

SONGS OF MADNESS AND SORROW Daron Hagen



•concerto for brass quintet—songs of madness and sorrow—serenade for ten instruments• Wisconsin Brass Quintet•.

cleveland chamber Symphony-Paul sperry, tenor, Victoria Bond, conductor.

The Oakwood chamber Players.

-DARON HAGEN: SONGS OF MADNESS AND SORROW-

Total CD Time: 70:47

CONCERTO FOR BRASS QUINTET (1995)	21:05
Wisconsin Brass Quintet	7.139
1. Sennets	2:47
2. Melodia	5:38
3. Invention	6:36
4. Romance	6:00
5. Tuckets	3:21
SONGS OF MADNESS AND SDRROW (1997)	27:27
Cleveland Chamber Symphony	-,:-,
Paul Sperry, tenor; Victoria Bond, conductor	
6. Invocation (Pastor Dorn)	0:41
7. The Grocer (Pastor Dorn)	4:47
8. The Boys (Editor Daily)	1:05
9. Mike Grazialny (Editor Daily)	1:15
10. Female, G (Psychiatrist)	1:37
11. A.J. Dayton (Psychiatrist)	0:57
12. E.L. Brockway (E.L. Brockway)	2:16
13. Henry Lloyd (Editor Daily)	2:19
14. John Persons (Psychiatrist / John Persons)	3:02
14. Tommy Kane (Editor Daily / Tommy Kane)	2:43
15. Credo–A Golden Bird (Pastor Dorn)	2:31
16. Blessing (Pastor Dorn)	0:48
SERENADE FOR TEN INSTRUMENTS (1999)	22:21
The Oakwood Chamber Players	44.41
17. Waves	2:42
18. Variations: Donde esta mi querida?	3:43 8:12
19. Intermezzo	6:01
20. Mixed Doubles	4:25



SONGS OF MADNESS AND SORROW

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CONCERTO FOR BRASS QUINTET (1995)

My point of departure with the Concerto (completed in New York City in 1995) was that contrasting harmonic systems might be used to organize a large-scale form. Structurally, the quintet's five movements surround the central "Invention" in the manner of concentric parentheses.

The first movement ("Sennets") manipulates four major triads—B-flat, D-flat, E, and G—as four three-note pitch groups, rather than as traditional chords. In this movement, solos for each player alternate with far-off, muted, close canons (simple arpeggiations of the four triads) for the entire ensemble. During one of the canonic sections, the tuba quietly introduces the theme of the second movement.

"Melodia" (the second movement) takes that theme and submits it to five variations and a coda. In contrast to the first movement, the harmonic language here is traditional and triadic-the four triads from the first movement figure as tonal centers. The mood is nostalgic: I allude to the music I sang in church on holidays as a child in Wisconsin, as well as to the brass interlude from my 1992 opera Shining Brow, for which the Wisconsin Brass Quintet served as principal brass players in the orchestra during its world premiere. During the coda, the theme is played a final time by the trumpets, accompanied by a rhythmic cell in the horn and trombone; this cell becomes the first of the two interlocking rhythmic cells that comprise the A section of the central "Invention" movement.

"Invention" has an ABA arch form. A second rhythmic cell is superimposed over the cell introduced in the coda of "Melodia." Two pitch groups are wed-

ded to these cells. During the course of their cellular development, the pitches associated with the two interlocking rhythmic cells are consistently doubled at the interval of the second, seventh or ninth; the result is without traditional harmonic function. The contrasting B section that follows is melodically based and is harmonized traditionally. Each player enjoys a single verse of what is essentially a song without words. The A sections contrast a well-crafted. "emotion-free" post-minimalist palette with what might be perceived as a more traditionally "felt" neoromantic central B section. (The exact center of the piece as a whole.) The A section cells return and are developed further before a coda, which returns at the end of the quintet as a whole.

The trumpet players take flugelhorns and the trombonist takes the euphonium, resulting in a darker, richer sound for the "Romance." Like the "Invention," it has an ABA arch form. The outer A sections utilize quartal harmony. The B section utilizes triadic harmony; a single three-chordlong progression is cycled through the circle of fifths. As each dominant falls to the next tonic during this section, the melodic sequences arrayed above the harmonies grow more florid. This melodic figuration evolves into a jazzy descant for flugelhorn which rides over a recapitulation of the opening quartal chorale. A mellow coda combines fragments of the triadic progression and the quartal chorale.

