

George Perle

(b. 1915)

Disc A (76:58)

Nine Bagatelles (1999)

1	No. 1	0:32
2	No. 2	0:53
3	No. 3	1:22
4	No. 4	1:02
5	No. 5	0:26
6	No. 6	0:36
7	No. 7	0:22
8	No. 8	1:06
9	No. 9	1:32

Horacio Gutiérrez, piano

Three Inventions for Solo Bassoon (1962)

10	I	1:50
11	II	1:54
12	III	1:30

Steven Dibner, bassoon

13 Adagietto con affetto from *Chansons Cachées* (1997) 1:58

Shirley Rhoads Perle, piano

Two French Christmas Carols (arr. 1958) 4:27

14	I The Miracle of St. Nicholas (2:33)	2:33
15	II Christ is Born Today (1:54)	1:54

The New York Virtuoso Singers; Harold Rosenbaum, conductor

Triptych for Solo Violin and Piano (2002) 9:28

16	I	3:20
17	II	2:34
18	III	3:34

Curtis Macomber, violin; Christopher Oldfather, piano

Brief Encounters (String Quartet No. 9) (1998) 27:14

Part One 10:43

19	I Rondoletto	2:34
20	II Quasi recitativo	1:34
21	III Prismatic Variations	3:58
22	IV Cadenza	0:30
23	V Moto perpetuo in tempo rubato	2:07

Part Two 7:32

24	VI Moment musical	0:48
25	VII Poco animato	1:41
26	VIII Strepitoso	2:25
27	IX Scorrevole	2:38

Part Three 8:59

28	X Introduction and Adagio	3:14
29	XI Scherzo I	1:05
30	XII Lyric Intermezzo	1:48
31	XIII Scherzo II	0:41
32	XIV Introduction and Allegro	2:11

DePaul String Quartet

Ilya Kaler, Robert Waters, violins

Rami Solomonov, viola; Stephen Balderston, cello

Concerto No. 2 for Piano and Orchestra (1992) 19:27

- 33** I Allegro molto 8:22
- 34** II Adagio 5:38
- 35** III Allegro 5:27

Michael Boriskin, piano
Utah Symphony
Joseph Silverstein, conductor

Disc B (76:45)

Serenade No. 3 for Piano and Chamber Orchestra (1983) 19:49

- 1** I Allegro 4:51
- 2** II Burlesco 2:46
- 3** III Elegy (in Memory of George Balanchine) 4:51
- 4** IV Perpetuum Mobile 1:40
- 5** V Finale 5:41

Richard Goode, piano
Music Today Ensemble
Gerard Schwarz, conductor

Solo Partita for Violin and Viola (1965) 12:53

- 6** I Prelude (viola) 3:24
- 7** II Allemande (violin) 1:48
- 8** III Courante (viola) 2:35
- 9** IV Sarabande (violin) 2:12
- 10** V Finale (violin) 2:54

Curtis Macomber, violin and viola

Six Celebratory Inventions (1981-95) 8:40

- 11** I For Ernst Krenek at Eighty-Five 0:50
- 12** II For Henri Dutilleux at Eighty 1:53
- 13** III For Oliver Knussen at Forty 0:58
- 14** IV For Gunther Schuller at Seventy 1:47
- 15** V For Richard Swift at Sixty 1:48
- 16** VI For Leonard Bernstein at Seventy 1:24

Molly Morkoski, piano

17 BassoonMusic (2004) 5:47

Steven Dibner, bassoon

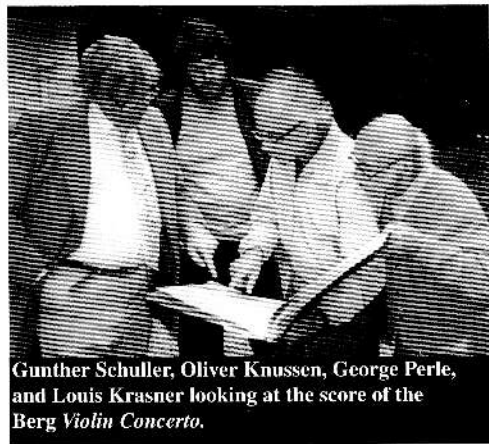
Quintet for Strings (1957-58) 28:55

- 18** I Allegro 6:27
- 19** II Scherzo 5:29
- 20** III Adagio (Variations) 11:12
- 21** IV Allegro; Molto Adagio 5:47

