i>Romance</i> for flute, clarinet, and piano (1987) [5:28]
Tim Malosh, flute Larry Guy, clarinet
Joseph Fennimore, piano |
|---|---|

Duo for oboe and piano (2002)

- | | | |
|----|------------|--------|
| 10 | Gay | [2:19] |
| 11 | Aria | [2:26] |
| 12 | Moderately | [1:27] |
| 13 | Fast | [3:01] |
- Eugene Box, oboe | Joseph Fennimore, piano

Second Sextet for woodwind quintet and piano (1986)

- | | | |
|----|--|--------|
| 14 | With good humor | [3:27] |
| 15 | Slow | [8:19] |
| 16 | Variations: moderately fast
Chelsea Chamber Ensemble
Joseph Fennimore, piano | [9:41] |

Total Time = 79:30

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