

**The D'Angelo Department of Music
at
Mercyhurst University**

Presents

Senior Recital: Kole Wentling

Featuring
Kole Wentling, Clarinet

In Collaboration with:
Dr. Sarah Kahl, Piano
Rebecca Wunch, Piano

Walker Recital Hall
Sunday, November 24, 2024
4:00pm



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Program

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano
I. Allegro tristamente
II. Romanza
III. Allegro con fuoco

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)

Sarah Kahl, Piano

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano
II. Andante

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)

Sarah Kahl, Piano

Cantilène *

Fernande Decruck
(1896-1954)

Sarah Kahl, Piano

Enchanted Forest
I. In the Woods

Karen Tanaka
(b.1961)

Sarah Kahl, Piano

-Brief Intermission-

The Starlight Night
I. The Starlight Night
II. Bright Star!
III. The Sight of Stars

Jenni Brandon
(b.1977)

Menuet From “Divertimento in D, K. 334”

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Rebecca Wunch, Piano

Arabesques for Clarinet and Piano

Paul JeanJean
(1874-1928)

Rebecca Wunch, Piano

The use of recording devices is strictly prohibited. Please turn off and stow all electronic devices. Thank you.

* Performed in dedication to Deborah Elizabeth Benedetto

Program Notes

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963) was a French composer famous for his Gloria and piano works. Learning piano from his mother at a young age, he went on to solely study music with Ricardo Viñes against his father's urges to focus on general studies. Poulenc was fascinated with composers such as Debussy, Satie, and Stravinsky, which eventually caused him to produce his first published composition *Rapsodie Nègre*. Before the 1920s, Poulenc had also formed the *Les Six*, a group of individual composers who reacted against composition styles written by Wagner, Debussy, and Ravel, often writing "irreverent music with Jazz-fueled tunes." Poulenc was also one of the first openly gay composers, often shown within his music. Scholars describe the vastly different styles of composition used to interpret the inner struggle with his sexuality.

The Sonata for Clarinet and Piano was composed in 1962, towards the end of his career; this was along with two other woodwind sonatas. The three- movement Clarinet Sonata was dedicated to Arthur Honegger, a fellow member of *Les Six*. Benny Goodman commissioned and premiered the piece with Lenoard Bernstein on piano. Sadly, Poulenc died of heart failure shortly before seeing the piece performed. The Sonata is part of the clarinet standard repertoire.

The Sonata begins with a fast 16th note passage passed between the clarinet and piano, which then leads into a lively tempo. The first movement features lots of arpeggiated leaps, as well as descending chromatic scales. In the second section of the first movement, the tempo drops significantly, as the clarinet continues to play modified concert A minor arpeggios. The first theme is heard again before completing the first movement. In the second movement, the clarinet starts with a soft open statement, before announcing an abrupt cadenza-like cry. The piano adds into this cadenza by striking a strong chord. The rest of the movement consists of a conversation between the clarinet and piano, as the melody is passed back and forth between the two instruments. The dynamic contrast in this movement sets the mood, as the volume fluctuates throughout the instrumental parts. The second movement ends abruptly by the clarinet playing a quick 64th note passage, landing on a concert D. This is soon followed by the piano. Movement three begins in a much faster tempo than the first two movements, and the clarinet shows some quick 32nd note arpeggios, reaching well into the altissimo register. Midway through the piece, the tempo slows again, revealing a beautiful passage between the piano and clarinet. The clarinet plays only quarter and half notes, while the piano supports with damper pedaled 8th note passages. The tempo eventually goes back into the original speed.

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) was a German composer in the early Romantic period. He began taking piano lessons at the age of six from his mother before taking lessons from Marie Bigot. Additionally, in 1817 Mendelssohn studied composition with Carl Friedrich Zelter in Berlin. By the time he was thirteen, Mendelssohn had presented his first public composition, and was already on the way to creating his first twelve symphonies. Mendelssohn was also known for bringing Johann Sebastian Bach's music to the public, as he performed Bach's *St. Matthew's Passion* in 1829. In 1835, Mendelssohn was appointed conductor of the Leipzig

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Gewandhaus Orchestra, later founding the Leipzig Conservatory when he turned thirty-eight. Due to depression from his sister, Fanny Mendelssohn, Felix Mendelsson's health declined, and he passed away in 1847.