Chicago String Quartet
Joseph Genualdi, violin 1, Jasmine Lin, violin 2
Rami Solomonov, viola 1, Baird Dodge, viola 2
Christopher Costanza, cello

George Perle is the unlikeliest nonagenarian. Although physically less able than a decade ago – and of whom can we say otherwise? – his mind remains agile and his music has magic. Honoring him as a composer, above all, is apt, for since the late 1930s he has enriched and delighted both performers and their publics with works wedding wit and invention to an intellectual probity that is altogether rare. But he must be honored, as well, as a theorist, as perhaps *the* theorist, of Schoenberg and his school, and honored, too, for his musicological scholarship, for his abbreviated career as a performing artist, and for his distinguished work in academe, where he mentored a new generation. Indeed, when one looks back more than half a century and assesses his achievements in the context of their time, Perle emerges as our complete musician nonpareil.

For Perle the composer, two encounters proved crucial. He recalls hearing his very first piece when he was six or seven – it was the first of Chopin's



Gunther Schuller, Oliver Knussen, George Perle, and Louis Krasner looking at the score of the Berg *Violin Concerto*.

Trois Nouvelles Études, his Op. 130 – and remembers its visceral impact. “Extraordinarily moved”, he took from this experience an “enormous and continuing respect and affection for the traditional harmonic language of Western music.”

Then, in 1937, he borrowed Berg's *Lyric Suite* from his composition teacher at the time. Playing the score at a piano was revelatory – “Within the next five minutes my whole future direction

as a composer was established.”

Let's look at these moments more closely. Though Perle often has mentioned being awakened by Chopin, he seems never to have been asked to explain: What did he find so special about this particular Etude, a work commissioned by pianist and pedagogue Ignaz Moscheles for inclusion in a piano method? To glance at the work is revealing. A formal piece that sounds freely imagined, a didactic piece that sounds intuitive, a complicated piece that sounds easy, it's a study in polyrhythms, setting threes in the right hand against fours in the left. Though there's surely no conscious connection between the two, Chopin's study can't help but evoke the third of Perle's *Six New Etudes* (1984), the ‘Papillions’ movement, where butterflies flutter in threes against fours.

More tellingly, Chopin's Etude is also a study in symmetries, with melodic phrases and harmonic structures that are finely (if conventionally) balanced, and despite its simplicities, the piece perhaps points to the defining characteristic of Perle's compositions.

Symmetries imbue his music. He employs them early and artlessly in the *Pantomime, Interlude and Fugue* (1937), for instance, and uses them with far greater consequence in later works written in ‘twelve-tone tonality’, the compositional system he devised based on cyclically derived symmetrical structures.

Never employed as intellectual conceit but used with great sophistication, symmetry allows Perle to plumb deeper in a quest for aesthetic authenticity, and I imagine he would agree with the late mathematician Hermann Weyl, who



George Perle, 1940

wrote (in his book entitled *Symmetry*) that "Symmetry, as wide or as narrow as you may define its meaning, is one idea by which man through the ages has tried to comprehend and create order, beauty, and perfection."

As a young composer in search of a voice of his own, Perle had been stymied. He felt that "the musical language itself had become problematical, that it was no longer possible to write music that was really significant because the traditional means of harmonic progression and structure no longer worked." He was puzzled, as well, by internal contradictions he saw in Schoenberg's twelve-tone method, the reigning orthodoxy of his formative years. (Most fundamentally, Perle understood that a twelve-tone row could not function simultaneously as both scale and motive, as Schoenberg prescribed.)

Berg's *Lyric Suite* was the key to clarification. Perle realized that the first movement of the *Lyric Suite* was based not on a Schoenbergian tone-row at all, but on structures derived from the circle of fifths. He understood, as well, that both Bartok and Stravinsky had reached similar ends with different means.

