

PROGRAM NOTES

CANON IN OCTAVE (1953)..... Jean Françaix (1912-1997)

This brief piece, which lasts approximately one minute, finds the horn chasing the piano for the composition's entire length—it is direct imitation spaced one beat apart. The work is written by French composer Jean Françaix, an accomplished pianist and former student of the famous composition teacher Nadia Boulanger.

SONATA NO. 3 FOR HORN AND PIANO (1970)..... Alec Wilder (1907-1980)

Moderately fast, Slowly, With a solid beat and a jazz feeling, Joyously

Alec Wilder, an American composer who was one of the most prolific composers for the horn in the 20th Century, was known for a compositional style which blends elements of jazz and classical music. This, along with most of Wilder's works for horn, was written for his good friend, the hornist John Barrows. Barrows was a well-known New York performer for many years, and he also served on the faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, New York University, Yale, and here at Arizona State. The piece itself features four movements: two relaxed movements to start, a third influenced by jazz, and a finale which has the feel of a waltz.

SNOWFLAKES (1994)..... Scott Vaillancourt (b. 1968)

Dave Day, trombone

Scott Vaillancourt is a composer, arranger, and performer who lives in Maine. He holds degrees in tuba performance and composition from Bowdoin College (of Maine) and the University of Michigan. This piece is an unaccompanied work for horn and tenor trombone duet. The composer notes that the work depicts the "varying moods brought on by a night snowfall." The work utilizes frequent alternation between a more ponderous tempo and a quicker, more rhythmic pace. Additionally, he uses occasional imitation between voices and manages to use essentially the complete range of both instruments.

INTERMISSION

TRIO FOR PIANO, VIOLIN, AND HORN, op. 40 (1865)..... Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Emilio Vazquez, violin

Andante, Scherzo, Adagio mesto, Finale

From a symphonic standpoint, Johannes Brahms was a composer who frequently and often memorably featured the horns in his compositions. Tragically, however, this symphonic output represents a small percentage of his overall works. Brahms wrote a great deal of vocal music beyond his symphonic works, and also wrote 24 chamber pieces during his lifetime—only one of which utilizes the horn (and sadly no solo works for the horn). That said, the Brahms horn trio represents perhaps the centerpiece of horn chamber works. Brahms actually studied all three of these instruments as a child, and was a well-known proponent of the natural horn—intending this piece to be performed on it. The piece is presented in four movements. The first movement opens with a theme that recurs throughout the movement built around an opening perfect fifth which alternates with a faster, more chromatic section led by the violin. The second movement is a quick scherzo that is contrasted with a trio section where the piano is more or less the solo voice before the standard return to the scherzo section. The third is a more reflective slow movement, and the finale is a rollicking rondo movement in a typical 6/8.

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