

Tyler Colvin, bassoon Gail Novak, piano

1st Masters Recital
Katzin Concert Hall | Sunday, March 19, 2017 | 7:30 p.m.

Program

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| Bassoon Sonata No. 1 | Giovanni Antonio Bertoli
(c. 1600-1645) |
| Trois Pieces, Op. 34
I: Lent
II: Andante Moderato
III: Andante Sostenuto | Charles Koechlin
(1867-1950) |
| Concertino pour basson et piano
I: Andante
II: Allegro Vivace | Marcel Bitsch
(1921-2011) |

INTERMISSION

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| Etude No. 5, Variations on <i>Streets of Laredo</i> for solo bassoon | John Steinmetz
(b. 1951) |
| Concertino for bassoon and orchestra
I: Assai Moderato
II: Allegro | Francisco Mignone
(1897-1986) |



School of Music

Giovanni Antonio Bertoli: *Bassoon Sonata No. 1*

Italian-born Giovanni Bertoli (c. 1600-1645) was a well-known violinist, composer, and virtuoso bassoonist. In 1645, Bertoli published his collection of nine sonatas for bassoon and continuo, called *Compositioni Musicali di Gio*. It is the oldest known collection of sonatas. Notably, a sonata for bass instrument with continuo was scarcely developed yet.

This work is divided into two sections, or small "movements." The sections differ in character, but cohere over their shared growth of virtuosic intensity throughout. Eventually, the themes are so ornamented that everything should sound improvised, therefore adhering to the 17th-century stylistic conventions.

Charles Koechlin: *Trois Pièces op. 34 pour basson et piano*

Charles Koechlin (1867-1950) began his studies at the Conservatoire in 1890 under the hands of Massenet and Faurè. Faurè, as well as Debussy, contributed a particularly significant influence upon Koechlin's colorful and mildly impressionistic style.

The *Trois Pièces* were composed between 1898 and 1907, standing at the opening threshold of Koechlin's chamber-writing. The first movement is a single long swell and decay within the sotto voce color of the bassoon's sound. The second movement moves us along a little, with a much more metered feeling. The last movement brings us back into the lull of the first movement, but shies away from beauty and enters into the sublime, removing all gratification of aural expectations.

Marcel Bitsch: *Concertino pour basson et piano*

Marcel Bitsch was born on December 29th, 1921 in Toulouse, France, and died on September 21st, 2011 in Paris. Beginning in 1939, Bitsch was a counterpoint student of Noël Gallon and a composition student of Paul-Henri Büsser at the Conservatoire de Paris. Bitsch won his first Prix de Rome in 1943 and his second in 1945. In 1956, he took his former teacher's position as the Professor of Counterpoint at the Conservatoire. In addition to his bassoon concertino, Bitsch has produced a comic opera, a ballet, symphonic and chamber music, various musicological publications, and numerous other instrumental competition pieces for the Conservatoire students.

Among the responsibilities of composition professors at the Conservatoire was the composition of pieces for instrumental students' competitions and evaluations. This cycle of piece writing for various instruments, which would revisit a single instrument about once every eight years or so, was known as the Concours de Paris. The bassoon concertino by Marcel Bitsch, composed in 1948 is one such piece.

The composition begins with gentle chords in the piano setting up for an atmospheric color-driven sojourn of the bassoon that explores the depth of the bassoon's vast palette of colors and timbres, as well as demonstrating the performer's ability to contain them. After the

cadenza, the piece transitions into the second section of the piece, which is a wild ride over extravagant gestures that dance all over the range of the bassoon, and between the bassoon and piano. So fasten your seatbelts, and enjoy the ride!

John Steinmetz: Etude No. 5: Variations on "Streets of Laredo" for solo bassoon

This piece, composed in 1981, is a unique synthesis of a contemporary piece written in the Italian Baroque style. John Steinmetz describes that he awoke one morning in Colorado with an old folk tune in his head, *The Streets of Laredo*. This melancholy cowboy tune is resounded once unornamented by the evocative sojourn of the bassoon, then followed by increasingly ornamented variations, composed by Steinmetz with this tune stuck in his head.

*As I walked out in the streets of Laredo
As I walked out in Laredo one day
I spied a young cowboy all dressed in white linen
All dressed in white linen and cold as the clay.*

Francisco Mignone: Concertino for Bassoon and Orchestra

Brazilian composer Francisco Mignone (1897-1986) was earning a living at the age of 13 playing the piano, conducting small dance orchestras, and playing flute in the larger orchestras in São Paulo, Brazil. Mignone loved to improvise with street musicians on the flute. At the beginning of his career, Mignone was composing strictly pop music, but had a thorough classical education. After returning to Brazil from a ten-year tenure of work and study in Italy, Mignone enthusiastically joined the Brazilian Nationalist Movement. As a member of this movement, he Mignone met bassoonist Noel Devos, a bassoonist who inspired him to write over a dozen works for this instrument.

The Concertino for Bassoon and Orchestra, being one of these works, really demonstrates Mignone's synthesis of his classical and popular influences. The first movement presents a provocative exploration of the bassoon's registers and numerous characters. The second is fast and nimble, and will leave you tapping along to it in your seat. Both movements implore upon the pianist and bassoonist to dance with each other and give the piece a sense of improvisation.