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A complete clarinet recital

Sara N. DeDona

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Abstract

A senior recital performance was given as a culmination of my musical studies through my undergraduate program. Many of the research hours are in the form of practice hours dedicated to the performance. This written portion of the thesis documents research about selected literature and performance implications.

The methodology includes extensive research about the music that is included in the clarinet recital, as well as discussion about repertoire selection and interpretation. The historical aspects of the pieces and composers are other important factors that define the practice and performance of the pieces.

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A COMPLETE CLARINET RECITAL

By

Sara N. DeDona

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Eastern Michigan University

Honors College

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Graduation

with Honors in Music Education from the School of Music & Dance

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Abstract

A senior recital performance was given as a culmination of my musical studies through my undergraduate program. Many of the research hours are in the form of practice hours dedicated to the performance. This written portion of the thesis documents research about selected literature and performance implications.

The methodology includes extensive research about the music that is included in the clarinet recital, as well as discussion about repertoire selection and interpretation. The historical aspects of the pieces and composers are other important factors that define the practice and performance of the pieces.

Cantilène, Louis Cahuzac

French composer Louis Cahuzac, clarinetist himself, performed many pieces with a variety of composers such as Debussy, Stravinsky, and Hindemith. He studied under the great Cyrille Rose, principal clarinetist of the Paris Opera and composer of the reputable *32 Etudes for clarinet* and *40 Studies for Clarinet*. Cahuzac also served as a conductor for several radio orchestras in southern France. He has composed a multitude of works for clarinet, including solos (notably, the unaccompanied *Arlequin*), etudes, duets, and small chamber pieces.

Cantilène is noted for its simplicity: it is simple in form, simple in harmony, and simple in melody. It has a musical form of ABA, meaning the main material is presented in the first and third section with a section in between that is related to the material but differs in melody. The harmony is written using the subdominant, dominant, and tonic chords repeatedly throughout the piece. The closest translation of the title comes from the Italian term “cantilena”, meaning “melody” or “song”, altogether indicating the style to be lyrical and relaxed. It is a short piece that is a single movement in length. Originally written for clarinet and orchestra, this reduction for clarinet and piano is the most commonly performed version.

Louis Cahuzac had recorded some of his own pieces for clarinet, and I was excited to take a look at his version of *Cantilène*. I listened with the assumption that his recording has the purest intentions of how the piece is supposed to sound, since none other than the composer himself is performing. I admired his use of *rubato* and the way that he shaped the phrases of the lyrical lines. I also noticed that there were some

rhythmic differences in a certain passage of the work, places he added an extra flourish of notes in the space of a fraction of a second. This piece is all about time and the ebb and flow of the melody; it is a sort of dance between the clarinet and the piano, both working together to pull back and push forward at different sections of the music for dramatic effect.

Taking those points into consideration, this short selection is whimsical and simple, and the beauty is found in its simplicity. A melody is derived in the first few measures of the piece and is delicately ornamented throughout. The sweetness of the piece highlights the sweetness of the clarinet; the performer has many opportunities to emphasize emotional qualities through personal interpretation and making stylistic decisions. At one point, I had to also accommodate intuitive decision making where it seemed appropriate.

I had originally desired to perform this piece from memory. Having ample opportunities to perform it in student recitals on and off campus and in my private practice, I still doubted my memory when it was under pressure. The possibility of not giving my best performance far outweighed the desire to play from memory. I decided to have the sheet music with me for every performance. After many hours of devoted practice, I did not necessarily need to look at it anymore, and it enabled me to look away from the written notation as I played. By not having to read all the notes, I was free to play with emotion and without inhibition. Even after practice and technical preparation, there were many other musical aspects to consider; such as when to slow down the musical line, at which point to raise the dynamic level, or which fraction of a second to

emphasize a particular note. All of those detailed features began to fall into place once I could focus on playing rather than reading the sheet music. That is one of the seemingly unexplainable aspects about music and the human connection that I have found to be miraculous in my musical studies.

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano, Francis Poulenc

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963) was introduced to music through the piano at age five by his mother. At his father's request, he attended conventional schooling before planning to go on to study at a conservatory. Both of his parents died when Poulenc was in his teenage years, which changed the direction of his career. He studied under Ricardo Viñes, a Spanish pianist and active performer, who acted as his mentor and directed him to composition and further piano study. Given the opportunity to meet other musicians and artists through Viñes, he studied the works of many composers of his day, such as Stravinsky, who inspired him to begin writing compositions around 1914. It wasn't until 1917 that Poulenc's first piece was premiered at the Theatre du Vieux Colombier in Paris. He first began to battle depression in the 1920s, which he would continue to experience throughout his life. In 1963, he died of a sudden heart attack in his apartment in Paris.

