



PRESENTS

“Classical Coffeehouse”

Ashley Hsu, Clarinet

with

Alexei Ulitin, Piano

Sunday, May 1, 2022

5:00 PM

Ulrich Recital Hall

&

Livestream (ter.ps/AHSrecital)

PROGRAM

Sonatine for B-flat Clarinet and Piano Valerie Coleman (b. 1970)

Three Pieces for Solo Clarinet Igor Stravinsky (1882–1972)

- I. Sempre piano e molto tranquillo
- II. = 168
- III. = 160

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990)

- I. Grazioso
- II. Andantino - Vivace e leggiero (~:7:00)

Pocketsize Sonata No. 1 Alec Templeton (1910–1963)

- I. Improvisation
- II. Modal Blues
- III. In Rhythm

Intermission

Cape Cod Files Paquito D’Rivera (b. 1948)

- I. Benny @ 100
- II. Bandoneón
- III. Lecuonerías
- IV. Chiquita
- V.

This recital is offered in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Clarinet Performance and Music Education.

Ashley Hsu is a student of Professor Robert DiLutis.

Program Notes

Unlike my undying loyalty to the clarinet, my brother switched around on several different instruments until he finally settled on playing jazz clarinet. With nothing to do during the summer break before I started UMD, I got dragged into the jazz world through a summer jazz program that my brother's jazz teacher ran. My perceptions of jazz in the lens of a classical music player did not work in the face of real jazz.

Classical Coffeehouse is a recital that includes a small representation of classical music's take on jazz in some form.

Whether the jazz influence is through the rhythmic style, chordal changes, or even the composers themselves, it merely reminds us that jazz in the lens of a classical music player—like my perception when I started out on jazz—is a botched vision of what jazz music truly is. Because seriously, when have you ever seen an actual improvisational section in a so-called jazz classical piece of music? Classical jazz in comparison to the actual jazz genre is like making coffee with a coffee machine, but somehow you end up with one of those super-sweet Starbucks coffee-free frappuccinos.

*For an uninterrupted music performance, please check that you are in a location with a strong Wi-Fi connection. **psst!** Don't exit out of the live stream after the last piece! Wait for a short and fun encore performance!*

Sonatine for Clarinet and Piano (2005)

Born in Louisville, Kentucky, **Valerie Coleman** (b. 1970) grew up listening to classical music on the radio, singing three-part harmonies with her sisters and fooling around with the electronic piano that was in the living room. Her interest in music eventually grew over the years, as Coleman founded and became the flutist of Imani Winds, one of the most famous and award-winning American chamber wind groups. She continues to perform globally, lead clinics, and compose repertoire for chamber groups, orchestras, and wind bands. As one of the most prolific living women composers today, she is often commissioned by colleges and other music groups to compose new works. Her most famous composition is the wind quintet *Umoja*, and her flute compositions are working their way up to become part of the standard solo flute performance repertoire.

Sonatine was inspired by Coleman's travels in Europe when touring with jazz saxophonist Steve Coleman. The music is supposed to be reminiscent of what one would hear in a nightclub—energetic music of rhythmic intensity which bounces between the clarinet and piano. Challenging for both the clarinet and piano performer, the music figuratively pulls and pushes the listener, surprising the listener with the unpredictability of the musical direction.

Three pieces for Solo Clarinet (1919)

Igor Stravinsky's (1882–1971) compositional style can be split up into three stages—Russian, Neoclassical, and Serial—as influenced by the composers and musicians around him, as well as what was happening on the world stage throughout his lifetime. The onset of World War I and the Russian Revolution caused Stravinsky to go into voluntary exile, moving first to Switzerland, then to France, and finally settling in America in

1939. Throughout his lifetime, Stravinsky composed countless instrumental, vocal, opera, ballet, and other classical works, and also performed as a pianist and conducted orchestras around the world.

The political situation in Russia and his move to Switzerland caused Stravinsky to turn to a new patron to support his works. Consequently, Stravinsky dedicated the *Three Pieces* (1919) to his new benefactor Werner Reinhart, who was an amateur clarinetist. The unaccompanied clarinet work is one of the first unaccompanied clarinet solos ever composed, and unique that asks the performer to play on both A and Bb clarinet. The first movement starts somber, not going beyond the clarinet “break.” The second movement jumps around the entire clarinet range, depicting some birds and a stalking cat, the animals represented by a “ribbon” of notes at the beginning, and the middle section, respectively. The third movement is the opposite of the somber first movement: energetic and staying above the clarinet “break,” playing around in the high range of the clarinet. Along with strict instructions to follow his markings, the movement itself is a mimicry of ragtime jazz style and Stravinsky’s previous composition, the “Ragtime” movement of *L’Histoire du soldat* (1918).

