

Brian McKee, bassoon

Sunday, April 7, 2013

12:00 PM

ASU Katzin Concert Hall
Tempe, Arizona

Vistas &

Landscapes

Featuring:

Brad Smith, piano

Bill Aikens, oboe

Audrey Miller, clarinet

Ryan Lemoine, saxophone

Erica Low, bass clarinet

Master of Music Recital

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Program

Recit et Allegro (1938)

Noël Gallon
(1891-1966)

Sonata in g minor, op. 24 no. 5 (c. 1788)

for bassoon and piano

Allegro con espressione

Adagio

Rondeau

François Devienne
(1759-1803)

Le Tombeau de Couperin (1914-17)

Prélude - À la mémoire de Lieutenant Jacques Charlot

Fugue - À la mémoire de Jean Cruppi

Rigaudon - À la mémoire de Pierre and Pascal Gaudin

Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)
arr. Raaf Hekkema
(b. 1968)

Brief Intermission

Lauro for Bassoon: Three Venezuelan Waltzes

Tatiana

Andreina

Carora

Antonio Lauro (1917-1986)
arr. Paquito D'Rivera (b. 1948)

Sonata in E-flat major (1887)

for bassoon and piano

Allegro ma non troppo

Largo

Allegro

Gustav Schreck
(1849-1918)

Brian McKee is a student of Dr. Albie Micklich



A stretch of coastline in Florence, Oregon – June 2012

Program Notes

Noël Gallon (1891-1966) - *Recit et Allegro* (1938)

Noël Gallon was a French composer and music educator who studied and worked at the Paris Conservatoire. He composed *Recit et Allegro* in 1938 for the Concours, a solo competition held at the Paris Conservatoire in which the school's most talented students compete in annually. Traditionally, a member of the composition faculty composes a new piece each year, and it was custom for the piece to be dedicated to the instrumental professor. This particular piece was later dedicated to Fernand Oubradous, renowned bassoonist, composer, and pedagogue who taught at the Conservatoire from 1944-1969.

The piece opens with a *recitative*, or freely played conversational melody and soon develops into a more metered, lyrical line. The *allegro* section later emerges in the form of a faster theme and more technically dense piano accompaniment. This playful theme develops and recurs frequently throughout the entire work following a secondary lyrical section. The piece ends in a flourish demonstrating the resonant singing capabilities of the bassoon, as well as the technical prowess of the piano.

François Devienne (1759-1803) – *Sonata for bassoon in g minor, op. 24 no. 5*

François Devienne also worked at the Paris Conservatoire as a composer and professor of flute. Additionally, he was an active bassoonist working extensively in Paris as well as playing bassoon at the Paris Opera. Devienne also wrote several operas and was also a sergeant in the Military Band of the French Guard.

This particular sonata is the fifth of six bassoon sonatas in op. 24. It has historically been performed with continuo instruments such as harpsichord, cello, or pianoforte. It features three contrasting movements, all of which are independently demanding in their own part. The lively outer movements are in g minor, while the second movement stands alone as a lyrical interlude in G major. As a whole, the work demonstrates the bassoon's technical and lyrical capabilities while simultaneously highlighting the importance of musical form and early Classical melodic lightness.

Much of Devienne's compositional output represents a significant historical transition to the Classical music style, emphasizing the importance of melodic simplicity, development, and form rather than sheer technical virtuosity and complex melodies characteristic of the Baroque period.

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) arr. Raaf Hekkema (b. 1968)

***Le Tombeau de Couperin* (1914-17)**

Prominently known as a French Impressionist composer, Maurice Ravel demanded considerable virtuosity from performers of his music. *Le Tombeau de Couperin* was originally composed as a colorful work for solo piano, and he later adapted it for full symphony orchestra. Perhaps Ravel's mastery of orchestration and melodic texture attracted saxophonist and arranger Raaf Hekkema to this work, having first arranged it for his Amsterdam-based ensemble, the Calefax

Reed Quintet. After examining the musical score, it is evident that Hekkema based much of his arrangement on the original solo piano work rather than the orchestral version. Many of the original orchestral wind excerpts are instead given to other instruments like clarinet and saxophone, perhaps to best match the intended textures of the piano work.