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano was one of three sonatas for woodwinds (the other two being for oboe and bassoon) that Poulenc wrote later in his life but didn't live to see them finished. Written in 1962, these were some of the very last pieces he ever composed and they represent the culmination of his compositional style. Commissioned by Benny Goodman, the Sonata was supposed to have been premiered by Poulenc himself. Since he died before it was published, Leonard Bernstein, pianist, and Benny Goodman, clarinetist, premiered the piece in 1963. It was dedicated to Poulenc's dear friend and composer, Arthur Honegger.

Today, Poulenc's *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano* is recognized as a standard piece of repertoire. It fit well into my recital as a representation of the contemporary style of

clarinet music. After Poulenc's long and prominent career, this piece was positively received at its premiere, especially since Benny Goodman was the performer. Poulenc wrote in such a unique style that it is a great piece to study jazz and neo-classical techniques. Also, the beauty of his music is admired by many avid listeners. Many of his pieces tend to include certain signature elements of his, including bitonality and jazz techniques. Following the traditional format of a sonata, there are three movements: *Allegro tristamente*, with a dramatic, middle-slow section; *Romanza*, gentle and mournful; and *Allegro con fuoco*, a bright and energetic finale.

As a well-known piece in the clarinet world, any performance of Poulenc's Sonata for Clarinet and Piano is held to high expectations. Since it has been in existence for decades, there are many professional recordings that clarinetists have created that set the standard for the level of musicianship. It is a common practice technique to develop an instrumentalist's own sound by mimicking techniques from other professional musicians; in this way, listening exercises are vital to performing artists. To stay true to the composer's intent of the music, it is often beneficial to trust other artists who inspire through great performance and therefore act as role models for less-experienced players. This was the case as I prepared this piece, and in listening to a diversity of reference recordings, I was able to develop an aural idea for their specific nuances. Primarily, I listened to the beautiful, rich, dark tone of Anthony McGill, principal clarinetist of the New York Philharmonic, in his recording of the three movements of Poulenc's Sonata. In October of 2015, I had the amazing opportunity to meet Anthony McGill in person and hear him play at a masterclass hosted by University of Michigan School of Music,

Theatre and Dance (see fig. 1). Creating a personal connection with a role model I had in my career field was inspiring to say the least, and I was also able to gain insight on his own methods of practice through his lecture. His performance at the masterclass truly exemplified a mastery of clarinet technique and showcased elements of musicality that I constantly strive for throughout my many hours of practice. I took his model of bold, passionate, and skilled musicianship and used it to drive my future practicing. My practice method for Sonata consisted primarily of repetition of technical passages and application of emotional drive. I had performed select movements of the Sonata in 2013 in a clarinet studio recital, which helped provide a foundation for more extensive study in 2015. After hours of research and individual practice, my dedication culminated with my highest quality performance of Poulenc's Sonata during my senior recital.



Figure 1: Sara DeDona (right) with Anthony McGill (center.)

Source: Jackson, Sandra. *EMU Clarinet Students with Anthony McGill*. 2015. Ann Arbor, MI.

“Riffs” from Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs, Leonard Bernstein

Leonard Bernstein was an American pianist, composer, and conductor. Widely known for his scoring of *West Side Story*, he was a notable composer for Broadway and wrote a number of works for orchestra, chorus, and chamber groups. His style is drawn from earlier American musicals along with 20th century composers Stravinsky, Shostakovich, and Mahler. Bernstein’s education included music study at Harvard on piano and the Curtis Institute of Music for conducting and piano. His compositional style is marked by his taste for jazz harmonies, odd groups of notes in five or seven, shifting time signatures, and lyrical melodies.

Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs was composed in 1949 with the intention that Woody Herman, jazz performer and big band leader, would premier it with his ensemble. Since Herman’s group disbanded before the piece was completed, it took a number of years until the first performance of the piece. It eventually was presented on October 16, 1955 on a live broadcast of the television program *Omnibus* with Benny Goodman as featured soloist accompanied by jazz ensemble. Benny Goodman was one of the greatest clarinetists and jazz musicians of all time, often called the “King of Swing” as a big band leader and performer. Each of the three movements features a different section of the ensemble: *Prelude* for the brass, *Fugue* for the saxophones, and *Riffs* for the ensemble featuring the solo clarinetist. Bernstein takes ideas from the classical world, such as the musical form fugue, and transforms them into an improvisational and genuine-sounding jazz piece. There is an additional orchestral version of this piece as transcribed by Lukas

Foss that was premiered by the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra with clarinetist Richard Stoltzman in 1997.

