

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Roy Barnett Recital Hall  
Friday, October 14th 2022  
7:00 p.m.

**CHAMBER MUSIC DOCTORAL RECITAL\***

**CARLOS SAVALL-GUARDIOLA, Clarinet**

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**CONOR STUART & FRANCISCO BARRADAS, Violins**

**CAROLINE OLSEN, Viola, and AIRELEEN ZHU, Cello**

Prelude, Allegro and Pastorale for Clarinet and Viola (1941)

Rebecca Clarke  
(1886-1979)

- I. Prelude – Andante semplice
- II. Allegro – Allegro vigoroso
- III. Pastorale – Poco lento

Caroline Olsen, Viola

- INTERMISSION -

Clarinet Quintet in b minor, op.115 (1891)

Johannes Brahms  
(1833-1897)

- I. Allegro
- II. Adagio – Più lento
- III. Andantino – Presto non assai, ma con sentimento
- IV. Con moto

\* In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctorate of Musical Arts  
with a major in Clarinet.

*We acknowledge that the University of British Columbia is situated on the  
traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people.*

## **- PROGRAM NOTES -**

### **Rebecca Clarke Prelude, Allegro, and Pastorale, for Bb Clarinet and Viola**

Rebecca Clarke (b. Harrow, England, 1886; d. New York City, 1979), one of the finest viola players of her day and a composer of rare distinction, was born in England, in 1886, to an American father and a German mother. She grew up a British citizen, studied music in London, and became one of the U.K.'s first female professional orchestral violists. She was stranded in the United States at the outbreak of World War II and settled permanently in New York City. She studied with Sir Charles Stanford at the Royal College of Music, London, and played chamber music with many of the greatest artists of the 1910s and 1920s, including Schnabel, Casals, Thibaud, Arthur Rubinstein, Percy Grainger, Myra Hess, and George Szell. Clarke's compositional output was small (only 82 works, including juvenilia) but brilliant and powerful. (Johnson, C. 2000. Oxford University Press, New York).

Clarke went to the US in 1939 for three months, she was refused a return visa, and had to wait out the duration of WWII. She was homesick and trapped in America when she composed the Prelude, Allegro, and Pastorale (1941). It was first performed at the 19<sup>th</sup> Festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music in Berkeley, California, on August 1942, by Rudolph Schmitt, clarinet, and Walter Herbert, viola. Over 30 composers from 13 nations were represented, being Clarke the only female composer in the festival.

Being surrounded by exclusively male composers in the 1942 Festival, Clarke modestly described in the program notes her "Prelude, Allegro, and Pastorale" as (quote): "... very unpretentious: a short, unassuming little prelude... The second movement should sound very spirited... The third movement, Pastorale, is rather melancholy and nostalgic..."

A considerable part of Rebecca Clarke's music, including this work, was unknown for the general public during her lifetime, but in the last decades of the Nineteenth Century, it has been more and more common to include her chamber pieces in the concerts as a standard repertoire. She felt gratified after her interview by BBC in 1976, realizing that her music regained the attention that it deserved. (YourClassical.org "Rebecca Clarke" accessed October 2022)

**Johannes Brahms**  
**Clarinet Quintet in b minor, op. 115**

The Quintet in b minor for Clarinet and Strings, op. 115, was written in Bad Ischl in the summer of 1891 at the same time as the Trio in a minor for Clarinet, Violoncello, and Piano, op. 114. Brahms had just met Richard von Mühlfeld, the clarinetist of the Meiningen Court Orchestra, and had become reacquainted with several clarinet pieces by Carl Maria von Weber and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart that Mühlfeld played to perfection. These circumstances inspired him to abandon his resolve, announced one year previously, to give up composition altogether. Writing to Clara Schumann on 2 October 1891, Brahms mentions both the trio and the quintet with a warmth of feeling that might almost be interpreted as a dedication: "More than that, I should in all fairness have to write above my best melodies: Actually by Cl. Sch.! For when I think of myself nothing intelligent comes to mind, still less anything beautiful!"

The first performance of both works took place at a private gathering in Meiningen on 24 November 1891, after which op. 115 and op. 114, were given their first public hearing in Berlin on 12 December. At the latter occasion Mühlfeld and Brahms were accompanied by the violinist Joseph Joachim and his celebrated string quartet – an exception to the quartet's longstanding tradition of performing only music for string instruments at its recitals. The two works and the performers were extremely well received. No less successful were two performances given in Vienna, the one on 5 January 1892 with clarinetist F. Steiner and members of the Rosé Quartet, the other on 19 January with Mühlfeld and the Joachim Quartet. The critics and the composer's friends were unanimous in their praise: Joachim did not hesitate to call the Clarinet Quintet one of the best works Brahms had ever written.

The earliest rehearsals and public performances of the Quintet were played from handwritten parts. As usual, this prompted Brahms to make corrections and improvements to his musical text before seeing it into print. Beginning in late January 1892, a lively exchange of letters ensued between the composer and Fritz Simrock, in which the publisher pointed out the advantages of quick publication while the composer was at pains to polish the text of his piece. The Quintet appeared some time between late February and early March 1892, despite Brahms's insistent pleas for more proofreading time. (Grassi, A. M. 2000, G. Henle Verlag, Munich)