

Spring 4-4-2009

Marshall University Music Department Presents a Senior Recital, Robert Heath, clarinet

Robert Heath

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DEPARTMENT of MUSIC

presents a

Senior Recital
Robert Heath, clarinet

accompanied by

Dr. Leslie Petteys, piano

Saturday, April 4, 2009
Smith Recital Hall
8:00 p.m.

This program is presented by the College of Fine Arts through the Department of Music, with the support of student activity funds. For more information about this or other music events, please call (304) 696-3117, or view our website at www.marshall.edu/cofa/music.

Program

Concerto in A Major, K. 622

W.A. Mozart
(1756-1791)

Allegro
Adagio
Rondo: Allegro

Intermission

Capriccio for Unaccompanied Clarinet in A

H. Sutermeister
(1910-1995)

Sonata in Eb Major, Op. 120, No. 2

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

Allegro Amabile
Allegro Appassionato; Sostenuto
Andante con moto-Allegro

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in performance. Mr. Heath is a student in the clarinet studio of Dr. Ann Marie Bingham.

Program Notes

Mozart's *Clarinet Concerto in A*, K. 622, was the first significant concerto for clarinet and remains one of the greatest. The concerto was written for his fellow friend and Freemason Anton Stadler. It was written for the basset clarinet, a creation of Stadler's that extended the range of the instrument downwards to a low C. Mozart wrote several other pieces for Stadler and his basset clarinet, including the *Clarinet Quintet*, K. 581.

Because both Stadler and Mozart were Freemasons, Masonic undercurrents run throughout the piece. The clarinet's sound in Mozart's time was thought to be "unworldly." Therefore, the clarinet became associated with particular characters in the secretive Masonic rituals.

The concerto was premiered on October 16, 1791. Mozart had finished it just two weeks before, and it was the last instrumental work he completed. In November, Mozart was confined to his bed, and he died just two months later on December 5, 1791. The concerto exemplifies Mozart's mature style.

The concerto has three movements: Allegro, Adagio, and Rondo. The first movement is cast in a traditional sonata-allegro form. The orchestra presents the thematic material first, and it is then repeated and explored by the solo clarinet. This is known as a double exposition. The clarinet and the orchestra alternate in constant conversation throughout the movement.

The slower second movement has a lyrical melody that has been featured in several movies, most famously including *Out of Africa* with Meryl Streep and Robert Redford. The third and final movement is a rondo in 6/8 meter. The theme is presented at the beginning and goes through numerous transformations throughout the movement. Overall, it is a light and playful movement, which can be particularly challenging for the clarinetist because of its sweeping scalar lines, as well as the need for consistently light tonguing. Near the end, there is a C Major arpeggio that is written for the chalumeau register of the basset clarinet. While many clarinetists play the section an octave higher than written, this performer will play the section in the original octave with the low F substituted for the C in order to accommodate the modern A clarinet.

Heinrich Sutermeister's *Capriccio for Clarinet in A* was written for the International Music Competition held in Geneva, Switzerland in 1947. Overall, the work is to be performed as though it were playfully improvised. Consequently, the general ambiance of the work is "high-spirited and jovial." It is broken up into three broad sections. Each

section can be divided into smaller sections, each with its own distinct personality. The first four measures introduce a playful theme that recurs several times. The theme is light and jumps around the chalumeau register. Throughout the work, this playful and at times, "ruvido" (rude because of the harsh accents), material alternates with a more elegant, dainty motive. "Subito," meaning "sudden," is used often with dynamic markings, which makes the contrasts all the more obvious.

Johannes Brahms is considered one of the most important composers of all time. He was the son of a professional musician who earned his living by playing horn, flute, violin, and double bass in taverns and dance halls. Brahms read many books and developed a library of over 800 titles, which covered poetry, fiction, drama, history, art, philosophy, religion, and travel. As reflected by his studies, Brahms was a diverse composer. He was "everywhere," acting as a model for such differing composers as Arnold Schoenberg in Germany and Ralph Vaughan Williams in England. He was generally well-received in all the genres in which he wrote, although he preferred to compose chamber music, lieder, and symphonies.

The Clarinet Sonata in Eb, Op. 120, no. 2 is the second of two clarinet sonatas that Brahms composed for Richard Muhlfield. Muhlfield inspired Brahms to write the two sonatas, as well as a trio and quintet that feature the clarinet. Brahms was so impressed with Muhlfield's playing that he came out of an early retirement to compose specifically for him. Brahms and Muhlfield's relationship was similar to that of Mozart and Stadler, close friends who had collaborated on several occasions for clarinet works.

The second sonata utilizes a variety of forms. The first movement is a standard sonata form with exposition, development, and recapitulation. The second movement is a ländler, a heavy peasant dance, with a trio and da capo. The third movement contains a theme and five variations. Throughout the sonata, the clarinet and the piano pass the melody back and forth in constant conversation, making this piece a clarinet and piano duet rather than a clarinet solo with piano accompaniment. The sonata is also characterized by the use of hemiola and the contrast of duple against triple meter, one of the primary challenges in performing it. The lush harmony, intricate rhythms, and general listenability make this sonata one of most significant works in the clarinet repertoire.