

2006

## Oboe Recital

Dane C. Philipsen

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OBOE RECITAL

by

Dane C. Philipsen

A recital submitted in  
Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements of the

University Honors Program  
Honors with Distinction

at

The University of Northern Iowa

May 2006

## Thoughts on an oboe recital...

During my years studying the performance of oboe at The University of Northern Iowa, I have played countless concerts. Some are more memorable than others are; the recital I played on 14 April 2006 was a particularly meaningful performance. It was the result of months of planning, patient practice, and mentoring fostered by years of progressive development.

One of the most critical components in developing this recital was programming. It is more than mildly daunting to select around an hour of repertoire from the canon of literature and less traditional pieces; the choices seem endless. The Bach *Sonata in G Minor* brought the voice of an unparalleled master of the Baroque era. Piston's *Suite for Oboe and Piano* gave a twentieth century interpretation of Baroque forms. *Three Piece Suite* by Dring offered a lighter but technically flashy piece to end the first half of the recital on a high note.

Opening the second half was the world-premier performance of *The Swirl of Memory* by UNI School of Music faculty composer, Dr. Jonathan Schwabe. His willingness to compose a new work for oboe in a chamber music setting gave me a truly unique performance opportunity. I have nothing except the printed music and educated inferences as to how to interpret these symbols for *nearly all* of the music I play. I have never had the opportunity to discuss the *Sonata* with Bach. But with Schwabe's piece, I had the opportunity to work with him as he wrote the piece, understand the things he was thinking about as he was developing motives and

themes, and offer my own thoughts—which actually influenced the final score. I understand more fully his musical conception of flipping through a photo album and the swirl of memories that creates. This experience will certainly affect how I approach any piece of music in the future—my insight into of how a composer works to develop the printed page has changed.

The final piece on the program, Poulenc's *Trio for Oboe, Bassoon, and Piano*, was the most challenging work to put together. I was fortunate enough to have an excellent pianist in Dr. Guy, and her willingness to perform such a dubious piano score is most appreciated. I had the opportunity to work with a talented bassoon player who also happens to be a good friend. The group dynamic allowed for some truly musically-magical moments in rehearsals as well as the performance. I heard a recording of the piece during the fall of 2005 and instantly put it on my "To Play Before I Die" list.

Beyond this point, there is little I can say about the recital that I did not say at the recital. Of course, there were months of diligent preparation, lessons, seeking the critique of colleagues, and simply the logistical planning—this work simply allows the music to be expressed in the moment. For me, it is the intense, hyper-consciousness of performing that offers the biggest thrill in music. As my oboe professor and beloved mentor, Tom Barry says, "...there's something about performing music by Bach... I can't say what it is, but everything in the world seems in its right place." I cannot say what it is, either. However, I know what he means. It is any performer's hope that the audience can connect in their own way to the music. It is my hope that the live recording of the recital may be that testament.

The University of Northern Iowa School of Music

presents

DANEPHILIPSEN-  
BOE RECI-TAL

WITH

DR. ROBIN GUY, PIANO  
MR. SEAN BOTKIN, PIANO  
MR. LOREN STATA, BASSOON

from the studio of Tom Barry

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Friday, 14 April 2006, 8:00pm

Davis Hall

Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center

Program:

Sonata in G Minor, BWV 1020.....J.S. Bach

- I. Allegro
- II. Adagio
- III. Allegro

Suite for Oboe and Piano.....Walter Piston

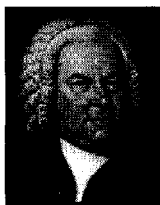
- I. Prelude
- II. Sarabande
- III. Minuetto
- IV. Nocturne
- V. Cigue

Three Piece Suite.....Madeleine Dring

- I. Showpiece
- II. Romance
- III. Finale

Mr. Philipsen, oboe

Dr. Guy, piano



### **Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750):**

#### ***Sonata in G minor, BWV 1020***

There is little doubt that a Bach composed this sonata, but there are questions regarding *which* Bach it actually was. Conflicting manuscripts place it as either a flute sonata from J.S. Bach or as a violin sonata from his son, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. Probably a father/son collaboration, the piece falls comfortably within the range of the oboe. The masterful uses of contrapuntal textures, creative use of functional harmonies, and unrelenting rhythmic momentum that have typified the works of J.S. Bach are all present in this piece. The gentle tranquility of the Adagio, in the relative Bb major, presents a gentle contrast to the incessant driving of the outer allegro movements.



