WORKS FOR SOLO PIANO AND CHAMBER ENSEMBLE
WITH PIANO OF PAUL SCHOENFIELD

by

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A Document Submitted to the Faculty of the
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS
In the Graduate College
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

1980
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

I hereby recommend that this document prepared under my direction by RONALD SLOAN
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Acceptance for the School of Music:

Director, Graduate Studies in Music

Date
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CHAPTER 1

A BIOGRAPHY

Paul Schoenfield is currently composer in residence at the University of Toledo. He is a composer of music for virtually all media, but has a special affinity for music of his own instrument, the piano. His works have been performed in concerts throughout the United States and Europe, broadcast on network television, and heard on recordings. As is often the case with today's serious composers, his abilities are channeled into musical areas besides composition. He has had a distinguished performing career, appearing as soloist with orchestras throughout the United States and in solo and chamber recitals throughout the United States and Europe. He has won numerous major competitions including the Leonard Bernstein Competition, National Young Artist's Award, and the Southwest Pianist's Foundation Competition. As a university professor he has taught a variety of courses encompassing the spectrum of music curriculum: composition, piano, music literature, analysis, counterpoint, chamber music, and music education.

Schoenfield was born on January 24, 1947 in Detroit, Michigan. His serious musical studies began with the Israeli composer and pianist Julius Chajes. Perhaps the musical highpoint of his younger years was his appearance as soloist with Leonard Bernstein and the New York
Philharmonic on national television in 1966. In 1967, he received a Bachelor of Music degree from Converse College, in 1968 a Master of Fine Arts degree from Carnegie-Mellon University, and in 1970 a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from The University of Arizona. His major teachers in composition have been Nikolai Lopatnikoff and Robert Muczynski, and in piano, Ozan Marsh and Rudolf Serkin.
Schoenfield's compositions are startling in their immense diversity. This is a result of his constant desire to grow and willingness to experiment. His output thus far can be divided into three categories: his early student works, his experimental works, and works displaying a jazz influence.

His childhood compositions are modeled on the simpler works of Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert. But Schoenfield also incorporated changing meters, whole tone scales, and bitonality. These techniques were not learned from twentieth century masters but were discovered through the insatiable curiosity of a child. The composer recalls deriving perverse pleasure from playing the *Sonata in C Major* by Mozart in C in the right hand and C-sharp in the left. He also relates that soon after he first encountered the piano he had developed a sophisticated repertoire of sounds from inside the instrument.

As Schoenfield became more aware of the music of his day, his compositions became increasingly complex and dissonant. During this time, he composed for large musical forces, including electronic instruments. The culminating work of this period was the *Concerto Grosso* for *Large Orchestra* composed in 1972. In this work, the composer felt he had taken atonality and ear-splitting volume to their limits.
The Burlesque for Saxophone, Trumpet, and Bass, composed in 1972, was a pivotal work in Schoenfield's output. Through this work, he discovered an ability to communicate using jazz and rock elements. While all the works since the Burlesque have been in this accessible idiom, they remain serious works of art. Their motivic development is complex and the technical demands made upon the performer are formidable.
CHAPTER 3
SPECIAL PIANISTIC CONSIDERATIONS

There are several pianistic features which Schoenfield tends to include in his works regardless of the style of the composition. Often they result from a certain fluency the composer has in executing a technical problem.

Perhaps his favorite device is the repeated-note pattern. This refers to striking a key several times in rapid succession. As most pianists realize, this is best achieved by continually alternating the fingers used to strike the key. The composer himself admits to a natural ability in performing this difficult pattern. The pattern is in the Sonata No. 2, Shikou, and the Country Fiddle Pieces.

Figure 1. Shikou, m. 31

Figure 2. "Who Let the Cat Out Last Night" from Country Fiddle Pieces, ms. 194-196
Throughout Schoenfield's music, the pianist is called upon to execute wide leaps at a rapid tempo. Good examples of this are in the left hand accompaniments in the Sonata No. 2 and the Country Fiddle Pieces. These accompaniments call to mind the stride bass of Fats Waller, a favorite performer of the composer.

