

MUSIC OF JAN BACH

EQUILIBRIUM-CD-79

DDD

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 75'43

[1]

GALA FANFARE (1979) (BMI)

[2'49]

Larry Rachleff, *conductor*

The Chicago Philharmonic

CONCERTO FOR HORN AND ORCHESTRA (1982) (BMI)

[40'34]

Jon Boen, *solo horn*

Larry Rachleff, *conductor*

The Chicago Philharmonic

[2] I. Fantasia

[13'32]

[3] II. Elegie e scherzo

[14'24]

[4] III. Rondo

[12'38]

Recorded June 1, 2004, Pick-Staiger Hall, Evanston, IL

FRENCH SUITE FOR UNACCOMPANIED HORN (1982) (BMI)

[12'35]

Jon Boen, *solo horn*

[5] I. Fantaisie

[4'20]

[6] II. Courante

[3'01]

[7] III. Sarabande

[2'44]

[8] IV. Fugue

[2'29]

Recorded July 11, 2005, St Giles Church, Northbrook, IL

[9] HELIX FOR SOLO ALTO SAXOPHONE AND CHAMBER OCTET (1983) (BMI) [13'15]

Stephen Duke, *alto saxophone*

Robert Debbaut, *conductor*

Jean Berkenstock, *flute*

Matthew Comerford, *trumpet*

Charlene Zimmerman, *clarinet*

Jon Boen, *horn*

James Berkenstock, *bassoon*

Jeremy Moeller, *trombone*

Jeff Handley, *percussion*

Rich Janicki, *percussion*

Recorded 7/12/2004, Boutell Memorial Concert Hall, DeKalb, IL

FOUR TWO-BIT CONTRACTIONS FOR FLUTE AND HORN (1964) (BMI) [5'56]

Jean Berkenstock, *flute*

Jon Boen, *horn*

[10] I. Second Lieutenant [1'07]

[11] II. Calliope [1'43]

[12] III. Gramophone [1'29]

[13] IV. Pinwheel [1'37]

Recorded 12/1/2005, St. Giles Church, Northbrook, IL

Gala Fanfare ©1984 by Highgate Press, a division of ECS Publishing. All Rights Reserved.
International Copyright Secured. Horn Concerto ©1982 by Highgate Press, a division of ECS
Publishing. All Rights Reserved. International Copyright Secured. Four Two-Bit Contraptions
©1988 by Highgate Press, a division of ECS Publishing. All Rights Reserved. International
Copyright Secured. French Suite and Helix ©1986 by Meadow Music, P. O. Box 403, Wasco IL.
All Rights Reserved. International Copyright Secured. © 2006 Jon Boen All Rights Reserved.



This is the first commercial CD devoted entirely to music of Jan Bach. All of the works on this disc were performed under the supervision of the composer, who has supplied the following program notes for his compositions.

With the single exception of my early (and notorious) *Four Two-Bit Contraptions*, all the works in this collection are historically connected with each other in one way or another. And they all include the French horn, played skillfully and musically by Lyric Opera Orchestra first horn Jonathan Boen.

The *Gala Fanfare* was commissioned in 1979 by the orchestra of the Lyric Opera for their debut performance as a concert orchestra, The Orchestra of Illinois. This short rouser was written in only one week: two days to write the score of the piece, and five days to copy the orchestral parts! It was a thrill (and a little scary) to hear the work only at its premiere performance; time constraints had made it impossible to attend any of the rehearsals. The opening gesture, covering the entire orchestral range from bottom to top, was suggested by the so-called “Mannheim Rocket” motives made famous by Johann Stamitz’ outstanding eighteenth-century ensemble, an orchestra which, like The Orchestra of Illinois, also drew its members from other, pre-existing orchestras. A frame of fanfares then encloses several brief sections featuring each family of the orchestra in turn – strings, woodwinds, brass and percussion – with each new section layered on the previous one.

On the strength of that work, I was asked three years later to write my *Concerto for Horn and Orchestra* for Lyric Opera first hornist Jonathan Boen. Thanks to a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, I had already written a thirty-five minute concerto for piano – one of my own performing instruments – which had been played in the summer of 1981 by Sheldon Shkolnik and Chicago’s Grant Park Symphony, another group which included many Lyric Opera musicians. Could I bear to write anything shorter than that work for my other performing instrument, the French horn, or anything less ambitious for Mr. Boen’s extraordinary talents as a hornist? The result was perhaps the longest and most difficult horn concerto ever written.

