

László Mező, the cellist, has a special place among the younger generation of Hungarian instrumentalists. Despite his youth, the bare facts of his career so far throw light on his exceptional abilities.

He studied at the Békéstarhos Music School, the Budapest Bartók Béla Conservatory and the Academy of Music. Throughout his studies, he was a pupil of the great Hungarian cello teacher, Antal Friss. (His chamber music teacher was András Mihály.) While still a student, he won a certificate of merit at the 1957 Casals competition in Paris and won second prize at the Dvořák Contest in Prague, in 1961. He graduated in 1962 and in the same year, won fourth prize in the heavily contested Moscow Tchaikovsky Competition. In 1963, the first prize at the Budapest Casals competition was divided among László Mező, Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi and Mihail Homitser.

László Mező continued his studies in the United States on a Ford Foundation scholarship in 1965/66. Two of his greatest teachers are Pablo Casals and Gregor Piatigorsky. During this time, he also attended the world famous Juilliard School of Music and participated in the Marlboro Festival in Vermont. Mr. Mező has a number of foreign tours behind him which took him to the Soviet Union, the German Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic, Austria, Italy, Turkey, Finland, etc.

László Mező's considerable acclaim can be attributed to his beautiful tone, brilliant technique which knows no difficulties unfailing musicality and primarily, his irresistible rhythmic drive all of which make him at home in every style.

This record contains two solo pieces played by László Mező — the *Solo Sonata by Paul Hindemith* written in 1923 and which represented a dramatic turning point in the composer's career when Hindemith settled finally on contrapuntal construction, and second, the *Solo Suite Op. 72 by Benjamin Britten* — a piece dedicated to Mstislav Rostropovitch. In the nine or rather ten movement composition, a "canto" recurring four times divides the various character sections. Besides the solo selections, *Stravinsky's "Italian Suite"* also features on this record. Stravinsky transcribed the light-hearted, charming chamber music piece for cello and piano from the "Pulcinella" ballet music in 1933.

Loránt Szűcs the piano accompanist in the "Italian Suite" is also a young musician, and is in the front ranks of Hungarian instrumentalists both as a soloist and an ideal accompanist.

HINDEMITH:  
 SYMPHONY IN B FLAT for concert band  
 1. Moderately fast, with vigor. . . . . 6:21  
 2. Andantino grazioso. . . . . 5:23  
 3. Fugue . . . . . 4:39

Side 2:

SCHOENBERG:  
 THEME AND VARIATIONS, OP. 43a. . . . . 10:45

STRAVINSKY:  
 SYMPHONIES OF WIND INSTRUMENTS . . . . 8:37

FREDERICK FENNELL, conductor  
 EASTMAN WIND ENSEMBLE

By coupling Paul Hindemith's *Symphony in B flat* (1951), and Arnold Schoenberg's *Variations, Op. 43a* (1943) with Igor Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* (1920-revised 1947), it is possible to present three divergent concepts of the wind ensemble medium by composers of the first rank. As with others in this series by Mercury and the Eastman School of Music, this disc is representative of the important compositions from the musical literature for the wind band and the symphonic wind ensemble. Our recordings in the field of symphonic repertory have included representative scores by American and British composers. Much of the best in the areas of field music and military marches by outstanding creators of these little masterpieces likewise has been both British and American in origin.

This far from accidental emphasis upon Anglo-American repertory has come about mostly because the music of quality which it represents has been or is becoming the basic repertory of our country's vast wind band activity. The interest, understanding, and sympathy of the composers thus represented is only now beginning to reward those long-patient and devoted souls to whom the wind medium is a happy and exciting form of musical life. This interest, however, is by no means confined to Englishmen and Americans. We are all the more pleased, therefore, to present on this disc three provocative scores by men who descend creatively from origins other than Anglo-American.

