

Toan Tran
Bassoon

Neilson Chen, piano
Amy Buescher, harp

Recital Series
Katzin Concert Hall
Saturday, April 9, 2016 - 2:30 PM

ASU Herberger Institute
FOR DESIGN AND THE ARTS
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Program

Nocturne for bassoon and piano - *World Premiere* -

Michael Mikulka
(b. 1985)

Chants d'arrière-saison

- I. Andantino
- II. Allegro
- III. Larghetto
- IV. Adagietto
- V. Andante
- VI. Allegretto
- VII. Moderato

Bernard Andrès
(b. 1941)

~ *Intermission* ~

Andante e Rondo ongarese

Carl Maria von Weber
(1786 - 1826)

Concertino

- I. Moderato
- II. Andante, quasi blues
- III. Giocoso

Peter Hope
(b. 1930)

**This recital is in partial fulfillment of the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts.
Toan Tran is a student of Dr. Albie Micklich.**

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Program Notes

***World Premiere* *Nocturne for bassoon and piano* - Michael Mikulka**

Michael Mikulka has written well over 100 pieces with varied styles, lengths, and instrumentations. His music has been premiered by members of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and Seattle Symphony with premieres in venues such as Dallas's Meyerson Symphony Center, Seattle's Benaroya Hall, the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, and North Carolina's Progress Energy Center. The composer writes that "*Nocturne for Bassoon* is a short piece which was composed entirely between the hours of 10 pm and 4 am. It heavily utilizes the upper register of the bassoon, and is mournful, obsessive, delicate, tense, and expressive." The bassoon and piano are in a constant dance around one another with many unexpected harmonic twists and turns that evoke the gloomy twilight hours that traditional nocturnes were expected to be performed in.

***Chants d'arrière-saison* - Bernard Andrès**

Bernard Andrès is a French harpist who is celebrated as one of the most prolific composers of harp music. As both a performer and teacher, Andrès has influenced an entire generation of French harpists through the development of his own harp notation style and use of special harp effects. *Chants d'arrière-saison* combines the bassoon and harp in a spellbinding duet that capitalizes on the instruments' large array of tone colors. The seven short movements are written in a melancholy, reflective mood that evokes clearly the translated title: "Songs from a season past."

***Andante e Rondo ungherese* - Carl Maria von Weber**

It is nearly impossible to think of the Romantic era of music without mentioning Carl Maria von Weber. Known largely for his operas such as *Der Freischütz* and *Euryanthe*, Weber brings the characters, drama and emotion typical of the genre to his concertpiece for bassoon. In continuation of the melancholy theme of this recital, the piece opens with a passionate and mournful andante before transitioning to a jocular rondo that finishes with all of the flair and pizzazz expected of an operatic hero. For audiences of the time period, watching an opera can be a similar experience to watching a movie in modern times (although the former was often restricted to affluent audiences). Both genres often contain a hero whom, after great trial and tribulation, achieves their various goals by the end of the production.

***Concertino* - Peter Hope**

Peter Hope is a British composer and a member of the Light Music Society. The Society states that "Light Music bridges the gap between classical and popular music . . . It has a strong emphasis on melody, and as such, it is designed to appeal to a wider audience than more serious forms of the Western classical music tradition." Film scores are one of the most popular genres encompassed within 'light music.' As such, Hope's *Concertino* often evokes the sense of grand Hollywood scores with its sweeping soundscapes and dramatic melodies. The first movement begins with a deeply melancholy melody that moves ponderously between the orchestral reduction and the bassoon solo before reaching a jazzy, blues inspired middle movement. In the finale, the star of the movie celebrates returning home, winning the affections of the love interest and unconditional triumph over the villain all in one movement. The movement is written as a joyous spectacle with pulsating beats in a semi-irregular dance meter. With but one momentary glance back at the moodiness of the first movement, the piece ends with technical aplomb and fireworks befitting any modern day feature film.