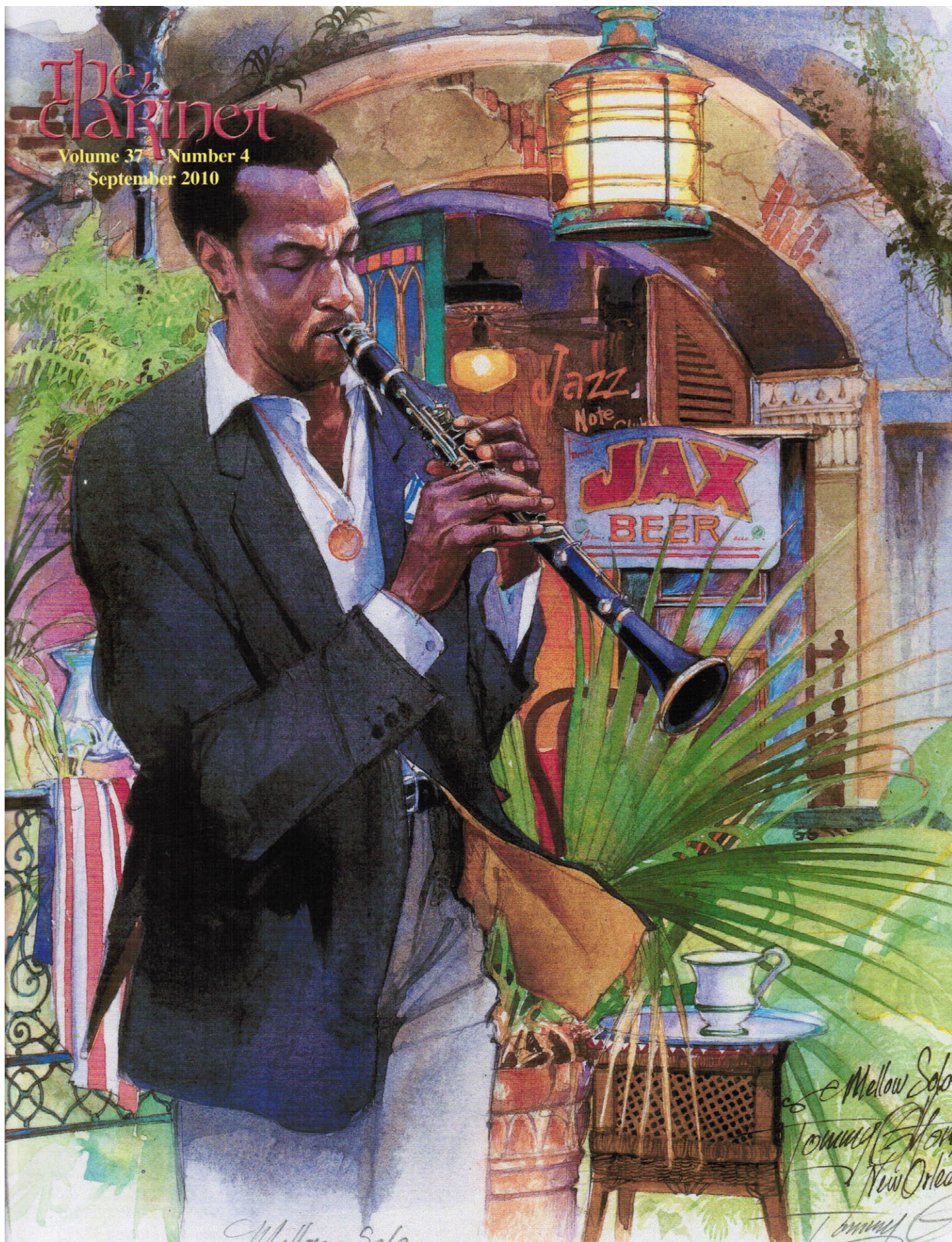


The Clarinet

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Mellow Solo

*Mellow Solo
Tommy Flanagan
New Orleans*

PENDERECKI by Penderecki!

by Peter Stoll

This past January 2010 we in the Toronto, Canada area had the great opportunity to enjoy a working visit by renowned Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki, thanks to a new addition to our Composition Department at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music, Professor Norbert Palej, originally from Poland himself and a protégé of Maestro Penderecki's (his last name by the way is pronounced by true Polish speakers as "Pen-der-et-ski"). One of the most celebrated of living Classical composers, Penderecki's music may be most famous to the general public for its frequent use in film soundtracks, including *The Exorcist* and *The Shining*!

