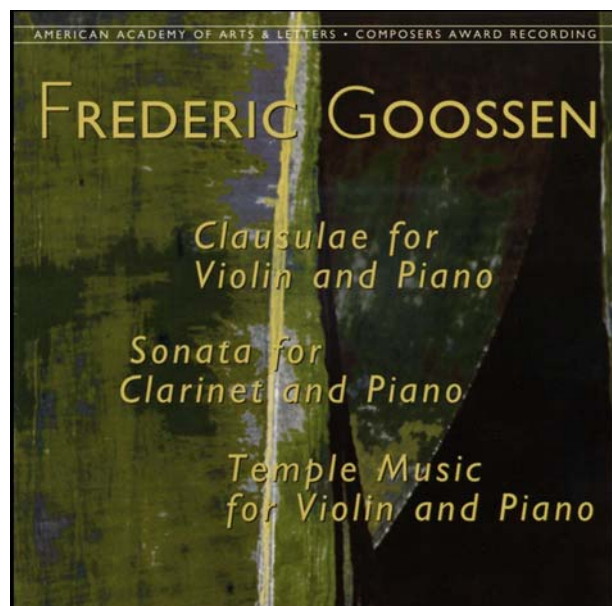


Frederic Goossen



<i>Clausulae</i> for Violin and Piano (1971)	(12:05)
1. I. Deliberato	(2:03)
2. II. Allegro vivo	(1:08)
3. III Allegro	(1:07)
4. IV Andante	(1:51)
5. V Allegro vivo e feroce	(1:29)
6. VI Andante	(1:47)
7. VII Adagio	(2:40)
Steinerius Duo: Myron Kartman, violin; William Henderson, piano	
Sonata for Clarinet in Bb and Piano (1986)	(17:17)
8. I Con Moto: steady	(5:42)
9. II Tempo di Siciliano	(10:04)
10. III Risoluto	(1:31)
Scott Bridges, clarinet; Patricia Perez Hood, piano	
<i>Temple Music</i> (1972)	(13:55)
11. I Allegro non troppo	(5:20)
12. II Moderato	(3:02)
13. III Pesante	(5:33)
Steinerius Duo: Myron Kartman, violin; William Henderson, piano	

Total playing time: 43:32

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Notes

Like most composers, I suppose, I prefer to work on commission and can respond well to deadlines. The realization that someone or a group of someones wants music from me is a powerful stimulus to write it. Although every composer answers to an inner compulsion, writing music in the abstract is for a professional composer as unsatisfying as most abstractions, and I think few composers relish the illusory “freedom” of writing music to no specific end.

The works of this recording all resulted from commissions and, as such, were written under specific sets of circumstances worked out between commissioners and composer. Far from inhibiting one’s imaginative powers, such limits serve to channel creative energy. To know what is wanted or demanded is to know where to direct one’s attention and technique.

Nothing is accomplished except through the application of technique. It has been noted that the greatest composers are precisely those who possessed the most formidable technique. In his essay “Heart and Brain in Music,” Arnold Schoenberg observed that it must be a very small heart that could express itself by the operation of a very small brain. I take that to mean that no matter how sincere the artistic intent, the result of sincerity must be realized through the manipulation of the materials of art—in the case of music through pitch, rhythm, dynamics, texture, and the whole range of compositional technique. The most profound expressive effects result from nothing other than the application of the composer’s skill to the raw materials thrust up by the imagination. As one can observe in the music of so great a master as Beethoven, the raw materials need not be remarkable in themselves. What is

needed is the capacity to develop them into meaningful sound structures. Technique enables one to do this.

In this respect, at least, a composer is a conjurer. He aims at effects and achieves them by way of skill. No amount of honest intent can take the place of having earned that skill. Since completing the Sonata for clarinet and piano in 1986, the most recent work on this recording, I have turned my attention in other directions. Major works of the past few years include a Quintet for two horns, violin, cello, and piano, *Landscapes* on poems of Wallace Stevens for soprano, flute, percussion, and piano, *Whispers of Heavenly Death* on poems of Walt Whitman for mezzo-soprano, oboe, and string quartet, and Symphony No. 5 for winds.

And so, what is next? One should not look too far into a future which may either not arrive or is sure to be surrounded by contingencies. I have in mind a cycle of songs to poems by Shelley, and after that another work for wind ensemble, this time with a soloist. The problem of the concerto, like that of the opera, remains only indifferently solved in our time, and I plan to take a crack at it. Even though I already have written concertos for piano, violin, viola, flute, oboe, and clarinet, I think I still have something to contribute along those lines. After that a clear, and unexplored, field lies ahead.

Stravinsky remarked, late in life, that the composer’s sole duty to music is to invent it. I subscribe to that view. The essential element is to gain sufficient mastery over one’s thoughts and musical ideas so as to project them in a manner that will reflect the original musical impulse that gave rise to them. To accomplish that goal is a rare achievement.

