

Robert Russell Bennett
Chamber Music



The Six Souvenirs
for Two Flutes and One Piano
(1948)

Janet Schlein Somers and Paul Mack Somers, editors



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John Wummer



Mildred Hunt Wummer

The Six Souvenirs for Two Flutes and One Piano were written in 1948 for, and premiered by **John Wummer** (1899-1977) and his wife **Mildred Hunt Wummer** with Bennett at the piano at Chamber Music Hall, City Center, New York. In it he honors his flute-playing friends, who just happened to be some of the most distinguished flutists of the twentieth century.



Brown Schoenheit

Brown Schoenheit moved into the room next door to Bennett at the Manhattan YMCA shortly after they both arrived in 1916. He just happened to be from Kansas City, Missouri, had spent two years studying flute and harmony with the first and second flutists of the Boston Symphony, and was in New York City to study with Georges Barrère. His puckish personality helped Bennett get over any homesickness he may have had and introduced Bennett to Barrère and members of his flute class. Before this period Bennett had written largely piano pieces, but his new acquaintance inspired him to write *Rondo Capriccioso* for flute quartet as well as a number of other fine works for the instrument. After his stint with Barrère, Schoenheit returned to Kansas City where he became principal flute with the Kansas City Symphony until his front teeth were knocked out in an accident and he could no longer play well. Oddly enough, there is now a scholarship for instrumental music study in his name at the University of Alaska, Anchorage. The “Souvenir” for Schoenheit skips along jauntily with syncopation and hemiola showing his lively wit and personality.



Georges Barrère

Georges Barrère (1876-1944), the brilliant but unassuming founder of the “American” school of flute playing, was a product of the Paris Conservatoire and studied flute with Paul Taffanel. After playing with the orchestra of the Paris Opéra as well as several other groups, Walter Damrosch in 1905 asked him to play principal with the New York Symphony Orchestra (today’s New York Philharmonic), where he remained until his death. His “Souvenir” is serene and melodic, reflecting the traits which made him the premier flutist of his time.



Harry V. Baxter

Harry V. Baxter (ca. 1882-1960), founder of Baxter-Northup Music Co. in Los Angeles and a founder of the Los Angeles Flute Club, and his wife E. Emilie Baxter (ca. 1883-1955, pianist and composer) were first introduced to Bennett by Quinto Maganini in 1926 while living in Passy, France. In 1930 the Bennetts sailed to Los Angeles with Jerome Kern and his family on the Kern’s sailboat and were met by the Baxters when they arrived in California. Bennett depicts the “barn dance” as a swinging, foot-stomping good time.



William "Billy" Kincaid

William "Billy" Kincaid (1895-1967), one of the most admired players of his time and the long-time principal flutist of the Philadelphia Orchestra, continued the Barrère tradition. His "Souvenir" has a somewhat tipsy character, perhaps suggesting the long-time battle with the alcoholism which was the primary cause of his death.



Quinto Maganini



Lamar Stringfield

Quinto Maganini (1897-1974), a Barrère student, was a composer and arranger of music for flute, and the founder of his own chamber orchestra in Norwalk, CT. It was he who, while they were on the ship to France in 1926, persuaded Bennett to study with Nadia Boulanger. And Lamar Stringfield (1897-1959), was also a member of Barrère's class, a composer, conductor and proponent of Southern folk music. Both are depicted by Bennett in a languidly chromatic nocturne which includes a solo passage for the pianist, Bennett himself.



Verne Q. Powell



Edward V. Powell

Verne Q. Powell (1878-1968), founded his own company in 1927 and produced flutes and piccolos which are still in demand today. His son Eddie (Edward V., 1903-1986), was the inventor of the Orkon, a cross between a flute and recorder. They must have had a good time joking around, as Bennett depicts them taking turns talking then bursting into raucous laughter.

To get a colorful picture of Bennett and a witty and amusing recounting of the music scene during the first three quarters of the twentieth century, read his *The Broadway Sound* (edited and annotated by George J. Ferencz. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2001, ©1999).

