

Cayla Bellamy, bassoon

February 21, 2020

Program Notes

Sonatine

Alexandre Tansman

- I. Allegro con moto
- II. Aria
- III. Scherzo

(1897-1986)

Dedicated to the late bassoon professor of the Paris Conservatoire, Gustav Dherin, Alexandre Tansman's *Sonatine* is frequently celebrated for its role as an honorary French contest piece. Despite consistently adhering to and vocally celebrating his Polish roots, Tansman's compositional voice reflects heavy influences of two distinctly non-Polish (and bassoon-favoring!) composers - Maurice Ravel and Igor Stravinsky. In this work, the open sonorities, explosive use of the full range of the bassoon, and ceaseless rhythmic drive both highlight those parallels and cement the *Sonatine* in the bassoon repertoire as both an audience and performer favorite.

Drei Etuden

Jose Siqueira

- II. Tempo di Modinha

(1907-1985)

The second movement of Brazilian composer Jose Siqueira's *Drei Etuden* bears a title translating simply to "in the tempo of a modinha," a style of light but sentimental Portuguese popular song. With great melodic simplicity and sweeping vocal gestures, this movement allows the performer to inhabit the role of folk singer, highlighting the composer's artistic mission to fuse elements of Brazilian culture with contemporary classical traditions and instrumentation. Within the bassoon community, this work has recently experienced a resurgence in popularity after its feature as one of the required repertoire selections for the 2017 Young Artist Competition of the International Double Reed Society.

Traces (2015)

Bret Bohman

(b. 1982)

"The conception for *Traces* started with the sound quality of the bassoon. For me, the timbre of the instrument has the ability to evoke an ancient sound world. I ruminated on this quality and began by asking the question: how did ancient humans react to their own echo? Before the advent of recording technology and the use of analogue and digital sound playback this was the only instance when sound was disconnected from its source; able to be heard by the maker but disconnected from the instance of vocalization. Humans could actually hear the sound of their own voices separated from their bodies.

There has been quite a bit of interest recently in the research of acoustic properties of ancient sites. Steven J. Waller, a researcher of archeoacoustics, proposes that the echoes in caves may have conjured ancestral spirits for early humans. Other research in this field includes mapping the acoustics of the underground tunnels of Lanzon in the Chavín de Huántar of Peru, though to shaped as part of a rite of passage ritual which included inducing audio hallucinations. Reading about this research helped give shape to this work as I imagined an ancient sound world with magical acoustic properties yielding unnatural echoes as the bassoon traverses through this sonic landscape.” - notes by the composer

Concerto in C Major, RV 472

II. Andante molto

III. Allegro

Antonio Vivaldi

(1678–1741)

The name of Antonio Vivaldi is no stranger to bassoon conversations. Having written 37 complete and two incomplete concertos for the instrument, Vivaldi's output for the bassoon is second only to that for the violin and most likely all came into existence in the last ten years of his life. While popular theories of inspiration by young bassoon prodigies at the Pietà create entertaining imagery of dozens of young, virtuosic girls with poorly-developed dulcians in hand, there is no evidence supporting any particular dedicatee to the majority of the concertos. The most frequently performed of these performed in the bassoon community are in minor modes - E minor (RV 484), A minor (RV497/498), G minor (RV 495), or D minor (RV 481) - but today's performance features a rare exploration into the major tonality with the second, fantasia-like movement and the blistering finale to the *Concerto in C Major*, a partially-hidden gem within the repertoire.