

Robert Helps (1928)
Portrait for Piano (1960)

Performed by George Bennette, piano

Portrait depicts no specific personality, but rather two contrasting aspects of human character. The one is steely, powerful, and unyielding; the other, contemplative and warm. The composer achieves a sense of unity in both through the use of straightforward melody, sustained tempi, and the total absence of decorative figuration.

In these two pieces by Del Tredici and Helps, they have used the piano for intense expressive purpose and without resorting to experimental gimmickery.

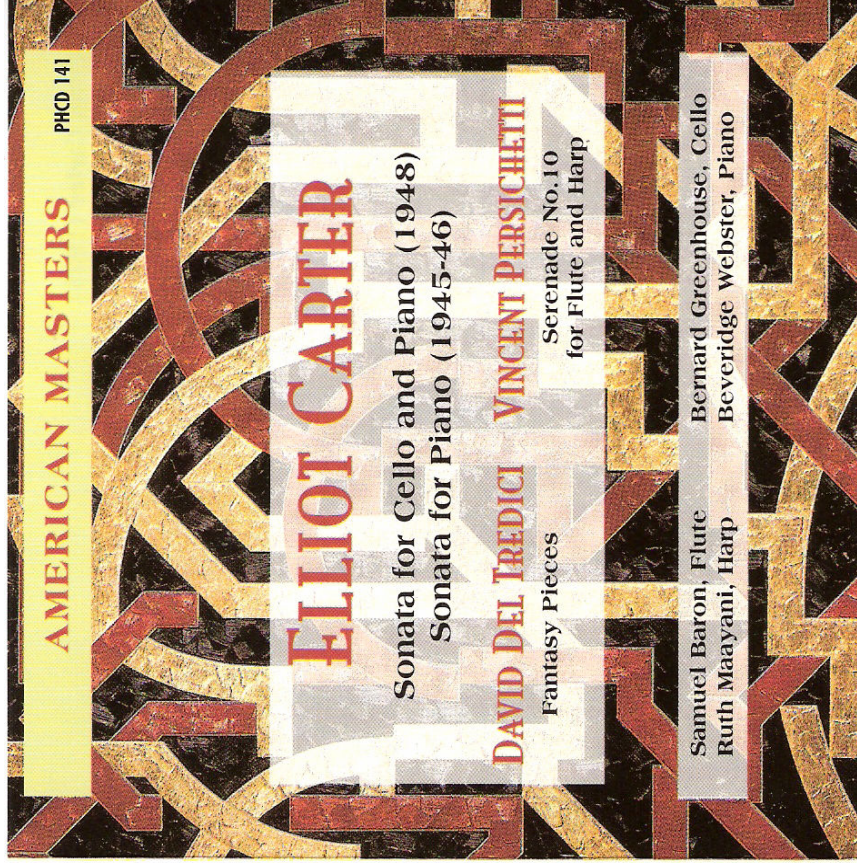
Vincent Persichetti (1915-1987)
Serenade No. 10 for flute and Harp (1957)

Performed by Samuel Baron, flute and Ruth Maayani, harp

The *Serenade*, written in 1957 was premiered by Arthur Lora, flutist, and Edward Vito, harpist in the course of a concert tour of the Orient. The work is in seven rather short and contrasted movements. Sharp and vivid profile of the material is more in evidence than elaborate development of the ideas; possibly this accounts for the unusual freshness and attractiveness of this work. A beautiful "aria" for flute in the fourth movement forms the high point.

The title *Serenade* appears frequently in Persichetti's works. The composer seems to reserve a definite style of music for this title, a style of graceful lyricism. Each of the Persichetti serenades varies considerably from the others; some are small, soloistic and intimate, others are for large ensembles. It is fascinating to observe how Persichetti has given expression to the lyrical idea through this large body of work, over the entire span of his composing activity. One must conclude that there is a definite "grazioso" core within the composer's personality that he must return to from time to time.

