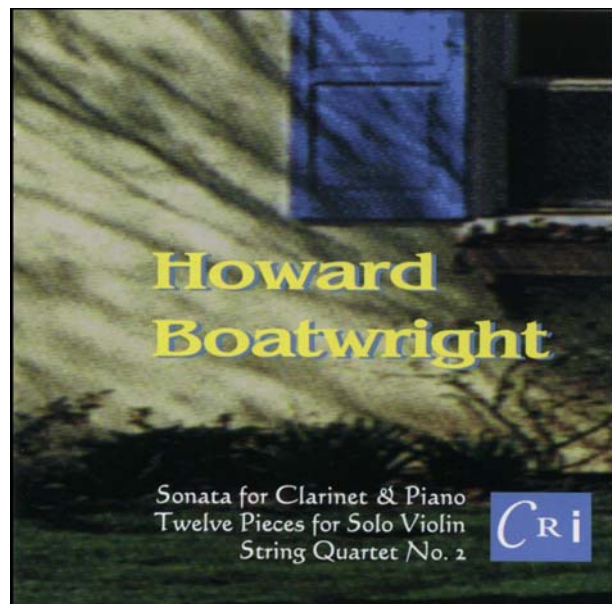


Howard Boatwright



Sonata for clarinet and piano (1980-83) (16:14)

1. I Allegretto piacevole (4:35)
2. II Lento espressivo (5:48)
3. III Allegro scherzando (2:35)
4. IV Allegro moderato (3:16)

Michael Webster, clarinet; Barry Snyder, piano

Twelve Pieces for solo violin (1977) (22:40)

Part One:

5. I Prelude: molto tranquillo (1:52)
6. II Fugue I: molto moderato, deciso (1:19)
7. III Fugue II (1:09)
8. IV Fugue III (Siciliano): tranquillo (1:52)
9. V Caprice I (Improvisation on a Motive): molto energico (:51)
11. VI Caprice II (Perpetual Motion): quasi presto ... (1:40)

Part Two:

12. VII Nocturne: lento, espressivo (2:56)
13. VII Fugue IV: grazioso, molto deliberato (2:41)
14. IX Fugue V: scherzando, non troppo
15. allegro (2:00)
16. X Fantasy: molto liberamente (2:40)
17. XI Chaconne: maestoso, molto posato ... (2:20)
18. XII Caprice III: molto vivace (1:21)

Howard Boatwright, violin

String Quartet No. 2 (1975) (24:18)

19. I Allegro moderato, deciso (6:29)
20. II Adagietto (6:44)
21. III Adagio—Rondo: allegro vivace (11:05)

Manhattan String Quartet: Eric Lewis,
violin; Roy Lewis, violin; John Dexter,
viola; Judith Glyde, cello

Total Playing Time: 63:27

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Notes

Howard Boatwright (b Newport News, VA, 16 March 1918; d Syracuse, NY, 20 Feb 1999) began the study of violin in Norfolk at the age of eleven under Israel Feldman, a pupil of Franz Kneisel. He played his first full-length recital at fourteen, and made his orchestral debut, playing Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole* with the Richmond Symphony, when he was seventeen. He was first violinist of the Feldman Quartet, which still exists in Norfolk, and he played solo recitals and concertos with orchestras in Virginia. In December 1942, Boatwright made his New York debut at Town Hall. In March of 1943 he was appointed associate professor of violin at the University of Texas, Austin, and in June that year he married Helen Strassburger, a soprano he had met at the National Federation of Music Clubs competition in Los Angeles in 1941. Howard gave recitals and was soloist with the Austin and Houston symphonies, Helen sang in opera in Austin and San Antonio; together they toured Mexico in the fall of 1944.

In 1945, Boatwright left his position at Texas, to study theory and composition with Paul Hindemith at Yale, fulfilling a latent desire to compose that had been pushed aside during his early years as a performer. In 1948, after three years of study, Boatwright—at Hindemith's instigation—joined the Yale faculty as assistant professor of theory. For his theory classes at Yale, Boatwright wrote his *Introduction to the Theory of Music* (Norton, 1956). He was also conductor of the university orchestra, and concertmaster of the New Haven Symphony; and he performed in many chamber music concerts in New Haven, and at the Yale summer school of

music at Norfolk, CT. As director of music at St. Thomas Church in New Haven, he gave a series of performances of old music, in New Haven (1952–64) as well as at the Metropolitan Museum in New York (1954–59). Some of these performances appeared on LP: the Alessandro Scarlatti *St. John Passion* won a Grand Prix du Disque when it was released on Lumen (France) in 1958.

In 1959, Boatwright went to India on Fulbright and Rockefeller grants. There he taught, and studied Indian music; in Bombay, he conducted the Bombay symphony orchestra, and with Helen gave recitals, and broadcasts over All-India Radio. A major project during this year in India was a study of South Indian violin playing, during two extended visits to Madras, where his teacher was T. N. Krishnan, one of India's greatest musicians.

On returning to the USA, Boatwright turned to editorial work, on the papers of Charles Ives which had been donated to Yale. His edition of *Essays Before a Sonata and Other Writings* appeared in 1962 (Norton). In 1964, Boatwright was called to be dean of the school of music at Syracuse University. After a Fulbright grant to Romania in 1972, he returned to teaching at Syracuse, and retired as Professor of Music Emeritus in 1983.

