

Hornarama Code 27023

Stephen A. Berg – Parking Meter

Introduction

How does one spend a life that started out so? His father tried out his compositions, in various styles, with his own children. Such experiences in childhood can (but must not) lead one to the realization that music is a very natural thing, a medium of selfexpression, a kind of language of its own. This was the deciding experience for **Stephen Anderson Berg**, realizing that he wanted to have to do with music. The further course of his life was thus determined: Born in Bremerton (Washington State USA) in 1945, he studied music education, french horn and history at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, served as a french horn player in the US-Army and was sent to Germany, Fulda, in that capacity. He stayed there and studied french horn further at the »Hochschule für Musik« in Cologne and later german schoolmusic at the »Hochschule für Musik« in Frankfurt. As french horn player he played in the »Südwestfälischen Philharmonie«, with the ensemble »Musica Negativa« and as one of the few free jazz hornists.

Since 1973 Stephen Anderson Berg is also teaching, first at the »Fachhochschule Fulda« and since 1976 at the »Musikhochschule der Stadt Fulda«. He teaches musictheorie, composition, history of the contemporary music, jazz piano, brass music and chorus.

If his music is to be understood as »music of life« as an expression of being alive, so — in this sense — his music is rightfully in place in the life of young people.

Have fun playing it!

For the editors of BRASS TOTAL: Christian Blümel, Münster (F. R. G.) September 1988

(Translation Evets Greb)

Foreword

Dear brass players!

After one look in the score, I am sure you will have seen that »Parking Meter« is a fast, hard-driving piece in f-minor. Play it with an aggressive bite — just think what can happen around a parking meter....

You six musicians should work and sound like a precision-unit. Phrasings, dynamics, intonation, tempi etc. need to be well coordinated, as if one person is playing. Somewhat utopic? Could be, but that is our goal! For those of you who want to experiment, here is a suggestion: play »Parking Meter« as if it were a ballad — with soft attacks, slowly, with as much emotional sensitivity as you can muster (here again, what can happen around a parking meter...?).

In other words, have no inhibitions about »playing« with the piece. Try out your ideas. If putting notes on paper is the business of the composer, the business of the musician is to bring life into the printed matter. How a piece is to be played is your field, even if I have my ideas about how I would like to hear it. There is a certain margin of freedom for interpretation. Don't let yourselves be degraded into »musicrobots«. That only are there to function perfectly. Use your thoughts, feelings and imagination to make a piece come alive. Such working out, trying out, is, of course, very satisfying.

One favor I do have: the noise (wind) passages and the couple of notes to be sung are not meant to be funny! They are meant simply as further techniques for marking sounds, for making music. Please don't make these passages silly. Instead, maybe remember that all jazz musicians sing, in fact, I don't know any good jazz musician who doesn't sing!

With the best wishes
Your Stephen Anderson Berg
Fulda (F. R. G.) summer 1988