Mendelssohn only wrote solo instrumental music for clarinet. Moreover, he was very close with Carl and Heinrich Baermann, which pushed him to create a chamber work featuring piano and clarinet. However, most scholars would agree the clarinet part is modest in comparison to the piano, the accompanying instrument. Sonata for Clarinet and Piano contains three movements, Adagio, Andante, and Allegro moderato. The second movement has the clarinet and piano trading off the melody, like a conversation between friends, but with heavier emphasis on the piano. The movement begins with the clarinet playing the main melody, a lone, which is revisited throughout the rest of the piece. After the introduction, the piano begins with a short melody of its own, before coming back with the clarinet to play the main melody once again. In the middle of the piece, the piano takes another solo section, recalling its first solo section. The movement ends with the clarinet and piano slowly getting quieter and quieter, until the piano ends with a soft G minor chord.

Fernande Decruck (1896-1954) was a French composer who specialized in woodwind composition. At eight years old, Decruck entered the Toulouse Conservatory where she won first prize in music theory and piano, and second prize in harmony. In 1918, she was accepted into the Paris Conservatory, and studied harmony with great composers such as Xavier Leroux and Jean Gallon. During this time, she also studied organ with Eugene Gigout. In 1923, Fernande Decruck was appointed the teaching assistant of Jean Gallon, and later married Maurice Decruck. The two moved to New York City, where Maurice was appointed head bassist for the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. Unfortunately, Maurice was the victim of an accident, which ruined his ability to play. The couple moved back to Paris, which gave Fernande a new passion for composition.

In 1932, she began composing for several wind instruments, mostly saxophone. During her composition period, Decruck created several pieces for saxophone as it was rising in popularity in France in the 1930s. She was most famous for *The Chant*, a solo piece for saxophone and piano, which was the first female composition introduced into the Garde Republicaine. In her later years she began writing compositions for solo instruments with piano accompaniment. One of these was *Cantilene for Clarinet and Piano*.

Cantilene for Clarinet and Piano is written in E minor. The piano introduces the piece with gentle chords leaping upwards and downwards. Expressively, the clarinet then enters in the chalumeau register and ascends with an F Sharp natural minor scale. Throughout the piece, Decruck uses different scales and modes including the whole tone scale and major pentatonic scale.

After starting in E-minor, the piece uses Db as a temporary tonal center before modulating to D. Decruck uses modal uses of D major and minor through the end. As the coda creates more space between each final statement, the second-to-last chord is an A9 add 6, but isn't followed by a D chord as one would expect. Instead, Decruck ends with an extended chord containing an E in the bass that has all the notes from the D major scale, except the D. The clarinet moves in steady ascending and descending sixteenth note

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passages for the duration of the piece while the piano gently accompanies in the background. Eventually the clarinet passes the major pentatonic scales to the piano as the clarinet begins a lyrical line overtop. The piece arrives at the most emotional moment when the clarinet plays a sextuplet cadenza, which is followed by arpeggiated, ascending octuplets from the piano. The piece ends with a somber, rhythmic feel recalling the beginning of the piece.

Karen Tanaka (b.1961) is a Japanese composer and pianist. She began her journey as a child, learning piano and composition in Tokyo, then later moving to Paris to study with Tristan Murail in 1986. After her studies, she went on to commission several works for various groups including the Royal Academy of Music in London, Juilliard School, Gaudeamus Foundation, Radio France, the Michael Vyner Trust, the Canada Council, the Arts Council of England, BBC, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Her works have also been performed by the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and more. Additionally, Tanaka also scored several short films, animations, and documentaries, including BBC's TV series *Planet Earth II* and an animated film titled *Sister*.

As a fan of nature, the forest had always influenced Tanaka's compositions, in 2013, *Enchanted Forest* was commissioned and written for Nobuaki Fukukawa and Yurie Miura, and premiered in Tokyo the same year. Originally written for horn and piano, this composition was adapted for trombone by Kole Wentling. The first movement features a stable piano part consisting of the right hand playing steady quintuplets, while the melody is played in the left hand. This melody is repeated throughout the movement, and is passed off between both the trombone and the piano. The entire piece feels uneasy, as the time signature repeatedly switches between 4/4, 5/4, and 6/4. When the trombone player begins to play, the dynamics fluctuate throughout the melody, giving the mystical, lost sensation to the audience. Although the trombone starts in the high register, throughout the piece, the performer will leap between registers. The piece ends with both instruments fading out into a niente, leading into the next movement of the piece.

Starry Night is written by Dr. Jenni Brandon (1977-Present) who is an up and coming composer of the twenty-first century. She received her Bachelor's degree in Music Composition from West Chester University along with her Master's & Doctorate in Music Composition from the University of Texas in Austin. Dr. Brandon has composed several pieces for various ensembles including orchestra, solo repertoire, choral ensembles, and instrumental duets. In addition to writing music, Dr. Brandon also enjoys conducting various ensembles across the country.

