

Recorded at The Crane School of Music, August, 2002

Recorded and Mastered by John Jungklaus

Produced by Mathias Wexler

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Five New Works for Cello

Mathias Wexler, cello
David Heinick, piano

Paul Steinberg
Paul Siskind
Mathias Wexler
Gregory Wanamaker
David Heinick

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Perhaps a musician's greatest responsibility is finding and championing important new works, forging an ongoing relationship with the music of his time and expanding the repertoire for future generations. If he is very lucky, the work is a great pleasure both artistically and personally. In certain extraordinary circumstances, the music also speaks profoundly to him and allows him to shine as a performer. In this happy event, the artist hardly feels the weight of the task, although learning new repertoire is always effortful, such is the enjoyment of bringing those new works to the public. This is certainly true in my case. The composers on this recording are respected colleagues at the Crane School of Music. That they should all have in their catalogs or be willing to compose significant new works for solo cello at this particular time was an unusual and happy circumstance. The works here presented reflect an amazing variety of styles, from lyrical soulfulness to impertinent jazziness to rock texture a la Jimi Hendrix. For me, this recording was a labor of love, and I thank my colleagues and friends, Dave Heinick, Paul Siskind, Paul Steinberg, and Greg Wanamaker. Thanks also to the ever patient Engineer/Producer John Jungklaus, who was always willing to "try it one more time." Together, we have captured a magic moment and left the musical world better than we found it!

—*Mathias Wexler*

Paul Steinberg

Dr. Paul Steinberg received the BA in Music Education from New Mexico State University, MM in Composition from Southern Methodist University and DMA in composition from the University of Oklahoma. His teachers include Warner Hutchison, Thom Mason and Michael Hennagin. Dr. Steinberg is the director for the Center for New Music Resources at the Crane School of Music, State University College, Potsdam, New York. He is a composer who has received many awards including the Charles Ives Center for American

Music Fellowship, a University Awards Fellowship, SUNY; Project Director, Center for New Music Resources, NEA; and Meet the Composer Grants. He is very interested in writing for combinations of acoustical and electronic media, and has written and performed many works with the New and Unusual Music Artists, a group that he helped establish in 1982. Paul is a woodwind doubler and a jazz aficionado as can be heard in much of his musical language.

The Upper West Side

This piece is based on my recollections of visiting my aunt as child, who lived on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. The work was written for Mathias Wexler and when I found out he grew up in this area, I felt this might be a natural connection for the genesis of this work.

Movement 1: Kiosk Ants — If one were to go to Broadway and 72nd Street at 6 p.m. during the week, one would see a plethora of workers coming out of a very ornate subway kiosk located in the middle of Broadway. They seem to scurry off to their apartments like a sea of ants.

Movement 2: The San Remo — Located on Central Park West is a gorgeous apartment building with twin towers named the San Remo. This building was always a landmark for my sister and me while we were exploring the outward territories known as Central Park. I have tried to represent the twin towers by composing this movement as a palindrome.

Movement 3: The Hayden Planetarium — After getting many sore necks watching a myriad of constellations unfold on the ceiling of this institution, I decided that I would represent it with a pontillistic movement.

Movement 4: Hack Attack Blues — I am the grandson of a man who spent 40 years as a taxi driver in New York City. In the vernacular, taxi-hack, and I tried to represent all the crazy cabbies I used to see driving like they were all immortal down Central Park West on a Saturday afternoon.

Movement 5: Bethesda Fountain — At 72nd Street and the entrance to Central Park is located Bethesda Fountain. When I first saw the place I could have sworn I was transported to Madrid, and Madison Avenue must have

agreed (if you are old enough to remember Fernando Lamas and the Chrysler Cordoba ads of the mid 70's which showed this fountain and waxed on about the benefits of "Corinthian Leather"). At any rate, I have tried to represent this beautiful fountain in the last movement of the work.



Paul Siskind

Paul Siskind's music encompasses many genres, and has been performed across the country and abroad by renowned ensembles such as the Minnesota Orchestra, Omaha Symphony, Arditti String Quartet, Dale Warland Singers, Continuum, Burklyn Ballet Theatre, and mezzo-soprano

Stephanie Blythe. He has received awards and grants from ASCAP, Meet The Composer, the American Music Center, the National Federation of Music Clubs, the New York State Music Fund, and the McKnight, Jerome, Puffin, and Dodge foundations. His work is published by G. Schirmer Inc., Cantando Musikkforlag, and Sweet Child Music, and has been recorded on the Innova, New Ariel, and ERM Media labels, among others. He has worked as a composer-in-residence for the Education Department of Minnesota Opera, as Twin Cities Chapter Coordinator for the American Composers Forum, as Music Director of One Voice Mixed Chorus, and as an Auditor for the New York State Council on the Arts. Dr. Siskind joined the faculty of the Crane School of Music, SUNY-Potsdam, in 1998.

