A GRADUATE CLARINET RECITAL

By

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A PERFORMANCE IN LIEU OF THESIS PRESENTED TO THE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF MUSIC

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

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Hannah Austin presented a graduate clarinet recital on March 27, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. in Room 101 of the Music Building. With the exception of one work, *The Shepherd on the Rock* by Franz Schubert, the works performed were from the 20th century and later. Even though the program featured fairly contemporary works, the pieces performed showcased a variety of expression and technique for the clarinet.

The recital began with an excerpt from the third movement of the *Symphony No. 2 in E minor, Op. 27* by Sergei Rachmaninoff, arranged for clarinet and piano. This excerpt is commonly requested on orchestral audition lists – it is a soothing, long-breathed melody spanning twenty-three measures. The melody circles about a few notes within a limited range, but provides the clarinetist with an opportunity to show expressive creativity. Following this excerpt was the *Sonatina for Clarinet Solo, Op. 27* by Miklós Rózsa. This is an unaccompanied work in two movements. Rózsa was an American composer of Hungarian birth, with many characteristics of his music deriving from Hungarian folk music and infused with Hungarian dance rhythms and lyricism of the gypsy tradition. *The Shepherd on
the Rock, D 965 is the most popular work for clarinet, soprano, and piano and was written in the last year of Schubert’s life in 1828. This piece is the most unique out of all of Schubert’s lieder for its scoring for a second instrument and for its multi-sectional, cantata-like character. Following intermission was the *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano, Op. 128* by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco. Written in 1945, this piece is in four contrasting movements. *Andante con moto* opens the work with a passionate melody that shows a Brahmsian influence. The *Scherzo* is a short, energetic movement in waltz meter, followed by the *Lullaby* with a slow melody suited to the title. The *Rondo alla Napolitana* is a fast, melodic dance movement fashioned after the style of Debussy. This was the University of Florida premiere of this daunting work for clarinet and piano. Closing the recital was a very fun, energetic encore piece by Béla Kovács entitled, *After You, Mr. Gershwin!*. Kovács, like Rózsa, is also of Hungarian birth and infuses Hungarian rhythms into his music. This work, written in 2004, is a jazzy piece fashioned after the compositional stylings of George Gershwin. The piece includes 1920s pop-jazz idioms, a slow blues-influenced melody (showcasing a number of extended techniques and embellishments, including flutter tonguing, slap tonguing, and foot stomping), and a return of a fast tempo with a melody alternating between Hungarian and American rhythms.

Hannah’s recital program presented a variety of styles, techniques, and expression with composers using Hungarian, Italian, Austrian, and American influences. These works comprised a program representing the clarinet from the Classical through the Romantic and Modern Eras. The program provided the clarinetist, as well as the listener, opportunities to perform and hear music that is not often performed in public.
PROGRAM NOTES

Excerpt from *Symphony No. 2 in E Minor, Op. 27*  
Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

**III. Adagio**

As the last great representative of Russian late Romanticism, Sergei Rachmaninoff was one of the finest composers and pianists of his time period. Drawing from the influences of Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov, he developed his own personal style of pronounced lyrical quality, expressive breadth, and a palette of distinctive orchestral colors. Rachmaninoff’s *Symphony No. 2 in E Minor, Op. 27* (1906), along with his famous *Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, Op. 18 for Piano and Orchestra* (1900), marked a significant development in the composer’s style toward the more lyrical melodies that he favored. After his *Symphony No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 13* (1895) was poorly conducted and received, Rachmaninoff was wary of attempting another large-scale symphony again, but the *Concerto No. 2* and its instant popularity freed him once again. *Symphony No. 2* displays his fully-fledged melodic style in the slow movement, his varied and discerning use of the orchestra in the scherzo, and a greater confidence in handling more large-scale structures. The melodic material is given a more leisurely expansion and development than in *Symphony No. 1*. One of the prominent orchestral excerpts for the clarinet, and requested on many audition lists, is the clarinet solo from the beginning of the third movement of *Symphony No. 2*, a movement that fully demonstrates Rachmaninoff’s melodic genius. The clarinet solo is twenty-three measures of a generous, long-breathed melody that never quite repeats itself, but rather slowly expands an idea and circles about a few notes within a limited range.

*Sonatina for Clarinet Solo, Op. 27*  
Miklós Rózsa (1907-1995)

I. *Tema con variazioni*  
II. *Vivo e giocoso*

Miklós Rózsa was an American composer of Hungarian birth, raised in Budapest, and was exposed to Hungarian folk music from a young age. Along with studying the piano, violin, and viola, Rózsa was also composing by the age of seven. Rózsa left Budapest in 1926 to study composition and musicology at the Leipzig Conservatory. He soon moved to Paris, where he quickly gained international recognition for his works and was awarded the Franz Joseph Prize from the municipality of Budapest in 1937 and 1938. Rózsa was also very involved in film music, serving as a staff member of MGM (1948-62) and becoming one of the most highly regarded composers in Hollywood. He wrote music for over 100 films, including *Spellbound* (1945), *A Double Life* (1948), and *Ben-Hur* (1959), won three Academy Awards, and taught film music at the University of Southern California for twenty years. Characteristics of his music derive from the pentatonic and modal qualities of Hungarian folk music, with infusions from Hungarian dance rhythms and lyricism of the gypsy tradition. Rózsa claimed that writing unaccompanied solo literature appealed to him because he grew up listening to Hungarian folk music that was often unaccompanied. He wrote a *Sonatina for Clarinet Solo, Op. 27* that “practically every clarinet player plays” and dedicated it to Bronislau Kaper, a fellow Hollywood film composer.
The Shepherd on the Rock, D 965 (Der Hirt auf dem Felsen)  
Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
Franz Schubert composed this lied for soprano voice, clarinet, and piano in the last year of his life, and many believe that it is the last song he ever wrote. Among all of his lieder, The Shepherd on the Rock stands apart the most – not only for its scoring for a second instrument, but also because of its multi-sectional, cantata-like character. The work is also more like an operatic aria than Schubert’s other lieder, because it was written for the operatic soprano, Anna Milder-Hauptmann. She asked Schubert to compose a brilliant concert aria for her that would allow her to express a wide range of feelings and would be suitable for a “large audience.” The first section features the lonely shepherd listening to the echoes rising from below the high mountaintop. The second section becomes darker as the shepherd expresses his grief and loneliness, while the third and last section is very hopeful as the shepherd anticipates the coming of spring and rebirth. The melodic lines from the soprano, clarinet, and piano are all closely inter-woven, creating an organic texture that qualifies the piece as both a chamber work and as a concertante aria.