It is too obvious, perhaps, but it is likewise undeniably true, that the present and future state of musical literature for all mediums of performance is sustained by the continuing interest of composers. The fabrication of an instrumental ensemble, however, is the end result of the combined skills and interests of instrumental designer-manufacturers and performers; but this joint industry waits upon the composer for the full realization of their work. Without the composer, all instrumental apparatus is relegated to vain wish and unfulfilled desire, conditions in which those agglomerations of wind and percussion instruments called bands have languished for over a century. In the final analysis it will be the composer who will decide the future of the wind band. This has been the history of those vast and great musical treasures which dwell in health in the mansions of the orchestra, the opera house, and the chamber music hall — treasures bountifully stored up for all to whom life without music would be toil without reward.

A medium of musical performance may vary with time. It may even perish as did the noble family of lutes, leaving a beautiful literature in their passing. When those various flat- and round-backed precursors of today's string family gave way to Salo's violin, it was the designers and builders working with the performers who eventually relegated their previous medieval masterpieces to the museum. But this was achieved only after the composer realized in the violins the presence of a more versatile, powerful and beautiful imitation of the human voice.

There is an appreciable comparison (provided one does not make it with the orchestra) in the development of the wind band. In this instance it may seem that the judgment of the composer, however, has been harsh and prejudiced. It may also be that, in his infinite wisdom, his rejection of it as an ensemble for his serious consideration has forced those men of honest purpose who conduct and otherwise devote themselves toward its acceptance to probe ever more deeply into themselves and the medium to discover why this should be. If this is the real truth of the matter, and if those who are associated with the wind medium might have begun to purge themselves of charlatanism and artistic iniquities — then, perhaps, the silent treatment dealt to the band by great creators in the past century has made a proper effect. But if this is true — as I firmly believe it to be — then our present gains in performance and education have been achieved at great price; that price includes no music for the wind band by such influential 20th century instrumental composers as Richard Strauss, Debussy, Ravel, Sibelius, Bartók, and Mahler — recalling but a few that come quickly and painfully to mind. The reasons why they wrote nothing for the massed wind ensemble (if they ever really thought of it at all) lie locked with them in the silence of peace. One can only conjecture. But luckily for us, Hindemith, Schoenberg and Stravinsky did compose works for the wind ensemble, and it is their fine compositions which make up the music on this disc.

Paul Hindemith (1895-1963) wrote his *Symphony in B Flat* in 1950-51 at the request of Major Hugh Curry who had invited Hindemith to appear as guest conductor of the U.S. Army Band at one of its concerts in the Nation's capital on April 5, 1951. Following his admirable life-long practise of supplying music as he sees it to every conceivable form of musical art, Hindemith furnished no mere bagatelle for the occasion. In 1952, the year of its issue by Schott (Hindemith's publisher) it was quickly established as one of the most important scores in a season filled with significant music for the ranking musical forms by the leading men of our time. A masterpiece in contrapuntal writing and brilliant orchestration, it represents the fulfillment of long-held desires for a major symphonic piece of length, breadth, and content, the substance of which might serve as a model to those whose courage toward the wind band suffers much from the lack of example. Scoring is for a full complement of players and it was recorded by the Wind Ensemble's 26 reeds, 17 brass, and 3 percussion.

Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951) wrote his *Variations, Opus 43a* in 1943, eight years before he died in Hollywood, California. Like his colleague, Paul Hindemith, he responded to a request for a serious work, but unlike Hindemith, he wrote with no particular occasion in mind, although the Goldman Band gave its premiere in the year of its completion. Schoenberg's score was commissioned by his publishers, G. Schirmer, Inc., at the suggestion of his son-in-law, Felix Greissle, who was then employed by them. It was intended that his work should be playable by the school bands of the United States. The cause of "playable" music is certainly understandable, but too often its end musical results are a compromise of the composer's psyche affording neither challenge to the performer nor satisfaction to the listener, nor granting much that is honest to the craft of composition. A long-time foe of compromise,

Schoenberg produced a work in the full stride of his maturity that is neither forbidding nor effete — one that is filled with a rich harmonic fabric that often betrays intense artistic admiration and deep personal affection for his friend George Gershwin. When the Variations were judged “beyond” the grasp of that vast commercial market in the schools he reversed the time-honored procedure and transcribed them for orchestra as Opus 43b. The circle seems to be closing, however, for Opus 43a appears with increasing frequency on the programs of our outstanding university concert bands and those of the rapidly growing number of symphonic wind ensembles.