Bernstein had also composed Sonata for Clarinet and Piano, published in 1942, which is another core piece of repertoire in the clarinet literature. Compared to *Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs*, the Sonata was written very early on in Bernstein's career. His later pieces, including *Riffs*, seem more distinguishable as he incorporates unique compositional techniques that fuse the classical and swing-jazz worlds of music together.

This selection was originally made between the Director of Bands at EMU, Dr. Mary Schneider, and myself. She planned for the 2015 fall concert program for the EMU Wind Symphony to include pieces inspired by jazz. This piece provided a great musical challenge in order to achieve a high level performance, thus making it worthy of a meaningful experience. I was ecstatic to receive an email from her in August inviting me to play the solo clarinet part accompanied with jazz ensemble for the concert. I quickly accepted and purchased the solo clarinet sheet music for *Riffs*, the movement of *Prelude, Fugue and Riffs* that features the clarinet, to use for practice. After many days and weeks of individual practice time, all members of the ensemble spent hours of rehearsal together preparing for the performance. For my senior recital, I performed the reduction for clarinet, piano, and percussion. This required additional rehearsal time and placed more responsibility on all three individuals to be able to perform soloistically within a small-group arrangement.

As the featured soloist for this piece, I had the outstanding opportunity to perform both on the Wind Symphony concert and the EMU Jazz Ensemble's concert that fall.

Playing as an invited soloist is such a wonderful opportunity to grow as a musician, but it also provides a challenge to balance with an entire ensemble and conductor (rather than blending as a regular ensemble member). Bernstein's music often includes tricky technical details, with odd numbers of beats per measure and awkward entrances for instrumental parts, which I had to be prepared for in rehearsal. I spent months ahead of time on independent practice of my solo part. Listening to recordings online, I sought to imitate the exact nuances of Benny Goodman, the American jazz clarinetist, or Alessandro Carbonare, an Italian professional clarinetist. In doing so, it elevated my own playing and helped me give the performance I desired.

On my recital, *Riffs* added elements of jazz to my selection of literature. I studied jazz performance through participation in Jazz Ensemble and Jazz Combos throughout my five years of college and I have a great passion for performing jazz literature. This piece allowed me to have fun with a style that allows for looseness and flexibility, which is something that is not applicable to all genres of music literature. To achieve the proper style of *Riffs* that the composer intended, I used vibrato, glissandos, and pitch bending to create a showy, flashy, and vibrant performance. It took months of practice to develop mastery of those skills.

Duo Sonata, Gregory Wanamaker

Gregory Wanamaker, currently a Professor of Composition at the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam, is quickly becoming a world-renowned composer of music literature. *Duo Sonata* was written for clarinet and saxophone and published in 2002. Wanamaker specifically dedicated the piece for two brilliant musicians: Tim McAllister, professor of saxophone at the University of Michigan, and Alan Woy, clarinetist and Professor Emeritus at Crane School of Music. *Duo Sonata* made its way into my life through a colleague, Daniel Goethals, who is a fellow music education student and saxophonist. Written for alto saxophone and clarinet, it was a perfect musical fit for our instrumentation and a challenge to our musicianship. We researched and tested several other duets but found *Duo Sonata* to be the most exciting and riveting. On this program, this selection represents the creation of new music and the need for support of current composers; this works to expand the diversity of repertoire available to musicians.

In four movements, this piece takes the players and listeners through a journey, quite literally; the titles of the movements are *Departure*, *Elegy*, *Scherzo*, and *Arrival*. Each movement takes on a unique character, connecting to the core of human emotions and invites the listener to be invested with the musical story that is being told. It is a piece whose compositional techniques are as much a part of the portrayal as the emotional interpretation. *Departure* begins in a flurry of notes, is rhythmically demanding, and relies on complete connection between the two performers in accuracy of timing. At points, the melody is written in both the saxophone and clarinet parts, except that they are displaced by one beat from each other, which requires a strong sense of musical

independence in order to achieve the desired effect. We had audience members come up to us after various performances of the piece and note the beauty of *Elegy*, the second movement, which is known to bring listeners to tears. Based on Wanamaker's reaction to the September 11th tragedy, this movement is reminiscent of a character lamenting a personal loss. Its form is irregular and free, with moving passages being passed back and forth between the two performers.