I was asked as a member of the university's faculty to perform several of the master's solo and chamber compositions for clarinet: the well-known *Three Miniatures* for clarinet and piano from 1959, the brief unaccompanied *Prelude* of 1987, and the more recent *Quartet* for clarinet, violin, viola and cello from 1993 (please note that while published in 1959, there are different dates for the *Miniatures*' composition found in different sources; this is the date from Maestro Penderecki's own Web site: <http://www.krzysztof.penderecki.eu/en/>).

In each case there was a working rehearsal before the performance in the composer's presence, and I can relate that while he presents a formal and serious demeanour, there is also a great, dry sense of humor! He had a lot to say about how to play each of his own works, and also a few general musical thoughts. My favorite was about extremely soft playing; he said to a string player "don't be tentative, play out expressively even in 'ppp.'" This should sound like music, not 'new music'!" Large musical gestures and

Ex. 1

miniature per clarinet e pianoforte

CLARINETTO in Sib

Allegro scherzando P 45 Ms 1

Andante cantabile 2

rit. a tempo rit.

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Ex. 2

Allegro ma non troppo

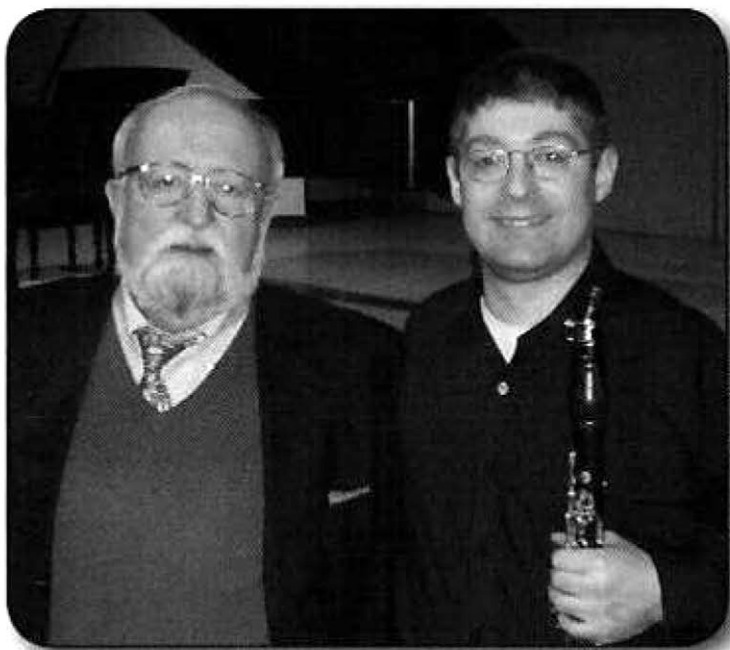
con vigore

energico

poco a poco cresc.

staccato poco a poco cresc.

con passione



Krzysztof Penderecki and Peter Stoll

clear contrasts were the order of the day throughout our working sessions with him.

Ex. 3 Allegro ma non troppo 3

mf con vigore poco a poco cresc. f con passione mp cresc. sub p stringendo p Più vivo f poco a poco cresc. ff

Ex. 4

più mosso cresc. ff poco a poco al tempo I

Ake Holmquist gewidmet P4603 1993 C. 1 MUS 1 **Ex. 5**

Clarinetto in Sib (La) **Quartett**
für Klarinette und Streichtrio

I
Notturmo

Adagio in La

pp p f muta in Sib

II
Scherzo

Vivacissimo

28 36

Die vollständige Fassung des Quartetts ist in der nächsten Ausgabe zu finden.

Ex. 6

p f cresc.