Three Epiphanies (1987)

The epiphanic nature of these pieces was motivated by both technical and circumstantial considerations. As an exercise to free my compositional approach, I set out with the constraint of completing each movement in one week's time, thereby letting the music develop on its own course rather than fashioning a tightly-knit work (which was then (in 1987) more typical of my compositional style). The music thus freely and continually transforms itself, its linear development at times interrupted by epiphanic bursts of inspiration. As an extended solo work of wide-ranging style, the piece presents interpretive as well as technical challenges to the performer.



Mathias Wexler

Mathias Wexler, cellist, chamber musician, educator, and composer has enjoyed an active and varied musical life. He has appeared nationally and internationally both as soloist and as a member of the Monticello Trio, enjoying appearances at Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, the Green Room in San

Francisco, the Bath Festival, U.K, and many others. He has long championed new music and enjoyed working with composers to premier new works. As a member of the Monticello Trio he commissioned and premiered new works by Martin Bresnick and Nicholas Maw, among others, receiving a Grammy nomination in 1995 for his premiere recording of the Maw Piano Trio as well as a Koussevitsky Award and awards from the National Endowment for the Arts. As an educator he has served on the faculty of the Crane School of Music since 1995, where he is now a Professor of Cello, Chamber Music and Music Education. He has published a set of Multi-metric Cello Etudes (Latham Press, 2002), has written feature articles for American String Teacher Magazine and the Chronicle of Higher Education and has served as a member of the Fulbright Awards String Selection Committee. He has recorded for CRI and ASV Records.

Night Breeze (2001)

Over the years I have constantly regretted the lack of contemporary cello etudes that represent a more jazz-oriented, American sensibility. *Night Breeze* is one of a number of Multi-metric Cello Etudes that I wrote in 2001 to afford my students exposure to a variety of meters in a jazzy style. Aside from being fun to play, it is challenging without being inaccessible and is, I hope, only the vanguard of a much larger collection of jazz, pop and improvisationally-based cello etudes waiting to be written.



Gregory Wanamaker

Gregory Wanamaker's music explores and extends unique timbral qualities of instruments and voices while maintaining lyric and dramatic characteristics commonly associated with works of earlier eras and contemporary popular music. The winner of numerous awards from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers; National Association of Composers, USA; and Britten-on-the-Bay, Wanamaker's music has been commissioned and performed throughout the United States, Canada, South America, Europe and Asia by performers including the PRISM Saxophone Quartet, Trujillo Symphony Orchestra, The Capitol Saxophone Quartet, The MAVerick Ensemble, The West Point Saxophone Quartet, The Gregg Smith Singers, Timothy McAllister, Robert Spring, Deborah Bish, Ensemble Radieuse, Noah Getz, and Lynn McGrath.

Recent premieres and other performances include such prestigious venues as the Niksic Guitar Festival in Montenegro; Festival de Inverno de Vale Veneto, Brazil; Festival Internacional Bach in Trujillo, Peru; World Saxophone Conferences in Ljubljana, Minneapolis, and Montreal; and the International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFests in Atlanta and Vancouver. In demand as a composer of solo and chamber music, Wanamaker has several recorded works on the Albany, Innova, Summit, Mark Custom and KCM labels. Wanamaker has also served as the Composer-In-Residence at the 12th and 13th International Bach Festival in Trujillo, Peru in 2005 and 2006, and at the 2005 American University Saxophone Symposium. Wanamaker currently teaches Composition and Theory at the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam.

Metallicellissimo (2001)

Metallicellissimo is a flashy work evoking energies and sound images of heavy-metal guitar solos. Commissioned by Matt Wexler, the work exploits left-hand pizzicato and quick passages using perfect fifth double stops.



David Heinick

David Heinick joined the faculty of the Crane School of Music at SUNY-Potsdam in 1989, having previously taught at St. Mary's College of Maryland and the University of Maryland-Eastern Shore. He holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music and the Catholic University of America. He is the composer of more than 70 works, several of which are published by Subito Music, Dorn Publications, Nichols Music, and Kendor Music; his music has been performed throughout the United States, and broadcast on National Public Radio, the CBC, and the BBC. For years, he performed music for piano, four hands with Carol Heinick; he has also performed as collaborative pianist with the Kronos Quartet, the Da Capo Chamber Players, and numerous noted soloists.

Sonata for Cello and Piano (2001)

The *Sonata* was composed in the first half of 2001 for Mathias Wexler. Initially, I planned on writing a single, stand-alone scherzo; the movement was written in a nondiatonic, but otherwise traditional, language. When it was finished, I realized that it was not quite substantial enough to fill a slot in a recital program on its own. The *Passacaglia* was written next. This slow movement became the first thoroughly serial work I'd written in about fifteen years. The first movement was the last written, and also the one completed most quickly. It is cast in a freely tonal, somewhat postminimalist language. Overall, the *Sonata* continues my interest in attempting to juxtapose stylistically contrasting movements while preserving a sense of wholeness across the work.

Publishers

Mathias Wexler's *Night Breeze* is available from Latham Press; Gregory Wanamaker's *Metallicellissimo*, Paul Steinberg's *The Upper West Side*, David Heinick's *Sonata for Cello and Piano* and Paul Siskind's *Three Epiphanies* are available directly from the composers.