Starry Night, written for unaccompanied clarinet, tells a story about the night sky and what might happen within it. The piece's name is inspired by Vincent Van Gogh's painting *Starry Night*. Dr. Brandon wrote her own fascination with the night sky by using poetry from Manley Hopkins, John Keats, and Van Gogh. The piece tells a story of the stars as "fire folk," and how seeing them can make one dream (Brandon, 2022).

Starry Night has three separate movements: The Starlight Night, Bright Star! and The Sight of Stars. The Starlight Night features quiet tones of the clarinet's clarion register, as to depict the stars appearing in the sky. Slowly each star appears, until the

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second section which depicts the stars collaborating with each other as “fire folk” through short joyful phrasing. Bright Star! is more somber than the first, paying a solemn tribute to the beauty each star beholds. The movement slowly moves towards a louder, more passionate section. As each lyrical phrase is emphasized by dynamic contrast and chromatic changes within the arpeggios. The Sight of Stars expresses the dream state of stargazing, almost as if the stars are a dream themselves. With the use of repeated 16th note patterns, it creates a slow build into the peak of the night. The stars begin to fall as the clarinet plays a scalar descent; however, in the final moments of the piece the stars shine bright one last time as the performer completes arpeggiated ascending quintuplet figures at a forte, but then to nothing.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) was one of the most influential composers of his time. In his lifetime, Mozart had completed over 600 works for symphonic, chamber, operatic, and choral settings. At an early age, Mozart showed signs of musical talent, and would often entertain people on the keyboard. At only the age of six, Mozart wrote his first composition, studying diligently under other great composers such as Haydn and Bach. When Mozart moved to Vienna at the age of twenty-five, his music began to grow in popularity, and is considered one of the greatest developments in a short amount of time in the history of music. One of his most famous works, which was never completed by him, was his requiem in D minor, K626, writing only a fraction of it before one of his students completed it after his death.

Menuet from Divertimento in D, K. 334 is a piece written for clarinet and piano. The piece follows a rondo form as the piece begins with the clarinet moving in ascending and descending seconds and thirds, while the piano compliments the clarinet with major chords in quarter notes. In the trio section, the clarinet picks up in tempo and plays passages in a concert Eb major scale. Also in the trio, the clarinet will play an ascending arpeggio which starts on a first inversion Concert C major chord, and alternates between inversions of this chord, and of a concert F minor chord. The piece concludes with a repeat of the A section once again, but with no repeats.

Paul Jeanjean (1874-1928) was a French composer and well-known clarinetist. He served as principal clarinet of the Garde Republicaine Band and the MonteCarlo opera. He studied under Cyrille Rose, who at the time was one of the leading clarinetists in the world. During this time, Jeanjean was given the opportunity to compose pieces through the Paris Conservatoire. The majority of what Jeanjean composed was clarinet etudes and technical studies. In addition, he wrote several for bassoon and cornet. Some of his most famous compositions include *Arabesque*, *Au clair de la lune*, and *Guisganderie*.

Arabesque, was written in 1926, shortly before Jeanjean’s death. The piece features solo clarinet and piano. The introduction begins with the clarinet opening with a graceful dominant B-flat ninth arpeggio, while the piano continually plays a B-flat dominant seventh in support. In the A-section, the clarinet continues the arpeggiated figures in various rhythms including triplets and 16th notes.

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One of the features is the expressive quality of the music, especially with the pushing and pulling of the tempo, and the soft quality of the piano. The B-section continues with this quality, with more stepwise motion rather than arpeggios. After going through another A-section, the piece changes key and incorporates another style into a C-section. There is a slight hemiola feel with the clarinet's triplets and the piano's eight notes. During this section, the clarinet and piano also pass an arpeggiated sequence back and forth as a call and response. The piece then moves to the original theme, before pushing into a cadenza, where the clarinet moves in fast arpeggiation, and scale-like movement. The cadenza reflects on the introduction, as the beginning melody is heard halfway through. Once the cadenza is finished, the clarinet and piano finish the last six measures at an almost double tempo, with the clarinet playing an Eb major arpeggiated sequence, and the piano supporting with an Eb major chord.