In 1938, a year after this discovery, Perle composed his first atonal piece, a *Molto Adagio* for string quartet, which was strongly influenced by Bartók's *Second String Quartet*. In 1940, after absorbing lessons learned from Berg's procedures, he composed his first piece in his own version of Schoenberg's system, a *Suite in the Second Twelve-Tone Mode*, for piano. In the ensuing decades, he continued to develop, refine, and expand his system of 'twelve-tone tonality', and it informs most of his works before 1967 and all of them thereafter.

Perle's music first was heard in New York in the late 1940s. Most significant was a major notice from Olin Downes, chief music critic for the New York Times; in 1948 he reviewed one of Perle's compositions, since withdrawn,

at Columbia University's McMillin Theater: "As music pure and simple, we were most impressed by the *Third Quartet* of George Perle. It is music wholly modern, very sensitive and precise, by a young composer who knows his Berg and his Webern, and all the rest of it. But it is more than a studied avoidance of the obvious. The compression of the thought and the clearly determined form grow upon the listener. It is all short-phrased and short-breathed. It goes perhaps out of its way to reject conventional phrase lengths and rhythmic groups. It is couched almost throughout in terms of free and dissonant counterpoint. Yet there are harmonic centers, and lyric stress as well as contrapuntal manipulation." Downes divined Perle's respect for tradition. (Indeed, a couple of phrases notwithstanding, the review gives a pretty good description of the opening movement of Beethoven's E minor '*Razumovsky*' *Quartet*, Opus 59, No. 2.) Perle has written that his "personal perspective (was) formed by my own need to find a way to write music that would do what music has always done, that would be coherent in the way that music has always been coherent, that would be new in its language and materials only to the extent that the realization of this aim in our time demands newness in language and materials." (Let's note how music is not the only of Perle's languages to be shaped by symmetrical structures.)

Through the years, each of Perle's musical interests informed the others. His study of Schoenberg led to his essential exegesis of *Serial Composition and Atonality*; his insights into the *Lyric Suite* led both to the formulation of his own musical language, explained in his book entitled *Twelve-Tone Tonality*, and to his definitive volumes on *The Operas of Alban Berg*; his studies in historical musicology, which focused on the 15th century chansons of Antoine Busnois, took him further into the Renaissance world and led, however obliquely, to his *Songs of Praise and Lamentation* (1975). Here, with borrowings from Ockghem (his *Déploration sur la mort de Binchois*), Josquin (*La Déploration de Johan*

Okeghem), and Jheronimus Vinder (*Lamentatio super morte Josquin de Prés*), he weaves an evocative, eulogistic tapestry in homage to great composers of successive generations.

Perle's music is inviting; it is deeply felt throughout and full of exuberant energy, graceful humor, and finely wrought melodic phrases that reflect and echo lucid harmonies. One of the special pleasures it affords us, Andrew Porter has noted, "is meeting themes that behave like characters who become more engaging the more we get to know them", an observation as true of older as of newer works.

Imagine the four temperaments: there's the melancholic *String Quintet* (1958), where the rhetoric is dark-hued, introspective and complex; there's the phlegmatic eighth of the *Thirteen Dickinson Songs* (1979), *The Heart Asks Pleasure*, where the soprano's indelible opening phrase, all calm and restraint (with a suggestive melisma on 'pleasure'), is set against an accompaniment of steady eighth-notes that mark time's inexorable passing; and there's the sanguine *Perpetuum mobile* that ends the *Six New Etudes* (1984), where a steady, earnest left hand provides firm anchor for a fanciful right, whose virtuoso excursions threaten to break gravity and effervesce. I'm not sure if Perle's make-up includes the choleric, but perhaps it's what we hear in the *Adagio for Orchestra* (1992), whose moody opening phrase, a great wash of string sonority, gets a sardonic edge when answered by a brass choir led by muted trumpets.

In his collection of *Forewords and Afterwords*, W.H. Auden wrote that though "I do not believe an artist's life throws much light upon his works, I do believe, however, that, more often than most people realize, his works may throw light upon his life."