The composer has provided the following notes: My music has always been tied to the circumstances of my musical life, as it has been with most composers. Consequently, the music written during the years in New Haven was primarily choral, because of the connection to St. Thomas Church, or chamber music, because of the many concerts at Yale. The change

from New Haven to Syracuse in 1964 brought a change also in the motivation for composing. There was no specific need for church music, or chamber music, nor was there any need to hold on to, or to teach according to, the ideas of my mentor, Paul Hindemith—in particular his antipathy to the modern Viennese school. An important influence in Syracuse as a colleague and friend was the violinist, Louis Krasner, whose early recording of the Berg violin concerto I had treasured since the twelve-inch discs came out in the early forties. Krasner had been a Syracuse faculty member since 1949, and was founder of the Syracuse Friends of Chamber Music. Through him, with his many anecdotes about the circle of Schoenberg, and performances that he gave or arranged, I was exposed to more music of the Viennese school than during the whole nineteen years in New Haven. A result of this change of environment was that I decided I had to come to grips with fully chromatic music, not relying on tonal functions for clarity of form and expression. I began to experiment with methods of regulating an even flow of chromatic pitches, but not, however, relying on pre-arranged tone rows. The resulting music would therefore be totally chromatic, but not serial.

String Quartet No. 2 was the first work in which I felt that I had fully grasped the possibilities of this technique, though since then I have applied it in various other media. It was commissioned by the Syracuse Society for New Music, and was first performed on April 20, 1975, at the Everson Museum in Syracuse, by the Manhattan String Quartet. The same group, with some changes of personnel, made the LP recording (CRI SD 514, 1984), which has been digitally remastered here. The quartet follows traditional formal outlines: a sonata-allegro with development for the first movement; a long-lined, expressive slow movement; a sprightly scherzo, employing bouncing bows; and a rondo finale which is introduced by a partial repetition from the second movement.

My clarinet sonata (1984) is one of a number of works including the clarinet that began through my friendship with Keith Wilson, professor of clarinet at Yale. My clarinet quartet of 1958, which won the publication-award of the Society for the Publication of American Music in 1962, was dedicated to Wilson. The first performance of the clarinet sonata was given in Liverpool, NY, in 1984, by Ralph D'Mello, a pupil of Keith Wilson. The version on this CD is a digitally remastered tape of a concert performance in 1988, by Michael Webster and Barry Snyder, at the Everson Museum in Syracuse, NY. The clarinet sonata, like the String Quartet No. 2, is traditional in its formal procedures, though not in its tonal language. The four movements are: 1) Sonata-allegro with development and recapitulation; 2) a large song-form; 3) a light-hearted scherzo; and 4) a rondo, with a somewhat march-like main theme, and lyrical contrasting sections.

In 1976, I gave an interview for Yale's oral history project, directed by Vivian Perlis. The interviewer asked me what I had written for the violin, since I was a violinist. I had to

answer that I had written chamber music including the violin, but nothing of a solo character. When she seemed surprised at that answer, I searched for a reason, and said that I had probably been inhibited by the fear that Howard Boatwright, the violinist, would be too critical of Howard Boatwright, the composer. Some months later, in March 1977, I was at a party in Syracuse following a concert of music by John Cage. I had met Cage several times in New Haven and New York, but when we were introduced on this occasion, he gave me an unrecognizing look. Some time later, he came across the room and said, "I'm so sorry, I didn't know you were you!" As we talked, Cage told me that he was taking "violin lessons" with Paul Zukovsky, in preparation for writing a set of violin pieces; these turned out to be the *Freeman Etudes* (1977–80). I thought immediately of the realization brought to the fore during the oral-history interview described above. Why should John Cage, who was not a violinist, be writing a set of solo pieces, while I, a violinist, had not? About a month later, after this unintentional nudge by Cage, I started to write the *Twelve Pieces* for solo violin. I gave the first performance at Syracuse University in February, 1978, and played them in several concerts elsewhere, including one in New York. The version here is a digital re-mastering of the tape from the first performance.

The *Twelve Pieces* reflect my experience with the unaccompanied sonatas and partitas of Bach, and, in some ways, the etudes and caprices from Kreutzer and Rode, through to Paganini and Wieniawski. Of course, they are not able to make use of the recurring scale and arpeggio patterns of diatonic major and minor keys. Nor do they use the common effects explained in orchestration books, such as tremolo, pizzicato, *col legno*, *sulla tastiera*, artificial harmonics, etc. The forms are varied: there are five fugues, lyrical pieces (Prelude, and Nocturne), etudes (the three Caprices), a fantasy, and a chaconne with variations. Although there is an over-all plan for the design of the set, the pieces can be performed in various smaller combinations. As studies, they can be used to prepare diatonically-trained fingers to cope with twentieth century music.

—Howard Boatwright

Michael Webster, of the University of Houston, has been principal clarinetist of the orchestras of Rochester and San Francisco. He also has performed with many important chamber music groups.

Barry Snyder, of the Eastman School of Music, is a Van Cliburn medalist, and is widely known both as a soloist and as a chamber musician. Michael Webster and Barry Snyder have had a long association, and have toured extensively, as a duo.

The **Manhattan String Quartet** has made a distinguished name for itself in the last two decades, especially for its performances in New York of the Shostakovich quartets.

Production Notes

CD Mastered by Joseph R. Dalton and Robert Wolff, engineer at Sony Music Studios, NYC;

Sonata for clarinet & piano: recorded at Everson Museum, Syracuse, NY; James Laronde, engineer.

Twelve Pieces for solo violin: recorded at Crouse Auditorium, School of Music, Syracuse University, NY; transferred from analogue to digital by Richard Burns.

From CRI SD 514: String Quartet no. 2; produced by Carolyn Sachs and Carter Harman; recorded by David Hancock, New York City, 1982.

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