The third movement, *Scherzo*, is based on the concept of polymeter; in this case, the ratio of 2:3. At any point, the two performers are in different musical meters in a sense that the subdivision of the pulse is either in triple or duple, but the players do not ever have the same subdivision at the same time. In live performance, the distinct tones of the alto saxophone and clarinet become so intertwined that it is nearly indistinguishable whose voice is whose, which is a feat that creates a stunning effect. The final movement, *Arrival*, is based on a blues style and is technically challenging because each player is meant to play when the other is not. We spent numerous hours studying the score, practicing our parts individually, then rehearsing our parts together. As a result of our research, Daniel and I were able to truly perform it well when we were also able to feel the groove rather than put thought into it. This piece truly showed me the importance of reliance and trust in another musician as well as developing an emotional connection with the music.

Freebirds, Scott McAllister

From a technical standpoint, *Freebirds* is the most difficult piece I had ever played in my collegiate career. It certainly stretched my own clarinet technique in multiple facets. In listening to the piece, it is an exciting yet extremely intimidating work, which is one of the reasons why it is so enticing, especially for those musicians who are up for a challenge. In terms of range, I had to practice extending up into the stratosphere of clarinet altissimo, learning alternate fingerings for one of the highest notes possible to play on the clarinet (a C that lies above five ledger lines above the staff). I had also been dealing with a physical ailment, tendonitis in my wrist, which was severely inflamed by any fast, repetitive motion on clarinet. This entire piece consists of fast, repetitive motion; therefore, I had to alter my practice techniques and often take breaks from practice since it became dangerous to my health.

I had the fortunate opportunity to meet Dr. Scott McAllister when he was invited to our campus in October of 2014 for a clarinet studio masterclass and as guest composer for the EMU Wind Symphony (see fig. 2). In preparation of his arrival, I had studied and practiced many hours through the course of the fall semester to be able to perform a couple of his pieces: *Devil Sticks*, a clarinet quintet; *Bling Bling*, solo for clarinet with piano; *Freebirds*, clarinet duet with piano accompaniment; and *Gone*, a piece for wind ensemble transcribed from his clarinet concerto. A fantastic composer that writes literature for wind ensembles and orchestras, Dr. McAllister is Professor of Composition at Baylor University. He holds degrees in clarinet performance and composition from Florida State University and composition at the Shepherd School of Music at Rice

University. An avid clarinetist and composer at a young age, he dedicated his life solely to composing after a car accident in adulthood impeded his ability to perform. Much of his literature is written for clarinet.



Figure 2. Dr. McAllister with Sara DeDona, Alexander Music Building, Ypsilanti, MI. Personal photograph by author, 2014.

I was able to work directly with Dr. McAllister and received feedback on our performances of his pieces. I gained insight into his inspiration and intent for pieces along with his enthusiasm toward younger musicians performing his work. He noted in particular that many of his works for clarinet are at a high level of difficulty; however, he

saw more and more young students, such as undergraduate collegiate students, performing his work. He pointed out his passion for young bands, mentioning his composition for band, *POPCOPY (Rated Teen)* that has three movements titled “Bieber Fever”, “Molly on the Floor”, and “#Twerk” that appeals to the younger generation. Dr. McAllister’s music tends to include many similar motives in his works, which I noticed throughout the pieces I performed on clarinet. He explained these were often based off of riffs he would invent while practicing clarinet in his youth. Amusingly, he loved to annoy his sister as she talked on the phone by playing high notes, which made their way into his later published compositions.

McAllister finds great inspiration from American culture and folk music; notably, Led Zeppelin, rock, and country music. He incorporated sounds that are fast, loud, and aggressive into *Freebirds*, which is based off of Lynyrd Skynyrd’s “Free Bird”. In McAllister’s *Freebirds*, the clarinet duo imitates the battling guitar soloists. In my senior recital, I performed the version that is accompanied by piano. There are available publications for two clarinets with wind ensemble as well as orchestra. I spent hours practicing and performing *Freebirds* with Jeremy Gdaniec, a colleague in my clarinet studio who was also enticed by this piece. We took the opportunity to perform this not only on both of our senior recitals, but also for the 2015 EMU Concerto/Aria Competition, at which we were awarded Honorable Mention for our performance.