Figure 3. Sonata No. 2, ms. 1-4

Figure 4. "Who Let the Cat Out Last Night" from Country Fiddle Pieces, ms. 81-83

Schoenfield uses the damper pedal aggressively, not just as a connector. Long Passages are often blurred by the pedal to create a special effect.
Figure 5. Sonata No. 14, ms. 4-3

The glissando is used in surprising ways by Schoenfield. In Shikou, there are fast and slow glissandi and one in sevenths. In the Sonata No. 14 there is a glissando on the strings. However, the tone cluster glissando in the Country Fiddle Pieces is the most unique. The pianist must, with one hand, glissando on both the black and white keys simultaneously. Use of the inside of the hand is the only possible method.

More unusual aspects of Schoenfield's piano writing will be discussed in connection with the unusual Sonata No. 14.
CHAPTER 4

SONATA NO. 2 FOR PIANO

The Sonata No. 2 for Piano, composed in 1956, provides a graphic indication of Schoenfield's early musical gifts. The work is in three movements: Alegro non troppo, Moderato, and Poco allegretto.

In the first two movements, Schoenfield displays a mastery of form and natural lyricism. However, it is in the third movement where he first demonstrates inventiveness and a pungent wit. This movement, which is in rondo form, is not specifically programmatic, but is meant to create the general aura of the circus. The A major opening theme is notable for its leaping quasi-ostinato bass accompaniment and numerous rubato indications. After its initial statement, the theme is abruptly transposed to B-flat major and stated again. This sudden jolt, reminiscent of Schubert's unprepared modulations, gives the theme new life. A descending whole tone scale in octaves serves as a bridge modulating to the second section. This bridge, marked ironico, recurs with increasing importance throughout the movement. The composer admitted that at age nine he was unable to perform this difficult figure because of the rapid octave technique required.

The second section, when analyzed hands separately is childlike in its simplicity. The interesting feature is the continuation of the B-flat major tonality in the left hand against the G-flat major tonality in the right. This creates a mischievous effect especially when combined with the weak beat accents.

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At the conclusion of this section, the left hand slides down chromatically from B-flat to join the right hand in G-flat. This brings about a restatement of the opening theme embroidered with triplet sixteenth-note runs.

The third thematic section is totally foreign in character to the rest of the movement. Its pulsating sixteenth-note motion is remarkably similar to the Toccata by Prokofieff.
No tonal center is established because of the extensive chromaticism and diminished harmonies.

The first theme returns, this time in C major, after two tantalizing false starts: one in B-flat major and one in D major. The intensity of the music is gradually increased by the thickening texture and louder dynamics. The movement is brought to a riotous conclusion when the descending whole tone scale is stated in four octaves simultaneously.

This movement presents definite musical and technical problems to the performer. The wide leaps, rapid repeated-note figures and octave scales must be executed with playful ease. The extensive rubato should sound spontaneous and not disrupt the overall flow. Perhaps most importantly, each return of the initial rondo theme must be given a slightly different inflection if the vitality of the movement is to be maintained.
CHAPTER 5

SONATA NO. 14 FOR PIANO

The Sonata No. 14 for Piano was composed in October of 1965. This work represents the composer's sensitivity to musical trends of the 1960's. The rhythmic complexities of Bartok and Stravinsky are placed in an avant-garde context. While such factors as meter and exact pitch become unimportant, the composer is able to retain control of the music with the help of explicit dynamic and expression markings.

An obvious prerequisite to a study of the piece is a familiarity with its nontraditional notation. In passages having stems without noteheads, random pitches in the direction of the stems should be played.

Figure 9. Sonata No. 14 (Notation), m. 46
Figure 10. Sonata No. 14 (Possible Realization), m. 46
In passages marked with alternating long and short stems, refer back to the previous written notes of different pitch. The long stems refer to the higher note.