The last movement returns to the mood and pitch set organization of the first. The four three-note pitch groups from the first movement return. Here, the virtuosic fanfares, which unfold the pitch groups horizontally, are juxtaposed with stuttering accompaniments that present the same pitch groups vertically. The first movement's canons return, as

well as fragments of the second movement's tune, before the fanfares again take center stage, climaxing in a recapitulation of the "Invention"'s coda.

Concerto for Brass Quintet was commissioned by the University of Wisconsin to celebrate the UW-Madison School of Music's 100th Anniversary. Compositionally folded into the piece are fond feelings of home—I am an alum. The quintet is joyfully dedicated to the members of the Wisconsin Brass Quintet, for whom it was written.

SONGS OF MADNESS AND SORROW (1997)

My ancestors immigrated to Upstate Wisconsin from Norway and Ireland during the 1800s. I was at first shocked, and then deeply moved by the fact that the people who figured in Charles Van Schaick's photographs (as featured in Michael Lesy's book Wisconsin Death Trip) looked uncan-

nily like the ones in our family's photo albums; the stories in the book were eerily similar to the family lore I had grown up hearing. One sad story, in particular, concerns my namesake and ancestor Dorn, a Lutheran pastor who, after a stint as an inmate at the Mendota Asylum for the Insane in Madison, hung himself.

Songs of Madness and Sorrow addresses the two main responses to the childlike feelings of helplessness, panic and rage created by the inhuman ravages of simple bad luck (Acts of the Market Economy) and epidemic diseases (Acts of God) in small Wisconsin towns at the end of the nineteenth century. These two responses are both paranoid in nature. One manifested itself in obsessive-compulsive behavior (which can make every person, from butcher to candlestick maker, more productive); the other was simple paranoia which arose from the realization that things hadn't turned out, in reality, the way that everyone, even the newspapers, had said it would. This is the interesting point, because this normally abnormal reaction was caused by the discovery of *truth*, not the creation of *delusion*. While composing the piece in New York City during July of 1996—the AIDS epidemic raging mindlessly on—it seemed to me that things hadn't fundamentally changed since 1896.

I find comfort and guidance in the strangely familiar, late nineteenth century dignity that runs through the "found" texts that I culled and adapted from period newspaper articles, advertisements, fiction, mental health records, and oral history. I adapted the texts into a libretto for a dramatic cantata—an opera without a plot—which takes place in the small towns of Upstate Wisconsin around 1890. In place of a traditional narrative, the piece moves through a series of emotional landscapes. There are a number of characters: Editor Daily, a

Psychiatrist, E.L. Brockway, John
Persons, Tommy Kane, and Pastor
Dorn, who opens the piece with an
"Invocation" and closes it with a
"Credo" and "Blessing" (a poem by
Gwen Hagen entitled "A Golden
Bird"). The tenor portrays all the
characters. Superficially, these people
(all of whom really existed) may seem
merely eccentric, but they were our
brothers and sisters, and I believe
that their humanity shines warmly,
inspiringly through.

Commissioned by Paul Sperry, the first performance took place on January 31st, 1997 in Tacoma, Washington. The Pacific Chamber Soloists, Paul Sperry, tenor, were conducted by Music Director Troy Peters.

SERENADE FOR TEN INSTRUMENTS (1999)

If abstract, so-called "pure" music can be said to take place anywhere, Serenade for Ten Instruments (composed at Yaddo during July of 1999), is surely set in Madison, Wisconsin, one hundred years after Songs of Madness and Sorrow. From the start, the Serenade was intended to be an emotional and musical counterweight to the earlier piece. Inasmuch as there is a program, I imagine it performed outdoors on a beautiful, cool, late-summer evening on the rolling lawn of a prairie-style home somewhere along the shores of Lake Mendota, the smell of grilling brats, newly cut grass, lake water, and *Leinenkugel* beer in the air-perhaps with the now-abandoned Mendota Asylum for the Insane indistinctly in sight across the water?-Sort of a Songs of Sanity and Happiness.

