

Brittany O'Quin, bassoon

Gail Novak, piano

Student Recital Series

Organ Hall | Friday, April 17, 2015 | 7:30 PM

Program

Duo tramonti

Ludovico Einaudi
(b. 1955)

Three Sacred Trees from *The Five Sacred Trees*

Eó Munga

Eó Rosa

Tortan

John Williams
(b. 1932)

INTERMISSION

Sonata for Bassoon and Piano

Prelude

Browning

Lament

John Steinmetz
(b. 1951)

ASU Herberger Institute
FOR DESIGN AND THE ARTS
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

School of Music

Program Notes
Brittany O'Quin, Bassoon

***Duo Tramonti (Two Sunsets)* by Ludovico Einaudi (b. 1955)**

Ludovico Einaudi is an Italian pianist and composer. He trained at the "Conservatorio Verdi" in Milan under composer Luciano Berio. He describes his sound as "post-classical", due to his instrument choices and his style. Einaudi composes for film and movie trailers as well, and his notable films are "I'm still here" and "The Intouchables". Duo Tramonti, or Two Sunsets, was written in 1999 for solo piano, but works very well to showcase the upper register of the bassoon.

Three Sacred Trees from *The Five Sacred Trees for Bassoon and Orchestra* by John Williams (b.1932)

John Williams is considered one of the greatest film composers of all time. In a career spanning over six decades, he has composed film scores for movies such as *Jaws*, *Star Wars*, *Jurassic Park*, *Indiana Jones*, *Schindler's List*, and many more.

In 1995 *The Five Sacred Trees for Bassoon and Orchestra* was composed for Judith LeClair, the principal bassoonist of the New York Philharmonic to honor the orchestra's 150th anniversary. Inspiration from this work comes from the writings of British poet and novelist Robert Graves. The work is composed of five movements, each representing a tree from ancient Celtic mythology.

John Williams says the following about Eó Munga, Tortan, and Eó Rosa from *The Five Sacred Trees*.

Eó Mugna, the great oak, whose roots extend to Connia's Well in the "otherworld," stands guard over what is the source of the River Shannon and the font of all wisdom. The well is probably the source of Mugna (music) and the sacred well.

Tortan is a tree that has been associated with witches, and as a result, the fiddle appears, sawing away as it is conjoined with the music of the bassoon. The Irish bodhrán drum assists.

The Tree of Ross (or **Eó Rosa**) is a yew, and although the yew is often referred to as a symbol of death and destruction, The Tree of Ross is often the subject of much rhapsodizing in the literature. It is referred to as "a mother's good," "Diadem of the Angels," and "faggot of the sages." Hence the lyrical character of this movement, wherein the bassoon intonates [sic] and is accompanied by the harp!

***Sonata for Bassoon and Piano* by John Steinmetz (b. 1951)**

The Steinmetz sonata is not in typical "sonata form". Steinmetz describes it as "music to be sounded... music for invoking different powerful emotions". The first movement portrays the bassoon as "a strong-voiced instrument exploring powerful feelings. Extended technique such as "pitch bending" is displayed in this movement. The second movement is based on an English tune from the 1400s called "Browning" (or "The Leaves be Green") composed by Elway Bevin. The last movement, or the "Lament" starts using very similar chords as previously heard in the first movement. Steinmetz describes the bassoon in this movement like a jazz ballad singer. The performer holds back certain notes, and then rushes others, to create a spacious and unhurried, yet brimming with emotion feeling. Dr. Ablie Micklich states, "To pull off this piece, you must bear a piece of your soul to the audience".