

Mp3 Fredrick Hoffer - Cd# 18 Suite For Wind Instruments, #1



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Contemporary American Classical Music 17 MP3 Songs CLASSICAL: Contemporary, JAZZ: Dixieland

Details: My father was a musician. He and his wife, along with his younger brother, Emil, were part of an early Jazz band. They played dances and weddings and were well enough known to have a program on the radio station WGY, The General Electric Station, in Schenectady, NY. According to Cousin Esther, who knew them all, the band was called: "Emil Hoffer and his Hoff-Tones." My father, Fred, played the fiddle; his wife played the piano; and Emil played the trumpet. There may have been more. My father spoke very broken English, because he was already an adult when they came here from Switzerland. Can you picture a bunch of Swiss, practically right off the boat, and upstate farmers at that, playing Jazz in public way back in 1915! What could this have sounded like? I wish I knew. This all broke up long before I came along. My father's wife had a breakdown and died in an insane asylum. Emil became a helpless wino, who I was a little afraid of when my father brought me up to see him. At some point my father started the Frankfort (NY) Steam Laundry in order to make a living. He also played the big Sousaphone in the town military band. Dad re-married, and I was born in 1925. My parents were very nice, and I was fortunate to have them, but my father died in 1931, too early to teach me much. I was in the Army Air Force in World War II, but I was a little too young to get into any action. I was in the Army for seven years, and I tried to learn the piano, but it was far too difficult to find a place to practice, so I had to give it up. After the War I got caught up in the New York art scene. I attended the Art Students League, and got a job there as porter, which I still have to this day. I was part of the 10th Street movement in the fifties, and made many friends among the artists. For a while I ran my own gallery, and later on had shows in New York, New Orleans, and even in Brussels. From time to time I tried to get into music, but for one thing I just didn't

have the head to learn all that theory. For another thing, my fingers were very unruly. I always made mistakes. Then in 1992 I got another start, and this time I didn't try to do what I was supposed to. Instead I found my own way. I found I was able to take the experience I got from creating paintings and apply it to music. For one thing I now understood that mistakes are not all bad. In fact, they can be considered to be messages from God. You cover up the mistake by altering what comes after it, so that it all fits together, exactly as is done in a painting. The mistake is a guide to something new; something you could never have thought of on your own. The key to creativity is to accept whatever comes and make use of it. You can always change it later when you are no longer in a creative mood. When I first started music, I felt I would be lucky to get enough music to fill a single tape. I had no idea of what was ahead of me! As I went along, I found that I have a kind of tape recorder in my head. It's always going, and I can access the music at any time, but it's not clean. It's a ROAR, and I have to work fast to get it down. When I am finished, I am devastated! How could I have possibly done this terrible stuff! The next day, after I have removed the obvious mistakes, I begin to see the beauty that is there. Because this music is created in a different way, you may find it strange at first. You may have to listen to it a few times before the notes and the melodies become clear to you. This is pretty definitely not virtuoso music. I am not a virtuoso. No concert pianist will ever play my piano pieces, and no one will ever stand up and shout "Bravo!" There are no lightning trills or arpeggios. There are no quick runs up and down the scales to show how well it can be done. However, I find that this kind of ornamentation can be an end in itself, and that it can obscure what is in the music. It's true. It is nice, and we are used to it, but I can't give it to you. Instead I have tried to concentrate on the emotional content of the music, and that is what I have for you.

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