Figure 11. Sonata No. 14 (Notation), ms. 18-20

Figure 12. Sonata No. 14 (Realization), ms. 18-20
Notes with a bracket next to them are to be played as chromatic tone clusters with the two written notes being the highest and lowest of the cluster.
A sharp or flat next to a bracket means to play all the black keys within the outer pitches and a natural means to play all the white keys. A wavy line signifies a continuation of the pattern of the preceding group of notes. A wavy line with an arrow means to move the entire pattern in the direction of the arrow.
The first movement is based on the introduction of four musical ideas and their subsequent combinations. The opening lento section states and repeats an ascending chromatic figure which ends in a long trill. The chromaticism, long trills, repetition, and blurred pedaling combine to create a mystical atmosphere. This mood is abruptly shattered by a series of rapidly ascending and descending fortissimo tone clusters. The rapidly ascending and descending figure is perhaps the predominate musical idea of the movement, either in tone cluster or single note form. The third musical idea is the use of the piano as a percussive instrument. Tone clusters at the lower extremity of the keyboard are to be played in intense syncopation.

From this point on, the various ideas are combined in different registers and dynamics. For example, the mystical lento theme, now stated in the bass, is suspended over the ascending and descending figure.

Figure 16. Sonata No. 14 (Possible Realization), m. 58
The fourth musical idea, marked moderato, appears midway through the movement. This theme is also quoted and developed in the last movement. It is difficult to execute because its metronome marking, dotted quarter note equals 104, is at variance with its accompaniment which is marked quarter note equals 138.

The movement concludes with the ascending and descending figure in its most bombastic version and the percussive figure in its most dissonant one.

The second movement, marked Lentissimo, evokes a terrifying eeriness. A simple chantlike melody is accompanied by various tone cluster accompaniments. Each statement of the theme becomes increasingly oppressive in character. Finally, the music degenerates into an ostinato of low bass tone clusters.

At this point, the moderato theme from the first movement is to be played by a clarinet in A from offstage. The clarinetist is instructed to produce a very hollow sound, "possibly like a mass of people slowly marching to a dungeon." The clarinet develops this theme while making a huge crescendo and decrescendo. The piano continues the cluster accompaniment and matches the dynamics of the clarinet.

What happens next is best described by quoting from the instructions in the score to the pianist. "Improvise a section lasting about two minutes which leads to the coda. This must not be a
contrasting section to the coda. A soft tonal melody with an accompaniment of two note chords, mostly fourths, fifths, and thirds would be very appropriate. The melody and accompaniment should both be in a range above middle C, but never let the right hand melody go into a tinny range."

The movement ends peacefully with a tonal setting of the first theme.

Improvisation has always been a meaningful activity for Schoenfield. His fluency as a improvisor has often aided his compositional processes. However, this fluency is not common among today's formally trained pianists. For these pianists the sonata will pose problems, but could also be therapeutic. By working out the improvisatory elements of this piece with creativity and good taste, the pianist is exercising a muscle that has gone unused far too long.
"Shikou" is a Japanese word meaning thoughts. It is the title of a suite of five pieces composed in 1968. The composer took as his inspiration the name of a friend, Mikiko. The rhythm of this name, two short syllables and one elongated syllable, serves as the unifying device for the entire work. The rhythm usually appears in conjunction with a particular pair of intervals: a major third, played harmonically, descending a minor third to another major third. The figure is stated in many settings throughout Shikou. Schoenfield does not try to write a set of strict variations based on this figure. Rather, he used it as a starting point for his flights of imagination. They are variations, not in letter but in spirit.

The first piece is marked lento and includes many fermatas. The instructions in the score are to make the fermatas "extremely long." The result of all this slowness is to create a state of hypnotic timelessness. Still there is a danger of lingering too long over every individual sound and losing feeling for the piece as a whole. The performer must consider where he is headed and the listener must remember where he has been. Generally, the piece stays within the pianissimo dynamic range. Because of this, the few loud moments are especially dramatic. The Mikiko motive is stated in many different ways: slowly, quickly, loudly, softly, and in different combinations.
Sometimes it crescendos and sometimes it decrescendos. Once it is in inverted form. The middle section of the piece contains a brief portion of music to be performed inside of the piano. It begins with a gently rising and falling glissando. This can best be achieved by using the flesh of the finger in a circular motion over the strings. Then a repeating two note figure is to be played by tapping the strings with the fingers.