Ex. 7

57 *vi.*
in Sib
63 *f*
68
72
76
80
84
90
95

Ex. 9

29
35 (accel.) a tempo
45 rall. a tempo
53 poco rall. mola in La
IV Abschied
Larghetto in La
6
12 poco sostenuto
18 a tempo pp

Ex. 8

150 *Vla. marc.*
157
164
171
177
184
191 agitato
197
204

While preparing these works, I had noticed a few questionable notes and rhythms that I thought might be misprints (one can even hear different choices made in various recordings). When Maestro Penderecki was here, I went with score to show him one place I wasn't sure about and he waved me off, saying that he would have to actually hear the spots in question to be sure, and so a fascinating opportunity opened up, to play these different options for him and get a definitive answer to each of these questions. In this article I will attempt to set down these decisions, and also a few of his general comments about his preferred style of playing these works.

He seemed very proud of the *Three Miniatures*, that a piece he had written while still a student had become such a staple of the repertoire. But he did say with a smile that when something has been performed and heard for so long, sometimes even the misprints start to sound familiar! He had only one comment for the first movement: "fast!" We went about 144 to the quarter and he at least seemed pleased!

The slow movement brought another one-word indication of his preference for clear expressive contrasts: "slow!" We went much broader than planned, about 72 to the eighth note. The first marking I had wondered about was bar 9-10 in this piece, there's a re-articulated D across the barline with two slurs to the first note that I thought might have been a misplaced tie. But he confirmed that he does want this re-tongued (see *Example 1*).

Maestro Penderecki asked for a "quasi attacca" into the last movement, and seemed happy with our tempo of around 144 to the eighth note. While correct in the clarinet part, please note a rhythmic misprint in the cue-line of the piano score, four bars after "con passione" (concert G to B \flat should be 16ths; *Example 2*). This is a difficult area for pianists, to play all of the notes in the repeated

Ex. 10

mus. in La poco rall.

IV
Abschied

Larghetto
in 1/2

Ex. 12

poco animato a tempo sostenuto

ppp

morendo

Ex. 11

accel.

a tempo poco rall.

Cadenza

Tempo I

più animato poco rubato

rall. a tempo

rall. sostenuto

poco animato a tempo

sostenuto

morendo

triplets whilst bringing out the left-hand duet with the clarinet. While simplifying the triplets by leaving out a voice or two may be a tempting option, we did not, and I heard the composer insist a string player in another work play all the notes of a complex multi-stopped chord, so he really wants to hear them all!

I have heard recorded performances add a noticeable *ral-lentando* and then *a tempo* between measures 10 and 11 of this third movement, but he was okay with only a very slight hint of this. There is a misprint in bar 35 (three bars before *Piu vivo*): the third note of the bar should be C[#], creating a semi-tone interval into the next note (B[#]). This has therefore usually been performed and recorded incorrectly for the past 50 years! (Example 3)

One can hear the extra slashes through the note stems in the second-last measure interpreted as fluttertongue on some recordings, but the composer prefers double-tonguing where possible. After all this quest for textual authenticity, I went out on a limb and added a quick fingered-glissando into the last bar (C[#]—F[#]) for added drama, and he liked that. But that is definitely *not* in the score!

Although brief at only two pages, the unaccompanied *Prelude* of 1987 is a gripping piece in performance. There is only one area of question, a curious continuation of a note underneath the next one played one line before the end (low C continues in brackets; Example 4). I chose to sing the lower C while playing the upper D^b, and again he didn't object! He also seemed to like the considerable vibrato I put on the high C, the climactic moment of the piece. I could not help wondering if the challenging chromatic triplet run upwards into this note was a tip of the hat to the clarinet's infamous *Peter and the Wolf* "cat up the tree" cadenza, but didn't have

the nerve to ask him! (The glissando up to high C also made me think of the Artie Shaw *Concerto's* ending.)

The *Quartet for Clarinet and String Trio* of 1993 is a major 20-minute work, comprising four movements and beginning and ending with hauntingly beautiful slow sections. (There is a terrific live performance by Martin Fröst on Youtube, with background pictures of frozen Nordic countryside.) These slow sections were where Maestro Penderecki was adamant that we not play too softly, in order to hear phrasing and the interplay between instruments, such as the opening clarinet and viola duet in the first movement "Notturmo" (Nocturne). So I began the piece (which is only solo clarinet for the first 10 bars) very quietly, and then brought up the dynamics a bit when the viola started. Measure 9 is correct as printed, the D^b does repeat over the barline; at least one recording I listened to changed this to a C^b but that is not what the composer wants (*Example 5*).

