Ludwig Alexander Balthasar

SCHINDELMEISSER (1811 - 1864)

Sinfonia Concertante Opus 2

for four Clarinets and Orchestra

Sinfonia Concertante Op. 2

for four Bb Clarinets and Orchestra

















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for four Bb Clarinets and Orchestra



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The Composer and his Sinfonia Concertante Opus 2

A clarinetist, conductor and composer, Ludwig (Louis) Alexander Balthasar Schindelmeisser was born in Königsberg, Prussia, on December 8, 1811. He was a student of J.M. Hostié, first in Königsberg and then in Berlin where he also studied composition under A. B. Marx and W. Gährich. As a young man he held the post of Kapellmeister in Salzburg, Innsbruck and Graz and served as conductor of the Royal Theatre. He moved through Hungarian and German cities as conductor of various orchestras until 1837 when, in Darmstadt, he assumed a permanent position which he held until his death on March 30, 1864.

The Sinfonia Concertante Opus 2 is said to be "one of a kind," there being few or no other instances of such a work for four solo clarinets with orchestral accompaniment. Be that as it may, this lovely piece is rarely performed and little known.

The orchestration is ambitious, showing, in addition to the soloists, two each of flutes, oboes, bassoons, horns and trumpets, four strings and timpani. The unaccompanied clarinet quartet is heard often throughout, alternating with musical transitions offered by the accompanying group. Occasionally the soloists and the full orchestra burst forth together, displaying the composer's creative genius at its best.



There is one recording performed by the Bamberger Symphoniker, conducted by Hans

Stadlmair with soloists Dieter Klöcker, Waldemar Wandel, Guido Stier and Heide Huber (3-1125-2 Koch Schwann). This writer established the initial tempo of each movement to be

Allegro moderato: $\downarrow = 120$ Andante religioso: $\downarrow = 72$

Rondo, Allegretto: $\bullet = 144$

and set the movements in the music notation files to these tempi, though the hopeful soloists will discover more than a little study and practice necessary to attain the listed tempi of the fast movements. The soloists in the recording take considerable artistic liberty with the tempi and offer an exquisite display of their mastery of the instrument and a beguiling interpretation throughout.

The first movement offers a familiar theme popularized by Percy Grainger in his *Country Gardens* but apparently lifted from a folk song found in the *Quaker Opera* collection of 1728, or possibly some earlier publication. It is begun by the strings in measure 38, continued by the oboes and repeated by the flutes in measure 45.

There is a lovely cadenza at the end of the second movement of the recording, presented elaborately by the soloists as an unaccompanied quartet lasting, as best as can be determined by this writer, an equivalent of 30-40 measures. The cadenza offered in the 19th century score used for this transcription, however, shows it in much abbreviated form lasting a mere 17 measures.

At this writing, the music notation files in Finale 3.7 format and type 1 MIDI files for this piece can be found at

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Oliver Seely Oakhurst, California April 12, 2016

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