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano, Op. 128  
Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968)
I.  Andante con moto  
II.  Scherzo  
III.  Lullaby  
IV.  Rondo alla Napolitana
Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco was an Italian composer, pianist, and writer on music. His formal music education began at the Istituto Musicale Cherubini in Florence in 1909, but he began studying with Pizzetti in 1915, who was the most important musical figure in Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s early development. In the early 1930s, Castelnuovo-Tedesco became increasingly concerned for Italian Jewry, and saw an opportunity to take a stand in a concerto that he was asked to write. He states that his music “was suddenly banished from the Italian radio and some performances of my works were cancelled.” The composer moved to the United States with his family in 1939, first to New York before settling in California until his death. His composition style has been labeled as neo-classical, but also reveals a reliance on traditional forms and an interest in early Italian music history. Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s most recognized contribution to music is his almost 100 works for the guitar, but he has also written opera, songs, and film music. His love for the clarinet, which he described as “agile and sonorous” and “dear to Mozart and Brahms” began early in his life. In this sonata (written in 1945), the passionate and serious Andante con moto shows a Brahmsian influence, as well as the Lullaby, which has a melody most suited to the title. The Scherzo is a brilliant movement in simple waltz meter, with a bright buoyancy and spirit. The last movement, Rondo alla Napolitana, is a brilliant, strongly rhythmic and captivating melodic dance movement. He attributes the form of the final movement to Debussy, although he adds a fugue.

After You, Mr. Gershwin!  
Béla Kovács (b. 1937)
Béla Kovács is a Hungarian clarinetist, teacher, and composer who studied at the Liszt Academy of Music and became a member of the Hungarian State Opera Orchestra while still a student. In 1975, he was appointed a professor at the Liszt Academy. As a notable
virtuoso and leading Hungarian clarinetist of his generation, he is a fine player of both classical and contemporary music. Kovács has recorded Mozart’s Concerto and Quintet, the quintets of Weber and Brahms, a number of contemporary Hungarian works, as well as his own Hommages – nine pieces that pay tribute to different composers, intended as supplementary study material or concert pieces. He was awarded the Liszt Prize in 1964 and named Artist of Merit in 1972. After You, Mr. Gershwin! takes 1920s pop-jazz licks and transforms them via irregular rhythms. Between the fast sections of the piece, a slower blues-influenced melody appears with a number of little embellishments, including flutter tonguing, slap tonguing, and foot stomping. When the tempo picks up again, the melody alternates between Hungarian and American rhythms, but mainly inclines toward the latter, especially since the piece is fashioned after Benny Goodman’s style of playing and is a nod toward the compositional stylings of George Gershwin. It is a fun showpiece and a perfect way of ending a recital!
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Hannah Elizabeth Austin was born on August 8, 1990 in Asheville, North Carolina. An only child to natives of the small town of Brevard, North Carolina, she grew up in Brevard and graduated from Brevard High School in 2009. She pursued a degree in Music Education at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, North Carolina, graduating with Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Science in Education degrees in May 2013. Hannah is graduating from the University of Florida in May 2015 with a Master of Music degree in Clarinet Performance.

While at Western Carolina University, Hannah studied clarinet with Dr. Shannon Thompson. She was a drum major for the nationally acclaimed “Pride of the Mountains” Marching Band and in 2011, led the Sudler Trophy-winning band in the annual Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, California. Hannah was the principal clarinetist of the WCU Wind Ensemble, under the direction of Dr. John West. She has also performed in different chamber ensembles and in the WCU Artist-in-Residence Orchestra with members of the Asheville Symphony. Hannah won concerto competitions with the WCU Civic Orchestra and Wind Ensemble playing the first movement of Mozart’s *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra, K. 622* and Rossini’s *Introduction, Theme and Variations*. Hannah has also performed in the pit orchestra for productions of *Kiss Me, Kate* and *Music Is*. In addition to
her studies, Hannah participated in the Orchestral and Chamber Music Program of the

During her time at the University of Florida, Hannah studied clarinet with Prof.
Mitchell Estrin and has been on a full graduate teaching assistantship, with duties such as
teaching the Woodwind Methods course for undergraduate music education majors,
teaching applied lessons to music minors and non-majors, assisting with the clarinet
library and Clarinet Ensemble, and daily operations of the Clarinet Studio. Hannah has
served as principal clarinet of the UF Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Dr.
Raymond Chobaz, performed as Bb and Eb clarinetist in the Wind Symphony under the
direction of Dr. David Waybright, maintained an active role in the Clarinet Ensemble as Bb
and Eb clarinetist, and performed in the pit orchestra for productions of Sweeney Todd and
Phantom of the Opera. Hannah also serves as the principal substitute for the Gainesville
Chamber Orchestra.