My selection of *Freebirds* for performance on my senior recital represents the amazing opportunities I was fortunate to come across throughout my collegiate music career. Collaborating with fellow talented musicians, working with current composers,

performing exciting music, being challenged by pieces that push my own limits and help me grow into a better musician, and celebrating the tremendous amount of private practice through public performance.

Reflection of Senior Recital

This “Complete Clarinet Recital” was my representation of clarinet throughout its many years of existence as well as my own pathway through collegiate music studies. I was able to incorporate a variety of styles, genres, and musical eras through my selection of repertoire. I was able to collaborate with fantastic musicians who were vital to the success of my recital: Steven Brancaleone, piano; Jeremy Gdaniec, clarinet; Daniel Goethals, alto saxophone; Melinda Haithcock, piano; and Caleb Lucido, percussion. Musicians can be an interesting group of people with a diversity of personalities, and I have had the fortune of working with many who have taught me that the social connection is just as crucial as the musical competence. I have learned to have patience, empathy, and flexibility when taking on a project such as this recital. Most importantly, I’ve had the fortune of having an amazing mentor, Sandra Jackson, Assistant Professor of Clarinet, as my instructor for five years. Her guidance has directed me towards numerous performance opportunities that have inspired my passion for music and learning. She gave me the tools to be able to perform at a high level of musicianship, and I am humbled to have been her student.

There are many implications of this recital on my future teaching career. Throughout my training for a Bachelor of Music Education, I have concluded that music education is a broad term that is loosely applied. In choosing this career path, I had to reflect on what music education is and how it has developed my person and influenced the lives of those around me. Much of the preparation for my senior clarinet recital consisted of time spent on the technical aspects of how to perform music; however,

achieving a high level of performance incorporates much more than just technique. The study of music is truly a study of language. This universal language has the power to speak emotionally, spiritually, and in ways for which we have no other words. In the process of taking music written decades or even centuries ago, bringing it to life, and sharing it with other human beings, is something incredible. Music education is about the power of sharing, collaborating, expressing individuality, connecting on an emotional level, and exposing creativity. Students learn from teachers, as I have from my mentor, Professor Sandra Jackson, among many others at Eastern Michigan University. Teachers learn from students, as I am every day while completing my student teaching assignment. This entire process has taught me that all this – dedicating years of my life to creating something beautiful, sharing that passion with others, involving a multitude of people through collaboration in performance, selecting a variety of repertoire from composers throughout the world – is worth it. With these values I have pursued to live by, I am excited to see what the future holds for me.

Sara DeDona

SENIOR RECITAL

CLARINET



Sunday, November 22nd

@ 2pm

Alexander Recital Hall



Featuring works by
Bernstein, Cahuzac, McAllister,
Poulenc, and Wanamaker



In collaboration with:
Melinda Haithcock, Piano
Steven Brancalone, Piano
Jeremy Gdaniec, Clarinet
Dan Goethals, Saxophone
Cal Lucido, Percussion

Poster made by: Molly DeDona 2015

EASTERN
 MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
 SCHOOL of MUSIC & DANCE

SARA DEDONA, CLARINET
MELINDA HAITHCOCK, PIANO

IN COLLABORATION WITH

STEVEN BRANCALEONE, PIANO
JEREMY GDANIEC, CLARINET
DANIEL GOETHALS, SAXOPHONE
CALEB LUCIDO, PERCUSSION

NOVEMBER 22, 2015 • 2:00PM • ALEXANDER RECITAL HALL
 PROGRAM

Cantilène Louis Cahuzac (1880-1960)

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

I. Allegro tristamente
 II. Romanza
 III. Allegro con fuoco

Sara DeDona, clarinet
Melinda Haithcock, piano

"Riffs" from Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)

Sara DeDona, clarinet
Steven Brancaleone, piano
Caleb Lucido, percussion

INTERMISSION

Duo Sonata Gregory Wanamaker (b. 1968)

I. Departure
 II. Elegy
 III. Scherzo
 IV. Arrival (Blues)

Sara DeDona, clarinet
Daniel Goethals, saxophone

Freebirds Scott McAllister (b. 1969)

Sara DeDona, clarinet
Jeremy Gdaniec, clarinet
Melinda Haithcock, piano

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Bachelor of Music Education.
Sara DeDona is a student of Professor Sandra Jackson.