### **Walter Piston (1894-1976):**

#### ***Suite for Oboe and Piano (1931)***

Although the ear may initially suggest little relation between the Bach Sonata and Walter Piston's Suite for Oboe and Piano, the two pieces are significantly related. The baroque partita inspires the prelude and dance forms used in the movements of this chromatically punctuated 20th century work. The *Prelude* itself is a modern two-part invention, a further nod to Bach. The metric rigidity of the *Prelude* falls away to the somewhat forlorn *Sarabande*, the sauntering *Minuetto*, and the serene *Nocturne*. The thematic material of the *Prelude* returns in the *Gigue* with the dance's characteristic meter and liveliness. In the middle of the *Gigue*, the oboe chases the piano through a canon, the two voices rejoining forces to end the suite with bombastic flair.



### **Madeleine Dring (1923-1977):**

#### ***Three Piece Suite (c.1970)***

Madeleine Dring did not compose *Three Piece Suite* for oboe but rather for harmonica and piano. Her husband, Roger Lord, transcribed the work for oboe after her death. He was a prominent British oboist and the inspiration for Dring's several oboe compositions. She studied composition with Gordon Jacob, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Herbert Howells at the Royal College of Music in London. The bright opening movement, *Showpiece*, justifies its

own name—flitting through asymmetric meters and playful melodic passages. The lyrical second movement, *Romance*, reflects Dring's success as a composer of British theater music; it reminds the listener of a Broadway love ballad. The closing *Finale* journeys from impish lightness to an unexpected ending, coming to rest on a rather wistful, gentle note.



**Jonathan Schwabe (b. 1953):**

***The Swirl of Memory* (2006)**

*for oboe, string quintet, and piano;*

*arrangement for oboe and two pianos by the composer*  
(premier performance)

*Notes from the composer:*

A memento in the form of musical scrapbook; a kind of *swirl* of images about my mother, Rebecca May Taylor Schwabe, who passed into the ages Christmas of 2004. The movements are:

I. **Macon 1922**, the place and time of her birth

II. **Homecoming**, her final days

III. **May**, her birth month and middle name. An expression of gratitude to a soul well-loved, and for a life well-lived.



**Francis Poulenc (1899-1963):**

***Trio for Oboe, Bassoon, and Piano* (1926)**

With the *Trio for Oboe, Bassoon, and Piano* as one of many testaments, Poulenc expressed great interest and success in writing for wind instruments. Attempts at writing for strings left Poulenc dissatisfied; he destroyed at least two violin sonatas and left a string quartet to the sewers of Paris. Winds in his chamber music are most often teamed with a demanding part for piano. This music winds its way through stylistic influences, mingling between the entertaining vitality of wind divertimentos and a profundity of emotions. The slow introduction to the first movement establishes a somberness that is quickly broken by the abandon of the presto. Moments of lyricism are interspersed throughout this energetic movement in Poulenc's typical fashion. The second movement is a passionate discourse between the double reed voices—music unfettered by unnecessary complications and beautiful in its simplicity of song, if for no other reason. The *Rondo* that follows bursts in with an exuberance that drives the piece to its conclusion.



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Intermission  
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The Swirl of Memory.....Jonathan Schwabe

I. Macon, 1922

II. Homecoming

III. May

Mr. Philipsen, oboe

Dr. Guy, piano

Mr. Botkin, piano

Trio for Oboe, Piano, and Bassoon.....Francis Poulenc

I. Presto

II. Andante

III. Rondo

Mr. Philipsen, oboe

Mr. Stata, bassoon

Dr. Guy, piano

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the Bachelor of Music in Performance degree at the University of Northern Iowa School of Music and in partial fulfillment of the Presidential Scholar Program of the University Honors Program.

Please join us for a reception in the student lounge immediately following the recital.

DANE PHILIPSEN  
 BOB REITALL

WITH

DR. ROBIN GUY, PIANO  
 MR. SEAN BOTKIN, PIANO  
 MR. LDRIEN STATA, BASSOON

DANE PHILIPSEN

- Sonata in G Minor, BWV 1020.....J.S. Bach  
 [01] -- I. Allegro  
 [02] -- II. Adagio  
 [03] -- III. Allegro
- Suite for Oboe and Piano.....Walter Piston  
 [04] -- I. Prelude  
 [05] -- II. Sarabande  
 [06] -- III. Minuetto  
 [07] -- IV. Nocturne  
 [08] -- V. Cigue
- Three Piece Suite.....Madeleine Dring  
 [09] -- I. Showpiece  
 [10] -- II. Romance  
 [11] -- III. Finale
- The Swirl of Memory.....Jonathan Schwabe  
 [12] -- I. Macon, 1922  
 [13] -- II. Homecoming  
 [14] -- III. May
- Trio for Oboe, Bassoon, and Piano.....Francis Poulenc  
 [15] -- I. Presto  
 [16] -- II. Andante  
 [17] -- III. Rondo

Recorded live,  
 14 April 2006,  
 8:00pm  
 in Davis Hall of the  
 Gallagher-Bluedorn  
 Performing Arts Center,  
 University of Northern  
 Iowa.

DANE PHILIPSEN