

AS I SEE IT

Jordanna Matlock, bassoon

Gail Novak, piano

Kristi Hanno, clarinet

April 23rd, 2016 at 7:30pm

Recital Hall at ASU

ASU Herberger Institute
FOR DESIGN AND THE ARTS

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

School of Music

—PROGRAM—

Concerto in e minor

Antonio Vivaldi

- I. Allegro Poco
- II. Andante
- III. Allegro

Gail Novak, piano

Three Rainy-Day Barcarolles

Evan C. Paul

1. A Dreary Mid-Morning
2. A Café on Rue Pergolèse
3. A Downpour

Gail Novak, piano

—INTERMISSION—

Etude No.5 “Streets of Laredo”

John Steinmetz

Suite Cantando

Bill Douglas

- I. Sambata
- IV. Cantabile
- V. Bepop

Kristi Hanno, clarinet

Gail Novak, piano

Antonio Lucio Vivaldi is one of the most important composers of the Baroque Era. For bassoonists, he is even more influential. Vivaldi wrote 37 bassoon concertos, more than any other composer. His incredible contributions to the bassoon repertoire makes him one of the few prolific composers for bassoonists. The *Concerto in e minor*, like many others, was written for an orphanage of abandoned girls where Vivaldi was employed as the resident musician.

Aside from his beautiful music, our historical assessment of Vivaldi is full of contradictions. He was a red-haired promiscuous priest who never made it through a Mass, a world traveler who could not walk far due to his baited breathing, and a *champion* of young female musicians. Most classical music lovers only know him as a musical prodigy and yet Vivaldi's life reveals a series of choices that make us wonder who was the man behind the music.

Three Rainy Day Barcarolles by Evan C. Paul was written in 2011. The piece is written in three movements, *A Dreary Mid-Morning*, *A Café on Rue Pergolèse*, and *A Downpour*. The three movements are meant to embody a single day in Paris coinciding with the rain. The *barcarolle* is a boating song of the Venetian gondoliers. The ‘rocking’ presents itself through the triple meter and gives the steady swaying movement throughout the piece.

Paul says the first movement is inspired by Ned Rorem who wrote a set of three barcarolles for solo piano. The second movement drew inspiration from Francis Poulenc and the third movement from two lesser known French composers Alfred Desenclos and Pierre Sancan. Paul admires these composers for their “highly colored triadic and octatonic writing, melodic contour and characteristic rhythmic subdivisions.” Incredibly the third movement still maintains its easy feeling and lush melodies even though it is based completely on the octatonic scale.

John Steinmetz is a very important living composer for bassoonists. One could say we hear his personality incorporated in his music. He is known to be eccentric, thoughtful and sometimes sarcastically funny as evidenced by his self-appointed title of “satirist” and his “Comedy and Satire” tab on his official website.

Etude No. 5: “Streets of Laredo” is an old cowboy folk tune that follows the structure of a theme and variations. In the 60's Steinmetz got “caught up in the folk music revival” while on bus trips in high school. He enjoyed singing and playing guitar to songs like “Puff the Magic Dragon”

and "This Land is your Land". Many years after leaving behind 'silly folk' tunes to become a "servant of Serious Art Music", Steinmetz describes waking up in a room in the Colorado Mountains with the tune "Streets of Laredo" stuck in his head. That morning he began writing a set of theme and variations to the "melancholy song full of tenderness and longing."

This unaccompanied, highly lyrical bassoon solo is written in baroque style with the dynamics, articulations and tempos left up to the performer. Steinmetz notes it should sound improvisatory as if the musician was making it up as he/she goes along. He also notes, "I have enjoyed inviting the audience to sing the theme with me, and they seem to enjoy it, too. After all, how often do people get a chance to sing with a bassoon?"

*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 as cold as the clay.*

Bill Douglas is a Canadian composer born in London, Ontario. His mother was a church organist and his father played trombone and sang in a big band. After being musically influenced by his parents, he and his two brothers during the early rock and roll movement, started a band in hopes to sound like some of their idols, Elvis and the Everly Brothers.

At thirteen, Douglas started playing bassoon and became increasingly interested in fusing classical music and jazz. While attending the University of Toronto, Bill Douglas had become a classical musician by day and jazz musician by night. This passion continued even when he began teaching in California. He wrote several etudes that blended together many different genres, some of his influences including Miles Davis and Herbie Hancock.

Suite Cantando, is a five movement work, today we will be performing three of the movements. The first movement, Sambata, is influenced by Brazilian and Cuban music (hence the combination of "Samba" and the "Bata" rhythm in the title). The fourth movement, Cantabile, is a very lyrical song. The fifth movement, Bebop, combines chord progressions often played by jazz musician with rhythms influenced by African music.