The first movement, "Waves," is a musical portrait of Lake Mendota in the late afternoon. It is light and airy in mood. This musical memory-portrait is shaped structurally like an arch. The pitches are organized into three groups. The middle section features a melody in the horn ornament-

ed with elaborate runs in the winds. The closing section combines the ornamental runs of the second section with a recapitulation of the opening canons.

"Variations: Donde esta mi querida? (Where is my beloved?)" is a set of eight variations on an original melody from the score of my opera Bandanna. In the opera, a character named Jake sings this melody during an aria in which he explores his feelings toward his wife. For this movement, I have revised and expanded the emotional states through which he moves. Accordingly, they are marked, in order: "Gently, Urgently, Agitated, Still on Edge, Driving, Brutal and Crass, Broad and Sad, Tenderly."

The movement that follows ("Intermezzo") is set just after sundown. It is an intimate conversation in three parts between old friends, each of whom mulls over the same pensive melody before passing it off fugally to the next. The middle section gives each player an opportunity to sing out over a new melody in the horn. The closing section takes place even later in the evening. Night has fallen. The first melody returns in solos for the flute and the violin. There's a brief coda during which the ten players, now five couples, bid one another goodnight and head for home.

The final movement, "Mixed Doubles," is a fun, quick rondo in which each instrument has a musical doppelgänger shadowing it—either rhythmically, melodically, or both. To me, the movement is a sort of musical pillow fight. The half steps that organized the first movement return, while the first idea of the rondo itself is based on the "Intermezzo" theme. All the ideas are tied together, the children have been put to bed, and the lights are finally turned off.

The Oakwood Chamber Players commissioned the Serenade and premiered it on October 3rd, 1999 at the First Unitarian Society in Madison, Wisconsin.

-DARON HAGEN

February 2004 New York City

LIBRETTO: SONGS OF MADNESS & SORROW

6. Invocation (Pastor Dorn)

More poetry is said to come from

Wisconsin than any other state in
the union.

7. (Pastor Dorn)

The grocer greeted her in a perfunctory manner and offered her a chair, which she took gratefully. She sat for a quarter of an hour without moving. At length she rose and went out on the walk, carrying the baby. She walked up and down the street, desolately homeless. She didn't know what to do with herself. She knew no one except the grocer. She grew bitter as she saw a couple of ladies pass, holding their demitrains in the latest city fashion. Another woman passed by, pushing a baby carriage in which a baby sat, bouncing and laughing and shouting. Its clean round face glowed from its pretty fringed hood. She looked at the dusty clothes and grimy face of her own little one and walked on savagely. The grocer was

familiar with these bedraggled and weary wives. He was accustomed to see them sit for hours in his big wooden chair, nursing tired and fretful children. Their forlorn, aimless, pathetic wandering up and down the street was a daily occurrence, and had never possessed any special meaning to him.

8. (Editor Daily)

The boys who went to Sparta yesterday to enlist with the volunteers there for the Cuban War sent back word that there's still room for 5 or 6 more men from here. In response to this information the following young men started for there at 8 o'clock last evening: John Smith; Ara Preston; Ned Olson; Orin Brist; George Franz.

9. (Editor Daily)

Mike Grazialny, an employee at the Menasha Wagonware Company, went violently insane while at work. He was taken with a fit of insanity and rushed out of the shop where he was employed. He began to yell most frantically. It was not long before every one of the thousand workers in the shop joined in with his yells. They just didn't know the man was crazy. The entire city was awakened by the din.

10. (Psychiatrist)

Admitted June 20th, 1901. Resident of Jackson County. Age 34. American. Married. Seven children. Poor. Melancholia—fear of some injury by the devil or some other person. Insomnia. Filthy. Emaciated. Extreme Weakness—tremor—very religious....

11. (Psychiatrist)

Constant worrying over the thought that he wouldn't solve the mysteries of perpetual motion has driven A.J. Dayton of Janesville insane. For the past fourteen years he has studied at night until way into morning. It is said he spent considerable money in efforts to solve the mystery of perpetual motion.

