

Master's Student Recital at Barnett Hall
25th, March, 2023
01:30 p.m.

Daniel Hayden, Clarinet

Fantasia Da Concerto (su motivi del 'Rigoletto' di Giuseppe Verdi)

Luigi Bassi
(1833-1871)

Eddie Park, Piano

Sonata in Eb major for Clarinet & Piano

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

- i. Allegro amabile
- ii. Allegro appassionato
- iii. Andante con moto

Eddie Park, Piano

~ intermission ~

Clair (Due pezzi per clarinetto)

Franco Donatoni
(1927-2000)

- I.
- II.

God Bless the Child

Eric Dolphy
(1928-1964)

This recital is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Master of Music degree with a major in Clarinet.

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Program Notes

Fantasia Da Concerto (su motivi del ‘Rigoletto’ di Giuseppe Verdi)- Luigi Bassi

Fantasia Da Concerto (commonly referred to as Bassi’s Rigoletto) is a virtuosic work by Luigi Bassi which was originally published in 1865. Bassi was an Italian clarinetist and composer born in Cremona, Italy; which is home to a rich history of instrument making (home of the Stradivari, Amati, and Rugeri families)¹. After completing his studies at the Milan Conservatory under Benedetto Carulli, Bassi would go on to become principal clarinetist of the famous ‘La Scala’ opera house in Milan. As a composer, Bassi’s work primarily centered around the clarinet; writing 27 works for the instrument including 15 operatic fantasies that includes ‘Rigoletto’².

Bassi’s Rigoletto draws from the musical material of Italian operatic composer Giuseppe Verdi’s work of the same name. Verdi’s opera is the story of Gilda, an innocent girl who is the victim of amorous attention from the Duke of Mantua. The focus of this work is upon Gilda’s father, a court jester named Rigoletto, who had previously mocked those who had met a similar fate³. Each variation in Bassi’s version directly correlates from motives from the original work.

Sonata in Eb major for Clarinet & Piano- Johannes Brahms

Brahms’s Sonata in Eb major is the second of a pair of pieces dedicated to clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld by the composer in 1894. Born to an accomplished double-bassist father and seamstress mother in Hamburg, Germany⁴; Johannes Brahms is widely regarded as being one of the most impactful composers of the mid-Romantic period. Seen as a composer who bridged the structure of the classical period with the expressionism of the romantic; Brahms first began his rise to prominence in the 1850’s through his relationships with classical artists such as Clara & Robert Schumann⁵. Through a glowing article written by Robert, Brahms gained enough support to publish his first official works⁶; which included his first two piano concertos. Being an accomplished conductor and pianist in his own right, Brahms would perform and conduct many of his own works throughout his career⁷.

After an accomplished career, Brahms vowed to retire from composition in 1890 at the age of 57. His promise of retirement remained short lived after attending a performance by clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld in 1891⁸. Affectionately nicknaming Mühlfeld “Fräulein Klarinette” due to his beautiful tone⁹, the two-musician’s friendship resulted in a collection of works centering around the clarinet including his Trio for clarinet, cello, and piano (Op. 114), Quintet for clarinet and strings (Op. 115), and two clarinet sonatas (Op. 120) that includes this work. Also drawing inspiration from the

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clarinet concertos of Carl Maria von Weber, both of Brahms's sonatas have corresponding keys with these work (Sonata & concerto I in F minor; Sonata & concerto II in Eb major).

Franco Donatoni-Clair

Franco Donatoni was an Italian composer, professor, pedagogue born in the city of Verona. Trained at both the Verdi and Martini conservatories, Donatoni began his career predominantly as a conventionally neo-classical composer¹⁰. After experimenting with Serialism throughout the 1950's; Donatoni would be heavily inspired by the work of composers including Webern, Schoenberg, and Cage. However, it has been documented that the influences of Cage's musical philosophy in-particular directly contributed to Donatoni's struggles with artistic depression; an issue that would plague him throughout his career¹⁰. Donatoni's musical philosophy rejected the idea of ego being intrinsically connected to music. In his view, music was something absolute, with any expression coming directly from the music and not the musician¹⁰. Unhappy with his composition career, Donatoni decided to pursue a career as a copyist in the 1970's before being convinced by his wife Susan to return to the profession after a 2 year hiatus spanning from 1974-1976¹¹. Returning to composition re-kindled Donatoni's passion for music. In the years following his hiatus, he would go on to write over 70% of his compositional catalogue, including 'Clair' (published in 1980)¹².

While Donatoni had utilized the clarinet in his music previously, 'Clair' stands out as being his only works for solo soprano clarinet. Looking at a list of his publications post-1980, it seems Donatoni developed a fondness for the instrument, utilizing both the soprano and bass clarinet in prominent roles across 9 of his following works. Compositionally, this work utilizes many aspects of his later-composition style including macro-scale refraction, quick changes in texture, and the re-contextualization of existing music¹².

Eric Dolphy- God Bless the Child

Eric Allan Dolphy Jr. was an American multi-instrumentalist hailing from Los Angeles, California. Few musicians in history have accomplished as versatile a skillset as Dolphy. At age 6, He began studying the clarinet and saxophone privately and immediately showed musical promise. Learning many other instruments in his youth including the oboe, Dolphy developed aspirations for a career in symphonic music and was offered a 2-year scholarship to study western-classical music at the University of Southern California while still in junior high school¹³. Choosing to study music at Los Angeles City College in 1949, he began to make recorded appearances for jazz groups such as the Roy

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Porter Band¹⁴. After enlisting in the US Army in 1950, he would serve three years while also continuing his studies at the Navy School of Music¹⁵.

Dolph's "Big break" first happened in 1959 when he was awarded a position in Chico Hamilton's quintet¹⁴. After a long period of touring with the group, Dolphy moved to New York City where his career would prosper. Partnering with his lifelong friend Charles Mingus while appearing with musicians such as John Coltrane, Booker Little, and Ornette Coleman; Dolphy's fame reached new heights. After touring Europe with the Charles Mingus sextet in 1964, Dolphy informed his good friend that he would be staying in Europe, due in-part to becoming disillusioned with American music listeners¹³. Tragically, later that year, Dolphy would pass from undiagnosed diabetes after slipping into a coma in Berlin, Germany at the age of 36¹³.

The version of 'God Bless the Child' being performed today is based predominantly on Dolphy's September 1961 performance on the album 'In Europe'. This unaccompanied work is Dolphy's improvisational interpretation of the original song by Billie Holiday and Arthur Herzog¹⁶. Holiday describes the original inspiration as coming from an instance where she was asked her mother for a loan and was denied. Frustrated with the response after her mother had often benefited from her daughter financial success, Holiday claims she shouted "God bless the child that's got his own¹⁷".

Bibliography on next page

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