The works on this recording were written over a period of more than fifteen years. Inevitably they will exhibit both affinities and disparities. No composer, however objective he imagines himself to be nor how much time has elapsed since the composition of his work, is ever able to provide considered judgment about his own music. Always it is the listener who will decide how well the composer has accomplished his, or indeed any, artistic goal.

Too often composers set out to explain their intentions and wind up obscuring them altogether. It seems to me that talking about music easily can take the place of writing it convincingly and that we are inundated today with apologies from composers who often are more “apologetic” than they set out to be. One must be wary.

Given this caveat, herewith are my thoughts on each of the pieces on this recording: Both *Clausulae* and *Temple Music* were written for the Steinerius Duo, who perform the works on this recording. *Clausulae*, written in 1971, is a suite of seven brief pieces separated by definite breaks, or cadences, thus the title, which has no medieval significance. *Temple Music*, written in 1972 for the dedication of Temple Emanu-el in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, is a large work in three movements with the scope, if not the form, of a sonata. The slow second movement is brief, and serves as an introduction to the final fugue. The plan of *Temple Music* is modeled on that of Beethoven’s Sonata No. 21 Op. 53.

The two works, though chromatic and dissonant in their essentially contrapuntal textures, are tonal. This is most noticeable in *Temple Music*, which employs a form of progressive tonality moving from the B-flat of the first movement through the F-centered slow movement to the fugue, which in turn progresses from D to G at the end.

Throughout *Clausulae* and *Temple Music*, a careful balance between the contributions of the two instruments is maintained. The works are, in the strictest possible sense, compositions for a duo.

The Sonata for clarinet in B-flat and piano was commissioned by clarinetist Scott Bridges and written in 1986. It is a continuation of a lengthy series of works for solo instrument with piano. I began serious study of the piano at the age of ten, and the instrument has remained a musical “first love” ever since. That is why it figures so prominently in my total catalogue of works.

The combination of solo-with-piano always has interested me. No matter what the other instrument is, I consider that it and the piano are engaged in a dialogue. In no sense is the piano an “accompaniment” to the clarinet in the Sonata. The two instruments are placed on an equal footing from the start and remain there.

The opening movement, “Con moto: steady,” combines two different musical characters into a harmonious whole. The

predominant tone is ruminative yet with an undertone of urgency that leads to a scherzo-like section in a faster tempo that stretches both clarinet and piano to their limits. The quieter mood wins out at the end.

The slow movement, “Tempo di Siciliano,” is an idealized version of the traditional dance-form employed by earlier composers. The prevailing atmosphere is somewhat cool and aloof, contradicting the conventional view of the energetic Sicilian people, perhaps, but quite in keeping with the treatment of the dance in art-music.

In the finale, the restraint of the earlier movements is abandoned for a more vivacious, even frenetic character that incorporates elements of jazz both in its melodic outline and its rhythms. The extreme upper register of the clarinet is exploited while the piano interweaves its own music into an intricate web. In this movement, I think of the two instruments as a team of acrobats working, in the strict sense of the term, “in concert.” The task of each is to complement the other without impeding each other’s activity. The work ends affirmatively.

—Frederic Goossen

Frederic Goossen (b 1927) a native of Minnesota received the first Ph.D. degree awarded in music from the University of Minnesota, in 1954, where he was a student of Donald Ferguson and James Aliferis, and later studying with Arthur Shepherd. The catalogue of his original works includes more than 100 compositions in a wide variety of genres, works for piano, orchestra, and voice predominating. There is a quantity of chamber music, much of which includes the piano.

Scott Bridges, clarinet, holds a DMA from Catholic University and a diploma from the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, Italy. Bridges has performed as clarinet soloist and ensemble player in Europe, Asia, and across the United States. Formerly a member of the New Jersey, North Carolina, and Kennedy Center orchestras, he is now a member of the music faculty of the University of Alabama.

Patricia Perez Hood, piano, is a native of Colombia, South America. Ms. Hood holds a bachelor’s degree from the Conservatory of the National University of Colombia and a master’s degree from the University of Alabama. Ms. Hood has performed with orchestras and as a solo recitalist in Europe, South America, and the United States. Currently she is a member of the faculty of the Birmingham-Southern College Conservatory in Birmingham, Alabama.

The **Steinerius Duo**, formed in 1970, has appeared in every major musical center on the East Coast of the United States including New York and Philadelphia. Allen Hughes wrote in the *New York Times* in 1971, “Debut is a Triumph for Steinerius Duo.” The name Steinerius is a combination of the Steinway piano and the 1728 Guarnerius violin which Mr. Kartman plays.

Production Notes

Sonata (BMI/American Composers Alliance) was recorded July 9 and 10, 1993, in the concert hall of the Frank Moody Music building of the University of Alabama School of Music. Recording engineer: David Glasser.

Clausulae and *Temple Music* (BMI/American Composers Alliance) originally recorded by David Hancock in January 1977 and digitally remastered by Joseph R. Dalton and Robert Wolff, engineer at Sony Classical Productions, Inc. New York City.