DEPAUL UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Friday, November 11, 2022 • 7:00 PM

BRIAN MOOSE

Graduate Recital

Murray and Michele Allen Recital Hall
2330 North Halsted Street • Chicago
Brian Moose is from the studio of Alex Klein. 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. Masks are recommended, but not required inside the Holtschneider Performance Center.
Gilles Silvestrini (b. 1961)

Cinq Etudes Russes: ou Volteface (2014)

*Duration: 3 minutes, 30 seconds*

Silvestrini has become well-known for writing ambitious works for unaccompanied oboe, often taking the form of suites of five or six movements. This work is one in which each movement is written in homage to a great Russian composer such as Shostakovich, Scriabin, Rachmaninov, and Stravinsky. In addition to referencing the composer the movement is named after, each movement has some facet of extended or ‘extreme’ technique. From micro-trills and double tonguing to blistering tempos, Silvestrini has helped push the performance standards for oboists to new heights. The movement for Prokofiev has two small moments of double-tonguing, but mostly centers on an unrelenting pace that steps straight over fiery and deep into the territory most would call ‘bombastic’. While any connection with extended technique invites some trepidation for both the performer and audience, Silvestrini manages a brilliant combination of being tuneful and tasteful insanity that, while not traditionally melodic, pleasantly sits in the ear.

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Canzonetta (1935)

*Duration: 8 minutes*

Samuel Barber likely enjoys the greatest acclaim among American composers from his generation. His *Canzonetta* was originally commissioned by the New York Philharmonic to be a concerto for oboe. Unfortunately, shortly after beginning his work on his commission, Barber was diagnosed with cancer and died a few short years later. As a result of his diagnosis, his final work would be the second movement from this concerto, which he transitioned to a standalone piece under the new name of *Canzonetta*. Barber as a composer is known for a melodically driven style. Despite having never written a solo oboe work prior to this publication, he displays no lack of ability in utilizing the extreme melodic potential of the oboe. Barber created a work that feels uniquely timeless and weightless and gives the impression of music that never really stopped playing, only that it is now being heard.

Alyssa Morris (b. 1984)

Up and Away: The Story of a Balloon (2014)

*Duration: 12 minutes*

I first had the pleasure of meeting Alyssa Morris during my first summer term at BYU, which was her last summer as a Masters student. While currently the Assistant Professor for Oboe at Kansas State University, she was already known for her compositions for the oboe as well as chamber
music. Ever since, it has been a pleasure to follow her works and finally be able to perform her music.

*Up and Away* is both delightful and witty in the depiction of ‘balloon life’. The first movement captures the pure joy of a child with a balloon, light hearted music that captures the sound of play. Morris fully embraces jazz and its influence is on full display during the second movement, life on a string. Full of swung rhythms and blues chords, it creates an easy listening experience. Above and beyond the jazz influence, this movement is full of quotes from Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, and other popular folk melodies which the bassoon, oboe, and piano are very familiar with from the classical contexts these are originally found in. The final movement quotes ‘the shire theme’ from *The Lord of the Rings*, and is a reflection on the peaceful drift of the balloon into the sky. Morris brilliantly captures the quiet sense of loss in a very striking, yet inviting writing.

Pierre Sancan (1916-2008)
**Sonatine for Oboe and Piano (1957)**
*Duration: 9 minutes*

Sancan’s Sonatine follows the Impressionist tradition of music that flows and shimmers. It is also part of a general grouping of oboe sonatas published as part of the post-war reflection of the 1950s. While not as cheerful as Ravel or Debussy, Sancan and others neatly follow in their footsteps. In general, these sonatas tend to ruminate on life, death, and the trauma of war, though they also reflect on more peaceful, happier times of lives well lived.

Sancan begins the piece with a dark, evocative melody that never quite settles into a solid key. The movement as a whole is dramatic and filled with frenetic energy. The second movement is most simply a lamentation. More correctly, it is the music of a soul that has been ripped to pieces and is profoundly tragic. The final movement is the whirlwind of music that is too fast and on the brink of being out of control.

Bohuslav Martinů (1890-1959)
**Concerto For Oboe (1955)**
*Duration: 18 minutes*

Originally born to Czech cobblers in Bohemia, Martinů’s life was during a time of great political turmoil. Shortly after Czechoslovakia was declared independent, Martinů moved to Paris for the early part of his career. On being declared too old for the Czech resistance forces of World War II, and simultaneously blacklisted by the Nazis, he moved to New York City for about 20 years. It was in New York that he fell in love with the music of
Black America and jazz, blues, and swing. His works during and after this period frequently contain subtle influences from that music, rather than overt references. Frequently one will hear a scale or rhythmic emphasis that is definitively not European. Having published well over 400 works, some of his most vocal critics say he composed too much, and the quality of his work suffered as a result. However, most find his music complex, tuneful, and satisfying.

Martinů’s Oboe Concerto, written during the last decade of his life, is no exception to this trend. The entire work is notable for the interplay between the orchestra (or piano) and the oboe, giving both the opportunity to develop the melodies within. Each movement is a study of contrasts. The first is bold and dramatic with interludes that are playful and sing above the music of the orchestra. He plays with offsetting beats and seamlessly transitioning into fanfares. Movement two is contemplative and distressed. Yet Martinů uses the chaos to set up one of the most satisfying moments of clarity and stillness the oboe repertoire has to offer. The final movement is a light hearted dance that contrasts with cadenzas that are filled with strife, if not quite anguish. This work certainly deserves its place among the most well-thought of concertos for the oboe.

Notes by Brian Moose
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