12. (E.L. Brockway)

ANNOUNCEMENT! MAGNETIC HEAL-ING! I take great, great pleasure in saying to the fine citizens of Black River Falls and adjacent towns and surrounding country that I have secured Doctor-I.B. Worley. Graduate of the School of Magnetic Healing, and have opened a school and a sanitarium of magnetic healing at my residence, Lower Falls, town of Brockway, where the afflicted may exchange their aches and pains for ease and comfort. We are living in an age of advancement and investigation where light is pouring in and he who shuts his eyes and scoffs and sneers is recreant to duty! He does society in general and mankind in particular an irreparable wrong. Consultation free. Strictly private and confidential. I am most respectfully yours for humanity, E.L. Brockway, Black River Falls.

13. (Editor Daily)

Henry Lloyd, a bachelor who resided five miles and a half from Janesville was found dead last Sunday in bed. He was 83 years old. Disappointment in love had made him a recluse. It is said Henry fell in love with a girl from New York, years ago, but never confessed it. He determined to go back east and ask for her hand in marriage. He made the trip only to find she had married another man the day before his arrival. He returned to Wisconsin broken-hearted, and from that time to his death, he avoided all female company.

14. (Psychiatrist)

John Persons, the sixteen-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. E.D. Persons, who killed himself on October 5th, left this in his pocket:

(John Persons)

"To relatives and friends:—Dear mother and father, brothers and sisters—I am going to rest. I am tired out. I leave my love to all and hope there is a better day to come. God is with us. Comfort yourselves. Lose no sleep. I hope I have left no enemies. I regret all sins that I have committed. Good-bye dear friends."

15. (Editor Daily)

Queer stories are afloat concerning a mysterious apparition near St. Cloud. A boy who is known for his veracity, Tommy Kane, tells the story of his dealings with the ghost:

(Tommy Kane)

"On Sunday evening I started out to repair the switch on the water tank. I'd gone some distance when I first noticed a man approaching me. At first I didn't think anything about him as he drew nearer. The strange man was dressed all in white. And then it seemed to me he wasn't walking. Instead, he glided along the rails. I asked him who he was and where he was bound and he vanished into the lively air."

16. Credo—A Golden Bird (Pastor Dorn)
I made an image—a golden bird stoned by laughing boys and hit—hit and mortally hurt. But in the long arc of falling it sang—the more and more softly—in beauty, because that was the only way it knew to communicate. My heart stopped in compassion. Now the image is mine, and no longer involves the bird person. It is set just behind my eyes. The person can die or go far away, or turn ugly and remote and none of it will matter. That moment is now mine. And that is how we shape our sanity.

17. Blessing (Pastor Dorn)

More poetry is said to come from
Wisconsin . . .

Public Domain Text Sources:

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- 7. Hamlin Garland, "A Day's Pleasure," *Main Traveled Roads*, pp. 176-178.
- 8. Town Paper, 16 June 1898.
- 9. Wisconsin State Journal, 22 February 1900.
- 10. Mendota State Mental Hospital, Madison, Wisconsin, "Female, G, patient #8848," *Record Book*, 1896.
- 11. Wisconsin State Journal, 19 April 1900.
- 12. E.L. Brockway, "Magnetic Healing!"

 Town Paper, 7 December 1897, front page.
- 13. Wisconsin State Journal, 20 August 1896.
- 14. Town Paper, Millston, 14 October 1897.
- 15. Wisconsin State Journal, 4 August 1898.
- 16. Gwen Hagen, Notes, unpublished.
- 17. Wisconsin State Journal, 10 April 1885

BIOGRAPHIES

DARON HAGEN's compositions have been commissioned and performed to international audience and critical acclaim by The New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Örchestra, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Brooklyn Philharmonic, American and National Symphony Orchestras, the American Composers Orchestra, the Buffalo and Puerto Rico Philharmonics, the New Mexico Symphony, the United States Marine Band, as well as the principal orchestras of Albany, Dallas, Denver, Florida, Houston, Knoxville, Lexington, Madison, Milwaukee, Nashville, Oakland, and St. Louis.

Gary Graffman, Sara Sant'Ambrosio,
Jeffrey Khaner, the Kings Singers, Paul
Kreider, Carolann Page, Ashley Putnam,
and Paul Sperry are among the many
musicians who tour with Hagen's music.
Major institutions, including the ASCAP
Foundation, Barlow Endowment, the
Curtis Institute, the Juilliard Dance
Division, Princeton University, the
Sundance Institute for Television and
Film, the University of Nevada, the

University of Wisconsin, and the CBDNA have all commissioned major works. Along with over 100 published compositions in every genre (including three symphonies, six concertos, and over 200 songs), he has composed five frequently revived operas.

