

Rick Sowash: Serenade

Michele Gingras, clarinet

Serenade for Mary for flute, clarinet and string quartet: A Musical Get Well Card (1979) [21:05]

Betty Douglas, flute; Michele Gingras, clarinet; and The Camilli Quartet

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| [1] | 3:45 | I. Overture toward Mary - Allegro marcato |
| [2] | 3:18 | II. Lullabye for Mary - Lento |
| [3] | 3:10 | III. Scherzo on Mary - Presto |
| [4] | 3:26 | IV. Spiritus Maria - Adagio, Lento non troppo |
| [5] | 7:23 | V. Theme and Mary-atons - Moderato |

Trio con Brio for violin, clarinet and cello (1999) [17:53]

Kris Frankenfeld, violin; Michele Gingras, clarinet; and Ellen Shertzer, cello

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| [6] | 1:54 | I. Intrada: Allegro con brio |
| [7] | 2:21 | II. Lincolnesque: Andante |
| [8] | 2:57 | III. Song of Samwise: Allegro con brio |
| [9] | 6:21 | IV. Lullabye: Moderato |
| [10] | 4:17 | V. Finale: Vivo con brio |

Quintet for Clarinet and String Quartet (1995) [24:51]

Michele Gingras, clarinet; and The Camilli Quartet

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| [11] | 11:29 | I. Allegro moderato |
| [12] | 5:06 | II. Presto |
| [13] | 2:01 | III. Moderato |
| [14] | 6:13 | IV. Vivo |

Total Playing Time: 63:50

Recorded at Hyde Park Community United Methodist Church chapel, Cincinnati, OH, June, 2011 Recording Engineer: John Burgess, Sound Foundry Productions

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338 Milton Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202-0971
e-mail: rick@sowash.com - www.sowash.com

Rick Sowash, Composer



Since 1990, Rick Sowash (b. 1950) has lived by his wits. He has earned most of his living by weaving the history and folklore of his native Ohio into books which he himself writes, publishes and markets. Rick is also a filmmaker, having written, co-produced and starred in two documentaries: "Johnny Applesseed" and "Storytelling Know-how for Teachers, Preachers & Speech-ifiers." In earlier years, he supported his family in a variety of ways: as an elected public official, an arts administrator, a radio broadcaster, an innkeeper and a church choir director. But Rick's true calling is the composition of classical music. He publishes his own sheet music and produces CD recordings of his 400-plus compositions. A storyteller/speaker all along and an increasingly recognized composer, Rick has made thousands of appearances before audiences large and small. Rick's "Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra," was premiered in Cincinnati in April of 2008. It has been recorded on the Marquis Classics label by David Drosinos and the St. Petersburg Symphony under Vladimir Lande. Rick lives in Cincinnati with Jo, his wife of 40 years. They have two children: poet Shenandoah Sowash, 30, and trombonist Chapman Sowash, 27.

Other CDs featuring the Music of Rick Sowash:

A Portrait at 50, RSP-1: Five works for various chamber ensembles

Eroica, RSP-2: Four works for various chamber ensembles

Sanctuary at 3am, RSP-3: Five works for various chamber ensembles

Enchantment of April, RSP-4: Trios #1, 2 & 3 for clarinet, cello and piano

Pastorale, RSP-5: Six works for various chamber ensembles

Goddess of the Moon, RSP-6: Trios #4, 6 & 9 for clarinet, cello and piano

Winds of May, RSP-7: Trios #5, 7, 8 & 10 for clarinet, cello and piano

American Perennials, RSP-8: Five works for various chamber ensembles

Vistas, RSP-10: Three works for various chamber ensembles

A Christmas Gift, RSP-11: Five works for various chamber ensembles

Four Piano Trios, GSCD-254: featuring The Mirecourt Trio

Chamber Music with Clarinet, GSCD-285: The Mirecourt Trio & Craig Olzenak

Music for the Appalachian Trail, GSCD-236: includes Fantasia on "Shenandoah"

For more information on these CDs or Rick Sowash's sheet music, books, films and services, consult his web site: www.sowash.com.

Serenade

Three Works for Clarinet and Friends
Rick Sowash

Michele Gingras, clarinet

Serenade for Mary for flute, clarinet & string quartet: A Musical Get Well Card (1979)

This work was written in praise of Mary Hoffman, who was my supervisor when I was a broadcasting producer at WOSU-FM, a classical music radio station, in Columbus, Ohio. Mary's love of life, gracious manner, delightful sense of humor and enthusiasm for classical music impresses everyone who crosses her path. In 1979, Mary became ill and was absent from the station for six weeks. I wrote this piece for Mary during that time, as a "musical Get Well card." Musicians from the Ohio State University Music Department recorded the work which was then broadcast on WOSU-FM while Mary listened from her sickbed. Her subsequent recovery was speedy and complete — a result of the musical tribute?