Perle's works illuminate a life that prizes collegiality and discourse. You sense nothing meretricious in either the man or the music, but rather a deep

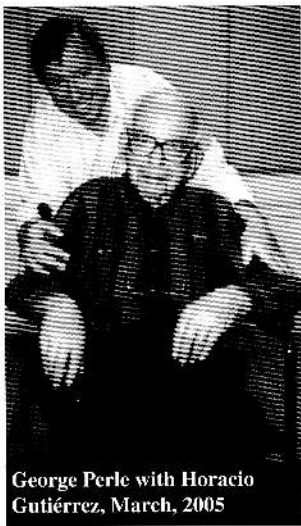
respect for all aspects of the artistic transaction.

"I think the listening experience is extraordinarily complex, spontaneous, intuitive, naïve, and sophisticated, all at the same time," he wrote, "and that the composer already participates in the listening experience in the process of composing."

For almost seventy of his ninety years, Perle has composed works ripe with delights, and they have helped us find our better selves. He has been exceptional as both composer and listener – he is The Listening Composer second to none – and for this we are all in his debt.

-George Gelles, 2005

George Gelles has written on musical matters for The New York Times, Musical America, The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, and other leading publications, and has held prominent positions at the National Endowment for the Arts and the Ford Foundation. He spent fifteen years as Executive Director of Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, in San Francisco, and was Director of Planning for The English Concert, in London.



George Perle with Horacio Gutiérrez, March, 2005

Nine Bagatelles

Written with the extraordinary range of Horacio Gutiérrez's gifts in mind, the *Nine Bagatelles*, are short, virtuosic, and evocative character pieces. *Nine Bagatelles* was premiered by Mr. Gutiérrez in March of 2002, in Rockford, IL.

-George Perle

Three Inventions for Solo Bassoon

The *Three Inventions for Solo Bassoon* is one of a series of pieces for unaccompanied bowed-string and wind instruments which I composed between 1942 and 1965 and which also includes works for violin, viola, cello, double bass, flute, and clarinet. A principal concern of mine and, I should think, of every serious composer of our time, has been the problem of harmonic structure in a post-diatonic

musical language. In the course of evolving my own personal solution to this problem I often found myself inclined to compose these unaccompanied solo pieces which, though they certainly didn't eliminate the problem, at least posed it in a less demanding way. The specific impetus for this piece came from William Scribner, who instructed me in some of the special possibilities of this instrument and for whom I wrote this piece in 1962.

-George Perle

Henri Dutilleux, George and Shirley Perle



Adagietto con affetto from Chansons Cachées

Adagio con affetto, the fourth piece from *Chansons Cachées*, was written for the 25th anniversary of Margaret and Philip Hess. It is 25 bars long and the first bar has the notes B-E-E-flat-E-flat, which in German notation spells HESS.

-Shirley Rhoads Perle

Two French Christmas Carols

The most remarkable thing about these two French carols, edited and arranged by George Perle, is how wonderfully unremarkable they are: with their conservative tonal language, well-crafted harmonizations, and lyrical choral writing, they give no hint of the startling originality of his modernistic, later choral works such as *The Chorus of Marvels*, *And So the Swans*, and *Sonnets to Orpheus*. The fact that the carols are written in keys so unrelated (G major and Gb major) as to make their juxtaposition jarring, seems to indicate that they were not meant to be performed one after the other. A conductor might be tempted (as I was briefly, knowing that they would appear together on this recording) to transpose *Christ Is Born Today* into G major. However, there is a certain softness and gentleness to the key selected by the composer, which better represents both the dignity and divine nature of the Lord's birth, and the soothing tones of the pastoral oboes and bagpipes mentioned in the text.

-Harold Rosenbaum

Two French Christmas Carols

The Miracle of Saint Nicholas

(Le Miracle de Saint Nicolas)

Three little children lost their way,
Gleaning the fields one autumn day.
A friendly butcher did they find.
"May we come in, sir, would you mind?"
"Come in, come in, my youngsters dear,
Lodging and food you shall have here."

Once they were in his knife he drew
And all at once the three he slew.
He cut them up in bits so small
and in a brine he dropped them all.

Seven years passed and then there came
into that field, the very same,
Good old Saint Nick, and he did stop,
Right at the butcher's little shop.

"Come in good Saint, welcome you are
Come in and rest, you've travelled far,
Come in and rest your weary feet."
"Butcher" he said, "What's there to eat?"