The short second piece is introductory to the third. It is more tonal and homophonic than the other pieces in the suite. The Mikiko motive appears only once and it is in an inverted form. A clever damper pedal effect is obtained at the end of the piece. It is produced when a series of widely spaced melodic intervals is sustained by the damper pedal. While the damper is being held, an appoggiatura chord is struck and the pedal is gradually released. Layers of sound are stripped away leaving the appoggiatura chord to sound alone. When the sound has almost disappeared, the resolution occurs.

![Figure 17. Shikou, ms. 25-30](image-url)
The third piece is a depiction of a wondrous fairy tale. A simple melody is spun out over a gently rocking accompaniment of perfect fifths. The meter changes to accommodate the peculiar whims of the melody. The Mikiko figure dances, high up in the faraway treble regions. An escaping glissando travels to the highest pitch on the piano and arrives with a bang. This piece has no ending. It continues on somewhere beyond the perception of earthlings. For a pianist to accurately portray this piece he must have the control to play a soft legato melody over a softer accompaniment. Also it requires courage to hold down both the una corda and damper pedals with infrequent changes.

The fourth piece, marked Allegro moderato, is a grotesque etude. The opening three measures contain all the thematic material used in the piece. These measures are harmonized almost exclusively in major sevenths and contain four altered statements of the Mikiko motive. This material is developed throughout the piece, contrapuntally. Midway through the piece, a curious moment occurs when an E-Flat is repeated fifty-three times in succession. The Mikiko motive appears in its most agitated setting during an extended stringendo. This stringendo climaxes with a statement of the opening theme in the left hand against a descending glissando in sevenths in the right. Towards the end, the only soft passage of the piece occurs as the left hand executes a nine measure chain trill. The main requirements for performing this piece are a rhythmic incisiveness and a highly developed athletic ability.
The final piece is a moderately strict retrograde of the first piece. Occasional alterations and deletions are made to make this piece successful in its own right. For example, the first four measures of this piece are not an exact retrograde of the final four measures of the first piece.

Figure 18. Shikou (Last Piece), ms. 31-33

Figure 19. Shikou (First Piece), ms. 1-4
CHAPTER 7

COUNTRY FIDDLER PIECES

In recent years, Schoenfield has become increasingly active as a chamber music performer. In 1973 and 1974, he participated in the highly-acclaimed "Music from Marlboro" series. His latest recording consists of violin and piano works of Dvorak, Janacek, and Smetana. It is logical, given his experience as a chamber music performer and his recent interest in the jazz idiom, that most of his later works are chamber music pieces. Jazz, in its most vibrant form, is often a dialogue between skilled improvisors. The Country Fiddle Pieces, while structurally tightly organized, succeed in sounding like such a dialogue.

The Country Fiddle Pieces are three short works for piano and violin. Two of the three works will be discussed: Who Let the Cat Out Last Night and Pining for Betsy.

Who Let the Cat Out Last Night is unrelenting in its energetic perpetual motion. There is hardly a measure without constant sixteenth-note motion. The form of the piece is difficult to categorize. Several musical ideas are introduced and developed, but they are not organized into distinct sections. As Arnold Schonberg described much of his own music, this piece could be termed a continuous development. The virtuosic figurations of the master country fiddlers are the
important thematic material. Fiddling done here, however, is not entirely traditional. It is often highly chromatic and has frequent meter changes.

Figure 20. "Who Let the Cat Out Last Night?"
from Country Fiddle Pieces, ms. 80-83

The piano offers support and angularity with dissonant syncopated chords. Occasionally, the piano takes up the fiddle material and accompanies itself with a stride bass. In fact, it is the fiddle imitations by the piano which cause the greatest technical problems. The piano is not as adept at executing fast sliding figures as the violin. A fingering with few hand grouping shifts is a necessity. Also the pianist's touch must be light to facilitate speed, maintain a playful mood and, of course, to not drown out the violin.

