

Gabrielle Hsu, bassoon

Emma Song, piano

Alexis Mitchell, oboe

Student Recital Series

Recital Hall | February 24th, 2017 | 5:00 pm

Program

Sonate pour basson et piano op. 168 (1921)

I. Allegro moderato

II. Allegro scherzando

III. Molto adagio – Allegro moderato

Camille Saint-Saëns

(1835-1921)

Suite pour basson et piano (1960)

I. Introduction et Allegro

II. Sarabande

III. Scherzo

Alexandre Tansman

(1897-1986)

Intermission

Sposa son disprezzata from the opera *Bajazet* (1734)

Antonio Vivaldi

(1678-1741)

trans. Albie Micklich

Trio pour hautbois, basson et piano (1994)

I. Adagio – Allegro moderato

II. Scherzo

III. Andante

IV. Finale

Jean Françaix

(1912-1997)

ASU Herberger Institute
FOR DESIGN AND THE ARTS
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

School of Music

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Saint-Saëns wrote the *Sonate* op. 168 just before his death in 1921 as part of a project that he undertook to write sonatas for all of the principal orchestral woodwind instruments. He died before he could complete this project, so we are very lucky to have this work. It is now one of the most frequently performed in the entire bassoon repertoire.

Throughout all three movements, the bassoon and piano parts are skillfully intertwined to showcase the strengths of both instruments. The piece opens with a beautiful, evocative *Allegro moderato*, followed by a lively and energetic *Allegro scherzando*. The final movement begins with a *Molto adagio* that builds slowly over a sparse accompaniment to a dramatic cadenza, which is finally interrupted by a playful *Allegro* that seems almost out of place.

Alexandre Tansman (1897-1986)

Tansman was born in Poland and began his musical education at the Łódź Conservatory. However, he spent much of his life in Paris, where he was mentored by several famous composers including Igor Stravinsky and Maurice Ravel. During World War II, he was forced to flee Europe to Los Angeles because of his Jewish background, and composed several Hollywood film scores during his time there. As a result, his music is a fascinating mixture of influences, drawing on both French and Polish styles as well as elements of traditional Jewish music and 1920s jazz.

This *Suite for Bassoon and Piano* and Saint-Saëns' *Sonate* were both written in France during the 20th century and used in the Paris Conservatoire *concours* (an annual competition in which students could only graduate from their course of study by earning First Prize), but they could not be more different. The aggressive, driving rhythms that characterize the outer movements of the *Suite* and betray Stravinsky's influence are in stark contrast to the lush, flowing romanticism of Saint-Saëns' *Sonate*.

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

The aria *Sposa son disprezzata* was originally written by Italian composer Geminiano Giacomelli but is most often attributed to Vivaldi, who borrowed it for his opera *Bajazet* (a pasticcio comprised partly of Vivaldi's original arias and several existing ones from other composers).

Here it has been "stolen" again to be performed on the bassoon in this beautiful transcription by **Albie Micklich**, utilizing the bassoon's singing tenor register to convey a voice-like character. Sung in *Bajazet* by a villain named Irene, this aria's title translates to "I am a scorned wife" and is a tortured lament of her husband's infidelity.

Sposa son disprezzata,	I am a scorned wife,
Fida son oltraggiata,	faithful, yet insulted.
cieli che feci mai?	Heavens, what did I do?
E pur egl'è il mio cor	And yet he is my heart,
il mio sposo, il mio amor,	my husband, my love,
la mia speranza.	my hope.

Jean Françaix (1912-1997)

Françaix was both a composer and a skilled pianist and studied with Nadia Boulanger, who considered him one of her best students. His *Trio for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano* was commissioned by the International Double Reed Society in 1994 only three years before his death. His witty, engaging writing brilliantly displays the contrasting tone colors and unique abilities of these three very different instruments. It is thoroughly lighthearted in character, with the exception of the melancholy, dreamlike *Andante*.

Sadly, this work is often neglected in favor of Poulenc's trio for the same instrumentation, composed almost 70 years earlier, so I am thrilled to have this opportunity to share it with you today.