Some of your wares would suit me fine.
Seven years now they've been in the brine
seven long years it's been" he said
Hearing these words the butcher fled.

"Butcher, return!" Nicholas cried,
"From the good Lord you can not hide."

Three fingers raised he, oh! now see,
Forthwith arise the children three.

Three little children lost their way,
Gleaning the fields one autumn day.
"I slept so well," said the first child.
"Me too," the second said and smiled.
And then the third one did reply,
"I dreamt I was with God on high."

Christ is Born Today

(Il est né, le divin enfant)

Christ is born, he is born today,
Loudly the oboe and bagpipe play.
Christ is born, our blessed Lord,
Let us sing in glad accord.

This glad day, this day of song.
Prophets long ago foretold.
This glad day, this day of song.
We've awaited oh so long

See how charming he is, how lovely.
Radiance streams from his sweet face.
Wise men promised long ago,
Gentle Child, Thy saving grace.

(Translations: George Perle)



James Levine, George Perle
Ravinia Festival, 1985

Triptych for Solo Violin and Piano

George Perle's *Triptych* was written for Curtis Macomber and commissioned by Judith Sherman in memory of her mother, LaVerne Luckens Smith. Its three short vignettes are characterized by the use of pithy motivic figures which are gradually transformed and elaborated upon during the course of a movement. Written for "Solo Violin and Piano", the work's thematic impetus originates in the violin part, with comments, asides, and harmonic underpinning from the piano. As with much of Perle's writing, *Triptych* is imbued with energy, wit, and humor while maintaining a compositional logic and clarity.

-Curtis Macomber

Brief Encounters (String Quartet No. 9)

Composition, for me at least, is always initiated by a vivid and spontaneous first conception. The latter may range from the briefest of musical 'ideas' (something that surely sounds like such a first idea, for example, is the two-chord figure that introduces the opening scene of *Wozzeck*, or the opening motive of Beethoven's Fifth) to, as in the present instance, the largest dimensions of a work--its overall formal design.

I knew from the beginning that my new quartet would consist of fourteen short movements (perhaps I was motivated in this direction by the wish to do the opposite of what I had done in the quartet that had preceded this one, which consists of a single large movement) and I also knew that these would fall into three 'Parts,' of which the first and third would each consist of five movements and the second of four. The idea of a five movement design for a string quartet immediately brings to mind the "arch-form" of the 4th and 5th quartets of Bartók, the former having as its axis of symmetry a third movement in the character of a scherzo flanked by 2nd and 4th movements in a slow tempo, and

the latter basing its symmetrical design on the alternative concept--a slow middle movement flanked by a scherzo. Before actually beginning the composition I thought of partitioning the fourteen pieces into outer parts of five movements each, with one of the alternative Bartókian arch forms reflected in Part One and the other in Part Three. Part Two would separate these with a four-movement middle part that would recall the traditional four-movement design of the classical string quartet. In the event, things turned out quite differently, and in a more interesting way, I think. Only Part Three will remind anyone of Bartók's symmetrical design, and this departs from it in the contrasts in the basic tempi of its first and last movements. The second and fourth movements of Part One, though they are strictly notated, seem to have an improvisatory character, as their titles suggest. As for the fifth movement of Part One, in my book on *Wozzeck*, I ask the rhetorical question, 'What other composer has ever given us a perpetuum mobile in tempo rubato, like the final movement of Act III in *Wozzeck*?' Yet that movement, in spite of seventeen changes of tempo within twenty-one bars, is what Berg said it was-- an "Invention on a Continuous Eighth-Note Motion." I have now offered a second example. And finally, as for Part Two, its four movements in no way refer to any aspect of the traditional design, as I had expected that they would. The movements unfold progressively, with each, after the opening *Moment musical*, moving at a faster tempo than its predecessor. The 'Brief Encounters' range in duration from 27 seconds to four minutes and 45 seconds.

Brief Encounters was commissioned by Rosemary Schnell with admiration and affection for Father Jack Minogue and Father John Richardson and the members of the DePaul University Vincentian Community in DePaul's Centennial year.

