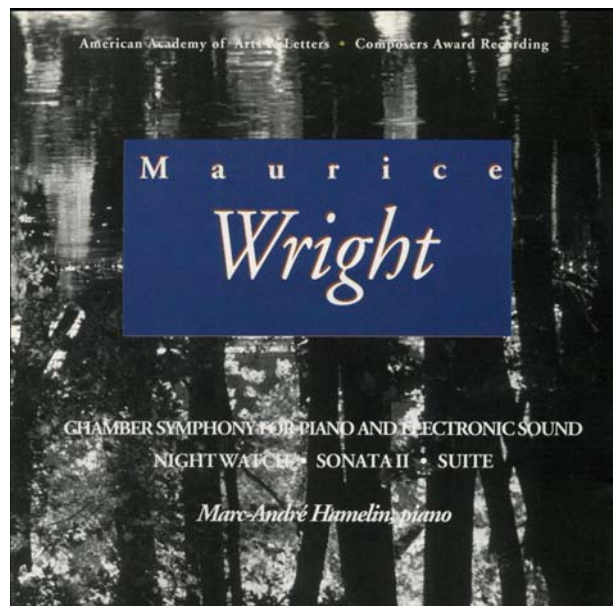


NWCR660

Maurice Wright



<i>Suite for Piano</i> (1983)	(18:19)
1. Preamble	(2:05)
2. Interlude; First Scene: Mountain Road	(3:11)
3. Interlude; Second Scene: The Tempest	(3:08)

4. Interlude; Third Scene: The River	(3:39)
5. Interlude; Fourth Scene: The Valley Spirit	(3:56)
6. Recollection	(2:20)

Marc-André Hamelin, piano

7. <i>Chamber Symphony</i> for Piano and Electronic Sound (1976)	(14:54)
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Marc-André Hamelin, piano

<i>Night Watch</i> (1978)	(14:54)
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8. A Breath of Air	(2:28)
9. Flower Dump	(1:12)
10. Snake	(1:58)
11. There Was A Serpent	(3:10)
12. An Epilogue	(2:02)

Jody Applebaum, soprano;

Marc-André Hamelin, piano

<i>Sonata II</i> (1983)	(19:02)
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13. Slow and deliberate	(5:48)
14. Pensive; subdued	(8:53)
15. Free	(4:20)

Marc-André Hamelin, piano

Total playing time: 63:27

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Notes

The compositions of Maurice Wright span the gamut of modern performance possibilities from solo instrumental work to opera and evidence a twenty-year involvement in electronic and computer music.

Maurice Wright was born in Front Royal, Virginia, in 1949. Since 1980 he has lived in the Philadelphia area, teaching at Temple University's Esther Boyer College of Music. He has been honored with awards and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. He has been commissioned by many of America's leading ensembles, including the Emerson String Quartet, the American Brass Quintet, the Parnassus Ensemble, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Wright's evocative orchestral work *Night Scenes* and his Brass Quintet have been recorded on New World CDs, and his *Madrigals* on a CD from CRI. Other recent recordings of his music include *Sonata* (1982) performed by Marc-André Hamelin on New World paired with Ives's *Concord Sonata*. *Village Voice* columnist Kyle Gann writes the following about the first sonata of Maurice Wright "to follow this interplay of textures as they shift, dart away and return, is to hear the qualities that make Wright one of the most subtle and eloquent of recent composers."

Suite began as a suite picturesque, a set of musical depictions composed during a trip to Colorado. The dramatic drive through the Rocky Mountains and the composer's fear of high places prompted "Mountain Road" and its churning of gears; the great Western thunderstorms and rushing rivers suggested

the following two scenes; and the beer-chugging, truck-driving, outdoors energy of the West drove the music of "The Valley Spirit." The four scenes are surrounded with canonic interludes and a polite preamble and postlude. *Suite* is dedicated to Mr. Hamelin.

The *Chamber Symphony* for Piano and Electronic Sound was composed for pianist Robert Miller, who presented the premiere at Alice Tully Hall in 1976 in a series of bicentennial concerts of American piano music. The electronic sound for the first two sections of the piece was realized at the Columbia-Princeton Center for Electronic Music through the manipulation of synthesized sound with extensive tape splicing and mixing. The computer sound for the third section was created with Barry Vercoe's Music 360 software at the Columbia University Computer Center under the watchful eyes of composer Charles Dodge. The work was first recorded by Lambert Orkis for the Twentieth Century Consort in Washington, D.C., and released on the Smithsonian Collection.

Night Watch was written for soprano Janet Steele and first performed at Carnegie Recital Hall in 1978 with pianist Lambert Orkis. The collected poems trace a night reverie's progression from disappointment to numbness as elements of nature lose their romantic symbolism, sometimes with high humor. The singer ends up with a headache!

Sonata II opens with quiet music that introduces a vigorous, muscular, fast movement. The middle movement is a set of increasingly abstract variations on its opening palindrome tune. Freely constructed and playful by comparison, the closing movement thrashes and rolls along until the pianist,

composer, and perhaps the listener as well have had enough. *Sonata II* was commissioned by a consortium of pianists with the generous support of the Lila Acheson Wallace Foundation through a program of Meet the Composer.

Marc-André Hamelin, piano, first prizewinner of the 1985 Carnegie Hall International American Music Competition, has been called a “super-virtuoso” (Harold Schonberg, *New York Times*) and was described by Carol Bergerson of the Montréal paper *Le Devoir* as being “Glenn Gould’s only worthy successor.” His London recital review was titled “Ultimate Perfection.”

Born in Montréal in 1961, Marc-André Hamelin studied at the Vincent d’Indy School of Music. He then emigrated to the United States and earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees at Temple University in Philadelphia. His principal teachers were Yvonne Hubert, Harvey Wedeen, and Russell Sherman.

Concerto performances include the orchestras of Indianapolis, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, the Manhattan Philharmonic, the

Riverside Symphony, and the Montréal Symphony, with which he toured Spain, Portugal, and East Germany in 1987.

Marc-André Hamelin’s active interest in expanding the pianist’s repertoire is reflected in his numerous recordings. His most recent CDs are issued by Music and Arts: a Liszt recital, Charles-Henri Alkan’s Concerto for Solo Piano, and a live song recital with his wife, Jody Karin Applebaum, with music by Britten, Schoenberg, and Bolcom.

In November of 1989 Marc-André Hamelin was awarded the Virginia P. Moore prize, the Canada Council’s highest honor.

Jody Karin Applebaum, soprano, praised for her commitment to contemporary music, has given numerous premieres including two works created specially for her voice. Her Canadian debut recital in 1989 was devoted entirely to twentieth-century American compositions. Since then she has appeared in festivals and cultural series throughout Canada and the Eastern United States. Her debut recording, *Masterpieces of Cabaret*, was released in the fall of 1992.

Production Notes

Produced and recorded by George Blood.

Suite for Piano, *Chamber Symphony*, *Night Watch* and *Sonata II* recorded in 1993. Mastered by Todd Whitelock, Engineer at Sony Classical Productions, New York City.