Photo: Jon Boen-left, Jan Bach-right

The concerto was a joint commission by Mr. Boen and Betty Bootjer Butler, a citizen of Evanston and patron of the arts who wanted something special to commemorate the life of her dear friend, Hal Cyril Skopin, who died abruptly at 65 during one of his early morning jogs. The work is in three movements. The first, Fantasia, is cast in standard sonata-allegro form and features off-stage horn calls and an extended cadenza for the soloist; it is a series of continually shifting musical images both familiar and disturbing. The second movement, Elegy e Scherzo, is the only movement with specific programmatic connotations. Cast in ternary form, its mournful outer sections recall features of the bel canto aria, a musical form central to the Lyric Opera's repertoire. The contrasting middle section is a quickly moving orchestral "jog" interrupted abruptly by a recurrence of the movement's opening: dark musical gestures representing death. The last movement is a jovial, fast-paced Rondo, sometimes utilizing Caribbean rhythms and percussion instruments (it was on a Caribbean holiday that Betty met Hal), and concluding with a "Jan" session in which all five hornists play polyphonically to the accompaniment of clapping from the other members of the orchestra. The Chicago Tribune's music critic John von Rhein understood the intention of the work, writing after the June, 1983 premiere that *"The circumstances might have produced an extended elegy, but that was not what Bach intended . . . the music dances with the joy of living."*

My *French Suite* for solo horn was written several months earlier than the horn concerto, and in a way served as a study for it. In my early planning of the concerto in 1982, I learned that Douglas Hill, horn teacher at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, had just completed a book on extended techniques for the horn. Naturally, I hoped to use some of these advanced resources in my concerto. The book was not yet published, but Doug promised me a pre-publication copy if, in return, I would write him a solo horn piece he could play at that year's horn convention in Avignon, France. The resultant solo work included many of the techniques Doug described in his book, creating one of the most difficult, if not the most difficult, works in the solo horn literature. Its movements borrow their names from some of those found in the French Suites of another Bach – Fantaisie, Courante, Sarabande, and Fugue (replacing the standard Gigue) – but are similar to those forms in name only. As an odd footnote to this collaboration, Doug also ended up playing the first chair orchestral horn part in the premiere of Jon's concerto the following year.

As my name became more and more associated with wind music, I was approached by the National Association of Wind and Percussion Instructors to write a piece to be premiered at an upcoming Music Educators National Conference in Chicago. I appreciated the fact that nothing specific was stipulated by the commission: the work could be of any length played by any combination of wind and percussion instruments. The result was *Helix*, a nonet written specifically for Stephen Duke, Northern Illinois University's outstanding saxophone soloist, and an accompanying ensemble of woodwind trio, brass trio, and percussionist duet. Its name, timely in 1983, was suggested by the chromatically labyrinthine motive which dominates the piece. This mini-concerto explored the saxophone's complex identity: neither brass nor woodwind instrument, wholly at home in neither the world of classical music nor jazz, both its physical position in the middle of this ensemble (where it could form a quartet with either wind trio) and its music's abrupt stylistic changes representing its ambivalent personality. Like the horn concerto, this piece required its soloist to perform some advanced performance techniques, and these were admirably played by Mr. Duke, who is also featured on this present recording.

My Four Two-Bit Contraptions for flute and horn is the earliest work in the present collection. It is also perhaps the best-known internationally of my compositions, and the shortest (which may be a key to its popularity). It was written in 1964 while I was in the U. S. Army Band in Washington, D. C., and it was intended as a surprise birthday gift for a former high school horn student of mine who had just enrolled as an undergraduate at the University of Michigan. Her roommate was a flutist, thus providing the unique combination of instruments for this composition. Interestingly enough, these two young ladies never played the work together; the flutist went on to become a professional performer, while my student gave up the horn entirely and became a high school English teacher. Perhaps the difficulties of the *Contraptions* had something to do with her decision! Observations about the work's movements – Second Lieutenant, Calliope, Gramophone, and Pinwheel – are announced by the two performers on this recording.

Jan Bach, *Composer*

Jan Bach has been composing since the age of seven, when he thought he could improve on the pieces his piano teacher assigned him to play. Twelve years later he achieved his first national recognition when his string trio won first prize in the Student Composers Contest sponsored by Broadcast Music. A performer on piano and French horn, he earned three degrees at the University of Illinois in Urbana, including the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in composition in 1971.

After three years as associate first horn in the U. S. Army Band and a year as an instructor at the University of Tampa, he began his teaching career at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb. Bach maintained a precarious balance among three careers of university professor, composer and performer for nearly forty years until his recent retirement. As a teacher, he was recognized by NIU as one of its most successful instructors of undergraduates; as a composer, he was recognized by the same institution with one of its very first Distinguished Research Professorship awards; as a performer he played first horn in various university and community ensembles including the Rockford (IL) Symphony where he first met Mr. Boen.