Igor Stravinsky's (1882-1971) *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* is one of the masterpieces of 20th-century music. Written in the recoil of his instrumental usage from the heights of *Rite of Spring*, its modest instrumentation of 3 flutes, 2 oboes, English horn, 3 B-flat clarinets, 2 bassoons, contra-bassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones and tuba represents what we have chosen to call a symphonic wind ensemble. The Symphonies written in memory of Claude Debussy, were designed for performance by the wind section of any symphony orchestra. Serge Koussevitzky first performed them in this fashion at a London concert on June 10, 1921. Stravinsky describes them as “an austere ritual, which is unfolded in terms of short litanies between different groups of homogenous instruments.” These are the sounds of genius, so classically balanced that to remove one bar or to add another would seriously impair their relationship. Like Mozart's magical *Serenade No. 10 in B Flat (K. 361)*, from which it is “descended,” it reveals again that composers with a true perception of the wind instruments as a sonority for performance by themselves may be as rare as the true genius himself.

# ITZHAK PERLMAN PLAYS STRAVINSKY

Divertimento · Suite italienne  
Duo concertant  
with Bruno Canino

## SIDE ONE

### Divertimento

band 1—Sinfonia—Danses Suisses

band 2—Scherzo

band 3—Pas de deux: Adagio—Variation—Coda

### Suite Italienne (from "Pulcinella" after Pergolesi)

band 4—Introduzione—Serenata

## SIDE TWO

band 1—Suite Italienne (cont.)

Tarantella—Gavotta con due Variazioni—

Scherzino—Minuetto e Finale

band 2—Duo Concertant

Cantilène—Eglogue I & II—Gigue—

Dithyrambe

In 1931 Stravinsky was introduced to a young violinist, Samuel Dushkin, and was asked to write something for him. He declined at first on the grounds that he was unsure of his ability to exploit to the full the potential of the violin as a virtuoso instrument. However, the friendly advice of Hindemith and the encouragement of his publisher persuaded him to set aside his scruples, and the outcome was the Violin Concerto which received its first performance in Berlin in October 1931, with Dushkin as soloist and the composer conducting.

Work on the concerto brought with it a close and fruitful friendship between composer and performer, and during the 1932-33 and 1933-34 seasons they were engaged for recital tours throughout Europe. Stravinsky was anxious to have something of his own for them to play at these concerts, but as he explains in his early autobiography *Chronicles Of My Life*, the combination of piano and strings had so far given him little pleasure. He felt that the percussive sound of the one blended badly with the plucked and bowed sounds of the other, and after long consideration he felt that only by reducing the number of instruments involved to the minimum was he likely to solve the problem.

The recitals offered Stravinsky the immediate impulse to come to terms with the aesthetic problems involved in writing for violin and piano, though, typically, these pragmatic considerations had to be qualified, and to some extent justified, by a statement of artistic aims. At the time, Stravinsky tells us, he had been reading a book about Petrarch by one of his friends, Charles-Albert Cingria, and a passage in it relating to lyricism assumed particular significance for him. In his opinion lyrical expression, which was not the same thing as 'a facility for lyricism', was a matter of craftsmanship and composition, "something that had to be learned and practised.



Igor Stravinsky and Itzhak Perlman in Honolulu, November, 1966

Photo: Camera Hawaii

The *Duo Concertant*, which is Stravinsky's only original work for violin and piano, consequently became something of a testament to this theory of lyrical expression. It was also intended to reflect through its form and content the scholarly art of the pastoral poets of antiquity. How far it succeeds in these aims is a matter of opinion. It need hardly be said though that the result is highly individual. The loosely structured opening *Cantilène*, for example, scarcely invokes the song-like character the word suggests. On the other hand the first of the two *Eglogues*, with its suggestion of a bagpipe drone, and the second with its Thracian warmth slightly tintured with dryness, do conjure up a kind of pastoral image.

The *Gigue*, one of Stravinsky's longest and most loquacious instrumental movements, is a vigorous and technically brilliant dance that would fit perfectly into a Breughel landscape. In the finale, *Dithyrambe*, however, lyricism triumphs unequivocally, in which at times bar lines are dispensed with entirely. All of which probably goes to show that we should not concern ourselves too deeply with the theories with which composers sometimes saddle their music, and should content ourselves with enjoying a unique and unquestionably important item in the short list of Stravinsky's instrumental compositions.