A violin melody of tied half notes and triplet quarter notes acts as a lyrical contrasting theme. The piano accompanies this melody with arpeggiated figurations in a blues harmony. The blues sound is achieved through the predominance of minor seventh intervals.
and the constant alternation between major and minor thirds. Later in the piece when this lyrical theme reappears, the piano accompanies it with repeated notes and weaves in moments of imitative counterpoint. An ascending triadic arpeggio plays an important role. Throughout the piece, it is transposed, stated in thirds, and set in bitonal harmony. The piece concludes with a piano passage which quotes the concluding passage of Franck's *Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major*.

![Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major](image)

Figure 21. *Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major*
BY Franck, ms. 230-232

!["Franck"](image)

Figure 22. "Who Let the Cat out Last Night" from *Country Fiddle Pieces*, ms. 206-208
In this piece, the goal of the performers is to sustain frantic energy. The meter changes should be delineated, but in a way that intensifies and not disrupts the momentum. Balance is a definite problem because both performers must give an illusion of wild abandonment, yet remain sensitive to the other's musical line.

One of the problems Schoenfield has faced is the difficulty in communicating serious musical ideas using the jazz idiom. Many of his jazz works, while complex in structure, have been light-hearted in character. Schoenfield addresses this problem in Pining for Betsy which he considers his finest work.

The first measure of the piece contains the principle motive to be developed, an ascending and descending minor third. In its initial statement, the motive possesses a certain poignancy, due in part to a tritone accompaniment. After the first measure, there is a piano interlude which is introductory in character. Throughout the interlude the minor third interval is dominant.

Suddenly the meter changes from simple to compound; the violin reappears; and the main body of the piece begins. The tempo marking here also describes the character, a slow swing. The violin melody is mournful; emulating the style of the blues singers. It is extremely syncopated and often scoops up to and tails away from pitches. Although the meter is usually compound, occasionally simple meter is injected. There are even instances when the violin and piano are in different meters simultaneously.
Major and minor thirds are still dominant melodically while half steps and minor ninthths become important harmonically.

The mournful character of the music gradually becomes one of agitation as an extended stringendo occurs. The initial three note motive reappears in an intense stretto. A climax is reached when the piano plays fortissimo thirty-second notes in both hands. Slowly the tension dissipates as the violin concludes the section with a pianissimo phrase to be played out of tune.

There is a moderately long coda which is similar to the opening piano music. The piece ends with a succession of unadorned statements of the three tone motive.
CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSION

One of the interesting activities in the consideration of the work of a living composer is to speculate about his future artistic endeavors. This is difficult in the case of Paul Schoenfield. On the surface, it seems that his music, because of its diversity, is not progressing in any one direction. Yet in each work one can sense his desire to be relevant to his times while maintaining high artistic standards. The only safe prediction for the future is that he will continue to compose with that in mind.
APPENDIX A

LIST OF WORKS BY PAUL SCHOENFIELD

Divertimento for Orchestra (1968)
Quintet for Piano and Strings (1969)
Trio #2 for Piano, Violin, and Cello (1969)
Shikou, Five Pieces for Piano (1969)
Two German Songs, for Soprano, Flute, Cello, and Piano (1969)
Sextet for Piano and Winds (1970)
Serenade, for Four Solo Voices and Orchestra (1970)
Sonata for Oboe and Electric Organ (1970)
Three Songs, for Soprano and Piano (1971)
Concerto Grosso, for Large Orchestra (1971-1972)
"Beulah's Boobs," Burlesque for Saxophone, Trumpet, Percussion, and Piano (1972)
Chamber Symphony (1973)
Rock Sonata for Amplified Cello and Piano (1973)
Te Deum for Amplified Piano and Orchestra (1976)
Country Fiddle Pieces (1978)
REFERENCES

Material for this document was obtained in conversations with Paul Schoenfield and Ozan Marsh.