

## **1. Objective**

The objective of the proposed project is to record the complete works for violin and piano by prominent American composer Vincent Persichetti (1917-1987). The music will be recorded by Hasse Borup, violin (PI) and pianist Mary Kathleen Ernst, piano. The works will be recorded in Libby Gardner Hall, University of Utah in May 2011 and published in June 2012 on Centaur Records. None of the five works (see details below) have previously been recorded, and this CD will contribute significantly to the recorded legacy of this important composer and American music in general.

## **2. Creative Objective**

This proposal details the recording of the following works by Vincent Persichetti:

- Sonata for Solo Violin Op. 10 (1940) (10')
- Fantasy Op. 15 for Violin and Piano (1941) (10')
- Serenade No. 4 op. 28 for Violin and Piano (1945) (9')
- 6 Piano Sonatinas Vol. I&II (1950 and 1954)(21')
- Masques Op. 99 (ten pieces) for Violin and Piano (1965) (10')

This repertoire includes the complete works for violin and piano by V. Persichetti. None of these pieces have previously been recorded. The source for this information is [www.arkivmusic.com](http://www.arkivmusic.com) and [www.hbdirect.com](http://www.hbdirect.com) which are the most complete catalogues of recorded music.

## **3. Justification/Significance of Project**

### **A. Significance of Repertoire**

Composer Vincent Persichetti (1915-1987) was one of the most prolific and important American artists of the twentieth century. His vast body of works covers virtually every genre of classical music, from solo pieces to large-scale symphonic works. Even though he was highly regarded by his contemporaries and widely performed, a surprisingly large number of his works remain un-recorded. This fact is true for Persichetti's works for violin and piano (the works proposed for this recording), which are highly important compositions for this genre.

The Sonata for Solo Violin (1940) and the Fantasy Op. 15 for Violin and Piano (1941, un-published) showcases the important early period of Persichetti's development as a composer. The composition-style is atonal with strong influences from Stravinsky, Hindemith, Bartok and Copland. Each of the movements of the solo sonata explores the vast range of tone colors and special effects available on the instrument, but the virtuosic writing never over-shadows the serene simplicity of the musical structure. The Fantasy has never been published, and the daughter of Mr. Persichetti graciously granted the PI permission to perform and record this work (see attached letter).

The Serenade No. 4 Op. 28 (1945) is a slightly later work that displays a remarkable mastery in the writing for both instruments. The four-movement work is structured as a

classical sonata, but with a distinct “Persichetti-sound.” The titles of the movements (*Patorale*, *Episode*, *Interlude* and *Capriccio*) conjures up vivid images that Persichetti masterfully “translates” into music.

*Masques* Op. 99 (1965) and the Piano Sonatinas (1950 and 1954) shows the educational side of Persichetti’s compositional genius, as the works are intended as “training-pieces” for the serious musician, much in the same way that J.S. Bach’s *Klavier-übungen* and *Inventions* were intended. As is the case with the compositions in this genre by Bach, Persichetti’s pieces are fully deserving of the concert-stage with beautifully crafted compositions showing each instrument’s best side. *Masques* Op. 99 was commissioned by Loise Behrend for The Juilliard School of Music to promote high quality chamber music for educational purposes.

The five works outline an important American composers unique contribution to a genre that is essential to classical music. The two instruments, violin and piano, have always inspired great composers to write some of their most inspired music, and Persichetti’s works are no exception. It is time for these works to be available to a wider public of music lovers, performers, scholars and students alike. The music is published by Theodore Presser, except for the Phantasy Op. 15, which is printed by permission from the archives at the New York Public Library (see budget page)

B. Significance of performance. For a performer, one of the defining moments in a career is the creation of a solo CD. The process and product places a performer on “the map” furthering his/her career tremendously. Throughout my career, I have been devoted to studying and performing contemporary music and this CD will make a strong, artistic statement with broad impact in the classical music field.