-George Perle

Concerto No. 2 for Piano and Orchestra

George Perle's second piano concerto, a Koussevitzky Music Foundation commission, was written for and dedicated to Michael Boriskin. Mr. Boriskin writes that: "the instrumental forces maintain Perle's characteristic chamber music ideal, and work collectively towards a common goal; soloist and orchestra cooperate, rather than compete. As always, Perle's sophisticated harmonic language yields remarkably rich chordal writing and felicitous euphonious textures.

The arduous, virtually non-stop solo part begins each movement, introduces every significant musical event, and includes two substantial cadenzas. The first movement, in a kind of hybrid sonata-allegro and rondo form, is dominated by two distinctive ideas: a jaunty yet resolute tune heard at the outset in the piano, and a skipping figure of triplets and chords, shared by soloist and orchestra. The ensuing middle section elaborates upon these; starting somewhat hesitantly above an insistent viola trill, the music bursts into a headlong dialogue between piano and orchestra, which eventually culminates in a return to the opening music. A varied recapitulation follows, into which is inserted the soloist's eventful cadenza, encapsulating the movement's main material. The snare drum, which helped open the concerto, prematurely intrudes, signaling the orchestra's imminent return; the formal restatement of material heard earlier resumes, bringing the movement to its somewhat unexpected conclusion.

The Adagio opens with the piano's sighing, plaintive figure, which will eventually re-appear twice in the orchestra, to punctuate the musical narrative. Phrases and gestures seem to strive for goals that remain unfulfilled by this delicate movement's end. The music is, at times, pared down to a few soft tones, barely clinging to the edge of audibility. A fluid pulse, several pronounced silences, and the blossoming of aphoristic gestures into expansive, drawn-out phrases create a sense of spaciousness and suspended time.

The brash finale, in a sort of modified sonata-allegro form, is launched by a spirited triplet flourish in the piano; though never heard again just this way, it contains elements from which the movement evolves. The pianist soon turns accompanist, first virtuosically partnering a meandering horn solo, then supporting in octaves a soaring string chorale. The distinctive triplets return in another of the rapid-fire colloquys that has characterized the work's outer movements. While the recurrence of the horn solo appears to herald a conventional restatement of the previous material, the piano abruptly takes over in a wide-ranging cadenza. The horn reasserts itself briefly, before the reappearance of the strings' chorale and a final reference to the triplets guide the work to its vigorous closing chords."

-Michael Boriskin

Serenade No. 3 for Piano and Chamber Orchestra

The *Serenade No. 3* is scored for flute, oboe, clarinet, saxophone (soprano and alto), bassoon, horn, trumpet, percussion, violin, cello, and piano. It was commissioned by Frank E. Taplin and first performed on December 14, 1983 by Richard Goode and the Music Today Ensemble, conducted by Gerard Schwarz, at Merkin Hall in New York City. The same performers recorded the work for Nonesuch Records, which has kindly permitted reprint of the following notes by Richard Goode: "The *Serenade No. 3* represents a culmination of Perle's recent work. Like his two earlier serenades, it is in five movements and for eleven players. In diversity of mood, clarity of form and scoring, and the sheer pace of musical events, it brings to mind classical predecessors evoked by its title – the serenades and divertimenti of Mozart. The five movements form an arch similar to those of the Bartók Fourth and Fifth Quartets. The first movement, in a free sonata form, utilizes a kind of metric modulation: several interrelated tempi are juxtaposed and transformed into one another in an almost

thematic way. In the *Burlesco* the piano is paired first with the woodblock, and then, in 'twittering machine' episodes, with the high woodwinds. The hymn-like episode near the beginning of the slow movement, an Introduction, Chorale, and Variations, was written a few hours before the memorial service for George Balanchine, which the composer attended. Only later did Perle realize that the music he had written was the beginning of an elegy for the great choreographer. The second scherzo is a ghostly *Perpetuum mobile*, pianississimo throughout. The listener may detect in it another ghost, that of Chopin – the composer had recently been listening to the coda of the *F-sharp Major Impromptu*. The final rondo, savage and playful, brings the *Serenade* to a close with echoes of the first movement's opening motive."

