Peter Whitehead

Gail Novak - piano
Marquise DeMaree – oboe

Senior Bassoon Recital
Organ Hall | 10 April 2016 | 7:30pm

Solo de Concert (1901)   *Charles René*
                                                              (1863-1935)

Charles René was a French composer who studied at the Paris Conservatoire. He won the *Deuxième Prix de Rome* in 1884, losing the the first prize scholarship to Debussy[1]. René is best known for his many piano pieces. This work for solo bassoon and piano is one of two pieces he wrote for solo instruments, the other one being a violin sonata[1]. Used as the 1901 contest piece for the Paris Conservatoire, this piece is composed in a romantic style with echoes of previous Conservatoire compositions. The introduction, common in Conservatoire works, is not strict with the rhythm, allowing for some rubato and flexibility with tempo. The second section of this work is in D-flat major, a challenging key signature for bassoon. Notable in this piece is its wealth of arpegiatted phrases, as well as elongated triplet rhythm in the second half.

[1]Fletcher, K.K. (1988). The Paris Conservatoire and the Contest Solos for Bassoon. *Indiana University Press*. Bloomington.

Mathematics, Sonata for Bassoon and Piano (2012)   *Alyssa Morris*
I. Geometry   *(1984-)*
II. Trigonometry
III. Integral Calculus

This sonata is divided into three movements, each using musical ideas to illustrate mathematical concepts. In *Geometry*, the first musical theme in 3/4 time is meant to represent triangles, while the second theme in 4/4 time is representative of squares and rectangles[2]. This is most evident in the opening three notes of the movement, which form a physically triangular pattern in the musical score. The triangle inspired theme is angular, with large intervals, while the square inspired theme is more melodic and stepwise. The merging of the two themes in the development section of this movement seeks to depict more complex shapes and can be heard in the juxtaposition between large intervals and melodic phrases harmonically, and in the mixture between triple and duple meter rhythmically.

In *Trigonometry*, Morris attempts to depict a visual representation of a sine wave[2]. This is especially evident in the opening theme. As the movement continues, the bassoon becomes more raucous, while the piano continues to contrast this with flowing arpeggios. The 16th notes in the bassoon part are an elaboration on the opening theme. The bassoon eventually comes back to mimic the opening theme at the end of the movement.

The third movement, *Integral Calculus*, is perhaps the most difficult of the three movements (just as integral calculus is perhaps the most difficult mathematical concepts of the three depicted). The bassoon part in this movement draws on the idea of mathematical limits by utilizing the extreme tonal range of the bassoon[2]. While in rondo form, ABACA, you will hear quotations of popular children's melodies in the B theme (ie. Twinkle Twinkle Little Star and ABCs). The movement ends with a restatement of the A theme after a bassoon cadenza.

[2]Morris, A. (2012). Mathematics, Sonata for Bassoon and Piano. *TrevCo*.

Niggun (1995)

Philippe Hersant
(1948-)

Philippe Hersant is a French composer, born in Italy, who studied under André Jolivet at the Paris Conservatoire[3]. His piece Niggun is a solo bassoon work that explores the use of multiphonics in its compositional style. Typical of Hersant's compositions, the opening statement recurs and is developed throughout the piece and the D-major multiphonic is used as a recurring pedal tone throughout the piece[3]. These compositional devices are used to depict the elements of a Jewish chant used in worship, from which this piece derives its name. The niggun style of chanting was cultivated by, and remains a central part of Hasidic Judaism[4]. A niggun is often improvisational and contains many repeated rhythmic phrases, depicting either lament or joy[4]. Due to the religious nature of this piece, the composition is modal, switching from major and minor centers to depict a more somber central idea.

[3]Myriam Soumagnac. (2016). Hersant, Philippe. *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press.

[4]"Niggun." (2016). *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press.

Trio pour piano, hautbois et basson (1924)
I. *Presto*
II. *Andante*
III. *Rondo*

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)

Francis Poulenc is a French composer and pianist, born in to a bourgeois family, conscripted into the French military in WWI, and a fiercely independent iconoclast[5]. Unlike many other well-known French composers, Poulenc did not receive the traditional musical education and was never educated at the Paris Conservatoire. This trio composition is from Poulenc's first of three periods of compositional development[5]. It is a jovial piece, rife with energetic dissonance and dramatic flourishes. Composed during the time Poulenc was also composing for the Ballets Russes, this work follows the style of 18th-century divertissement, but does not strictly adhere to all the harmonic rules (ie. the dissonances). While the outer movements are the most energetic, with the *Rondo* being the more upbeat of the two, the middle movement is reserved, thus following traditional macro-compositional style.

[5]Chimènes, M. & Nichols, R. (2016). Poulenc, Francis. *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press.

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the B.Mus. in Orchestral Performance (Bassoon). Peter Whitehead is a student of Dr. Albie Micklich

ASU Herberger Institute
FOR DESIGN AND THE ARTS

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

School of Music