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April 10, 2018

Program from Senior Honors Bassoon Recital

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2018

Abstract

Program from Senior Honors Bassoon Recital

By Haley Matthews

The senior honors recital incorporates some of the most familiar and influential cross-era solo works for bassoon. Compositions include works of Vivaldi, Mozart, Saint-Saëns, Tansman, Elgar, and Glière. The repertoire was chosen based on its overall significance and recognition within the bassoon community and constitutes roughly 65 minutes of music. Preparation for the recital primarily consisted of incorporating effective practice methods into each piece. Such methods were chosen based on the particular skill or talent each individual piece required, including practice of technical passages, practice of appropriate phrasing, metronomic practice, scale study with intonation scrutiny, and practice of the entire recital performance. The challenges of the recital were centered around the overall musicality of the phrases as well as the endurance ability. For an additional challenge, the recital was mostly played while standing, which significantly alters the physiological support for the bassoon both in embouchure and in preparatory breathing technique. Through the completion of the recital, I have learned many things about myself as a musician and the stamina required to perform solo recitals. These particular findings will be helpful in possible future recitals.

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HALEY MATTHEWS, BASSOON

SENIOR HONORS RECITAL

PATRICIA DINKINS-MATTHEWS, PIANO

SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 2018, 5:00PM

EMERSON RECITAL HALL, SCHWARTZ CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS

PROGRAM*Sonatine*

Alexandre Tansman (1835-1921)

*III. Allegro con Moto**II. Aria Largo Cantabile**III. Scherzo Presto**Romance for Bassoon and Piano*

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

Bassoon Concerto in E Minor, RV 484

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

*III. Allegro Poco**II. Andante**III. Allegro***Intermission**

Deux Morceaux

Reinhold Glière (1875-1956)

Impromptu

Humoresque

Sonata for Bassoon and Cello, K. 292

Wolfgang A. Mozart (1756-1791)

III. Allegro

II. Andante

III. Rondo

Will Lawson, Bassoon

Sonata for Bassoon

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

III. Allegro con Moto

II. Aria Largo Cantabile

III. Scherzo Presto; March

PROGRAM NOTES

Alexandre Tansman, a French-Polish composer, was heavily influenced and mentored by notable composers such as Igor Stravinsky and Maurice Ravel, as highlighted within his works through the similar harmonic implications and defining rhythmic features. Tansman's *Sonatine* is a powerful three movement piece written for bassoon and piano. Initially the piece features aggressive and rhythmic interplay between the piano and bassoon as the piano forcefully pulses eighth notes and the bassoon maniacally exclaims the main melodic motif. The second movement presents a contrasting, gentle melodic section that gives way to the even more frantic third movement. Amusing and exhilarating for performer and audience alike, this work exemplifies some of the best of what 20th-century composers contribute to the standard bassoon repertoire.

As the exclusive work for solo bassoon written by Elgar, the *Romance* for Bassoon and Piano is a substantial yet gentle piece reduced from the original orchestral arrangement. He creates a lush Romantic style with expansive, impassioned lyrical lines. While many are familiar with his most famous works such as the *Enigma Variations* and *Pomp and Circumstance*, not many know the British composer was originally a bassoonist. In his early years prior to focusing on his compositional studies, Elgar often played with a small chamber wind group. The *Romance* was his only work for solo bassoon and he never publicly performed the work. Instead, Elgar dedicated the composition to Edwin James, the principal bassoonist of the London Symphony

Orchestra. However, Elgar's level of comfort with the instrument is displayed in the smooth note to note transitions which seamlessly fall under the bassoonist's fingers.

The *E Minor Bassoon Concerto* is one of the most well-recognized Baroque concerti by Antonio Vivaldi. Composed for orphaned girls at the Italian Ospedale della Pietà, the concerto embraces the characteristic elements of the Baroque Era including sequence, figuration, rapid arpeggiation and scalar passages in both the tenor and bass registers. While the notable composer is well known for his many violin concerti, operas and symphonies, he is also responsible for writing 39 concerti for bassoon. With over 500 total concerti, Vivaldi's works for bassoon comprise some of the largest amounts of solo repertoire he had written, second only to violin. His contribution to the bassoon repertoire remains unparalleled to this day. Although challenging on a modern bassoon, the pieces would have been even more difficult on a Baroque bassoon with only five keys. As most of these concerti were written during Vivaldi's time as a composer and violin teacher at the Ospedale della Pietà, the pieces were most likely written with a particular student in mind; however, whoever inspired the large number of bassoon concerti remains unknown.