Dr. Bach is the recipient of countless grants, awards and commissions, achieving international recognition through professional performances of his music, his publications, recordings and mini-residencies, and his biography in such standard reference works as *Who's Who in America*, *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*, and the new *Groves Dictionary*. Six times he has been recommended for the Pulitzer Prize in Music. He counts among his most important teachers such composers as Robert Kelly, Burrill Phillips, Kenneth Gaburo, Jean Berger, Donald Martino, Roberto Gerhard, Thea Musgrave and Aaron Copland.

Dr. Bach is a composer member of Broadcast Music Inc., New York, and administers his own small publishing company, Meadow Music. He and his wife Dalia have two daughters and live in the west Chicago suburb of St. Charles.

Additional information on Jan Bach's life and works can be found at his website, <http://www.janbach.com>

Jonathan Boen, Horn

"Boen, Rachleff, and Symphony II (Chicago Philharmonic) were fleet and agile, dashing through Bach's upbeat tangles with sophisticated flair. Boen's tone was clear and mellow, capable of blending elegantly into the orchestral texture as well as striking out in confident solo voice." Wynne Delacoma, Chicago Sun-Times

"The solo horn gets a bravura workout, dancing around the orchestra's darting figuration and pounding, percussion-driven rhythms. The virtuosic Boen and Symphony II made the concerto a real audience-grabber..." John Von Rhein, Chicago Tribune

Jonathan (Jon) Boen has served as Principal Horn for the Lyric Opera of Chicago since 1979, a position he secured at the age of 22. In addition, he is Principal Horn for the Grant Park Orchestra, Music of the Baroque and the Chicago Philharmonic. During his distinguished career, Jon has been Guest Principal Horn for the Santa Fe Opera and the Milwaukee Symphony, has performed with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Israel Philharmonic, and has appeared with a variety of groups, including the Contemporary Chamber Players and Music Now.

Jon is a former member of the Denver Symphony and the Chicago Brass Quintet, with whom he toured extensively and released three recordings. He also has taken part in the Colorado College Summer Festival, the Sanibel Music Festival, and Midsummer's Music in Door County, Wisconsin. In high demand both as a recitalist and orchestra soloist, Jon is known for his performances of works by J.S. Bach, Beethoven, Lennox Berkeley, Brahms, Britten, Cherubini, Handel, Martinu, W.A. and Leopold Mozart, Poulenc, Schumann, Scriabin, Strauss, Telemann, and Vivaldi.

Teaching is an important part of Jon's musical life: he has given master classes throughout the United States, as well as in England and Japan. He currently serves on the faculty of the DePaul University School of Music in Chicago.

Jon lives in River Forest, Illinois with his wife, professional violinist Laura Miller. He has two daughters, Olivia and Jessica.

To experience the depth of Jon's musical versatility, visit his Web site at www.jonboen.com



Stephen Duke, Alto Saxophone

Steve Duke is widely known for his work as an accomplished classical and jazz saxophonist and for performing new music and computer music. Duke's versatility on the saxophone prompted Allan Kozinn of the *New York Times* to write, "*Stephen Duke played the music with a gorgeous tone and moved easily between, say, the Coltranesque leaps and the supple fluidity of the Hodges pastiche.*"

Duke has been featured as saxophone soloist in major classical, jazz and new music festivals and conferences throughout the United States and Europe, including appearances as varied as the International Computer Music Conference, the Bourge Synthese Festival, the Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States (SEAMUS), the World Saxophone Conference, and the World Music Institute. His jazz performances include Spoleto USA, the Hilton Head Jazz Festival. He has worked with many featured artists, including Ella Fitzgerald, Joe Williams, Nelson Riddle, Rosemary Clooney, Charles McPherson, Fareed Haque, Louis Bellson, Zoot Sims, Roland Hanna, Frank Wess, Doc Severinsen, and others. As a classical saxophonist, Steve Duke has performed for the American Ballet Theater and the Bolshoi Ballet, and other concert orchestras.

Since 1993, Steve Duke has commissioned and premiered more than 20 solo works in acoustic and electro-acoustic music. His solo recordings include jazz solo album *Monk by 2* (Sony/Columbia) and computer/acoustic album *Saint Ambrose* (Capstone). Other solo recordings can be heard on CDCM Series, Centaur, and EMF.