The *Duo Concertant* received its first performance in Berlin on 28th October 1932 and became a central feature

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The **Suite Italienne** is now more commonly heard in the cello version made by Piatagorsky. Like the *Divertimento*, it is an arrangement of movements from a ballet, this time *Pulcinella*, originally produced in 1920. In 1925 Stravinsky prepared a violin and piano version of some of this music under the title *Suite for violin and piano, after themes, fragments and pieces by Giambattista Pergolesi*. The present Suite, with the same title as the cello version but a slight variation in the items included, was prepared in 1933. Unlike the *Divertimento*, the arrangement of the *Pulcinella* music differs considerably from the original, at times almost to the extent of recomposing the music. There are six movements in all. The first four and the last are the same as those of the 1925 suite and equate to numbers 1, 2, 12, 15, 17 and 18 of the original ballet where, incidentally, the *Serenata* is a tenor solo which originated as an aria in Pergolesi's opera *Il Flaminio*. The additional movement, *Scherzino*, is not to be confused with No. 3 of the ballet, but is in fact another tenor solo (No. 10(c)) which in the original is sung to words set to part of the Overture to Pergolesi's *Lo Frate'nnamorato*. Inevitably this transcription has neither the vigour nor the colour of the orchestral original, but it makes a useful, lively and not too difficult addition to the violinist's repertoire.

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*Recording Producer:* SUVI RAJ GRUBB  
*Recording Engineer:* NEVILLE BOYLING  
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# IGOR STRAWINSKY (1882–1971)

SEITE/SIDE/FACE 1:

- 1. Ebony Concerto (1945)** [8'51]  
Allegro moderato – Andante – Moderato –  
Con moto – Moderato – Vivo  
*Michel Arrignon, Klarinette*
- 2. Drei Stücke für Klarinette solo (1918)** [4'00]  
Three Pieces for Solo Clarinet  
Trois pièces pour clarinette seul  
*Alain Damiens, Klarinette*
- 3. Concertino für Streichquartett (1920)** [6'33]  
Concertino for String Quartet  
Concertino pour quatuor à cordes
- 4. Acht Instrumental-Miniaturen  
für 15 Spieler (1962)**  
Eight Instrumental Miniatures for 15 Players  
Huit miniatures instrumentales pour 15 exécutants
  - I. Andantino
  - II. Vivace
  - III. Lento
  - IV. Allegretto
  - V. Moderato
  - VI. Tempo di Marcia
  - VII. Larghetto
  - VIII. Tempo di Tango[7'45]

SEITE/SIDE/FACE 2:

- 5. Dumbarton Oaks (1937/38)**  
Concerto in Es für Kammerorchester  
Concerto in E flat for Chamber Orchestra  
Concerto en mi bémol pour orchestre de chambre
  - I. Tempo giusto
  - II. Allegretto
  - III. Con moto[15'12]
- 6. Elegie für Viola solo (1944)** [5'09]  
*Gérard Causse, Viola (alto)*
- 7. Epitaphium (1959)** [1'40]  
für das Grabmal des Prinzen Max Egon zu Fürstenberg
- 8. Doppelkanon für Streichquartett (1959)** [1'37]  
Raoul Dufy in memoriam

## Ensemble Intercontemporain

Lawrence Beauregard, Sophie Cherrier, Istvan Matuz (Flöte) · Laszlo Hadady, Didier Pateau (Oboe) · Michel Arrignon, Alain Damiens (Klarinette) · Jean-Marie Lamothe, John Wetherill (Fagott/bassoon/basson) · Jacques Deleplancque, Jens McManama (Horn/cor) · Antoine Cure, Jean-Jacques Gaudon (Trompete) · Jérôme Naulais, Benny Sluchin (Posaune/trombone) · Gérard Buquet (Tuba) · Michel Cerutti (Schlagzeug/percussion/batterie) · Alain Neveux (Piano) · Marie-Claire Jamet (Harfe) · Jacques Ghestem, Sylvie Gazeau, Maryvonne Le Dizes (Violine) · Sylvie Altenburger, Gérard Causse, Jean Sulem (Viola/alto) · Philippe Muller, Pierre Strauch (Violoncello) · Frédéric Stochl (Kontrabass/double bass)

Dirigent/Conductor/Chef d'orchestre:

## PIERRE BOULEZ

Ces enregistrements ont été effectués à l'IRCAM, Centre Georges Pompidou, à l'occasion du Festival d'Automne 1980 – Stravinsky; Direction Artistique: Pierre Boulez et Nicholas Snowman.

