



**Franz WAXMAN**

Sinfonietta for String  
Orchestra and Timpani

**Lukas FOSS**

Piano Concerto No. 2

**Lukas Foss, Piano**

Los Angeles Festival Orchestra

**Franz Waxman**

1953 and 1956 Studio Recordings

## FRANZ WAXMAN CONDUCTS • 1

**Franz WAXMAN (1906-1967):**

**Sinfonietta for String Orchestra and Timpani (1955)**

- |                     |              |
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| ② Klage lied: Lento | 4:38         |
| ③ Scherzo: Finale   | 3:30         |

Recorded in Los Angeles, California, late June 1956

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**Piano Concerto No. 2 (1953)**

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### Lukas Foss, Piano Los Angeles Festival Orchestra • Franz Waxman

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Tracks 1-3 recorded in Los Angeles, California, late June 1956

Tracks 4-6 recorded in Los Angeles, California, June 1953

Reissue Producer: Michael Fine; Audio Restoration Engineer: Wolf-Dieter Karwatky

Publishers: Fidelio Music Publishing Company (ASCAP) (Tracks 1-3);

Carl Fischer (revised 1953 edition) (Tracks 4-6)

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## Franz Waxman: Sinfonietta for String Orchestra and Timpani Lukas Foss: Piano Concerto No. 2

**Franz Waxman (1906-1967)**

**Sinfonietta for String Orchestra and Timpani**

Franz Waxman led a variety of musical lives as composer, conductor and impresario. He was born in Konigshutte, Upper Silesia, Germany, now Chorzow, Poland, on 24th December, 1906, started piano lessons at the age of six and went on to advanced musical studies in Dresden and the Berlin Conservatory. He began his professional film career in Berlin by orchestrating the musical score for *The Blue Angel*. In 1934 he moved to the United States and for the next 32 years composed and conducted 144 motion pictures scores in Hollywood. He was nominated for the Academy Award ten times and won twice-in-a-row with *Sunset Boulevard* in 1950 and *A Place In The Sun* in 1951. Waxman's other most memorable scores are *The Bride Frankenstein*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Rebecca*, *Objective, Burma!*, *Prince Valiant*, *Crime In The Streets*, *Sayonara*, *Peyton Place*, *The Nun's Story* and *Taras Bulba*.

For the film *Humoresque*, Waxman wrote a special piece based on themes from Bizet's opera *Carmen*, which was played by Isaac Stern on the soundtrack. "*Carmen*" *Fantasia* has become standard repertoire and was recorded by Heifetz, Stern, Kogan and Vengerov. Among Waxman's other concert works are *Overture for trumpet and orchestra*, *Rhapsody for piano and orchestra*, *Goyana: Four Sketches for piano solo percussion and string orchestra*, *The Charm Bracelet* for chamber orchestra, *The Black-Foxe March*, a dramatic song cycle, *The Song of Terezin*, an oratorio, *Joshua* and the symphonic suites, *The Spirit of St. Louis*, *Hemingway* and *Ruth*.

In 1947 Waxman founded the Los Angeles International Music Festival and for the next twenty years presented seventy World, American and West Coast premières by such composers as Bernstein, Foss, Harris, Honegger, Mahler, Mennin, Orff, Piston, Poulenc, Prokofiev, Schoenberg, Shostakovich, Stravinsky, Vaughan Williams and Walton.

Franz Waxman frequently guest-conducted orchestras in the United States, Europe, and Israel, and was chosen to be the first American, as part of the cultural exchange programme, to conduct the major orchestras of the Soviet Union. During his Moscow concert, on 15th March, 1962, the orchestra requested permission to incorporate *Sinfonietta for String Orchestra and Timpani* into its permanent repertoire, as a result of the composition's enthusiastic reception by the Russian audience which demanded a repeat of the work during the concert. Waxman presented the score, onstage, as a gift to the orchestra.

The composer has written:

*The Sinfonietta was written on board the SS Cristoforo Colombo, en route from New York to Europe. I was going to Europe for a conducting tour which included an appearance with the Radio Symphony Orchestra in Zurich, Switzerland. The work was commissioned by Rolf Liebermann, then Director of Zurich Radio, to whom the work is dedicated. I finished the work by the time the boat docked in Naples. The parts of the score were copied within 24 hours after my arrival in Zurich. The performance took place on 30th October, 1955. The United States première occurred on 11th June, 1956 at the Los Angeles Music Festival under my direction.*

The La Plata Festival in Argentina staged the *Sinfonietta* as a ballet and Kirk Peterson recently choreographed it under the title *Blue Rain* for the American Ballet Theatre in New York.

The three movements are in sharp contrast to each other. After a short introduction of three bars the *Allegro* of the first movement starts with the rhythmical pattern in the lower strings above which the first and second violins announce the first theme, interrupted by heavy timpani accentuations. The second theme is introduced in the middle of the movement. After short developments of both themes, the Coda again states the principal theme, ending with an extended version of the introduction.

