

The D'Angelo Department of Music
at
Mercyhurst University

Presents

Senior Recital

Aidan Moore, Clarinet
In Collaboration with Dr. Sarah Kahl, piano

Featuring:
Mercyhurst Clarinet Choir and
Members from the Mercyhurst Saxtet

Walker Recital Hall
Sunday, November 16, 2025
4:00pm



www.mercyhurst.edu/music

PROGRAM

Three Preludes

- I. *Allegro ben ritmato e deciso*
- II. *Andante con moto e poco rubato*
- III. *Allegro ben ritmato e deciso*

George Gershwin
(1898-1937)

Sonata in F Minor, Op. 120, No. 1

- III. *Allegretto grazioso*

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

Première Rhapsodie, L. 116

Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

Lamento

Luigi Bassi
(1833-1871)

Clarinet Concerto No.2, Op. 74

- III. *Alla Polacca*

Carl Maria von Weber
(1786-1826)

Intermission

Views of the Blues

Gordon Lewin
(1921-2008)

Aidan Moore & Rebecca Wunch

Blue Skies

Irving Berlin
(1888-1989)

Arr. Richard Percival

Clarinet Choir, Rebecca Wunch, director

Bb Clarinets: Julianna Cole, Persie Doolittle, Shannon Evans, Stephanie
Lassiter, Aidan Moore, Nicole Nietsch, Rebecca Stanish

Bass Clarinets: Emma Damiani & Tristan Yeagle

Celtic Suite
I. Midnight in Kinsale
II. Love Song
III. Ceilidh

Gavin Whitlock
(1977-present)

Soprano Saxophone: Aidan Moore
Alto Saxophone: Julianna Cole
Tenor Saxophone: Shannon Evans
Baritone Saxophone: Tristan Yeagle

Dovahkiin: Dragonborn

Jeremy Soule
(1975-present)
Arr. Rebecca Wunch

Mercyhurst Saxtet, Rebecca Wunch, director

Soprano Saxophone: Aidan Moore
Alto Saxophone: Jacob Pierce
Tenor Saxophone: Julianna Cole & Cian Conley
Baritone Saxophone: Shannon Evans & Tristan Yeagle

The use of recording devices is strictly prohibited. Please turn off and stow all electronic devices. Thank you.

NOTES

George Gershwin was born in New York City in 1898 to Russian Jewish immigrants. When he was 15 years old, Gershwin dropped out of school and made piano rolls for player pianos for the New York nightclubs. George was a profound pianist who composed many great pieces, his most famous being *Rhapsody in Blue*. Gershwin's most successful Broadway show was *Porgy and Bess*. Two years after its premiere, Gershwin died at the age of thirty-eight.

Three Preludes is a collection of short piano pieces composed in 1926. Each prelude is an example of how early 20th-century music used classical western idioms with jazz influence. This was Gershwin's only work for piano that was published during his lifetime. There are many arrangements for a variety of instruments, this specific version was arranged for Clarinet and Piano by James Cohn.

The first prelude, *Allegro ben ritmato e deciso*, opens with a blues riff from the clarinet alone, foreshadowing the melody. This movement has a jazzy sound, with its choice of notes and a syncopated feel. This movement features many technical challenges for the

clarinet, including several intricate triplet and 32nd-note runs. Additionally, an octave glissando from B5-B6, arguably the most challenging aspect to play in the whole piece, due to the technique involved and extreme register in which it is played. The movement ends with the clarinet and piano playing a 32nd-note run in unison, and the clarinet ending with a C7, the highest standard note on the instrument.

The second prelude, *Andante con moto e poco rubato*, is in C-sharp minor, in an ABA form, and has the sound similar to a blues ballad. Most of the A section uses an ostinato in the piano, established from the start, while the clarinet plays over it, in a lazy swing feel. The mood is different and lighter in the B section. This is where the piano has consistent quarter notes in the right hand, while the left hand is used as a response to the clarinet's melody. The return of the A section is like the beginning, except with added grace notes to jazz it up.

The third prelude, *Allegro ben ritmato e deciso*, opens with a brief piano introduction before the clarinet enters with the main melody. The clarinet plays a recurring sixteenth note triplet, sixteenth note melody, which highlights the nimble quality of the instrument while being propelled forward by the rhythmic drive of the accompaniment. This piece features some octave glissandos that challenge the technical abilities of the clarinet, especially those that change registers. This piece continues to push the listener forward with its use of sixteenth-note triplet passages and articulated sixteenth-note patterns in the altissimo register. When the main melody occurs for a final time, it is followed by one final glissando that is specifically marked *lento*, instructing the clarinet player to elongate the gliss, which concludes the third and final prelude.