Glière's *Deux Morceaux*—in English "Two Pieces"—is comprised of an *Impromptu* and *Humoresque*. These short pieces contrast in style and character and contain lively interplay between the bassoon and piano. They are included within the Russian composer's larger work, *Eleven Pieces for Different Instruments and Piano*, which also features flute, oboe, clarinet,

horn, and cello. This comprehensive collection opens with a dramatic flute melody and waltz, before passing the spotlight around and ending with two triumphant horn pieces. The bassoon pieces, *Humoresque* and *Impromptu*, are the eighth and ninth segments of the larger work, meant to be played after the clarinet and before the concluding horn. As a notable Russian composer, Glière taught at the Kiev and Moscow Conservatories, studied and collected Russian folk music, which he often incorporated into his orchestral music. *Deux Morceaux* is an excellent representation of the stylistic characterization Glière employed in order to test the boundaries of the typical instrumental works of the time. The *Impromptu* and *Humoresque* are light-hearted, entertaining pieces.

Originally intended for two bassoons, the Mozart *Sonata* for Bassoon and Cello includes Allegro, Andante and Rondo movements. Although it is typically published and commonly played with cello accompaniment, Mozart's *Sonata* will be performed with two bassoons to highlight a more customary sonata duet instrumentation for the Classical time period. Within this period, duos for two wind instruments were more common than duos for wind and string instruments. Regardless of instrumentation, this piece epitomizes the Classical period with harmonic and structural clarity, light texture and interplay between the two voices. The Allegro movement is established with a playful melodic exchange among the two complementing voices. Throughout the movement this initial motive returns, each restatement brings a slightly different connotation to the overall quality. The last statement of the melody resolves inconclusively and harmonically leads into the Adagio movement which has a smooth texture and calm melody. The work concludes with a lively, virtuosic Rondo.

Even in his later years, Saint-Saëns was an active conductor and composer with a plan to feature the lesser-known instruments, as his last three complete works were sonatas aimed to increase the woodwind repertoire. While composed during the last year of his life and dedicated to his friend and bassoon professor of the Paris Conservatory, Clément-Léon Letellier, *Sonata* for Bassoon and Piano by Saint-Saëns is a beautiful romantic era piece encapsulating charming themes and dramatic culminations. Written primarily in the tenor register, the delicate, mellifluous first movement is complemented by the contrasting, energetic second movement and dramatic adagio third movement, which gives way to a brisk march that brings the work to a climatic close. As both a highly expressive and virtuosic work, the piece is perhaps one of the most well-loved lyrical compositions for bassoon.

PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

Haley Matthews is a senior at Emory University currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree with a double major in Biology and Music Performance. Originally from Jasper, Georgia, she discovered a passion for music and the arts after attending a music class at Pickens County Middle School where her mentor encouraged her to play the bassoon. She has studied bassoon with Dr. Shelly Unger for more than 10 years and has participated in myriad ensembles, including the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra, Emory Youth Symphony Orchestra, Atlanta Youth Wind Symphony, and the Governor's Honors Program Chamber Winds and Orchestra. She currently serves as principal bassoonist of the Emory University Symphony Orchestra and Emory Wind Ensemble. In her spare time, Matthews performs for patients in various hospitals and nursing homes with Emory Harmonic Remedies, a music outreach program she co-founded. Upon graduating from Emory University in the spring, Matthews will work as a medical scribe at Northside Hospital in Canton, Georgia. She plans to apply to medical school in the fall of 2018. Her dreams are to become a physician specializing in infectious diseases and to continue playing her bassoon. Making music will always play a significant role in Matthews's life; she appreciates all the musical experiences and playing opportunities she has had during her time as a musician at Emory.

Patricia Dinkins-Matthews joined the faculty of Emory in 1998, where she is a lecturer in piano, vocal coaching, piano skills, and collaborative piano. She has been a member of the piano faculties at the University of Florida, Baylor University, the American Institute of Music Studies (Graz, Austria), and McLennan College. Dinkins-Matthews has an undergraduate degree from the University of Tennessee and both a master of music degree in piano performance and a doctor of musical arts degree in piano pedagogy and performance from the University of Colorado. Dinkins-Matthews is an active solo and chamber music recitalist, and she has performed both in the United States and in Europe. Dinkins-Matthews has been the pianist for the Florida Arts Trio and the American Chamber Winds, and she has appeared as a soloist with the Colorado Symphony, the University of Tennessee Orchestra, and the Florida Symphony Orchestra. Dinkins-Matthews is the pianist for the Aevia Trio and is the associate pianist for the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chorus.