As a teacher, he is widely recognized for developing jazz and classical style crossover performance pedagogy and for the application of the Feldenkrais Method to reduce tension in music performance. He holds an honored position as a Distinguished Research Professor at the School of Music at Northern Illinois University, where he has taught since 1980, and for many years has been a Yamaha performing artist.

Steve and his wife, LeAnn Spencer, live in Naperville, IL.

Jean Berkenstock, *Flute*

Jean Berkenstock serves as Principal Flute of the Chicago Philharmonic and has been Principal Flute of the Lyric Opera of Chicago for over 36 years. Prior to that, she was a member of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. She is a former Professor of Music at the College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University and is a founding member of Midsummer's Music Festival in Door County, Wisconsin. From 1968 - 2000, she was Principal Flute with the Grant Park Symphony Orchestra in Chicago. She has performed on numerous occasions with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Contemporary Chamber Players of the University of Chicago, and numerous ballet orchestras.



She has also appeared as soloist with the Grant Park Symphony, the Orchestra of Illinois and the Illinois Chamber Symphony, and frequently performs in the Chicago area in recital and chamber music performances. She is a graduate of Illinois Wesleyan University, and received advanced training in the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and through studies with Donald Peck.

Robert Debbaut, *Helix Conductor*

Robert Debbaut has guest conducted orchestras in the United States, Central America, Asia and in Europe including Chicago Chamber Orchestra, Chicago Philharmonic, Dearborn Symphony, Filharmonia Sudecka (Poland), Hartford Symphony, Kharkiv Philharmonic (Ukraine), Milwaukee Symphony, National Symphony of Guatemala, North Bohemian Philharmonic, Novgorod Chamber Orchestra (Russia), Saint Petersburg Classic Orchestra (Russia), Shanghai Conservatory Orchestra, Utah Symphony, and the Yaroslavl Symphony Orchestra (Russia) among others. Debbaut, who holds the degree Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Michigan, is currently Visiting Conductor at the University of Minnesota School of Music where he teaches Graduate Conducting and conducts the University of Minnesota Symphony Orchestra. His teachers have included Neeme Järvi, Gustav Meier, Helmuth Rilling and the late Maurice Abravanel.





Larry Rachleff, *Music Director*

"A Take-charge Maestro who invests everything he conducts with deep musical understanding . . ." is the Chicago Tribune's most recent review of Music Director Larry Rachleff. Now celebrating his fourteenth season with the Chicago Philharmonic, Rachleff also serves as Music Director of the Rhode Island Philharmonic, the San Antonio Symphony and as Director of Orchestras and the Walter Kris Hubert chair at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music.

Mr. Rachleff has recently appeared as guest conductor with such prestigious orchestras as the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Houston Symphony, the Seattle Symphony, the Indianapolis Symphony, the Utah

Symphony and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. In 1993, he was selected as one of four American conductors to lead the Cleveland Orchestra at Carnegie Hall under the mentorship of Maestro Pierre Boulez.

A former faculty member of Oberlin Conservatory where he served as Music Director of Orchestras and Conductor of the Contemporary Ensemble, he also served as Conductor of the Opera Theatre at the University of Southern California. In 1988, Mr. Rachleff served as the Music Director of the highly acclaimed American-Soviet Youth Orchestra tour. He has conducted and presented master classes at the Chopin Academy in Warsaw, the Zurich Hochschule and the Sydney and Queensland, Australia conservatories.

He is in constant demand as a conductor and master class clinician and is frequently invited to lead other conservatory orchestras such as those at The Juilliard School, England's Royal Northern College and New England Conservatory. He has spent his summers conducting at the Grand Teton Music Festival, Aspen, Tanglewood, Interlochen, Music Academy of the West and the National Repertory Orchestra in Breckenridge.

As an enthusiastic advocate of public school music education, Mr. Rachleff has conducted All-State orchestras and festivals in virtually every state as well as in Europe and Canada. He has served as principal conducting teacher for the American Symphony Orchestra League, the Conductors' Guild and the International Workshop for Conductors in the Czech Republic. As a dedicated advocate of contemporary music, Mr. Rachleff has collaborated with leading composers including Samuel Adler, the late Luciano Berio, George Crumb, Michael Daugherty and John Harbison, to name a few.

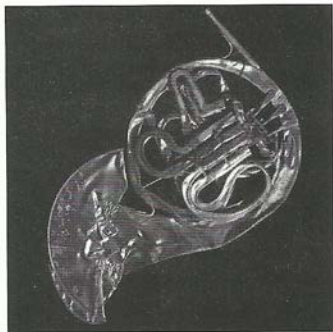
Mr. Rachleff and his wife, soprano Susan Lorette Dunn, live in Houston with their young son, Sam.