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) was a German composer and pianist regarded as one of the greats of the Romantic period. Born in Hamburg, Brahms began his musical career as a pianist, then started to develop the art of orchestration and began to write luscious, intricate music. He is most well-known for his masterful symphonies and sonatas, his most famous being Symphony No. 1. Brahms was a close friend of composer Robert Schumann, and his wife, Clara, was heavily influenced by their work and liked to employ some of their writing styles. Brahms was, overall, a well-rounded composer writing for a variety of ensembles, some of his most famous works include the *Hungarian Dances* and *German Requiem*.

Brahms wrote his *Sonata No. 1 in F minor*, Op. 120, no. 1 and 2 in 1894 for clarinet and piano. The first sonata has four movements, *Allegro appassionato*, *Andante un poco adagio*, *Allegretto grazioso*, and *Vivace*. *Sonata No. 2* in E-flat major, has three movements, *Allegro amabile*, *Allegro appassionato*, *Andante con moto — Allegro*. Op. 120 is one of the staple romantic era pieces for clarinet, making use of the clarinet's rich tone and advanced technical ability. There is also a version of Brahms Op. 120 written for Viola.

Allegretto Grazioso is the third movement in Brahms's Sonata, written in a simple triple meter. This piece utilizes the clarinet's rich chalumeau register and beauty of the clarion, giving it a nice mixture of low, rich sound and sweet upper tones. This piece is in ternary form with the clarinet and piano passing the melody back and forth throughout. The rhythmic motive found throughout consists of a dotted quarter note, followed by three eighth notes. There is also a call-and-response within the clarinet part, it repeats the same rhythm, but the use of decrescendos makes a clear distinction between the call and response. There are instances where the clarinet takes on the accompaniment role by playing long tones in the lower chalumeau register while the piano plays the melody. The

movement ends with an ascending scale in fourths to the recurring dotted quarter to eighth rhythm descending to the chalumeau register for its conclusion.

Claude Debussy (1862-1918) was born in Saint-Germain-en-Laye. A talented pianist and composer, he went to study these disciplines at the Paris Conservatory at the age of 11. Throughout his early years, his life was filled with hardship, and these events led to his earliest sense of compositional style. A piece that fully displays this early style is *Claire de Lune*, one of the most well-known works for piano. Debussy is a versatile composer, creating great works for multiple ensembles and solo instruments, including orchestra, voice, chamber ensembles, and, most famously, piano. To accentuate certain feelings in his works, Debussy drew inspiration from famous artists and poets like Monet and Edgar Allen Poe. Some celebrated works he wrote inspired by non-musical artists include *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* and *La Mer*.

Première Rhapsodie was the piece Debussy wrote when the Paris Conservatory commissioned him for the annual examinations of its clarinet students in 1910. The piece was later dedicated to Prospère Mimart (1859-1928), the clarinet professor who debuted the piece in 1911. This piece has numerous challenges for the clarinetist, including advanced technical passages, breath control, and expressiveness. Something that helps attribute the expressive nature of this piece is that there is no discernible form. There are two distinguishable motifs in this piece. This motif appears throughout much of the piece, most prominently near the beginning. It consists of a half note tied to an eighth note, followed by a sequence of quarter and eighth notes that form a syncopated rhythm. This rhythm is supported by the piano's left hand, while the right hand maintains a steady flow of eighth-note triplets.

The introduction of this piece is first marked at *Rêveusement lent*, dreamily slow; this allows the clarinet to play beautiful legato lines alongside a mysterious piano accompaniment, causing a complexness and layers to the music. The piece changes from various tempos and can either change by small increments or *Le double plus vite*, which means to double the tempo. The time signature also changes multiple times, starting with a simple quadruple and changing to a simple triple and simple duple meters. Towards the end of the piece, Debussy utilizes a Neapolitan 6th chord, notated in thirty-second notes in the clarinet parts, creating a sense of dramaticism that builds into the final moments of the piece. The most exciting section follows, marked *Plus animé*, where the clarinet conveys a quiet intensity as the piece nears its conclusion. In the final measures, the piano enters at a slower tempo. The clarinet then propels the music toward the end with an ascending scale to altissimo quarter notes, culminating in a sustained tone, halted by the pianist's emphatic Gb major chord.

Luigi Bassi (1833-1871) was born in Cremona, Italy. Bassi was a talented clarinetist and composer who primarily wrote for the clarinet. Little is known about Bassi, but he studied at the Milan Conservatory under Benedetto Carulli from 1846 to 1853. He then went on to write 27 works for the clarinet, including 15 operatic fantasies. His most famous work, *Fantaisie brillante*, is based on Verdi's *Rigoletto*.

Little is known about *Lamento*, but it is believed to have been written as a short concert piece. There is also little information regarding Himie Voxman's edition of this piece. Voxman was a music professor who was known for editing and arranging music, specifically for the clarinet. He worked closely with Rubank in getting his editions published. This piece is also titled *Nocturne*, which refers to music that possesses nightlike qualities.