Produktion und Aufnahmeleitung/Production and Recording

Supervision/Directeur de production et de l'enregistrement:

Dr. Rudolf Werner

Tönmeister/Recording Engineer/Ingénieur du son:

Karl-August Naegler

Verlage/Publishers/Éditions: E.H. Morris & Co., London (No. 1) ·

J & W Chester, London (No 2) · Edition Wilhelm Hansen,

Copenhagen (Nos. 3 & 4) · B. Schott's Söhne, Mainz (Nos. 5 & 6)

Boosey & Hawkes Ltd., London (Nos. 7 & 8)

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Cover Illustration: Zeichnung von Pablo Picasso

Art Direction: Hartmut Pfeiffer, Hamburg

Printed in West Germany by Neef, Wittingen

Although we know that Stravinsky regularly composed at the piano, the scoring of his music never sounds at all secondary, and he delighted throughout his life in setting himself new problems of instrumentation. The works recorded here all demonstrate this, not least the earliest of them, the *Three Pieces* for solo clarinet (1918), where the severest problem is that of creating music which is pure melody, without harmonic support or contrapuntal interest. There is, however, no sign of compositional strain in these lively pieces, echoing the tangy style of *Histoire du soldat* and designed as a thank-offering to the man who had made the production of that work possible, the Swiss patron Werner Reinhart.

Interest is again centred on a solo line in the *Concertino* for string quartet, which Stravinsky described as being 'in the form of a free sonata allegro with a definitely concertante part for the first violin'. The piece was written in the summer of 1920 in Brittany and was the composer's first work after *Pulcinella*, so standing at the threshold of his neoclassical period while also recalling the biting violin part of *Histoire du soldat*.

A work wholly novel

# Igor Stravinsky

(1882–1971)

Seite/Side/Face 1:

## 1. Octet for Wind Instruments (1923/1952)

Octuor pour instruments à vent

Oktett für Blasinstrumente

I. Sinfonia: Lento – Allegro moderato

II. Tema con Variazioni: Andantino – attacca:

III. Finale: Tempo giusto [14'55]

## 2. Pastorale for Violin and Quartet of Wind Instruments (1934)

Pastorale pour violon et quatuor

d'instruments à vent

Pastorale für Violine und Bläserquartett

[Arr.: S. Dushkin]

Moderato [2'50]

## 3. Ragtime for Eleven Instruments (1918)

Ragtime pour onze instruments

Ragtime für elf Instrumente [4'30]

Seite/Side/Face 2:

## 4. Septet (1953)

I. ohne Bez. [3'07]

II. Passacaglia } [8'29]

III. Gigue }

## 5. Concertino for Twelve Instruments (1952)

Concertino pour douze instruments

Concertino für zwölf Instrumente [6'26]

## *Boston Symphony Chamber Players*

Joseph Silverstein	Violin (2, 3, 4, 5)
Max Hobart	Violin (3)
Burton Fine	Viola (3, 4)
Jules Eskin	Cello (4, 5)
Henry Portnoi	Bass (3)
Doriot Dwyer	Flute (1, 3, 5)
Ralph Gomberg	Oboe [Hautbois] (2, 5)
Laurence Thorstenberg	English Horn [Cor anglais] (2, 5)
Harold Wright	Clarinet (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
Charles Kavaloski	Horn (3, 4)
Sherman Walt	Bassoon [Fagott] (1, 2, 4, 5)
Matthew Ruggiero	Bassoon (1, 5)
Armando Ghitalla	Trumpet (1, 3, 5)
Andre Come	Trumpet (1)
Rolf Smedvig	Trumpet (5)
William Gibson	Trombone (1, 3, 5)
Gordon Hallberg	Bass Trombone (1, 5)
Everett Firth	Percussion [Schlagzeug] (3)
Myron Romanul	Cimbalom (assisting artist) (3)
Gilbert Kalish	Piano (assisting artist) (4)