Chicago Philharmonic

Proud of its heritage as the former Symphony II, founded in 1991, the Chicago Philharmonic orchestra carries on the tradition and mission, now starting its 16th consecutive season (2005-06) at Northwestern University's Pick-Staiger Hall, in Evanston, IL. This is the same orchestra that repeatedly won accolades from music critics and audiences, and was named by the Illinois Council of Orchestras as "Orchestra of the Year" for 2001-02.

The Chicago Philharmonic is a not-for-profit, professional, full-scale orchestra made up of top flight career musicians drawn from the Chicago area, including members of the Lyric Opera Orchestra, the Grant Park Symphony, and the Ravinia Festival Orchestra. Top-flight musicians who play together over time develop a special coherence of ensemble virtuosity, as so clearly exhibited by this orchestra's cadre of professionals.

The ensemble is dedicated to building new audiences for serious music by offering moderately priced concerts at the highest professional level in convenient venues. In addition, the Chicago Philharmonic undertakes education outreach programs and non-concert events designed to enhance public appreciation of the art form. For more information, please visit: www.chicagophilharmonic.org



Post (concerto performance) horn

This project was partially funded by:
The Aaron Copland Fund for Music
The DePaul University School of Music
The Estate of Betty Bootjer Butler

Executive Producer: Michael W. Udow
Producers: Konrad Strauss, Jan Bach
and Jon Boen
Recording Engineer: Steven Lewis
Assistant Engineer: Peter Cerbin
Editing and Mastering: Konrad Strauss
Graphic Design: Pamela Kende
Cover Photography: Benny Kende
Manufacturing: ProductionPro

Special thanks to:
Laura Miller
Sylvie Sadarnac-Studney
James Berkenstock
James W. Palermo
Douglas Tello
St. Giles Episcopal Church, Northbrook, IL
Northern Illinois University Department
of Music

THE PUBLISHED MUSIC OF JAN BACH

Music for Brass

CONCERT VARIATIONS for euphonium and piano Tuba-Euphonium Press
CONCERTO FOR EUPHONIUM AND ORCHESTRA Tuba-Euphonium Press
CONCERTO FOR HORN AND ORCHESTRA Highgate Press c/o ECS Publishing
CONCERTO FOR TUBA AND CHAMBER ORCHESTRA Tuba-Euphonium Press
FANFARE AND FUGUE for five trumpets Associated Music
LAUDES for brass quintet Mentor Music
QUINTET FOR TUBA AND STRING QUARTET Tuba-Euphonium Press
ROUNDS AND DANCES for brass quintet Highgate Press c/o ECS Publishing

Music for Woodwinds

CONCERTINO FOR BASSOON AND STRINGS Trevco Music
EIGHT DUETUDES for flute and bassoon Trevco Music
LAZY BLUES for five bassoons Trevco Music
MUSIC FOR A LOW-BUDGET EPIC for piccolo and bassoon Trevco Music

Music for Mixed Ensembles

EISTEDDFOD for flute, harp, and viola Highgate Press c/o ECS Publishing
FOUR TWO-BIT CONTRACTIONS for flute and horn Highgate Press c/o ECS Publishing
SKIZZEN for woodwind quintet Highgate Press c/o ECS Publishing

Music for Large Ensembles

DOMPES AND JOMPES for string orchestra Highgate Press c/o ECS Publishing
GALA FANFARE for orchestra Highgate Press c/o ECS Publishing
THE HAPPY PRINCE for narrator and chamber orchestra Highgate Press c/o ECS Publishing
PRAETORIUS SUITE for symphonic band Highgate Press c/o ECS Publishing
SPRINT for orchestra Highgate Press c/o ECS Publishing

Music for Choir

HAIR TODAY for a cappella choir Highgate Press c/o ECS Publishing
MY WILDERNESS choral cycle for a cappella choir Boosey & Hawkes
THREE CHORAL DANCES for women's choir Carl Fischer
THREE SHAKESPEAREAN SONGS for a cappella choir Moon of Hope

Music for Percussion

TURKISH MUSIC for multipercussion solo M. M. Cole
WOODWORK for four percussionists Highgate Press c/o ECS Publishing

Music for Piano

CONCERTO FOR PIANO AND ORCHESTRA Highgate Press c/o ECS Publishing

Opera

THE STUDENT FROM SALAMANCA Highgate Press c/o ECS Publishing
THE SYSTEM Highgate Press c/o ECS Publishing