Ravel himself was an army truck driver during World War One, and he dedicates each movement to the memory of a friend killed in action in the war. The fourth movement, *Rigaudon* is interestingly dedicated to two brothers killed by the same artillery shell. The work is the best-known example of the genre *tombeau*, a piece of music commemorating the death of a notable individual. When criticized for composing a lighthearted, reflective work for such a somber occasion, Ravel replied, "The dead are sad enough in their eternal silence."

Antonio Lauro (1917-1986) arr. D'Rivera (b. 1948)

Lauro for Bassoon: Three Venezuelan Waltzes

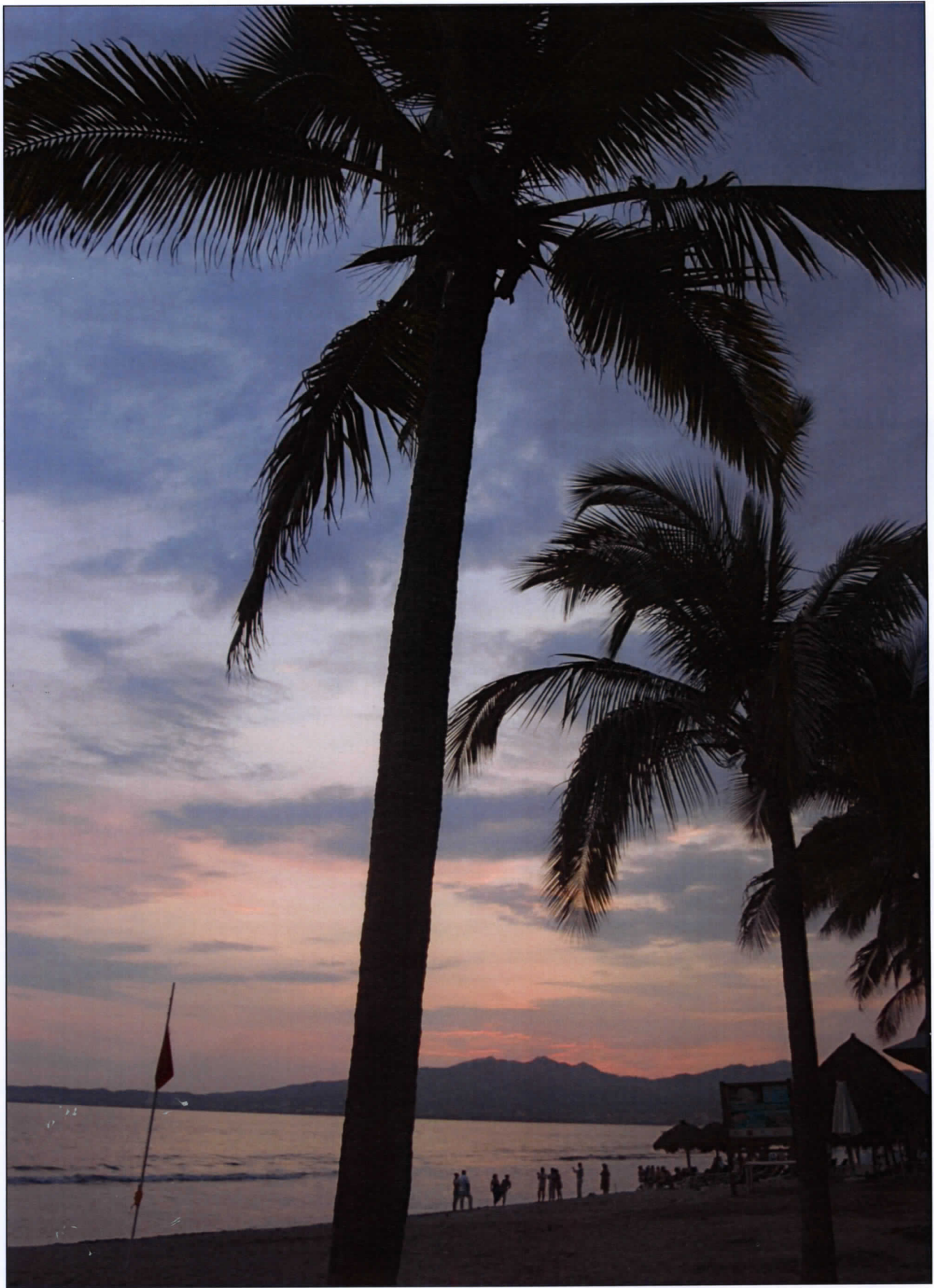
Antonio Lauro was a Venezuelan classical composer who lived and worked in Caracas. He is primarily known for his contributions to classical guitar repertoire. He was a fervent cultural nationalist, institutionalizing lasting musical and cultural identities within his native country.

