

BERND FRANKE

DREI ORCHESTERSTÜCKE (1980-83)

Première: 6.10.1984, Gewandhaus Leipzig, Gewandhaus Festival

Orchestra: Gewandhausorchester, Kurt Masur

Duration: 16'

Publisher: Breitkopf & Härtel Wiesbaden, Paris, Leipzig

Instrumentation: 3.3.3.3. - 4.3.3.1. - Tmp.Perc(3) – Hrp - Strings

The *Three Orchestral Pieces* were my first composition for a full orchestra.

I started work on them at the beginning of my final year at the Leipzig Conservatory, in autumn 1980, and the third piece was completed in spring 1983 during my period as *Meisterschüler* in the Berlin Academy of Arts.

The three pieces are short, each of about five minutes duration, the movements formally clear, and each possessing a specific compositional character.

The main aspect of the composition lies in its thematically tonal and dramaturgically formal structure. The first piece is in the form of a *rondo*, a quiet introspective introduction by the brass being offset by the rhythmically differentiated structure of the woodwind. The nervous minimalistic rhythm of the woodwind expands several times in a crescendo above a tonal carpet of strings. These episodes are interrupted twice by the brass, which recall their introspective introduction. The movement ends in a fortissimo from the full orchestra.

The second movement is dominated by the disintegration of the tempo. The quiet beginning by the percussion is interrupted by an ever increasing tonal wave from the woodwind. These waves flow into a trombone solo which is accompanied by quiet notes from the strings. In the middle of the piece the brass recall in a choral nature the introduction of the first movement. After this reminiscence the woodwind takes the lead, this time as reducing waves above a trombone solo, which begins a dialogue with a solo horn. The piece ends quietly and with restraint.

The third movement is the most rhythmic and dynamic. In an introduction the brass present a theme, the distinguishing characteristics of which are tension-laden intervals such as a major seventh, minor ninth and tritonus. This theme is varied; at the beginning a rhythm from the percussion runs underneath the woodwind and strings with unison horns which grow in melody and dynamic, and after being twice interrupted by intermezzi from the full orchestra, rushes in a short *stretta* to a *reprise* of the introductory material.

The movement ends in a twelve-tone-chord in which the brass motif from the introduction is once again heard.

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Bernd Franke

Translation from the German text: W.D. Bengree-Jones, 2001

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