Biographies

Kole Wentling started learning the clarinet at the age of ten, and has continued to play since. He is currently studying Music Education under Rebecca Wunch and Dr. Scott Meier, and is expected to graduate in the spring of 2025. In 2023, Kole also started receiving private lessons for trombone, and did an unofficial secondary declaration in his degree, studying under Mr. Kent Tucker of Erie, Pennsylvania. While in school, Kole actively participates in the Civic Orchestra and Clarinet Choir on Bb Clarinet, Jazz Ensemble on lead trombone, and brass ensemble on trombone. Additionally, Kole is the winner of the 2024 Mercyhurst University Concerto/Aria Competition, to which he performed Carl Maria Von Weber's Concertino in Eb Major.

In teaching, Kole currently serves as World of Music's only brass and woodwinds private teacher, holding a studio of over twenty-five private students seen on a weekly basis. Kole has previously worked with local marching bands including Erie High and Girard. Additionally, Kole has served as Rebecca Wunch's Teaching assistant, helping to lighten the workload by grading homework, providing assistance to students when necessary, and teaching a remedial theory class in the spring for students who need additional help with Music Theory. Outside of the University, Kole also serves as bandleader, and co-founder of Swing Syndicate, a jazz sextet located in Erie Pennsylvania. Kole intends to graduate and teach in a local school, eventually working towards his masters degree in Jazz studies.

Kole would like to extend his condolences to the family of Mrs. Benedetto, and am dedicating his performance of Cantilène by Fernande Decruck in memory of her. Although Kole knew her for a short amount of time in the Celebration

Biographies (Cont.)

Ringers group of Grove City, she was always someone that would get a laugh out of you. She was always kind, and thinking of others, never showing an ounce of selfishness in her aura. From memory, Kole can remember the funny names of note values Debby would label them as, one of which was quarter rest, just being a genuine squiggle. It always brought a smile to his face, and she will be deeply missed within her community, and within the Celebration Ringers.

Sarah Kahl is the accompanist for the Erie Philharmonic Chorus (EPC), Erie Junior Philharmonic Chorus (EJPC) and Erie Philharmonic Youth Chorale (EPYC). She also serves as the group piano instructor for both the EJPC and EPYC. Kahl has extensive background in piano pedagogy and has taught piano and multi-level classes in the group piano setting at universities in Minnesota, North Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, and Pennsylvania. She also serves as a collaborative pianist at Mercyhurst University. Kahl is an active performer in the Erie area where she performs with established musicians and students alike. In addition to her performance roles, she is the Music Coordinator at Church of the Cross in Fairview, PA, and operates a private piano studio.

Kahl received her DMA in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from the University of Kansas where she studied with Jack Winerock. She received her Master's degree in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from the University of Nebraska where she studied with Paul Barnes and pedagogy with Brenda Wristen. She received her Bachelor of Music Degree in Music Education from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota and studied under David Worth.

Gratitudes:

To My Family: Thank you for supporting me through my undergraduate degree. There have been many happy moments, sad moments, moments where I would want to throw the towel in completely and give up music forever. You stood by me through all of those moments, and now, it is almost over. Thank you for always being there to "Fix the boo boos" that I could never fix alone, and no matter what, being my biggest fans from the sidelines. I love you.

To My Friends, Old and New: Thank you for being a part of my life. I have always had the belief that people come and go into my life for a reason, and it is because of that reason that I am who I appear to be today. There is no doubt that your kind gestures, moments of laughter, and energy you send my way influence me to do better.

To My Students: To say I have been blessed with the students I have taught is an understatement. To be the person who gets to be involved with your musical growth is beyond an emotion to describe. You are what motivates me to continue doing what I do, and to grow as a young educator in this ever-changing world. Please never change!

Gratitudes (Cont.)

To my Professors: Thank you for leading me in the right direction as I finish up my time here at Mercyhurst University. Although I didn't start here, you have made me feel at home and welcome in my educational career. Your kind words of encouragement, professional advice, and giving that extra push to work harder has made me a successful teacher, and I look forward to proving that when I leave for student teaching.

To my Primary Professor: Becky, I don't believe a thank you would describe how appreciative I am of everything you have done for me. When we met, I was in a rough spot, getting ready to leave my previous college. I had lost my passion for music and almost dropped out of college entirely. You were the only clarinet teacher that responded back when I sent out emails looking to transfer colleges, and I'm glad you were the only one. From day one, you have shown me what it is like to be an excellent teacher, someone who not only walks their talk, but does so in so many different ways that every student can learn based on their pattern of learning. We've had plenty of long discussions of teaching domains, life skills, and general mental wellbeing. You have not only ignited my passion for music again, but helped make me the teacher I intend to be in the field. I said it before, but I'll say it again, there is no amount of thank yous that I could give that would equate to what you have given back to me.