C. Justification of funding. In the budget I have requested financial support for music, transportation and producer/engineer costs. The music is essential to performing and recording the repertoire, the transportation costs will bring the pianist and producer to The University of Utah and the costs for producer and engineer will ensure the highest quality of the actual recording. As a specific condition in the field of classical music it should be mentioned that, as an artist, finding a label willing to take on a project is a major obstacle. Finding a good label is even harder, but important if the release is to have any significance (as a vehicle for the dissemination and publication of the research, just like a periodical or scientific journal in other fields). For that reason, few artists are able to record a CD without financing most or some of the costs. With the major changes in the recording industry in the past ten years, it is the norm that even well established artists have to cover some of the costs incurred, in this case the actual recording. As this is a no-royalty agreement with Centaur Records, no income will be generated for the PI by this recording.

#### **4. Methods**

The recording sessions will take place May 11-15, 2011 in Libby Gardner Concert Hall, University of Utah. Each recording session will be 7 hours (total of 37 hours over 5 days). The performers will be violinist Hasse Borup (PI) and pianist Mary Kathleen Ernst. The Producer will be Boris Renner, who is Director of Music Productions at the National Slovenian Radio. Audio Engineer for both recording sessions and post-production will be David Michael Cottle. A final master will be delivered in December 2011 with a target release-date in June 2012.

In preparation for the recording several recitals will be planned. One will be in Libby Gardner Hall (the site of the recording). In order to meaningfully prepare for a recording the process of live-performance is crucial. Only in front of an audience can the interpretation successfully be honed to exactly the version that both performers are happy with. This process extends into the recording sessions and ultimately to the post-production phase, where also the producer gets intricately involved in both the practical and artistic decisions. The producer, Boris Renner, is the Director of Music Productions at the National Slovenian Radio and a highly skilled professional whom I have previously worked with. The role of the producer is crucial to the quality of the recording, since he will oversee the entire project and be artistically responsible for the product. After the material has been recorded, Mr. Renner will work closely with the engineer (Mr. Cottle) and the PI to edit the music and finely balance the sound to create the final product. 41 hours have been allotted (see budget) for this phase. Finally, when the recording is satisfactory to the performers and producer, the mastering takes place. This is the process of aligning all tracks and normalizing levels, format, etc. 10 hours have been allotted for this process. At this point the recording is ready to be sent to the publisher.

The PI will write the liner notes for the CD. This highly scholarly process is the culmination of the practical research conducted, and ties the artistical and scholarly parts of the project together. The length of the liner notes are usually around 2,500 words.

#### **5. Bibliography**

Patterson, Donald. Vincent Persichetti : a bio-bibliography. New York: Greenwood Press, 1988.

Persichetti, Vincent. Twentieth-century harmony; creative aspects and practice. New York: W.W. Norton, 1961.

R. Evett: 'The Music of Vincent Persichetti', *Juilliard Review*, ii/2 (1955), 15–30

W. Schuman: 'The Compleat Musician', *MQ*, xlvii (1961), 379

D.M. Rubin: 'Vincent Persichetti', *ASCAP in Action* (1980), spr., 8

R. Schackelford: 'Conversation with Vincent Persichetti', *PNM*, xx/1–2 (1981–2), 104–34

J. Hilfiger: *Comparison of Some Aspects of Style in the Band and Orchestral Music of Vincent Persichetti* (diss., U. of Iowa, 1985)

J.B. Smith: *Golden Proportion in the Published Solo Piano Music of Vincent Persichetti* (diss., U. of Missouri, Kansas City, 1987)

D.L. and J.L. Patterson: *Vincent Persichetti: a Bio-Bibliography* (Westport, CT, 1988)

D.A. Morris: *Life of Vincent Persichetti, with Emphasis on Works for Band* (diss., Florida State U., 1991)

Archiv Music, <http://www.arkivmusic.com/classical/main.jsp>

Walter G. Simmons. "Persichetti, Vincent." In *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/21384> (accessed July 16, 2010).