*Produktion und Aufnahmeleiter/Production and Recording Supervision/Directeur de production et de l'enregistrement: Thomas Mowrey*

*Coordinating Producer: Franz-Christian Wulff*

*Toningenieur/Recording Engineer/Ingénieur du son:*

*Hans-Peter Schweigmann*

*Cover-Photo: Speidel, Hamburg*

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Printed in Germany by Neef, Wittingen



Stravinsky began his *Octet* for wind instruments (flute, clarinet, two bassoons, two trumpets and trombones, one tenor and one bass) at the end of 1922 when he was in Biarritz, finishing it in Paris the following spring. In his *Dialogues and a Diary*, he writes that it was prompted by a dream, in which he saw himself in a small room surrounded by a small group of instrumentalists playing some attractive music, which he did not recognise though he strained to hear it. There is some discrepancy with his account in *Chroniques de ma vie* where he said that he began to write the music down without knowing what the sound medium would be. The first movement in any event was written first and is in sonata form; the second began life as a waltz but Stravinsky quickly realised that it would be ideal for a set of variations, the first time he had employed this particular form. Stravinsky himself conducted the first performance at a Koussevitzky concert at the Paris Opera House (Cocteau, who was present, described Stravinsky's conducting as reminiscent of "an astronomer engaged in working out a magnificent instrumental calculation in figures of silver").

Stravinsky subsequently revised the score in 1952 but the changes he made were trivial in character. The *Pastorale* was originally composed in 1907 as a song without words for soprano and piano, and dedicated to Nadezhda Rimsky-Korsakov. After the war Stravinsky arranged it for soprano, oboe, cor anglais, clarinet and bassoon while he was staying in Biarritz in 1923. About ten years later he transcribed the piece and expanded it for violin and piano together with Samuel Dushkin, the dedicatee of the Violin Concerto, and also made the present transcription for violin and wind quartet.

*Ragtime* is scored for eleven instruments including the cimbalom. Stravinsky wrote it in Morges in 1918, completing the score at the time that the armistice was being concluded at the end of the 1914–18 war. He later made a piano arrangement of it but the first performance was conducted by the late Arthur Bliss at the Aeolian Hall London, in 1920. As Eric Walter White puts it, the idea motivating the work was to produce some kind of "composite portrait" of the new type of popular dance music that had just emerged in the States, bringing it into the concert hall as in the past composers had done for the minuet, waltz and other dance forms.

The *Septet* for clarinet, horn, bassoon, violin, viola, cello and piano was begun in July 1952 and completed early in 1953. It is dedicated to the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, and first performed in Dumbarton Oaks in January 1954 with Stravinsky himself conducting.

Appropriately enough the opening bars are similar in feeling to the *Dumbarton Oaks* Concerto (1938) and the clarinet part is a distant relative of the *Pastorale*. The work finds Stravinsky at his most ingenious contrapuntally. The first movement is a sonata allegro; the second, a passacaglia; the third, a gigue in which no fewer than four fugues can be found. The main theme of the passacaglia is shared out between clarinet, cello, viola and bassoon and the result is then treated as a series of sixteen notes. These are heard also in inversion and retrograde inversion. Eight notes from the passacaglia comprise the tone row of the gigue.

The same year, in 1952, Stravinsky arranged his *Concertino* for string quartet for twelve instruments – flute, oboe, cor anglais, clarinet, two bassoons, two trumpets, two trombones, violin, and cello – and in this form it received its first performance in Los Angeles the same year. Originally the *Concertino* was written for the Flonzaley Quartet and occupied the composer during the summer of 1920. It is a single-movement work, written in a free sonata allegro with a concertante part for the first violin. When transcribing it Stravinsky took the opportunity of re-barring it, and making other minor adjustments, but the concertante violin part remains as before.

Robert Layton