Hagen has taught composition at Bard College, the Curtis Institute, and Princeton and appears as an accompanist of his own art songs and gives colloquia at festivals, conservatories, and colleges throughout the US and Europe. Prizes include the Kennedy Center Friedheim Prize, grants from Opera America, the American Academy of Arts and Letters and two from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Camargo Foundation, the ASCAP-Nissim Prize, the Columbia University Bearns Prize, and the Barlow Prize. Recordings are available on the Albany, Arabesque, Arsis, CRI, and Klavier labels, among others. Founding Director (1983-1993) of the Perpetuum Mobile Concert Series on which over forty composers' works were premiered, Hagen has served as composer-in-residence for the Long Beach Symphony, as a panelist for the NEA, and on numerous composition

award juries. Trained at the Curtis
Institute, the University of WisconsinMadison, and at Juilliard, Hagen is a
Yamaha Concert Artist and a Member of
the Corporation of Yaddo whose music is
currently published exclusively by Carl
Fischer; E.C. Schirmer published his
works exclusively prior to 1990. Born in
Milwaukee in 1961, he has lived in New
York City since 1984.
[www.daronhagen.com]

PAUL SPERRY is recognized as one of today's outstanding interpreters of American music. Equally at home with repertoire that extends from Monteverdi opera and the Bach Passions to Britten and hundreds of songs in more than a dozen languages, tenor Sperry sings American music with a conviction and an enthusiasm that brings it to life for countless listeners.

A passionate advocate for American music, Sperry works to insure that the wonderful works he has unearthed will be easily available to others. He has compiled and edited several volumes of American songs for G. Schirmer, Peer-Southern,

Boosey & Hawkes, Carl Fischer, and Dover Publications. His collection "American Encores" was released by Oxford University Press in October 2002. In 1989 Sperry became the first non-composer to be elected president of the American Music Center, a 58-year-old national organization that provides information about American composers and their music throughout the world. He held that position for three years and, from 1996-2003, served as chairman of the board of the American Composers Orchestra, the only orchestra in the world devoted to the performance of American music. The orchestra gives an annual series of concerts in Carnegie Hall in New York City.

Sperry's recordings of American music include four CDs of American song on Albany Records and numerous songs and chamber works available on DG, CRI, Crystal, Musical Heritage, Summit, and Nonesuch Records. He is one of four singers to have recorded the complete songs of Charles Ives (Albany). Other recent CDs include the songs of Poulenc, Les chemins de l'amour, and Great

Composers Love Folksongs Too, both with pianist Ian Hobson for Zephyr Records. Their recording of Schubert's Winterreise, also on Zephyr, is due to be released shortly.

Born in Chicago, Sperry graduated from Harvard College and continued his studies at the Sorbonne in Paris. He worked extensively with such masters of art-song interpretation as Jennie Tourel, Paul Ulanowsky, and Pierre Bernac. Today Sperry is widely appreciated for his own master classes at the Eastman School of Music, the Peabody Institute, Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, the Cleveland Institute of Music, the University of Southern California, the Manhattan School of Music, Harvard, and Yale. Since 1984 he has taught 19th- and 20th-century song repertory and performance at The Juilliard School, creating there what may be the country's only fullyear course in American song.

Sperry also teaches courses in American song at the Manhattan School of Music in New York and in how to prepare a song recital at Brooklyn College and Conservatory. He was on the faculty of the Aspen Music Festival from 1978 to 2002, and founded the Vocal Program at the Pacific Music Festival in Sapporo, Japan, serving as its director from 1991 to 1997. In 1987 he became the director of Joy In Singing, an organization dedicated to helping young singers. He lives in New York City with his wife, sculptor Ann Sperry; they have three children. [www.paulsperry.net]