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano (1942)

Rocketing to fame as a last-minute replacement conductor for the New York Philharmonic in late 1943, Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990) quickly became a household name in America as a versatile musician and celebrity—a performer, educator, composer, and humanitarian. As a conductor, he conducted for the New York Philharmonic for nearly two decades and was often requested to guest conduct for various orchestras around the world. As an educator, he taught at Tanglewood and Brandeis University, and

initiated and led the *Young People’s Concerts*, a television show in which Bernstein conducted and presented classical pieces with young musicians as the members of the orchestra. As a composer, Bernstein composed for a variety of genres ranging from Broadway musicals, symphonies for orchestra, opera, and many other classical and jazz compositions. Despite his success in the American music culture (such as the musical *West Side Story*), his personal life was wrought with political turmoil such as McCarthyism paranoia in the 50s which led to a travel ban and government scrutiny on Bernstein.

Bernstein’s *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano* (1942) roughly took six months to compose, as Bernstein had written the piece in the time when he was still a struggling freelance musician. The sonata also has traces of Bernstein’s *Sonata for Violin and Piano*, which he composed two years before. Composed of two movements, the piece is dedicated to clarinetist David Oppenheim, who Bernstein met at Tanglewood, though the premiere performance was performed by David Glazer. While the first movement is depicted as elegant but restrained, the second movement is more energetic, and more in tune with Bernstein’s energetic compositional style. The second movement also includes traces of *West Side Story* motifs through the 5/8 time signature and the influence of Cuban rhythms Bernstein had heard during his Key West vacation he took while he composed the piece.

Pocketsize Sonata No. 1 - Alec Templeton (1949)

Despite being born blind, **Alec Templeton** (1910–1963) was blessed with perfect pitch. The Welsh pianist, composer, and radio personality earned a place at the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music in London in his early music career. Under the baton of bandleader Jack Hylton, Templeton moved to America in the mid-1930s and became a successful

performer and American personality, performing for and in various venues, also becoming a lifetime member of the New Orleans Jazz Club. He was the most active in the radio scene, even becoming a host of his show called *It's Alec Templeton Time*. Listeners of the blind pianist were wowed by Templeton's unique performing style of simplistic yet aesthetically musical phrasing of performing jazz twists on various classical pieces and composer styles. Templeton also composed pieces for both jazz and classical genres such as *Trio for Flute, Oboe, and Piano* (his first composition at the age of 18), though his most famous composition is the jazz tune *Bach Goes to Town*, which has consequently been arranged for a variety of instrument combinations.

Edging the line between the jazz and classical styles, *Pocketsize Sonata No. 1* combines elements of both the sonata and jazz standard forms to create an ABA-like thematic pattern for listeners to follow. Split into three movements, the sonata starts with a British folk/countryside-like feel, only to change gears to get progressively get more 'jazzy' with each movement: the stepwise intervals and chords of blues in the piano in the 2nd movement, and the New Orleans jazz style of the 3rd movement. It is one of three clarinet works written by Templeton.

Paquito D'Rivera - Cape Cod Files (2009)

Born in Cuba in 1948, jazz saxophonist, clarinetist, and composer **Paquito D'Rivera** (b. 1948) grew up in a musically enriching environment with the help of his classical saxophonist father Tito D'Rivera (who taught himself clarinet so he could teach Paquito clarinet). While his early music career was full of jazz and classical music, Cuban politics were full of turmoil as well. The Communist party took over the Cuban government in 1959, resulting in D'Rivera becoming drafted into the army, and for the Cuban music

scene, a brief ban of jazz music (considered 'too imperialist' in Communist beliefs) which then turned into 1984-esque monitoring of music performed. Frustrated with the restrictions placed on his music performances, Paquito D'Rivera defected to the US in 1980, becoming a renowned Latin and Cuban jazz musician as well as a successful classical clarinet soloist. D'Rivera is still an active performer and composer both in the jazz and classical world and hosts a show called "Paq-Man's Korner" on his Youtube Channel.