Robert Russell Bennett (1894-1981) led — for some seven decades — an active professional life, both as orchestrator of others' music and as composer of a long list of concert works. He is reputed to have orchestrated all or part of some 300 Broadway and London productions between 1920 and 1976, and turned out hundreds of other published arrangements during his lifetime...

Spending the duration of his professional career almost entirely in New York City, Bennett made his acquaintance with those on both 'sides' of the music business: [Jerome] Kern and [George] Gershwin on one hand, and [Sergei] Rachmaninoff, [Leopold] Stokowski, and [Fritz] Reiner on the other. The great majority of his pieces were given New York premieres in the hands of prominent conductors, orchestras, and soloists.

Bennett made it clear to Kern and other songwriters that his personal preferences in music lay with the classics; though he was viewed as something of a 'snob' by his Broadway associates for this reason, he saw the popular music industry as merely a money-making venture, with popular songs just another commercial commodity. This did not prevent him, however, from establishing a reputation for tastefulness, creativity, and restraint in his commercial scoring; for several decades he was acknowledged as the leading practitioner in his field.— George J. Ferencz. *Robert Russell Bennett, a Bio-Bibliography*. Greenwood Press, 1990. p. ix.

The Maurice River Press Robert Russell Bennett Project

This series is devoted to Bennett's unpublished works, undertaken with the permission of his estate, administered by his grandson, Kean MacDonald. We are grateful for the always supportive and cheerfully given aid of the Bennett scholar George Ferencz of the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater, and to the music librarian Gregory MacAyeal of the Music Library at Northwestern University, who at all times carefully and expertly aided in the procuring of the various Bennett manuscripts, some from the 1920s needing restoration before being turned over to us.

The Editors

Janet Schlein Somers graduated with a Bachelors in Music performance (flute) from San Francisco State University and with a Masters in Library Science from California State University at Berkeley. She subsequently was a music cataloger at Cornell University's Olin Library, was the head cataloger at the Juilliard School, consultant in setting up the music library at the Hebrew Arts School of the Kaufman Center in New York, and Luce Cataloger at the Westminster Choir College of Rider University in Princeton. She also earned a M.A. in Music from Montclair State University in New Jersey. For many years she was a freelance flutist in North Jersey. She now plays with the Bay Atlantic Symphony.

Paul Mack Somers (b. 1942) studied composition with Warren Benson and George Andrix at Ithaca College Conservatory, and participated in master classes with Norman Dello Joio under a Ford Foundation Grant. Somers has composed theatric, vocal, choral, chamber, and orchestral music. His music has been performed in Lincoln Center, Weill Hall in Carnegie Hall, and Ars Vitalis.

Commissioners include Palisades Virtuosi, Brett Deubner, Ellen Hassman, Ron Levy, Michiko Otaki, and the Jacques Cousteau Center for Estuarine Research for a young audience work related to the ecology of the Delaware Bay. He has also composed various solo instrumental works over the years, available on the CD "Sonatas and More" by Maurice River Press (MRP1502). He and his wife Janet live along the Maurice River near Mauricetown, New Jersey.

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Six Souvenirs

for Two Flutes and One Piano

5

Duration: c. 14'

ROBERT RUSSELL BENNETT

(1894-1981)

I.

(...thinking of Brown Schoenheit)

Edited by Janet S. Somers

and Paul M. Somers

Allegro con ritmo (♩ = 104)

Flute 1

Flute 2

Piano

6

11

1

1

mf

f

16

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

mp

Pno.

mp

21

2

Fl. 1

mf

Fl. 2

mf

Pno.

p

mf legato

26

Fl. 1

f

Fl. 2

f

Pno.

31

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Pno. *mf*

35

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Pno. *f* *dim.*

41

Fl. 1 *sonoro*

Fl. 2 *sonoro*

Pno. *p*

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Pno.

48



Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Pno.

55

4

4

f

p



Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Pno.

62

mf

mf

mf dim.