Trio con Brio for violin, clarinet and cello (1999)

Four of this work's five movements were written for my clarinetist friend Angelo Santoro. It was my last composition of the twentieth century, completed on New Year's Eve, 1999.

Angelo plays with passion, so I wrote a piece for him that would be "con brio," meaning "with fire!" Thus, the title, "Trio con brio." It's in five movements, however, and I didn't think listeners would want "fire" in all five movements, so the second and fourth movements are "cooler" for contrast.

The first movement is entitled Intrada which simply means entrance or beginning. The music says, "Wake up and pay attention!" Next comes Lincolnesque. Since the premiere performance was slated for February 13, the day after Lincoln's birthday, I devised this folksy music, depicting the lanky, young rail-splitter with affection and wistfulness. Song of Samwise is a jig rendered as a round. The tune came to me as I was reading a funny little poem which the character Samwise Gamgee recites at one point in JRR Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings (one of my favorite books). The elegiac Lullabye was written especially for another clarinetist friend, Cynthia Field, in honor and memory of her mother, Ellen Lewis Field. The Finale movement closes the piece with one last burst of fire!

Quintet for Clarinet and String Quartet (1995)

This work was written for and is dedicated to my friend, the French clarinet virtuoso, Lucien Aubert, who premiered it in June, 1996 at St. Julien le Pauvre, an historic church in the heart of Paris.

That premiere was one of the high moments of my life. I even dared to give the audience a short explanation of the work — in French! I told them that the work is my attempt to express what I have felt, wandering amid the beautiful, grand and ancient forms of Europe. I'm from Ohio: how magnificent Paris seems to me!

Similarly, imagine how the classical "sonata-allegro form" seems! Exposition-Development-Recapulation! How does an American respond to such grand municipal and musical structures? What is it like for an American to be in the capitals of Europe? or for an American composer to tackle the musical structures Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven made their own so magnificently?

The first movement of this quintet is my response to the sonata-allegro form. In the other movements, I took on other classic European musical forms: the minuet-scherzo, the toccata, and the Hungarian Dance, à la Brahms.

The result is music that sounds American even while it lovingly pays homage to the great musical forms of Europe. They loved it in Paris!



Michele Gingras, clarinet

Biographical Sketches:

Michele Gingras, clarinet, Michele Gingras is Distinguished Professor of Clarinet at Miami University (OH), where she was named Crossan Hays Curry Distinguished Educator in 2002, and Distinguished Scholar of the Graduate Faculty in 2005. Prof. Gingras has authored two books and 200 articles and reviews for international publications, and performed on four continents. She has recorded over a dozen CDs, and also performs as a klezmer musician. She earned a Premier Prix at the Montreal Conservatory, a Masters of Music at Northwestern University, and did her doctoral work at Indiana University. Gingras is an Artist Clinician for Rico International and Buffet Crampon USA.

Betty Douglas, flute, earned a Master of Music in Flute Performance from the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and a Bachelor of Music in Flute Performance from the State University of New York at Potsdam. She is a member of the innovative chamber ensemble School House Symphony which performs educational programs at over 60 schools annually. A Nebraska native, Ms. Douglas has performed with orchestras in OH, KY, SC and France. She was the 1996 winner of the National Piccolo Artist Competition.

The Camilli Quartet:

Kristin Frankenfeld, violin, performs frequently in the Tri-State area as a member of the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra and the Cincinnati Ballet Orchestra. An avid chamber musician, she has been featured on the Taft and Linton Chamber series and plays regularly with the the Cincinnati String Quartet. A graduate of the Eastman School of Music, she holds both Bachelor and Masters degrees.

Elizabeth Steva, violin, completed her Doctorate of Music in Violin Performance at Florida State University. She is an Assistant Concertmaster with the Lexington Philharmonic Orchestra and performs frequently in recitals in the United States. Dr. Steva is also an Adjunct Professor in the Music Department at Northern Kentucky University and operates the Steva Studio where she teaches violin and viola.

Dorotea Vismara Hoffman, viola, is a member of the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra, and formerly a tenured member of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino Orchestra, in which capacity she has performed under the batons of Claudio Abbado, Riccardo Muti, Thomas Shippers, Zubin Mehta, Yuri Temirkanov and Mstislav Rostropovich, among others. Mrs. Hoffman has also been on the faculty in music schools, conservatories and universities in the US and in Europe for three decades. She still enjoys performing, as well as teaching violin, viola and chamber music.

Ellen Shertzer, cello, graduated from the University of Michigan with Bachelors and Masters Degrees in Cello Performance. She is the cellist in the chamber ensemble School House Symphony and performs in the Cincinnati area in local orchestras and chamber music groups. Ms. Shertzer teaches Suzuki cello and directs the Cello Choir in the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music Preparatory Department.