Cape Cod Files (2009) was initially commissioned for the Cape Cod Music Festival's 30th Anniversary to bring new clarinet duo works to the clarinet repertoire. Later on, David Gould commissioned D'Rivera to expand the piece into a double concerto for solo clarinet, piano, and orchestra. Both arrangements were premiered by clarinetist Jon Manasse and pianist Jon Nakamatsu (and the San Jose Orchestra). The piece consists of four different movements, each representing one of D'Rivera's heroes. The first movement is a homage to the jazz clarinetist Benny Goodman, and the theme is based on Benny Goodman's intro to the song "Memories of You." The second movement is an Argentine milonga inspired by the Bandoneón expressive sound, such as Pizzolla, Jaurena, Del Curto, and other Bandoneón performers. The third movement is an unaccompanied clarinet solo inspired by jazz pianist Ernesto Lecuona. The fourth movement, "Chiquita Blues," which translates to "little blues," is a piece inspired by an early 20th-century Cuban Lilliputian singer/actress who had dwarfism, and musically is in a form of a 12-bar blues, combined with elements of the Cuban traditional dance style and atonality.

Performer Biographies

Ashley Hsu is a senior music education and clarinet performance double major studying under Robert DiLutis. Along with her extensive pre-college music experiences, she was recently part of the 2022 CBNDA Intercollegiate Band (she also participated in the band in 2020), and won 2nd place in the Sidney Forrest Clarinet Competition, participated in the Honors Performance Series Virtual Music Summit.

In the past, she has won 1st place in the Gaithersburg's Young Artist Award Competition's Woodwinds Division and participated in National Symphony Orchestra's Summer Music Institute. She has also expanded her musical horizons to jazz, as she has recently interned at the Jazz Academy of Music's JAM Camp, and is currently playing clarinet in the Capital Focus Jazz Band. Aside from her performing and educating pursuits, Ashley enjoys photography, biking, and origami.

Alexei Ulitin

A native of Kiev, Ukraine, Alexei Ulitin enjoys a vibrant career as a collaborative artist, solo pianist and teacher. Ulitin currently serves as a piano faculty at Rowan University (New Jersey). He is also a staff pianist and accompanying coordinator at the University of Maryland, College Park. From 2016 to 2018, he served as a visiting assistant professor of collaborative piano at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. Ulitin has worked as a member of the musical staff at several music festivals, including Aspen, Meadowmount, Siena, and the Northern Lights. He has been a recipient of the New Horizons Fellowship at Aspen Music Festival for three years.

His recital partners have included Stephen Wyczynski, Emilio Colón, Daniel Perantoni, Demondrae Thurman, Anton Belov, Marian Stieber, and Jon Garrison. Ulitin has won prizes in numerous competitions, including the 2014 Baltimore Music Club

Competition (first prize), 2014 Wonderlic Piano Competition, 2013 Liszt-Garrison International Piano Competition, 2010 International Young Artist Piano Competition in Washington, D.C. (first prize), and 2010 Music Teachers National Association competition (Eastern Division Winner). He earned a Bachelor of Music from Rowan University, Master of Music from the National Music Academy of Ukraine (Kiev), and Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Maryland.

SPECIAL THANKS TO –

My family – for their support for my future full of music and listening and ignoring my practice sessions of honking away at my clarinet

Professor DiLutis – helping me develop my clarinet playing skills over the course of my college career, and help me prepare my recital music through countless lessons

Alexei U., Henry Sheppard – for being wonderful music partners-in-crime

My current music professors – for patiently dealing with me and my shenanigans as I attempted to balance recital preparation and schoolwork this semester

My past and present music teachers, conductors, and etc. – for being part of my musical journey towards greatness

Please note: As a courtesy to the performers and your fellow guests, feel free to watch this recital with other people in your vicinity, and to type anything into the livestream chat. Please remember that food, drink, smoking, photography, recording (audio and video), and animals (other than service animals) are allowed over the internet, and not in-person – we the performers cannot see what you are doing. But we the performers would also appreciate your efforts if you watched and listened to the performance without any distractions. Note that we make every effort to start on time. Latecomers are still welcome to watch and listen, or just listen to the performance.

Read the program notes? Try correctly connecting the circles together :)

