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Ensemble Concerts: ISU Chamber Orchestra, April 7, 1993

Glenn Block Director/Conductor
Illinois State University

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Music Department
Illinois State University

ISU CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Glenn Block, *Music Director
and Conductor*

Jon Feller, *Assistant Conductor*

One hundred eleventh program of the 1992-93 season.

Kemp Recital Hall
Wednesday Evening
April 7
7:00 p.m.

Program

Suite No. 3 in D Major, BWV 1068

Ouverture
Air
Gavotte I & II
Bourrée
Gigue

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Suite No. 4 in D Major, BWV 1069

Ouverture
Bourée I & II
Gavotte
Menuet I & II
Réjouissance

Johann Sebastian Bach

This concert, the ISU Chamber Orchestra concludes a two-year cycle of performing all the Brandenburg Concertos and Orchestral Suites composed by Bach.

Next ISU Orchestra Concert
Monday, April 19, 1993 8:00 p.m. Braden Auditorium
Annual Concerto Concert featuring student soloists

Program Notes

Suites, BWV 1068 & 1069

Johann Sebastian Bach

The four masterworks we know today as Bach's "orchestral suites" were not originally called suites at all, but "ouvertures." The term "orchestral suite" is an invention of 19th-century scholars and publishers who collaborated to publish the vast amount of music found after Bach's death.

Bach and his contemporaries wrote such works and called them ouvertures because they were modeled after the operatic ouvertures which had been composed for the royal court of Louis XIV at Versailles. From Lully to Mozart, nobody surpassed Bach in the depiction of majesty which dominates the four suites. The custom of rounding off the grandiose Baroque ouvertures with a set of dances and other light pieces was perhaps suggested by popular Rococo collections (suites) of dances for chamber ensembles or keyboard.

Suite, BWV 1068

Ouverture. All the four suites open with the traditional French overture form characterized by the many jagged, dotted rhythms and profusion of trills which give a sharply characteristic style to the slow introduction. The slow introduction is followed by a faster, fugal allegro that is the main part of the movement. At the end, the form is rounded off by a return of the pompous dotted section.

Air. The slow second movement is probably the best known music composition by Bach under the title "Air on the G String".

Gavotte. The gavotte was originally a French folk dance which made its way via the ballroom to the dance movements of Baroque instrumental works. This movement is a strongly rhythmic piece with a contrasting middle section, after which the opening is brought back.

Bourrée. The bourrée, also, was originally an old French folk dance. The fact that its name comes from the French word "bourrir" (meaning to flap the wings) suggests that it may go back to very primitive dances, possibly even of totem origin, in which the dances imitated the movements of ritual beasts and birds.

Gigue. The jig, with its exuberant, driving triple rhythm, was a great favorite for the final movements of Baroque suites, sonatas, and concertos.

Suite, BWV 1069

The Suite No. 4 is the most "modern" of the four and the only one which is believed to have been composed in Leipzig. Earlier sketches may indicate an earlier composition date, during the Köthen years, and without trumpets and drums. The final festive version, with the addition of three trumpets and drums must have been composed for a special occasion, probably in 1725 at the latest.

Ouverture. The three part, slow-fast-slow form of all the opening overture movements continues in this suite. The only exceptional part of the form is the highly contrapuntal 9/8 fugal section which is the main part of this movement.

Bourée. Originally a French peasant dance, this dance movement uses the older three-part form, with a contrasting bourree section in the middle in the relative minor, followed by a return of the opening section.

Gavotte. This movement is a sturdy rhythmic piece in two sections, each of which is repeated.

Menuetto. This menuet, like those of many baroque composers, is a more straightforward, vigorous piece than the more aristocratic and nobler dances of Mozart. This one is scored for strings and woodwinds, without the trumpets and drums that lend their brilliance to the other movements of the suite.

Réjouissance. Although it is not a dance form, this sparkling, little finale derives its name from the same phrase as the bourrée.

Notes by Dr. Glenn Block

Personnel

Glenn Block, *Music Director and Conductor*
Jon Feller, *Assistant Conductor*

Violin

Nicholas Currie, *Concertmaster*
Carlene Easley, *Principal Second Violin*
Amy Ahrens
Elisabeth Honn
Rebecca Mertz
Heather Neaveill

Viola

Jacqueline Young, *Co-Principal*
Jon Feller, *Co-Principal*
Abigail Baker
Denise Phillips

Cello

Bo Li, *Principal*
Maria Cooper
Jennifer Holtman

Double Bass

Brian Dollinger, *Co-Principal*
Michael Govert, *Co-Principal*

Oboe

Blake Duncan, *Principal*
Karla Ilten
Melissa Gustafson

Bassoon

Jeffery Womack

Trumpet

Tim McCoul, *Principal*
Jerry Mohlman
Troy Mckay

Harpsichord

Julian Dawson