



Sinfonisches Blasorchester Bern

Sounds of Žofín

Giuliano Sommerhalder, trumpet
Rolf Schumacher, conductor

WASBE Conference 2022
Friday, 22nd of July 2022, 8:00 p.m.
Žofín Palace, Prague

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Zdeněk Jonák (1917–1995)

Ciacona in E minor

Stephan Hodel (*1973)

Happenstance

Concertino for Trumpet and Wind Ensemble
(commissioned)

World Premiere

Soloist: Giuliano Sommerhalder, trumpet

1. Devious Tango
2. Aria
3. Elegant Bossa

Franco Cesarini (*1961)

Symphony No. 3 „Urban Landscapes“, Op. 55

1. Wrigley Building from Dawn to Noon
2. Blue Silhouette
3. Cloud Gate

Giuliano Sommerhalder, trumpet
Rolf Schumacher, conductor

Ciacona in E minor by Zdeněk Jonák (CZ, 1917–1995)

This work, subtitled "Ein Altböhmischer Choral" (An Old Bohemian Chorale), uses the ancient Hussite war hymn "Ye Warriors of God" as the chaconne melody. This is the same theme used by Karel Husa in his *Music for Prague 1968*, and by Smetana in his opus magnum *Ma Vlast*. The chaconne theme is stated at the outset of the piece in the trombones and remains evident almost continuously throughout the work. The piece was composed for the Internationale Festliche Musiktage Uster (Switzerland) and premiered by the Wind Orchestra of the Royal Northern College of Music (Manchester, England) in 1993. The compositional work of the Czech composer Zdeněk Jonák (1917–1995) covers all areas of new music up to film music. He also has composed several works for the wind medium.

Happenstance by Stephan Hodel (CH, *1973)

Happenstance, a coincidence or chance situation, is a reference to a harmonic idea which this piece is based upon. The concept of Random Harmony, developed by the American jazz pianist Kenny Werner, combines a random sequence of bass notes with random chord qualities (e.g. Lydian, Maj7#5 or Symmetric Dominant). Through voice leading and melody, these chords, which are rather alien to each other, are now connected and formed into musical phrases. The resulting continuum creates unexpected sounds and chord progressions that repeatedly deceive the listener's expectation and provide surprising moments.

To counteract the random element and to achieve musical continuity, more traditional and square forms, such as a tango or a bossa nova, are used.

The three characteristically different movements give the soloist the opportunity to showcase the diverse facets of the instrument, from the marching and fanfare-like, to the recitative-singing, to the dance-like and rhythmic qualities in the final movement.

The work was composed in the winter of 2021/22 after a lengthy study phase with Kenny Werner and is dedicated to the trumpeter Giuliano Sommerhalder, the Berne Symphonic Wind Orchestra (SIBO) and its conductor Rolf Schumacher.



Giuliano Sommerhalder (1985) is a laureate of some of the world's most prestigious international competitions. He actually serves as principal trumpet at the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra and is active worldwide as a teacher and as a soloist on modern and historical instruments.

He studied with Pierluigi Salvi at the *Conservatorio "Giuseppe Verdi"* in Como and with Max Sommerhalder at the Detmold *Hochschule für Musik*. He also gleaned important stimulus from Maurice André, Eric Aubier, Stephen Burns, Hans Gansch, James Thompson and others. As a soloist he performed with ensembles such as the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the NDR Symphony Orchestra in Hamburg, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra and others. Since 2019 he is the trumpet lecturer at the *Hochschule der Künste Bern*.



Stephan Hodel is a versatile composer, arranger and orchestrator. He has written for ensembles of various kinds, from big band to symphony orchestra. He has also written for theatre/ballet, rock music productions and has composed music for children.

Based in Berne, Switzerland, Stephan is a graduate of the Royal College of Music in London where he completed his postgraduate studies with distinction in Composition with Joseph Horowitz. Also at the RCM he was awarded the *Cobbett and Hurlstone Prize* for outstanding creative achievement. He studied Jazz Composition and Arranging at Berklee College of Music in Boston and holds a MA in Conducting and Music Education from the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Lucerne.

Symphony No. 3 "Urban Landscapes", Op. 55 by Franco Cesarini (CH, *1961)

Fascinated by the beauty of Chicago, the Swiss composer Franco Cesarini has translated his emotions into music: this is how *Symphony No. 3 "Urban Landscapes"* was born, a musical portrait of this metropolis overlooking Lake Michigan.

The composition is divided into three movements: *The Wrigley Building from Dawn to Noon*, *Blue Silhouette* and *Cloud Gates*, which by sharing the same thematic material arranged in cyclical form, strengthen the overall cohesion of the piece.

The first movement, preceded by a short slow introduction in which the main theme is presented in an almost dreamlike form, metaphorically represents the city at dawn. The sudden change of time symbolizes the start of activities with all its noises and sounds: you can hear the bell that announces the closing of the subway doors, the sound of cars speeding by, the siren of a patrol car. If the first movement represents the day, the second introduces a nocturnal environment: a melancholic melody played by the English horn anticipates a more animated tempo depicting melodies coming from jazz clubs.

Powerful fanfares that take up the second theme of the first movement introduce the third movement. In this finale, the role of the two themes is reversed compared to the first movement and one takes the place of the other in a kind of games of mirrors. *Symphony No. 3 "Urban Landscapes"* is a sumptuous musical portrait of the "Windy City".

The Berne Symphonic Wind Orchestra (Sinfonisches Blasorchester Bern, SIBO) is a top-class wind orchestra founded in 1979 by its present conductor Rolf Schumacher. The 60 members of the orchestra are outstanding amateur or professional musicians from the Berne region. The instrumentation corresponds to the model of the American Symphonic Band. The aims and purposes of the orchestra are the cultivation of concert music, the encouragement of contemporary compositions, the performance of public concerts as well as the participation in musical events in Switzerland and abroad. Every year, various works are rehearsed and publicly performed on a project-by-project basis.

The Orchestra was invited for concerts in several countries such as Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Germany, Hungary, Japan, the Netherlands and the USA. Thanks to numerous participations in national and international events and competitions, the orchestra enjoys high recognition far beyond the borders of the city of Berne.



Rolf Schumacher, the founder and conductor of the Berne Symphonic Wind Orchestra started his professional studies as a conductor with Albert Benz at the Lucerne Conservatory in 1980, where he successfully graduated in 1985. He participated in several international conducting seminars and was elected conductor of the renowned Feldmusik Sarnen in February 1998, which he successfully directed until 2016. From 2002 to 2018 he was a member of the Artistic Advisory Committee of the Swiss Wind Music Association.

From 2005 to 2015 he was artistic director of the „Jungfrau Music Festival“. In 2009 he was elected to the board of WASBE International for six years. He teaches conducting at the *Hochschule der Künste Bern*, where he took over the study programme for conducting of wind music in 2014.



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References:

Photos by Bruno Bonansea (G. Sommerhalder), Dennis Yulov (S. Hodel),
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Texts by Stephan Hodel (Happenstance), Franco Cesarini (Symphony No. 3),
Ithaca College Wind Ensemble and Harper, Lawrence Dale
(https://digitalcommons.ithaca.edu/music_programs/4733; Ciacona in E minor)