

11-24-2013

Sin City Winds

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Chris Fujiwara

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Erin Vander Wyst

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Repository Citation

O'Neil, J. L., Fujiwara, C., Vander Wyst, E., Sheridan, A., Holloway, J., Tsai, L., Davis, J., Fassbender, E. (2013). Sin City Winds. 1-2.

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Authors

Jamie Leigh O'Neil, Chris Fujiwara, Erin Vander Wyst, Ashlea Sheridan, Jon Holloway, Lynn Tsai, Jenny Davis, and Eric Fassbender

College of Fine Arts

presents

Sin City Winds

Jamie Leigh O'Neil, flute
Chris Fujiwara, oboe
Erin Vander Wyst, clarinet

Ashlea Sheridan, bassoon
Jon Holloway, horn

Graduate Woodwind Trio

Lynn Tsai, flute
Jenny Iles Davis, clarinet

Eric Fassbender, bassoon

PROGRAM

Maurice Ravel
(1875–1937)
trans. by Jones

Le Tombeau de Couperin (1914-17)
Prelude
Fugue
Menuet
Rigaudon

Elliot Carter
(1908–2012)

Eight Etudes and a Fantasy (1950)
Maestoso
Adagio possibile
Vivace
Intensely
Fantasy, Tempo giusto

INTERMISSION

Walter Piston
(1899–1963)

Three Pieces for flute, clarinet, and bassoon
Allegro scherzando
Lento
Allegro

The Graduate Woodwind Trio

Carl Nielsen
(1865–1931)

Quintet, Op. 43 (1922)
Allegro ben Moderato
Menuet
Praeludium- Tema con variazione

Sin City Winds and Graduate Trio are coached by Jennifer Grim.

Sunday, November 24, 2013

7:30 p.m.

**Dr. Arturo Rando-Grill Recital Hall
Lee and Thomas Beam Music Center
University of Nevada, Las Vegas**

PROGRAM NOTES

Maurice Ravel (trans. Jones)

Le Tombeau de Couperin (1914-17)

Originally composed for solo piano, *Le Tombeau de Couperin* is a work composed to pay homage to the French Baroque piano suite. The piano version of the work has six movements, each in honor of a friend Ravel lost to World War I. The piece takes the formal structure of a baroque dance suite, with each movement taking the tempo and meter of a specific dance. *Le Tombeau de Couperin* was orchestrated by the composer in 1919, but this version contains only four of the six movements. The orchestral version of *Le Tombeau de Couperin* clearly demonstrates Ravel's talent as a masterful orchestrator. His orchestration calls for an oboist of virtuosic skill; many times playing intertwining melodies with other woodwinds. The transcription of the work on today's program is that of Mason Jones, former principal horn of the Philadelphia Orchestra (1939-1978) and a faculty member of the Curtis Institute of Music. Jones was also the co-founder of the prestigious Philadelphia Woodwind Quintet. The four movements included in this transcription are identical to those in Ravel's orchestral transcription, and are as follows:

1. Prelude: in memory of First Lieutenant Jacques Charlot (who transcribed Ravel's *Ma mere l'oye* (Mother Goose Suite) for solo piano)
2. Fugue: in memory of Second Lieutenant Jean Cruppi
3. Menuet: in memory of Jean Dreyfus
4. Rigaudon: in memory of Pierre and Pascal Gaudin

Elliot Carter

Eight Etudes and a Fantasy (1950)

Two-time Pulitzer Prize winning American composer Elliot Carter first showed an interest in music when the intrinsic insurance salesman-turned-composer Charles Ives appeared in the youthful Carter's life; he sold insurance to Carter's parents. At the age of fifteen, Carter was present at the New York premiere of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, an experience that would solidify the young composer's future in music. Carter went on to study at several universities on the east coast, and with such influential composers as Walter Piston and Gustav Holst. He also spent several years in Paris under the tutelage of Nadia Boulanger, who was perhaps the most famous teacher of fellow American composer Aaron Copland. Carter's only work for woodwind quartet, "Eight Etudes and a Fantasy," arose from non-traditional circumstances. While teaching an orchestration class at Columbia University in 1949, Carter gave his students an assignment to write for a woodwind quartet. Thoroughly unsatisfied with the efforts of his pupils, Carter demonstrated, with a series of "etudes" the immense orchestration possibilities available to the composer using this instrumentation. These etudes, then, are not etudes for the instrumentalists, as is traditionally the case with works bearing that title; instead they are etudes, or studies, for Carter's own composition students. Finally, as if to demonstrate even more possibilities to his students, he composed the "Fantasy," which cleverly combines the etudes as episodes of a fugue.

Walter Piston

Three Pieces for Flute, Clarinet, and Bassoon (1925)

American composer, Walter Piston, wrote *Three Pieces for Flute, Clarinet, and Bassoon* in 1925 while studying composition with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. Of the trio combinations possible from the wind quintet, oboe, clarinet, and bassoon have been the most commonly utilized. Piston deviated from this course by introducing the flute in place of the oboe. This results in an expression of range and agility, as well as a different yet compatible timbre. Piston's *Trio* represents one of his earlier works and is also one of the first works using this combination for the chamber music repertoire. The first and third pieces are marked by vigorous activity accompanied by ostinato rhythmic figures, while the second piece has a nostalgic quality with closely and widely spaced sonorities. Following completion of this *Trio*, in 1926 Piston returned from Paris and joined the Harvard faculty until his eventual retirement in 1960. Over the course of nearly four decades at Harvard, he mentored a number of prominent composers who would go on to become leaders in American music composition, including Leonard Bernstein and Elliott Carter.

Carl Nielsen

Quintet, Op. 43 (1922)

Danish composer Carl August Nielsen (1865-1931) is perhaps best known for his six symphonies. One of twelve children and the son of a poor housepainter, Nielsen studied violin and composition at the Royal Conservatory in Copenhagen. He penned three concertos, one each for violin, flute and clarinet. The flute and clarinet concertos, written late in Nielsen's life, were written for members of the Copenhagen Woodwind Quintet for which Nielsen also composed his *Wind Quintet* of 1922. After using the *Wind Quintet* as a vehicle to explore the personalities of each member of the group in a chamber music setting, Nielsen decided to continue writing for his friends by composing a concerto for each instrument. Unfortunately, he died in 1931 having written only two of the five intended works. The *Wind Quintet* is a true "tour de force" for every member of the quintet, and has become a part of the standard quintet repertoire. Nielsen is not afraid to stretch the technique of every player, and requires the players to be virtuosic and flexible. The oboist, for example, must double on the English horn, and the bassoonist must use an extension (a tube placed in the top of the instrument) near the end of the work to achieve a note outside of the instrument's normal range. This work was, in every sense, written for a group of five friends. Not only does each instrument have several distinct moments in the spotlight; the personality of each instrument and that of its performing member of the Copenhagen Wind Quintet shines through quite clearly. Nielsen's most known commentary on the work a short, yet poignant comment: "The composer has here attempted to present the characteristics of the various instruments. Now they seem to interrupt one another and now they sound alone. The theme for these variations is the tune of one of Carl Nielsen's spiritual songs, which is here made the basis of a number of variations, now gay and grotesque, now elegiac and solemn, ending with the theme itself, simply and gently expressed."