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AMERICAN MASTERS

PHCD 141

ELLIOT CARTER

Sonata for Cello and Piano (1948)

Sonata for Piano (1945-46)

DAVID DEL TREDICI

Fantasy Pieces

VINCENT PERSICHETTI

Serenade No.10
for Flute and Harp

Samuel Baron, Flute
Ruth Maayani, Harp

Bernard Greenhouse, Cello
Beveridge Webster, Piano

Elliot Carter (1908)

Sonata for Cello and Piano (1948)

Performed by Bernard Greenhouse, cello and Anthony Makas, piano

Sonata for Piano (1945-46)

Performed by Beveridge Webster, piano

"In the *Sonata for Cello and Piano*" states Mr. Carter, "I was also concerned with idiomatic writing and tried to establish various musical characters and to choose musical materials especially suited to the medium. Although throughout the cello is given prominence over the piano, the instruments are combined in a different way in each movement. While composing the music during the summer of 1948 in Dorset, Vermont, I thought of a procedure incorporated in this sonata that is, as far as I know, original. (It has been called 'metric modulation' by Richard Goldman in an article for *The Musical Quarterly*, January 1951) and it consists in the coordination of all the tempi of the work and their interrelation by notated changes of speed. This device becomes most prominent in the course of the third and fourth movements but each movement is related to the one immediately preceding it by the carrying over of a motive played at the same speed. The carry over can be most clearly heard when the fast oscillating motion of quintuplets played by the piano in the background of the middle and end of the second movement is taken up at the same speed with an entirely different meaning as a motive of the opening theme in the cello at the beginning of the third movement. The large circle of speed changes is completed when the sonata concludes by returning at the very end to the speed of the first movement."

"The *Piano Sonata*," according to Mr. Carter, "begins and ends in B major, but it is conceived as representing a clash between this key and A sharp minor which plays an equally important role. The first movement begins in the affirmative and serious vein, stating various ideas that are heard throughout the work. At the very outset there is a short idea which is transformed later into the theme of the slow movement. There is also an arpeggio figure from which the main ideas of the first movement are derived. After its slow opening, the work gathers momentum leading to a first theme; this is represented in various ways against a background of brilliant piano writing. Then comes a definite close and a second theme starts at a lower speed. The development is concerned mostly with the first theme and its brilliant arpeggio figuration, although here and there the rapid flow is interrupted by parts of the second theme. The return is quite short and work strapingly into a coda."

"The second movement is in three large parts: a slow lyrical section with several themes which return at the end of the movement, and a lively fugue that forms the middle section. The composition uses many resources and sonorities of the modern piano and is thought of as being completely idiomatic for the instrument, with no attempt to imitate the orchestra with other instruments."

"The fugue is a continuous development of ideas drawn from the subject revealing all the different characters hinted at in the four-voice exposition. After this, the subject is heard in many different contractions, as well as in its original form. In the light jazzy section, the rhythmic pattern of the subject is used as the basis for a new theme surrounded by motives from the subject. The fugue ends with a gradual thinning out; the subject is heard in a three-voice texture, in a two-voice, then finally in octaves. This leads to a resumption of the slow movement with the themes stated in a different order."

David Del Tredici (1937)

Fantasy Pieces (1962)

Performed by George Bennette, piano

Composed in 1962, the *Fantasy Pieces* are to be played without intervening pauses, and each one sustains a distinct mood. The prevailing atmosphere is one of unrest and introspective turbulence, and each piece moves toward a climax and its subsequent resolution. The menacing, diabolical quality of No. 3 is, so to speak, another manifestation of the nervous figuration of No. 2. No. 4 is a grander expression of the sensuousness of No. 1. This last one, probably the most original of the group, works up to a hysterical climax which is finely balanced by the relaxation of the coda. Also noteworthy is its beautiful layout on the piano and the effect produced by unsynchronized playing of melodic notes with bass and contrapuntal decoration, all meticulously notated.

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File under
Classical/Carter.

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ADD



AMERICAN MASTERS

Elliot Carter

Sonata for Cello and Piano (1948)

Bernard Greenhouse, cello

Anthony Makas, piano

- (1) Moderato espressivo 5:02
- (2) Vivace leggero 4:38
- (3) Adagio 5:20
- (4) Allegro 5:33

Sonata for Piano (1945-46)

Beveridge Webster, piano

- (5) Maestoso - flowing and expressive 9:51
- (6) Andante - Allegro - Andante 13:06

David Del Tredici

(7) *Fantasy Pieces for Piano* (1962) 8:37

George Bennette, piano

Robert Helps

(8) *Portrait for Piano* (1960) 6:05

George Bennette, piano

Vincent Persichetti

(9) *Serenade No. 10 for Flute and Harp* (1957) 11:23

Samuel Baron, flute Ruth Maayani, harp