

NWCR631

Henri Lazarof



Henry Lazarof (b1932)

1. Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra, No.1 (1968) (26:47)
Laurence Lesser, violoncello; Oakland Symphony Orchestra, Gerhard Samuel, conductor
2. *Cadence II* for Viola and Tape (1969) (7:54)
Milton Thomas, viola
3. *Continuum* for String Trio (1970) (14:09)
Stanley Plummer, violin; Milton Thomas, viola; Laurence Lesser, violoncello
4. *Cadence V* for Flute and Tape (1971) (11:04)
James Galway, flute, alto flute, bass flute and 4-channel tape

Total playing time: 50:24

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Notes

All of the works on this disc date from the late 1960s and early 1970s. Like so much of my music, all of these pieces were written for and dedicated to particular musicians, in this case they are the distinguished players who also recorded the works.

The Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra dates from 1968, the same period as the *Mutazione* for orchestra and the chamber concerto *Omaggio*. It received its world premiere at the hands of Laurence Lesser with Gerhard Samuel conducting the Oslo Philharmonic in September of 1969. Subsequent performances were given by Lesser with the Oakland Symphony Orchestra, Samuel again conducting and with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, conducted by Zubin Mehta. My Concerto for Cello and Orchestra No. 2 was also premiered under conductor Samuel with cellist Jeffrey Solo and the Oakland Symphony Orchestra in 1991.

The Concerto is in one continuous movement opening with a long *Cadence* for solo cello and followed by three inventions and five variations based upon the inventions. With juxtaposition of contrasting elements used as an important expressive and structural element, the Concerto undergoes a total metamorphosis from its beginning to end. The variations utilize only small instrumental ensembles with the solo cello (i.e. percussion, wind sextet, celli, etc.) and thus approach chamber music, both in writing and sonority. In contrast, the inventions call for the full forces of the orchestra to be used in a dramatic, increasingly dense multi-layered design. The *Cadence* also constitutes an independent piece for solo cello and as such has received many performances by Lesser to whom the entire Concerto is dedicated.

The *Continuum* for string trio was written in 1970 especially for the Monday Evening Concerts with a premiere given on the 16th of November 1970 in Los Angeles. The work is in one movement and could best be described as a free, virtuoso *Concerto a tre*. Many compositional elements already at work

in my first three *Cadence* pieces are here further exploited, enlarged in scope and dimension. Once again the factor of controlled chance plays an important part in obtaining a maximum possible flexibility of expression and thus allowing for a more ample and continued sonorous strata.

My *Cadence* series features virtuosic instrumental writing for a soloist with tape accompaniment and consists of six works:

Cadence I (1968) for solo cello [taken from the Concerto for Cello and Orchestra No. 1]

Cadence II (1969) for viola and tape

Cadence III (1970) for violin and 2 percussionists

Cadence IV (1970) for solo piano

Cadence V (1972) for solo flute and tape

Cadence VI (1973) for tuba and tape

Cadence II was written in October 1969 especially for Milton Thomas, thus the subtitle, *Cadence for Milton*. As the title suggests, the work has an overall free shape. Based upon a *cantus firmus* (the first note to be heard—an open C string)—with long melismas branching out, the composition comprises a network of many interlocking sub-sections using both traditional and graphic notation. The element of controlled chance also plays a rather important part in its structure.

In the many layers of “live” and pre-recorded viola sounds—quite uncompromising in the complexities of their rhythmic, melodic and dynamic relationships—a sense of continuously increasing tension is formulated by the super imposition and accumulation of musical events from the “past” into the “present.”

It was premiered in 1969 by Milton Thomas at Alice Tully Hall in New York, with numerous other performances given in Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Francisco, Boston, as well as in several European cities.

Cadence V was written for and is dedicated to James Galway who premiered the work in Los Angeles in 1973. The soloist uses the C, alto, and bass flutes and the tape consists of pre-recorded C, alto and bass flutes on 2 and 4 channels. *Cadence V* is in one continuous movement with its different sections clearly delineated by the diverse use of the flutes. Its density varies from the solo to duets (with the tape) and up to a five voice contrapuntal texture. The character is expressive as well as dramatic. The tape portion was prepared in Los Angeles by the soloist with the composer's assistance.

—*Henri Lazarof*

Composer and educator, **Henri Lazarof** received his musical training in Europe and the United States. In 1959 he joined the faculty of the University of California, Los Angeles, where he taught composition for several years and was a major force in the dissemination of new music, directing major festivals and conducting and commissioning new works.

Lazarof is the recipient of commissions from the Berlin Philharmonic, the Baltimore, Houston, Seattle, and Utah Symphony orchestras, the London Sinfonietta, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Chamber Symphony of San Francisco, La Salle String Quartet, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Collage New Music Ensemble of Boston, 20th Century Consort, and the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, among others. In addition, his works have been performed by the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the New Philharmonia Orchestra, the BBC Symphony, the English

Chamber Orchestra, the Frankfurt and Cologne symphonies, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the ORTF in Paris, La Scala, the RAI in Turin, Rome, and Milan; the Warsaw Symphony, the Monte Carlo Radio Symphony, and the Israel Philharmonic. Lazarof was composer-in-residence in Berlin from 1971–72 and at Tanglewood in 1979.

Respect for Lazarof's music has been evidenced not only in the form of his many commissions, but also by various awards, among which are the first prize in the International Competition of Monaco for his Concerto for Viola and Orchestra (1962); the First International Prize of Milan for *Structures sonores* (1966), in addition to several grants from the Ford Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

In early 1992, to commemorate his sixtieth birthday (on April 12), premiere performances were given of *Divertimento II* by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and Symphony No. 2 by the Seattle Symphony, the latter two works having been commissioned by the respective performing ensembles. Also performed was the Violin Concerto with the Seattle Symphony, led by Gerard Schwarz and featuring violinist Yukiko Kamel. Later in '92, the New York Chamber Orchestra gave the premiere performance of the Clarinet Concerto with soloist David Singer.

A prolific composer in many media, Lazarof's music is performed widely and has been recorded by many labels. His publishers include Theodore Presser co., AMP, Bote and Bock.

Production Notes

From Desto DC-7109

Concerto

The original recording was made possible by a grant from the Ford Foundation Recording Publication Program

Continuum & Cadence II

Recorded by Lester Remsen in Los Angeles, California, in 1970.

From CRI SD 381

Cadence V

Produced by Carter Harman, Recorded by Lester Remsen, Los Angeles, California, in 1973.

The original recording was made possible by a grant from the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund for Music, Inc.

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