Lamento is in a compound duple meter in the key of G minor. The central tempo of the piece is *Andantino*, with several sections ending with cadenza-like material, before returning to a tempo. All the cadenza-like measures have the term *a piacere*, which means, at pleasure, indicating a cadenza-like section. This piece is in a rounded binary ABA' form, with the piano primarily playing in a waltz-like accompaniment pattern. In the B section, the music modulates to Bb major, and a different texture in the piano part accentuates this change in style. The end of the piece features the expression, *morendo*, which is achieved as the clarinet fades to a pianissimo dynamic.

Carl Maria von Weber (1786- 1826) was born in Eutin, Germany. A celebrated composer, conductor, and pianist in the Romantic era, he was mostly known for his operatic works. Weber's family was very musically inclined, with most of its members' occupations being related to music and performing. At a young age, Weber started taking lessons from young Michael Haydn, Joseph Haydn's younger brother, and then moved to Munich to study voice and organ. At the age of 14, he premiered his first opera, *The Silent Forest Maiden*. After the successful debut, he eventually sought out Michael Haydn again for further tutelage. Weber was eventually appointed as the director for the Breslau Opera in 1806 and got into some legal trouble years following. During his eventful, somewhat short life, Weber also served as the conductor for the Prague Opera and the German Opera in Dresden. In his time, Weber is credited as being one of the foundational forces that helped shape the German Romantic era. He was most well-known for his work in solidifying the romantic opera, but he also wrote a variety of concertos for piano and wind instruments.

Clarinet Concerto No.2, Op. 74 is one of six concert pieces that Weber wrote for the clarinet. Most of his clarinet works are considered staples of the clarinet repertoire, most famously being the two concertos and *Grand Duo Concertant* with piano. Weber's fondness for the clarinet came from his relationship with his good friend and clarinetist, Heinrich Bärmann. Bärmann is legendary in the clarinet world, being regarded as a clarinet virtuoso and one of the most influential pedagogues for the instrument. This concerto was written for Bärmann, so he wrote it to challenge the clarinetist in every way. This piece is written for a virtuoso; so, it includes technical passages in the first and especially the third movement that require advanced prowess and technique. The second movement is titled *Romanze*, which is very lyrical, reminiscent of Weber's extensive opera background.

Movement 3 of Weber's Second Concerto for Clarinet is titled *Alla Polacca*. The term *Polacca* derives from the Polish dance tradition of Polonaise, which is in a triple meter at a moderate pace. This is true for the third movement as well; it is written in a simple triple meter and at a moderate tempo. This movement is written in Eb major in a modified ternary form. The movement tends to have a forward motion quality with the melody in the A sections starting with a syncopated rhythm with accents that emphasize this quality. There are also various stylistic markings throughout the piece, including *scherzando* and *con fuoco*, with fire. In the last reprisal of the A section, in the first phrase, Weber raised everything a half step to provide dissonance in the growing tension before the finale. The last section of the piece is marked as *brillante*, highlighting the virtuosic playing of the clarinetist. A vast majority of the section is a string of sextuplets in scalar and arpeggiated forms. This section proves to be the most physically demanding and challenging of the concerto, serving as an excellent conclusion to the piece.

Gordon Lewin (1921-2008), born in the United Kingdom, was a well-known clarinetist in London. Lewin studied clarinet and composition at the Royal College of Music. He arranged music for different theatres in London and was a member of the BBC TV Orchestra. In addition to his theatrical arrangements, he was an avid composer and arranger for woodwind instruments, including a piece for flute and clarinet titled, *3 Latin American Impressions*. Lewin played clarinet and saxophone for a variety of settings, including recording studios, radio, TV, and soundtracks of over 100 film scores.

Views of the Blues was written by Lewin in 1985 for two Bb clarinets. *Views of the Blues* appeared in his album, "Times for Flying", which is an album of duets for clarinet. This piece has three movements, titled I, II, and III. In this third movement, Lewin showcases classic jazz and blues idioms with several devices commonly used in these styles. A couple of these jazz devices include pitch bends and glissandos. The third movement is written in an ABA rounded ternary form. This piece has an introduction in a slow blues tempo, and the scoops help give the introduction a sly feeling. The rest of the piece is in double-time swing tempo, highlighting the nimbleness of the clarinet with fast eighth notes and triplet runs. In the penultimate section before the D.S. al Coda, the feature switches to the bottom part, giving them the lead. In the following section, along with many other sections of the piece, Lewin harmonizes the two parts with runs alternating between a major and minor third apart. The piece ends with a two-measure coda utilizing a downward glissando in both parts.

Special Thanks

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