



**Michael Fascetta, Clarinet**  
**Angela Draghicescu, Piano**  
**Senior Degree Recital**  
**April 21, 2024, 5:30pm**  
**Gore Recital Hall**

**Hall of Ghosts (2021)**

Amanda Harberg (1973)

**Drei Romanzen, Op.22 (1853)**

Clara Schumann (1819-1896)

Andante molto

Allegretto

Leidenschaftlich schnell

**Sonatina for Clarinet and Piano (2024)\***

Robert Strauss (2002)

*Intermission*

**Konzertstücke No.2, Op.114 (1833)**

Félix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Nathan Soric, clarinet

**Sonata for Clarinet and Piano, Op.184 (1962)**

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Allegro Tristamente

Romanza

Allegro con Fuoco

\* *Premiere*

## Hall of Ghosts

Amanda Harberg (1973)

*Program notes from the composer*

*Hall of Ghosts*, composed in April 2020, was composed as a 'thank you' gift dedicated to the wonderful community of flutists who participated in my Prayer Project- a virtual flute orchestra project that I produced during the Covid-19 lockdown period.

*Hall of Ghosts* was inspired by piccolist Gudrun Hinze, who recorded her part for the Prayer Project in the Gewandhaus Chamber Music Hall. This hall would normally be full of musicians rehearsing and performing, but now, due to Covid-19, the hall lay empty and filled only with echoes and memories. The image of Gudrun's solitary piccolo inspired in me a musical invocation, imploring the spirits to let the music return.

In the first section, the silence of rests and pauses creates an expressive background for the searching and plaintive phrases of the solo piccolo. The lively middle section is a contrapuntal dialogue between the ticking of time and an instrument striving to make itself heard. These materials trade off throughout the piece. You can decide through your interpretation on who wins. The music? Or the ghosts?

## Drei Romanzen, Op.22

- I. Andante molto
- II. Allegretto
- III. Leidenschaftlich schnell

Clara Schumann (1819-1896)

Clara Schumann composed *Drei Romanzen*, op.22 for violin and piano during the month of July 1853. This work is among the final that she wrote, as she had only begun composing again that summer after being dormant in composition since the 1840s. Following the summer of 1853 however, her attention again shifted away from composing to performing and editing her husband Robert's works following his confinement in 1854 and death in 1856. The Romanzen was inspired by Robert's birthday, and was dedicated to virtuoso violinist and friend of Clara's Joseph Joachim.

Often overlooked for her compositional skills, Clara Schumann was a highly noted concert pianist and virtuoso, performing her own piano concerto at the age of 14 with Mendelssohn conducting. Her mother was a talented vocalist, while her father was a domineering man who also happened to be a highly reputable piano teacher, and was the one who pushed Clara to become somewhat of a child prodigy.

Clara met her husband, Robert Schumann in 1830 when she went to study with her father. At the time, Robert was also a pupil of Clara's father, and Clara and Robert married in 1840, despite her father's many objections. Clara managed to compose a couple of songs and piano pieces during the first part of their marriage, however following their move to Düsseldorf in 1853, she became significantly more productive. She and Robert had 8 children together, and she took charge of many of the household chores.

Clara served as the breadwinner of the family, regularly touring and giving concerts her entire life. She set new standards of performance that are still practiced to this day, among them being the standard of playing recitals or concertos from memory. Clara was also a talented improviser, which some believed allowed her to easily bridge the gap between her composer side and performer side. Clara was a big supporter of the contemporary composers of her time, including her husband Robert and a young Johannes Brahms. She gave 238 total concerts with violinist Joseph Joachim throughout Germany and England, during which they were most known

for playing Beethoven's violin sonatas. It was through Joachim that the Schumann's first met Brahms, who became a close friend to the family.

In 1854, Robert tragically suffered a terrible mental collapse, attempted to commit suicide, and was placed into an asylum, after which Clara and Robert never saw each other again. Robert would pass away two years later in 1856, at the age of 46. Clara composed very little in the years following her husband's death, leaving us with only 23 published works.

Had Clara composed more, she very well may have risen to the height of her composer husband, who often encouraged her to do so. In fact, her Op.12 and his Op.37, *12 Songs from Liebesfrühling*, was one that they wrote together, with three of the 12 being Clara's. Clara was once quoted saying, "Composing gives me great pleasure. There is nothing that surpasses the joy of creation, if only because through it one wins hours of self-forgetfulness, when one lives in a world of sound."