-Richard Goode

Solo Partita for Violin and Viola

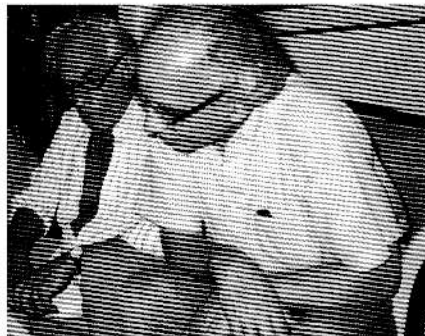
The *Solo Partita* for violin and viola is the last of a series of pieces for unaccompanied bowed-string and wind instruments which I composed between 1942 and 1965 and which includes works for violin, viola, cello, double bass, flute, clarinet and bassoon. The piece was written at the request of an old friend, Irving Ilmer of the Fine Arts Quartet, who was equally adept at both instruments and wanted a work in which he could demonstrate the facility with which he could change from one to the other and back again. The only restriction he imposed was that I should not ask him to change instruments in the middle of a movement. That I consciously chose to be influenced by Baroque antecedents in writing unaccompanied music for these instruments is evident, I think, not only from the titles of the individual movements, as well as of the work as a whole, but from their musical character as well. I had written almost a third of the *Prelude* before I knew whether it would be for violin or viola since to that

point the compass was within the range of either. This gave me a clue for the *Finale* which commences with exactly the same music but replaces a descent below the open G string by an ascending figure. If the work sounds rather "tonal" this has nothing to do with the system of "12-tone tonality" which is the basis of my harmonic language in general. In spite of the highly chromatic character of the piece, there seem to be triadic reference points and one might even say that the work as a whole is in G minor. It ends, however, as any Baroque composition in G minor would have done, on a G Major triad.

-George Perle

Six Celebratory Inventions

The six short pieces that make up George Perle's *Celebratory Inventions* were all composed as separate works and grouped for the first performance, which was given by Russell Sherman in Boston on January 17, 1997. Perle composed the first Invention as an independent piece that had not been published or performed before he received an invitation to contribute to the eighty-fifth birthday celebration of Ernst Krenek, so he offered this two-part invention as his gift. This suggested the idea of composing such a work for other composers' significant birthdays. Four of them – Dutilleux, Schuller, Knussen and Bernstein – were musicians whom he met or with whom he worked at Tanglewood, where he



Leonard Bernstein, George Perle
Tanglewood, 1981

was three times composer-in-residence, and where he has spent his summers for many years.

BassoonMusic

BassoonMusic (2004) is the last composition to have been completed by George Perle. Commissioned by Steven Dibner, the San Francisco Symphony's associate principal bassoonist, *BassoonMusic* is Perle's second work for solo bassoon, the first being the *Three Inventions* of 1962. From the outset of this six minute long work, Perle delights in the juxtaposition of highly contrasting musical ideas. Initially, a jocular staccato figure is followed by a lyrical and tender melody, both of which are immediately repeated. What follows is a masterful expansion of these materials into a work that uses the bassoon's different registral 'personalities' to create music that is at once playful, nostalgic and referential.

