

Spring 4-30-2015

Marshall University Music Department Presents a Senior Recital, Rebecca Adkins, Clarinet

Rebecca Adkins
Marshall University

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The Marshall University
SCHOOL of MUSIC and THEATRE

presents a

Senior Recital

Rebecca Adkins,

Clarinet

assisted by

Dr. Henning Vauth,

Piano

and

Angela Scoulas and Molly Page, Violins

Jacob Campbell, Viola

Dean Pauley, Cello

Craig Burletic, Bass

Thursday, April 30, 2015

Johnson Memorial United Methodist Church

7:30 p.m.

This program is presented by the College of Arts and Media through the School of Music and Theatre 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.

Oblivion

Astor Piazzolla
(1921-1992)

Sonata, Op. 167

Camille St. Saëns
(1835-1921)

Allegretto
Allegro animato
Lento
Molto allegro

Intermission

Benniana

Steve Harlos
(b. 1957)

Blues Nocturne
Jazz Rondo

Clarinetto

Ondrej Kukal
(b. 1964)

Dr. W. Edwin Bingham,
Conductor

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Music Performance. Ms. Adkins is a student of Dr. Ann Marie Bingham. For more information about this or other music events, please call (304) 696-3117.

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We would like to express sincere appreciation to Reverend Jack Lipphardt, Director of Music Bruce Rous, and the Johnson Memorial United Methodist Church for hosting this recital.

The Marshall University School of Music and Theatre is grateful for the support of many families and individuals who help make our department strong and vibrant.

If you would like to support the Department of Music through a donation and assist with student scholarships, academic travel for students and ensembles, or general support of the department please contact:

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Astor Piazzolla was one of the most influential Latin American composers of the Twentieth century. He not only created a new style of music entitled Nuevo or "New" Tango, but also was a virtuosic bandoneon player and composer of a large variety of works. A bandoneon is an Argentine and Uruguayan instrument that is closely related to the accordion.

Piazzolla was born in Mar Del Plata, Argentina. When he was four years old, his family moved to New York where he began to hear a new variety of jazz and classical music that influenced his own musical compositions. He and his family moved back to Argentina when he was fifteen years old and the mix of tango, classical music and jazz influence fueled a new genre. Despite the initial rejection of his music, Piazzolla fought for it. His struggles paid off because now he and his music are loved all across the world.

Written in 1982, *Oblivion* was used for a film entitled *Henry IV* by Mario Bellochio that is based on Luigi Pirandello's drama *Enrico IV*. The main theme of the story, according to John Whitfield of the University of Birmingham, England, is "madness which lies just under the skin of ordinary life and is, perhaps superior to ordinary life in its construction of a satisfying reality. The play finds dramatic strength in its hero's choice of retirement into unreality in preference to life in the uncertain world." Piazzolla related to this greatly. Unlike the other pieces Piazzolla was composing at this time that reflect more jazz and rock influence, *Oblivion* stays true to his tango roots. It is a melancholy piece with an elegant structure that spins a sad tale of love and woe. The beautiful long notes, arpeggiated accompaniment, and haunting melodies make it no surprise that this piece remains one of Piazzolla's most famous works.

Saint-Saëns' *Sonata, Op. 167* is different than a traditional Romantic era sonata because it has four movements instead of three. It is believed that Saint-Saëns was moving back towards the Classical tradition. The first movement, "Allegretto", seems to begin out of nowhere. The pianist plays calm eighth notes in 12/8 meter. The clarinet enters with a passionate melodic passage that continues to build and then comes back down almost like a wave.

The second movement, entitled "Allegro Animato", fits the title very well. It is much lighter, faster and more animated than the previous movement. The clarinet plays phrases in the beginning that the piano takes over and continues. There is a contrast between the short staccato passages followed by smooth legato lines. "Lento", the third movement, is very slow and dark. Its steady half and quarter notes give a feeling of anguish. This movement seems long due to its funereal tempo and energy.

The cheerful, fast paced "Molto Allegro" follows the Lento without any pause. Here the clarinetist is given a chance to whirl and spin with many virtuosic passages. The end of this movement brings the piece full circle, first with only hints of the main theme from the first movement, and then a full return of the melody that sounds even sweeter the second time through.

Benniana is a three movement tribute to famous clarinetist Benny Goodman. Goodman was well known for his easy transitions between the worlds of jazz and classical music. This is represented quite well in the contrast between the first movement and the last two movements of *Benniana*. The whole piece recreates some of the famous jazz and classical sounds reminiscent of Goodman's own playing. All movements are fully notated and require no improvisation.

The first movement, entitled "Benny's Dream", is the composer's attempt to represent the classical side of Goodman's playing. It has highly chromatic passages and a very straightforward classical style. The second movement, "Blues Nocturne", begins classically but moves quickly to swinging passages that are typical of the swing ballads of Benny's time. The last movement, "Jazz Rondo", is a fast and fun full on jazz movement. The main theme of the third movement is repeated several times but there are several contrasting sections with themes that were popular during the swing and big band era.

Kukal's *Clarinetto* is a highly virtuosic one movement piece. The piece runs a little past twelve minutes and is divided into three contrasting sections. The first section is fast and states the theme that is then played in many different variations. The following section is slow and has a much freer character but it still is difficult for the performer with many jumps from the lowest range of the clarinet to the highest. The last section restates the main theme with the addition of arpeggios and flashy chromatic sequences. By this time the theme is obvious to the listener. The syncopated rhythmic variations of the theme make it difficult for the player because they change constantly.

This piece is written in a folk-like European style with strong klezmer and American jazz influences. This piece is tonal and quite enjoyable for the listener. It is written for solo clarinet accompanied by a string quartet and double bass. A piano reduction also is available should one not be able to perform it with the string ensemble. The string parts definitely have their fair share of technical passages and the clarinet part was written with basically no breaks or places to breathe. This can prove very difficult for the clarinet player. Overall, this piece is fun and flashy and very enjoyable for the performers and the listeners.