### **Sonatina for Clarinet and Piano**

Robert Strauss (2002)

*Program notes from the composer*

I began writing the material for my Sonatina for Clarinet and Piano last fall, on a relatively somber night. I had just been notified that a family member of mine had been hospitalized, so I couldn't sleep. I felt a need to do something, even though there was really nothing I could do to help. Yet, I had a feeling everything was going to be okay, which fortunately it was. It turns out this particular family member had just had a bit too much to drink. This piece reflects on that feeling of helplessness and hopefulness, and a little bit of silliness.

### **Konzertstücke No.2 für Klarinette und Bassethorn, Op.114**

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Nathan Soric: Clarinet

Felix Mendelssohn was born in Hamburg, Germany, and was the second of what would be four children. His older sister of 4 years, Fanny Mendelssohn, was an incredibly talented and celebrated composer and pianist, having written over 200 Lieder, and over 500 compositions during her lifetime.

Felix Mendelssohn was a prolific composer himself over his short lifespan. His portfolio includes 5 full symphonies, 12 string symphonies, the oratorio *Elijah*, 2 piano concertos, a violin concerto, and a variety of chamber works, including 6 completed string quartets, a string octet, 2 piano trios, 2 string quintets, 3 piano quartets, a piano sextet, and a number of duo sonatas. Mendelssohn also wrote 5 single-movement works for solo instruments and orchestra, which he referred to as *Konzerstück* (concert pieces). The first three, op.22, 29, and 43, are all written for solo piano and orchestra. The other two, op.113 and op.114, were written originally for clarinet, basset horn, and piano accompaniment. The two pieces would later be written for clarinet, basset horn, and orchestra. Today, the two works are played either in the original orchestration, or the basset horn part is played either with a second clarinet or with bass clarinet.

In 1829, Mendelssohn met Heinrich Joseph Baermann (1784-1847), who was regarded unanimously as the most outstanding clarinetist of his time. Their friendship quickly grew over the years, and in 1832, Heinrich and his son Carl were on a tour in Berlin. Mendelssohn invited them to his home while they were in Berlin, and in exchange for Carl preparing his favorite meal, sweet dumplings and cheese strudel, Mendelssohn would compose a piece for clarinet, basset horn, and piano or orchestral accompaniment. According to Carl Baermann, he arrived at Mendelssohn's home at 9 am, and at 5 pm, the meal was done and Mendelssohn had

completed the piece. It was rehearsed that night by both Baermann at Mendelssohn's home, where some minor revisions were made. In January of 1833, Mendelssohn sent an autographed manuscript of the completed piano version of op.114. Mendelssohn never orchestrated op.114, with that task being left to Heinrich Baermann

### **Sonata for Clarinet and Piano Op.184**

- I. Allegro Tristamente
- II. Romanza
- III. Allegro con Fuoco

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Francis Poulenc composed a wide variety of works throughout his lifetime, including works for choir, solo voice, chamber music, ballet, orchestra, solo piano, and wind instruments. Poulenc was also a very accomplished pianist, performing both solo piano and working as an accompanist throughout his career. He was also a member of *Les Six*, which was a group of the 6 leading composers in France during the 20th century. Poulenc was mostly self-taught as a composer, and his mother was the one to encourage him to take up piano lessons as a child.

Poulenc's Sonata for Clarinet is one of three sonatas that he wrote towards the end of his life for woodwinds, with his Sonata for Flute op.164 (1956-57) and Sonata for Oboe op.185 (1962) also being composed just before his untimely death in January of 1963 from a heart attack, just three months before the premiere of the sonata.

A number of Poulenc's later works carry dedications to some of his lifetime friends, and the clarinet sonata is no different being dedicated to Arthur Honegger, who died in 1955. The oboe sonata however is dedicated to Prokofiev, and it is speculated that during the publishing process of the two pieces, since they were composed essentially at the same time, that the dedications were actually switched, and the clarinet sonata was meant to be dedicated to Prokofiev. This does have some merit to it, as the sonata does contain many allusions to Prokofiev's music. It is also more than possible that this is the case as the works were published posthumously.

The premiere of the sonata was given at Carnegie Hall in April of 1963, with Benny Goodman playing clarinet and Leonard Bernstein playing piano. The first performance in France was in July of 1963 by clarinetist André Boutard and pianist Jacques Février. This French duo produced the first recording of the sonata in 1964.