A Clarinet Senior Recital by Sara DeDona
Program Notes

Cantilène Louis Cahuzac (1880-1960)

Louis Cahuzac was a composer of French origin. A clarinet player himself, he performed many pieces with a variety of composers, working with Debussy, Stravinsky, and Hindemith. He studied under the great Cyrille Rose, principal clarinetist of the Paris Opera and composer of the reputable *32 Etudes for clarinet* and *40 Studies for Clarinet*. Cahuzac also served as a conductor to several radio orchestras in southern France.

Cantilène is noted for its simplicity: it is simple in form (ABA), simple in harmony (subdominant, dominant, tonic), and simple in melody. The term “cantilena” translates as “melody” or “song” from Italian, altogether indicating the style to be lyrical and relaxed.

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano, Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Francis Poulenc, born in Paris, grew up as a pianist and composer. He was known at an early age for his simple melodies and later noted for producing accessible music with wonderful lyricism. His version of the modern French style of music included clarity, simplicity, and freedom. In his own words, Poulenc stated, “I am a musician without a label.”

The *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano* was written in 1962 in memory of Arthur Honegger, a Swiss composer and friend. This was part of a series of instrumental compositions that was never finished in Poulenc’s lifetime. He left behind three woodwind sonatas, including those written for oboe and flute. The clarinet sonata had its premiere performance in 1963 by Benny Goodman and Leonard Bernstein in New York. It opens with a playful and vibrant theme in *Allegro tristamente*, settles into a chant-like calmness in *Romanza*, and finishes with a flurry of interjected rhythms in *Allegro con fuoco*.

“Riffs” from Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs, Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)

Leonard Bernstein was an American pianist, composer, and conductor. Widely known for his scoring of *West Side Story*, he was a notable composer for Broadway and wrote a number of works for orchestra, chorus, and chamber groups. His style is drawn from from earlier American musicals along with 20th century composers Stravinsky, Shostakovich, and Mahler. Bernstein’s education included music study at Harvard on piano and the Curtis Institute of Music for conducting and piano. His compositional style is marked by his taste for jazz harmonies, odd groups of notes in five or seven, shifting time signatures, and lyrical melodies.

Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs was premiered in 1955 on a television program with Benny Goodman as featured soloist. Each movement features a different section of the ensemble; *Prelude* for the brass, *Fugue* for the saxophones, and *Riffs* for the ensemble featuring the solo clarinetist. -Bernstein takes ideas from the classical world, such as the fugue, and transforms them into an improvisational and genuine-sounding jazz piece.

***Duo Sonata*, Gregory Wanamaker (b. 1968)**

Gregory Wanamaker is currently Professor of Composition at the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam. With performances by world-renowned instrumentalists, his literature is becoming accepted into the staple repertoire for musicians. *Duo Sonata* is a four-movement work that was written in 2002 for saxophonist Tim McAllister and clarinetist Alan Woy.

“1. *Departure* is a highly chromatic and rhythmically driven movement in sonata form. Opening with a fast unison passage (introducing the two instruments as if they together were one), they separate – dancing in homorhythmic passages – only to return to the opening phrases in octaves.

2. *Elegy* is strictly white-note aeolian and freely rhythmic. Perhaps more importantly, it was composed very quickly as a reaction to the tragedy of September 11, 2001. It has since been rescored for string orchestra, string quartet, wind ensemble and saxophone quartet.

3. Like *Departure*, the *Scherzo* opens with the clarinet and saxophone in unison silences only to find themselves simultaneously presenting simple motivic ideas in a 2 vs. 3 polymeter.

4. Unlike the previous movements, the groove presented in *Arrival (Blues)* requires the performers to consider those points “when not to play,” as Al Woy humorously put it. It is a fast blues (proportional to the 12-bar format) with a contrapuntal development.”

-Gregory Wanamaker

***Freebirds*, Scott McAllister (b. 1969)**

Dr. Scott McAllister currently serves as Professor of Composition at Baylor University. McAllister has degrees in clarinet performance and composition from Florida State University and composition at the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University. An avid clarinetist and composer at a young age, he dedicated his life solely to composing after a car accident in adulthood impeded his ability to perform. Much of his literature is written for clarinet; other notable pieces are arranged for wind ensembles and orchestras.

McAllister finds great inspiration from American culture and folk music; notably, Led Zeppelin, rock, and country music. He incorporates sounds that are fast, loud, and aggressive into *Freebirds*, which is based off of Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Free Bird". In McAllister's *Freebirds*, the clarinet duo imitates the battling guitar soloists.

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