The second movement is a Dirge-like song supported throughout by an even timpani beat. It opens with a cello solo and builds to various formations of the song-melody in a rather rhapsodic style ending again with the solo cello phrase of the beginning. No violin or basses are used in this movement. The *Scherzo* introduces entirely new material using the five notes of the extended introduction as a *cantus firmus* over the *fugato* middle section of the movement. It closes with another rhythmical variation of the introductory theme.

Waxman received many awards during his career including an honorary membership of the Mahler Society, the International Society of Arts and Letters and a doctorate from Columbia College. Franz Waxman died on 24th February, 1967 in Los Angeles, California.

John W. Waxman

**Lukas Foss (1922-2009)**  
**Piano Concerto No. 2**

A true Renaissance man, Lukas Foss (born 12th August, 1922, Berlin, Germany) was that rare breed of musician, equally renowned as a composer, conductor, pianist, educator and spokesman for his art. The many prestigious honours and awards he received testify to his importance as one of the most brilliant and respected figures in American music. As a composer he eagerly embraced the musical languages of his time, producing a body of over one hundred works that Aaron Copland described as including "among the most original and stimulating compositions in American Music". As Music Director of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Brooklyn Philharmonic and Milwaukee Symphony, Foss was an effective champion of living composers of every stripe and brought new life to the standard repertoire. His legendary performances as a piano soloist, in repertoire ranging from J. S. Bach's *Concerto in D minor* to Leonard Bernstein's *Age of Anxiety*, have earned him a place among the elite keyboard artists of our time.

As a conductor Lukas Foss was hailed for the adventurous mix of traditional and contemporary music that he programmed, and he appeared with the world's greatest orchestras, including the Boston, Chicago, London and Leningrad Symphonies, the Philadelphia and Cleveland Orchestras, Santa Cecilia Orchestra of Rome, and the New York, Berlin, Los Angeles and Tokyo Philharmonics.

In 1937, as a fifteen-year old prodigy, Lukas Foss moved to America to study at Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music. By that time he had already been composing for eight years, starting under the guidance of his first piano teacher, Julius Herford, in Berlin. He also studied in Paris with Lazare Lévy, Noël Gallon, Felix Wolfes and Louis Moysse, after his family had fled Nazi Germany in 1933. At Curtis his teachers included Fritz Reiner (conducting) and Isabelle Vengerova (piano). By the age of eighteen he had graduated with honours from Curtis, and was headed for advanced study in conducting with Serge Koussevitsky at the Berkshire Music Center, Tanglewood and in composition with Paul Hindemith at Tanglewood and Yale University. From 1944 to 1950 Foss was the pianist in the Boston Symphony Orchestra and in 1945 he was the youngest composer ever to receive a Guggenheim fellowship.

When Foss succeeded Arnold Schoenberg as Professor of Composition at the University of California at Los Angeles in 1953, the University probably thought it was replacing a man who made traditions with one who conserved them, but that was not how things turned out. In 1957, seeking the spontaneous expression that lies at the root of all music, he founded the Improvisational Chamber Ensemble, a foursome that improvised music in concert, working not from a score, but from Foss's ideas and visions. The effects of these

experiments soon showed in his composed works, where Foss began probing and questioning the ideas of tonality, notation and fixed form. Even time itself came up for scrutiny in his pioneering work, *Time Cycle*, which received the New York Music Critic's Circle Award in 1961, and was recorded on the CBS label. At its world première (for which the Improvisational Chamber Ensemble provided improvised interludes, between the movements), Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic performed the entire work twice in the same evening, in an unprecedented gesture of respect.

Lukas Foss's compositions prove that a love for the music of the past can be reconciled with all sorts of innovations. Whether the musical language is serial, aleatoric, neoclassical or minimalist, the "real" Lukas Foss is always present. The essential feature of his music is the tension, so typical of the twentieth century, between tradition and new modes of musical expression. Many of his works – *Time Cycle* (1960) for soprano and orchestra, *Baroque Variations* (1960) for orchestra, *13 Ways of Looking at a Blackbird* (1978) for soprano and small ensemble, *Tashi* (1986), for piano, clarinet and string quartet and *Renaissance Concerto* (1985), for flute and orchestra – are landmarks of twentieth-century repertoire.

His ideas – and his compelling way of expressing them – won considerable respect for Foss as an educator as well. He taught at Tanglewood, and was composer-in-residence at Harvard, the Manhattan School of Music, Carnegie Mellon University, Yale University and Boston University. In 1983 he was elected to membership of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and in May, 2000, received the Academy's Gold Medal in honour of his distinguished career in music. The holder of eight honorary doctorates (including a 1991 Doctor of Music degree from Yale), he was in constant demand as a lecturer, and delivered the prestigious Mellon Lectures (1986) at Washington's National Gallery of Art.