He again suggested a *quasi attacca* into the second movement Scherzo. Mr. Penderecki asked for this to be fast and aggressive, with a strong crescendo from the strings right into the clarinet's first entry on high E^b that is not marked (*Example 6*). It is imperative to maintain tempo and not slow down, as he said "too slow and the string doubled-notes won't work." Maestro Penderecki wanted a *ff* that was very intense. At bar 79 and following I was able to double-tongue the slashed notes to match the strings. That's the effect he intended (*Example 7*).

The misprint bug struck again at measure 207; the grace notes should be the same as the previous two bars, starting on G[#] (*Example 8*).

He stated that the third-movement "Waltz" must sing out and be *molto rubato*! The accelerando should really move forwards, and the clarinet's low E near the

end should be strong, not *piano* as implied from the last available dynamic marking (*Example 9*). The cello should likewise be strong at the conclusion.

The final *Abschied* (Farewell) section should start *forte*, with the strings really playing out (*Example 10*). The rallentando at bar 40 is back to the opening *Larghetto* tempo, and then the clarinet solo at bar 43 *piu animato/poco rubato* should in fact be taken *molto rubato*, with a very fast accelerando to "move and sing..." Maestro Penderecki was very demonstrative in the rehearsal, standing up and waving his arms faster and faster as I played this! (*Example 11*) The misprint bug bit one last time here, the second D^b in measure 46 should actually be a C, for a semi-tone motion and a repeated effect to the last three notes of the bar.

The string portato should really dig in, and any string isolated 16th notes (like bar 60) always taken upbow (*Example 12*). He asked for the cello pizzicato note just before the final bar to be played very strongly.

It was a great honor and pleasure to be able to play such masterpieces and standard repertoire for the original author and receive guidance about style, interpretation and note authenticity. For any of our younger I.C.A. members and readers, I encourage you to seek out opportunities to work with living composers; it's such a different and rewarding process from trying to imagine what Mozart would really have wanted here or there! And I have almost always found a profound and heartening gratitude from composers, that performers are willing to work at bringing their music to life, here even a musician famous around the world was no different...happy collaborations to all of you!

ABOUT THE WRITER...

Known for his virtuoso energy on stage as well as an easy and entertaining way

of speaking with the audience, **Peter Stoll** was a prizewinner in the International Clarinet Society Competition and also solo clarinetist with the World Orchestra of Jeunesses Musicales in Berlin and Vienna. He performs regularly in Toronto as principal clarinetist with the Toronto Philharmonia at the Toronto Centre for the Arts and has toured with contemporary music ensembles to the U.S.A. and across Europe. Peter travelled to Russia as soloist with the Volga Wind Ensemble in Canadian composer John Hawkins' concerto "Summerdances."

Peter performs on all sizes of clarinet as well as the saxophone and the haunting Lithuanian *birbyne*. He has been involved in a number of CD releases, and teaches clarinet, chamber music and performance classes at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music. He is also a member of the Royal Conservatory of Music's National College of Examiners, and is much sought after as an adjudicator at music festivals across the country.

Highlights of this season include a duo recital with pre-eminent Canadian percussionist Beverley Johnston and a performance of the Mozart *Concerto* and a new work by young Canadian composer Mark Nerenberg with the Toronto Philharmonia, as well as a chamber music recording with the Talisker Players, and an evening as featured soloist with the Toronto Youth Wind Orchestra. Peter's Web site is www.peterstoll.ca

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Krzysztof Penderecki: *Tre Miniature per clarinetto e pianoforte*, c.1959 Deshon Music, Inc. and PWM Editions BWI 492

Prelude (1987) c. 1988 B. Schott's Sohne, Mainz ED 7567

Quartet for Clarinet and String Trio (1993) c. 1993 Schott ED 8229

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Penderecki PRELUDE

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Penderecki QUARTET FOR CLARINET AND STRING TRIO

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