



DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Saturday, October 26, 2024 • 3:00 PM

JASON HUANG

Graduate Recital

Brennan Family Recital Hall
2330 North Halsted Street • Chicago

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Brennan Recital Hall

JASON HUANG, BASSOON

Graduate Recital

NATHAN CANFIELD, PIANO

PROGRAM

Jacques Ibert (1890-1962)
Carignane (1953)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Cello Suite No. 1 in G major, BWV 1007 (1717-1723)
I. Prelude
II. Allemande
III. Courante
IV. Sarabande
V. Menuet 1/Menuet II
VI. Gigue

Charles Koechlin (1867-1950)
Sonata for Bassoon and Piano, Op. 71 (1919)
I. Andante moderato – Allegretto Scherzando
II. Nocturne: Presque adagio
III. Final: Allegro, vigoureusement et rudiment rythmé

- Intermission -

William Grant Still (1895-1978); arr. Alexa Still
Songs for Bassoon and Piano (1944)
I. Bayou Home
II. If You Should Go
III. Song for the Lonely

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)
Bassoon Sonata, Op. 168 (1921)
I. Allegretto moderato
II. Allegro scherzando
III. Adagio – Allegro moderato

Jason Huang is from the studios of Miles Maner and William Buchman. This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the degree Master of Music.

As a courtesy to those around you, please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices. Flash photography is not permitted.

PROGRAM NOTES

Jacques Ibert (1890-1962)

Carignane (1953)

Duration: 2 minutes

Jacques Ibert was a French composer who began his musical training with learning the violin and piano. He took up composing after receiving his baccalaureat but supported himself mainly by giving instrumental lessons and accompanying singers. After winning the first prize in the Prix de Rome in 1919, Ibert's compositional career took off. Towards the end of his compositional output, Ibert began to explore more with individual instruments' unique timbre and color. This is clear in not only his orchestral works from the early 1950s, but also small chamber and duo pieces, like *Carignane*. Taking its name from a red grape variety found commonly in French wines, *Carignane* evokes imagery of a peaceful afternoon by the stream, enjoying a glass of said wine. Ibert highlights the bassoon's ability to sing and create different characters as the melody ebbs and flows over the calm foundation of a steady piano accompaniment. The piece communicates a feeling of constant, but unhurried motion by means of its interesting harmony, which never quite settles, even in the final chord. This leaves listeners curiously desiring more, yet content with not being completely satisfied, emphasizing the imagery of a light, carefree afternoon.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Cello Suite No. 1 in G major, BWV 1007 (1717-1723)

Duration: 14 minutes

Johann Sebastian Bach is easily one of the most influential composers in classical music with much of his music still being performed and analyzed today. While Bach was a keyboard virtuoso, finding success playing and composing for both the harpsichord and the organ, he also composed regularly for voice, leading to various Kapellmeister, or chapel choir master, appointments throughout Germany. Bach's claim to fame comes not only from his works for keyboard and voice, but also those written for orchestra, chamber, and solo instruments, primarily violin and cello. The Six Cello Suites all follow the same form, having six movements each based on a specific type of dance which serves as the title of their respective movements. These suites are ubiquitous in any serious cellist's musical education, serving as tools to teach technique in addition to musical interpretation and style. Performing a cello suite on bassoon, however, poses unique challenges that require creative solutions. Two particular challenges of note are the bassoonist's need to breathe, and the bassoonist's inability to sound multiple notes simultaneously as in the written double stops. Tackling these issues is difficult but overcoming them and performing a great piece of music is deeply fulfilling and worth the hard work.

Charles Koechlin (1867-1950)

Sonata for Bassoon and Piano, Op. 71 (1919)

Duration: 10 minutes

Charles Koechlin was a French composer that was better known during most of his lifetime as a theorist and writer. Koechlin's father, a wealthy textile designer, hoped that his son would be an artillery officer, but tuberculosis ended any possibility of Charles having a military career. Subsequently, Koechlin's interest in music grew, and he entered the Paris Conservatoire where he fell in love with the music of J.S. Bach. There he completed an in-depth study of his music, which provided inspiration for his compositional style (hence why I have paired these pieces on this program). While at the Conservatoire, Koechlin studied composition with Gabriel Fauré, whose influence can be seen throughout much of his output, the Bassoon Sonata being no exception. The harp-like arpeggiated chords in the piano at the beginning of the first movement, for example, are especially reminiscent of Fauré's music. This piece as a whole plays around with the listener's perception of time with seemingly random meter changes and the use of unconventional meters such as 6 ½ /4. Despite this non-traditional treatment of time, Koechlin never leaves the listener feeling lost and uses time in a way that highlights the humorous qualities of the bassoon.

William Grant Still (1895-1978); arr. Alexa Still

Songs for Bassoon and Piano (1944)

Duration: 9 minutes

William Grant Still, known as the "Dean of African American Composers", maintained a prolific musical career spanning about sixty years of arranging, performing, teaching, and composing. He began working in 1916, arranging and publishing songs for bandleader W.C. Handy, and soon began writing and publishing his own work in addition to playing in local musical pit orchestras. As he developed his skills in arranging, he took an interest in orchestration and started composing larger scale works such as symphonies, operas, and musicals while still writing and publishing songs. Alexa Still, a flutist from New Zealand and Professor of Flute at the Oberlin Conservatory, has taken a particular interest in William Grant Still's music and has made several recordings and arrangements of his chamber works and songs. These specific arrangements by Ms. Still highlight the somber tone of each song, making clever use of the bassoon's unique tone color in its various registers to communicate a sense of yearning. "If You Should Go", based on a poem by Countee Cullen and dedicated to author Joyce Hansen, is representative of Still's philosophy of championing the work of fellow African Americans, a theme that can be drawn through much of his long career.

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Bassoon Sonata, Op. 168 (1921)

Duration: 13 minutes

Camille Saint-Saëns was a French pianist, organist, and composer who began studying piano at the young age of three. By age ten, he was performing Beethoven and Mozart concertos from memory with cadenzas he wrote himself. After completing his education at the Paris Conservatoire in organ and composition, Saint-Saëns's reputation as a performer and composer began to grow, though he received backlash from critics for his support of Liszt and Schumann, who were at the time deemed too progressive. Saint-Saëns's skill in performing is undeniable, as is his compositional ability, evident through his popularity and the regularity with which his works are performed today. The Bassoon Sonata, one of the only Romantic-era solo pieces for bassoon, was his final composition and is representative of a blend of compositional styles. The three-movement form of a sonata was made popular during the Classical period by composers such as Haydn and Mozart, and features a fast-slow-fast arrangement of movements, with the first movement typically being in sonata form. Saint-Saëns's Bassoon Sonata however has a quasi four-movement structure of moderate-fast-slow-fast, with the first movement composed in a modified sonata form, displaying the larger trend held by many Romantic-era composers of experimenting with established tradition.

Notes by Jason Huang

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