Still an active musician into his eighties, Foss continued to teach, conduct and compose. Later works include two new string quartets (*No. 4* – 1999; *No. 5* – 2000), a *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand and Orchestra* (1993), *Toccata: Solo Transformed* (2000) for Piano and Orchestra, *Symphonic Fantasy for Orchestra* (2002), *Concertino: Baroque Meditations* (2003) for Orchestra, *For Aaron* for Chamber Ensemble or Chamber Orchestra (2002) and a *Concerto for Band* (2002), written for a consortium of independent secondary schools and private colleges.

A long time resident of New York City, Lukas Foss died there at home on 1st February, 2009. He is survived by his wife Cornelia, a noted painter, two children, a grown son and daughter, and three grandchildren.

**Official biography from Carl Fischer website  
(reproduced with permission).**

Lukas Foss wrote his *Second Piano Concerto* in Rome at the American Academy in 1950-1951. It was given its first performance at the contemporary Music Festival in Venice with the composer at the piano. In the fall of 1951, it was introduced in the United States by Charles Munch with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Although it had won the Horblit Award for that year, the composer withdrew it for revision, a complete rewriting of the first movement and extensive alterations in the second and third. Franz Waxman introduced this new version at the Los Angeles Music Festival on 16th June, 1953. It has since been performed by major orchestras in Cincinnati, Tanglewood, St. Louis, Miami, Chicago, San Diego, Vienna, London and Baden-Baden.

The concerto is in three movements and follows the great nineteenth-century concerto in the sense that the pianist emerges at the protagonist of a drama, pitting his forces against those of the orchestra.

The first movement is an extended sonata form. The orchestral exposition contains all three themes. A trumpet intones the main theme and immediately establishes the symphonic character of the first movement. Later, the piano enters with a short cadenza leading into the main theme and turning it into a "heroic" utterance. What was merely stated in the orchestral exposition is now being elaborated upon by the piano. The development section which follows includes a *fugato*. When the recapitulation sets in, the main theme returns with a new expressiveness. A great deal has happened to this theme and it now emerges changed, less optimistic, less aggressive and brilliant, more meaningful, older. The drama is unfolding. The entire recapitulation is different, less tightly woven, than the exposition. A cadenza and a short coda bring the movement to a close.

The second movement is lyrical and singing. At first the orchestra gives the pianist a rest. He enters – freely, in the improvisatory fashion with a slow broken chord. The movement departs from the usual procedure when the recapitulation offers the beginning material in a new and varied form, faster, lighter, thus incorporating a scherzo into the slow movement. (This scherzo is

at the same time a recapitulation.) Toward the end the slow tempo is regained. Timpani and pizzicati echo the beginning as the pianist finishes with the same slow broken chord with which he made his entrance.

The introduction to the last movement is a kind of recitative. There is a dialogue between pianoforte and orchestra. Then the piano bursts forth with a toccata-like theme which constitutes the main idea of the movement. The form is that of a rondo. The piano's figuration is melodic but at high speed. A strong rhythmic drive prevails throughout. Here the pianist can unfold a controlled but considerable virtuosity. The piano's furor increases toward the end. As it lands in a dissonant cadenza the orchestra pauses, as if unable to keep up with the piano's madness. Finally both forces join in a high concentrated climax.

Arthur Rubinstein championed this piano concerto as "one of the finest pieces written in our time". In a letter to the Carl Fischer music publishing house, he went on to say of this work, that "it possesses a most solid musical structure, and at the same time, which is rare in modern concert, it is pianistically brilliant and gives the pianist full opportunity to display his gifts."

**From the original liner notes**

**Los Angeles Festival Orchestra (1947-1966)**

The Los Angeles Music Festival was first organized for the purpose of presenting each year a Festival of Music, the programmes of which introduced many important works of music hitherto unknown not only in Southern California but sometimes even to America and the world. They included 70 world premières. From their inception, the Orchestra and Festival were under the leadership of Franz Waxman. The musicians in the Festival Orchestra were hand picked by Franz Waxman from colleagues he had worked with since 1935. On other recordings from the 1950s and 1960s the orchestra was known as the Columbia Symphony Orchestra in performances conducted by Bruno Walter and Igor Stravinsky. For further information go to <http://www.franzwaxman.com/lamf/index.html>

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**ADD** **MONO**

# Franz Waxman Conducts · 1



Playing  
Time  
47:06

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**Lukas Foss, Piano**

**Los Angeles Festival Orchestra**

**Franz Waxman**

Tracks 1-3 recorded in Los Angeles, California, late June 1956

Tracks 4-6 recorded in Los Angeles, California, June 1953

Revered as one of Hollywood's leading film composers, Franz Waxman was also a conductor and impresario. He founded the Los Angeles Festival Orchestra, and he gave many première performances on the West Coast. His own *Sinfonietta for String Orchestra and Timpani* was written on board a ship whilst en route from New York to Europe in 1955. Full of exciting contrast, it has recently been revived as a ballet score. Waxman premièred the revised version of Lukas Foss's *Piano Concerto No. 2* in 1953. The multi-talented Foss, who plays the piano part, crafted a work accommodating the past and the present. Arthur Rubinstein championed it, calling it 'one of the finest pieces written in our time'.

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