Lauro's *Valses Venezolanos*, or Venezuelan Waltzes, were originally composed as solo guitar pieces and were affectionately named after important people and places in his life. When they were published, he named the first one after his niece, Tatiana, the second one after his sister, Andreina, and the final one Carora, after a town in which a guitarist friend of his lived. Cuban-born composer and wind virtuoso Paquito D'Rivera (b. 1948) creatively arranged these works for the bassoon, highlighting the instrument's resonant capabilities, tone color varieties, and wide range as primary features in these characteristically exotic solo pieces.

Gustav Schreck (1849-1918): *Sonata in E-flat major for bassoon and piano* (1887)

A German composer, educator, and choir director, Gustav Schreck studied and lived much of his life in Leipzig. He also held the post of Cantor at the Thomaskirche, the same post at the same church that Johann Sebastian Bach held for much of his lifetime. The *Sonata in E-flat major* is one of only two works Schreck composed for solo instrument and piano, the other an oboe sonata in F major.

The three-movement work features a variety of thematic contrast and rich, colorful melodies that highlight both the bassoon and piano as solo instruments, collaborating as equal voices throughout. Its harmonies and thematic development are reminiscent of the style of Johannes Brahms, who was still composing in Germany while this piece was written in his later years. It demonstrates the bassoon's singing personality along with the powerful, resonant capabilities of the piano. Though the sonata's melodic content and harmonic structure beautifully fit the romanticized personalities of both instruments, it is surprisingly not often performed, and is most definitely an intended highlight of today's recital.



A beach in Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico – July 2012

Originally from San Carlos, California, Brian McKee began studying bassoon at age eleven. Brian played principal bassoon with the Peninsula Youth Orchestra in the San Francisco Bay Area, and performed the Mozart Bassoon Concerto with the orchestra his final year. He has also performed and recorded in countries across Europe. Now a Master of Music candidate in Bassoon Performance at Arizona State University, Brian plays with the ASU Symphony Orchestra, Wind Ensemble, Bassoon Ensemble, and Graduate Reed Quintet.



Prior to coming to Arizona, he studied bassoon with Dr. Steve Vacchi at the University of Oregon and received his Bachelor of Music in Performance in June 2012. Brian played bassoon and contrabassoon with the UO Symphony Orchestra, Oregon Wind Ensemble, and a variety of chamber groups. He has played with established ensembles in Oregon including the Eugene Ballet and the Newport Symphony Orchestra. He also sang baritone and bass with the University Singers, the premier large choral ensemble at the University of Oregon.

An advocate of new music, Brian performs dozens of contemporary works for various ensembles, including world premieres and newly commissioned pieces. He was a member of the Eugene Contemporary Chamber Ensemble, a group dedicated to twenty-first century works at the UO. He has also worked with members of the wind quintet Imani Winds, and participated in their annual chamber music festival at The Juilliard School in New York City in summer 2012.

In addition to performance, Brian enjoys the creative side of event organization and administration, and has worked extensively planning music festivals and contemporary arts events in the community. Brian looks forward to continuing his experiences while studying bassoon with Dr. Albie Micklich at ASU, concentrating his skills as a performer and creative organizer and applying them toward a comprehensive musical study. Aside from music, Brian enjoys bicycling, skiing, traveling, and photography, documenting all of his adventures in pictures.

Brian would like to thank everyone, including family, friends, fellow musicians, professors, and colleagues for attending today's recital. Please join him and his family for a reception in the Katzin Concert Hall lobby immediately following the performance.



Wildflowers in Edgewood Park, Redwood City, California – March 2013