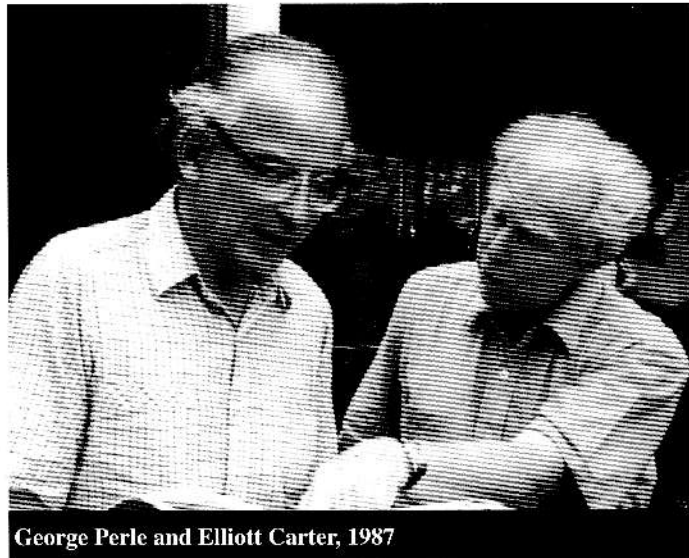
-David Starobin

Quintet for Strings

The *String Quintet*, begun in 1957 and completed in February of 1958, is scored for two violins, two violas and cello. Its dedication is "in memory of Laura Slobe." The opening bars of the sonata-like first movement (*Allegro*) present material which will be used for the entire work- a descending scalar melodic line, sustained pedal tones, and melodic thirds. In the second movement, a scherzo, melodic thirds reminiscent of the opening figuration of the first movement form the main theme. These thirds appear three times in the course of the shortest movement of the quintet. The elaborate slow movement, marked *Adagio (Variations)*, is the focal point of the composition. Describing this movement, Carl Sigmon writes that "a declamatory cry opens and dominates

the movement- a cry so stark that it must be repeated; there is no answer but itself." The last movement of the work, an *Allegro*, is free and melodic, developing, yet again, material from the opening of the quintet. As the movement progresses, it is clear that the prevailing mood of the slow third movement is still the dominant force. The *Allegro* winds down in tempo and mood until a final reflective coda, marked *molto adagio*, brings the piece to a stark and questioning conclusion.

-David Starobin



George Perle and Elliott Carter, 1987

Executive Producers: David and Becky Starobin

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Photograph of George Perle and Horacio Gutiérrez: Becky Starobin

All compositions: ASCAP

Nine Bagatelles: Recorded March 24, 2005, at the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, New York City; Produced and engineered by Adam Abeshouse; Editor: Silas Brown; Published by Galaxy Music Corp./ECS Publishing

Three Inventions: Recorded April 13, 2005, at the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, New York City; Produced and engineered by Adam Abeshouse; Editor: Silas Brown; Published by Theodore Presser Company

Adagietto con affetto from *Chansons Cachées*: Recorded March 24, 2005, at the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters; Produced and engineered by Adam Abeshouse; Editor: Silas Brown; Published by Galaxy Music Corp./ECS Publishing

Two French Christmas Carols: Recorded April 17, 2005, at the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters; Producer: David Starobin; Engineer: Adam Abeshouse; Editor: Silas Brown; Published by Galaxy Music Corp./ECS Publishing

Triptych: Recorded June 17, 2003, at the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters; Produced and Engineered by Judith Sherman; Editing assistant: Jeanne Velonis; Published by Galaxy Music Corp./ECS Publishing

Brief Encounters (String Quartet No. 9): Recorded March 11, 2005, at DePaul University School of Music; Chicago; Producer/Engineer: Thomas Miller
Editor: Mark Yoshizumi; Published by Galaxy Music Corp./ECS Publishing

Concerto No. 2 for Piano and Orchestra: Recorded February 7, 1993, at Maurice Abravanel Hall, Salt Lake City, Utah; Producer/Editor: Brad Michel
Engineer: John Newton (Soundmirror, Inc.); Originally released on Harmonia Mundi HMU 907124, courtesy of Michael Boriskin; Publisher: Galaxy Music Corp./ECS Publishing

Serenade No. 3 for Piano and Chamber Orchestra: Recorded November 15, 1983, Rutgers Church, New York City; Produced and Engineered by Marc Aubort and Joanna Nickrenz, (Elite Recordings, Inc.); Originally released on Nonesuch 79108-2, courtesy of Nonesuch Records; Publisher: Galaxy Music Corp./ECS Publishing

Partita for Violin and Viola: Recorded on April 5, 2005 at the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, New York City; Produced and engineered by Judith Sherman; Engineering and editing assistant: Jeanne Velonis; Published by Galaxy Music Corp./ECS Publishing

Six Celebratory Inventions: Recorded September 10, 2005, KAS/Mastersound, Astoria, New York; Producer: David Starobin; Engineer: David Merrill; Editor: Silas Brown; Publisher: Galaxy Music Corp./ECS Publishing

Bassoon Music: Recorded April 13, 2005 at the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, New York City; Producer: David Starobin; Engineer: Adam Abeshouse; Editor: Silas Brown; (From the composer's manuscript)

Quintet for Strings: Producer: George Perle; Engineer: Eric Arunas; Editor: Wayne Hileman, Squires Productions, Inc.; Published by Boelke-Bomart Publications

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