



Gateway Chamber Orchestra

Historic Seconds

March 30 - 31, 2014

On the Nature of Things

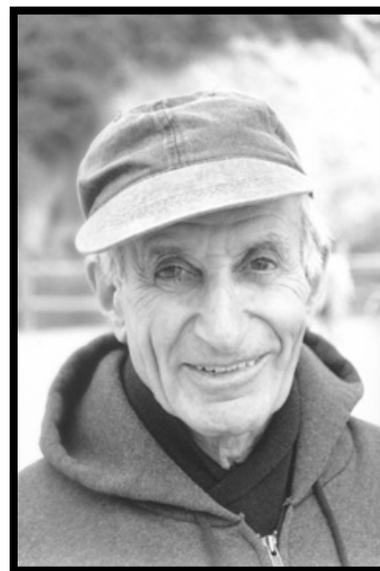
YouTube Links:

One of two: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyglGX8fPmE>

Two of two: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dueRnnn4Bo>

About the composer

Henry Brant (1913 – 2008). Born in Canada, Henry Brant spent most of his life in the United States, composing and arranging music for radio, movies, ballet, orchestras and jazz ensembles. Brant began composing at the age of eight and soon had a long list of titles to his credit. He spent his later years teaching music at Julliard and Bennington College. He is the winner of numerous awards for his music, including the 2002 Pulitzer Prize for his work, *Ice Field* (2001).



About the music

On the Nature of Things is a unique type of music called a “spatial tone poem.” In this type of music (spatial music), some ensemble members stand on the stage, while others are instructed to stand in specific places around the concert hall. Brant’s purpose is to use the space of the concert hall as a type of instrument, creating unique blends of sound that are different from one concert hall to the next.

What is a Tone Poem?

A tone poem is a piece of music that is written to tell a story without words. The story is told using melodies and instruments to portray characters, actions, or moods. The most well-known tone poems were written by late-Romantic composer, Richard Strauss.

Chamber Symphony No. 2 in E-flat minor, Op. 38

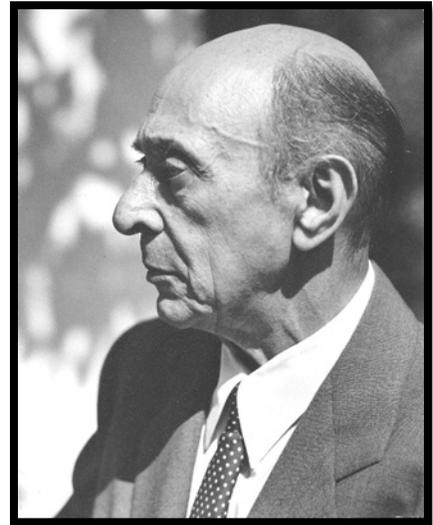
YouTube Links:

Adagio <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HhokckqZ58A>

Con Fuoco-Lento <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vjDrdSu2JF8>

About the composer

Arnold Schoenberg (1874 – 1951) was born in Austria and moved to the United States in the early years of World War Two. He first taught music in Boston, and soon moved to California where he spent the rest of his life composing and teaching music. Schoenberg is commonly described as an expressionist composer, writing music that portrays extreme emotion or sentiment. In keeping with this concert's theme, *Historic Seconds*, Schoenberg is also known as the leader of the Second Viennese School: A group of innovative composers in Vienna including Schoenberg and several of his students. The first Viennese School included composers Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, about 100 years before Schoenberg.



About the music

Schoenberg began composing the *Second Chamber Symphony* in 1906 when he was still fairly young as a composer, and wrote music that sounded like most of the other music from the late 1800s. However, before completing the piece Schoenberg developed new techniques for composing that sounded nothing like the music of previous composers. Schoenberg then spent over thirty years composing music in his new, atonal style before returning to his previous compositional techniques in 1939 to complete the *Second Chamber Symphony*.

What is atonal music?

Tonal music is music that centers around a tonic, resting tone, or a starting pitch. In most western music, the starting pitch is the first note of the scale, or what singers call “Do” (as in “Do, a deer, a female deer...”). In tonal music, composers use the melody and supporting chords to bring the listener’s ear back to the sound of the tonic (Do) and the chord based on this note (the One Chord or I chord). Failing to end on the tonic would be like starting a sentence that never...

Atonal music then is music that does not center around any particular note or chord. Sometimes listeners of atonal music say that it sounds like a random series of notes rather than a melody or predictable tune.

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 36

YouTube Links

Adagio molto, Allegro con brio <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IuvtMeHYSDw>

Larghetto <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eT750MIG-0g>

Scherzo, Allegro <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=inIpeeXoypE>

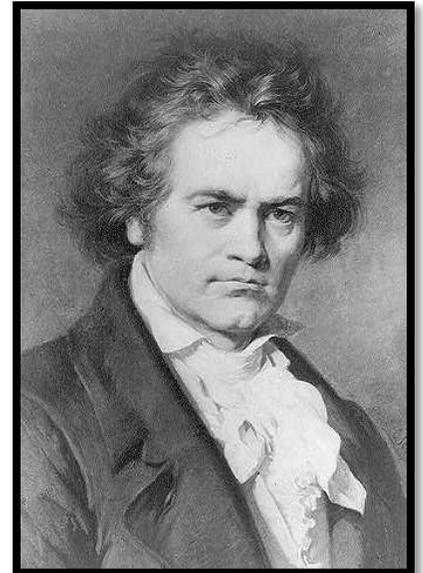
Allegro molto <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6KUqPey3Zw8>

About the composer

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827) was born in Bonn, Germany but spent most of his adult life in Vienna, Austria where he moved to study music with the well-known composers for which Vienna was known. In his earlier years, Beethoven composed music in the Classical style of Haydn and Mozart. Throughout his life, however, his music began to break away from the typical sounds of his predecessors. For this reason, Beethoven is commonly viewed as the transitional composer from the Classical era to the newer, Romantic style of music.

About the music

Beethoven's second symphony marks his transition as a composer away from the style of earlier composers. This piece was composed in 1802 and first performed in 1803, a time when Beethoven was beginning to realize that he was losing his hearing. It is in this symphony where Beethoven revealed his newer, heroic style, and began to bend (and break) some of the compositional rules that were established by previous composers. In this symphony, for example, Beethoven wrote a quicker paced *scherzo* in the third movement, rather than using a slower *minuet* for this movement. Although this may seem like a small change, it was one of the earlier signs of Beethoven's willingness to experiment with sounds and techniques that had not yet been explored.



What is a scherzo?

A *scherzo* is a fast-paced composition in a triple meter (three beats in every measure). Since the word *scherzo* means “joke,” many scherzos are intended to sound comical and lively.

What is a minuet?

A minuet was originally a light, courtly dance from France, written in a triple meter (three beats in every measure). In the early years of the Classical era, composers began to use the sound, feel, and meter of minuets for the third movement of symphonies.