VICTORIA BOND has led the Houston. Pittsburgh, and Buffalo Symphonies and was appointed Artistic Director of the Harrisburg Opera and the Wuhan Symphony in China. Her recordings as a composer and as a conductor appear on many labels. Bond is the first woman to be appointed Exxon/Arts Endowment conductor with the Pittsburgh Symphony, the first woman to be awarded a conducting grant from the National Institute for Music Theater, where she worked as Christopher Keene's assistant at the New York City Opera, and the first woman to graduate with a doctorate in conducting from the Juilliard School. lwww.victoriabond.coml

WISCONSIN BRASS QUINTET: John Aley, Rich Rulli, trumpets & flugelhorns; Douglas Hill, French horn; William Richardson. trombone & euphonium; John Stevens. tuba. Founded in 1972, the Wisconsin Brass Quintet is ensemble-in-residence at the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Music. The brass chamber music experience of the Wisconsin Brass Quintet is nationally recognized. Their musical expertise has been acknowledged by Verne Reynolds, Jan Bach, Daron Hagen, Karel Husa, John Harbison, and many other composers. Quintet members John Stevens and Douglas Hill have also composed extensively for the group. The WBO was a featured performing ensemble at the 1995 International Brassfest in Bloomington, Indiana. They have performed throughout the Midwest as well as nationally, including performances at New York's Carnegie Recital Hall and Merkin Hall.

The quintet's educational programs and master classes have been presented in such prestigious settings as the Juilliard School and the Yale School of Music. They regularly perform radio broadcast concerts for Wisconsin Public Radio. Their

most recent CD (Mark Records), Images, includes the works of Hagen, Hill, Stevens, and Harbison. Their initial CD (Summit Brass), Fabrics, features Verne Reynolds and two works of John Stevens. Barry Kilpatrick writes for the American Record Guide: "I've reviewed over 250 brass recordings in the past five years, and this is one of the very best. The WBQ is a remarkable ensemble that plays with more reckless abandon, warmth, stylistic variety, and interpretive interest than almost any quintet in memory."
[www.wisc.edu/music/html/bios/wibrass.html]

CLEYCLAND CHAMBER SYMPHONY, founded by Dr. Edwin London, has a unique mission and vision to commission, perform, record, and promote the dissemination of musical works exclusively by composers of our time. The musicians of the Cleveland Chamber Symphony, along with its artistic and administrative leadership, have developed an extraordinary set of skills required to meet the ever advancing evolution of musical language and challenges of institutional development in these competitive times. While the Cleveland

Chamber Symphony's current number of over 160 world premieres of new works primarily commissioned by the CCS ranks at the top of the list of all orchestras over a comparable period, the commitment goes further by giving repeat performances, often in multiple locations locally, regionally and nationally. The orchestra's work in the recording studio leads to the production and distribution of a significant body of compact disc recordings, further insuring a permanent and widely available legacy of the Chamber Symphony's extensive contemporary repertoire.

[www.clevelandchambersymphony.org]

OAKWOOD CHAMBER PLAYERS: Anne Aley, horn; John Aley, trumpet; Marilyn Chohane, flute/piccolo/alto flute; Carl Davick, bass; Warren Downs, cello; Nancy McKenzie, clarinet/bass clarinet; Jennifer Morgan, oboe; Leyla Sanyer, violin; James Smith, conductor; Keith Sweger, bassoon; Katrin Talbot, viola. The Oakwood Chamber Players have been together since 1984, and the core membership has been unchanged for almost the last ten of these years. Each member brings to the group

special qualities beyond music that enhance the spectrum of music-making. It's an intelligent bunch, with most of the players having advanced degrees and several holding "day jobs" in fields such as molecular biology research, journalism, medicine, photography, public school teaching, and arts management. All perform actively in the Madison area, and with the Madison Symphony Orchestra and Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra. All are proud parents of brilliant children. [www.oakwoodchamberplayers.com]

CREDITS

CONCERTO FOR BRASS QUINTET

Producers: Wisconsin Brass Quintet &

Marvin Nonn

Tonmeister: Nancy Becknell Recorded at Wisconsin Public Radio's Buck Studio, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisconsin in the Spring of 1997.

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SONGS OF MADNESS AND SORROW

Producer: Daron Hagen Recording Engineer: David Yost Editor: Robert Schuneman Recorded in Drinko Recital Hall, Cleveland State University, Cleveland, Ohio on February 9, 2000.

SERENADE FOR TEN INSTRUMENTS

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