

University of Missouri School of Music

Masters Recital • 2020-2021 Series

Graduate Saxophone Recital

Daniel Vega, saxophone

Dr. Natalia Bolshakova, piano

May 2nd, 2021 • 3:30 pm • Sinquefield Music Center Recital Hall

Program

Concertino da Camera

- I. Allegro con moto
- II. Larghetto—Animato molto

Jacques Ibert

(1890-1962)

Holy Roller

Libby Larsen

(b. 1950)

Intermission

Rock Me!

Barry Cockcroft

(b. 1978)

Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano

- I. Two-part Invention
- II. La Follia nuova (A Lament for George Cacioppo)
- III. Scherzo: “Will o’ the wisp”
- IV. Recitative and Mad Dance

William Albright

(1944-1998)

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Music degree in saxophone performance. Daniel Vega is a student of Leo Saguiguit.

Requests for accommodations related to disability need to be made to building coordinator, Susan Worstell, 206 Sinquefield Music Center, 573-884-1604, at least seven days in advance of the event. Events are subject to change. For up-to-date information, please visit our web site: www.music.missouri.edu

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Program Notes

Concertino da Camera

Jacques Ibert composed the *Concertino da Camera* for saxophonist Sigard Rascher in 1935. After it was performed that same year, Rascher frequently performed it around Europe and America with many different orchestras and conductors. This work is considered neoclassical but has fringe elements of impressionism and jazz. Originally for alto saxophone and eleven instruments (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet, violin, viola, cello, and double bass), it is most commonly performed with alto saxophone and piano.

Movement one of the concertino uses the stock form of ABBA with a coda. The first theme subverts the expected rhythmic emphasis by creating an accent structure that stresses the upbeats, a vestige of jazz. This offset suggests French composers' interest in American jazz in the 1920's and 1930's. The second theme is more lyrical and tuneful, with a slower harmonic rhythm. The second movement two begins with a solo recitative and aria in the saxophone, marked *Larghetto*. The harmony accompanying this soft and lyrical movement are also impressionist, beginning with an E minor chord with a flat eleventh, splitting the third of the chord. The movement is brought to a close at an extremely soft dynamic to set the audience up for the lively third movement, marked *Animato molto*, without pause. This final movement is in sonata-allegro form. The piano or orchestra starts this movement alone and the saxophone restates the theme provided by the piano or orchestra. This vivacious theme I is balanced by a sweet and tuneful theme II but with a slower harmonic rhythm.

Ibert was a French composer who won the Prix de Rome in his first attempt while studying at the Paris Conservatory. He is considered eclectic and not married to any genre or style. His successful career led him to compose operas, ballet, symphonies, film music, concertos, piano music, incidental music, and chamber music. His two most notable orchestral works are *Divertissement* (1930) and *Escales* (1922)

Holy Roller

Holy Roller is a pentacostal revival sermon captured in the sound of alto saxophone and piano. These sermons are an ecstatic outpouring of the Holy Spirit combined with fierce warnings of fire and brimstone. These preachers speak in tongues and bring the audience into the aisles, dancing, weeping, shouting, jerking uncontrollably, and fainting. To composer Libby Larsen, these revival sermons are musical masterpieces of rhythm, tempo, and extraordinary tension and release. She uses the saxophone to imitate the rhythmic inflections of revival sermons, creating an eclectic range of characters in a through

composed movement. The composer states, “the music is the language, the language is the music, and the result moves the spirit to other states of being.” *Holy Roller* was written for Paul Bro in 1997.

This piece is a through-composed rhapsody. There are two recognizable melodies sprinkled throughout, elaborated, and transformed: *When the Saints Go Marching In* and the hymn *Shall We Gather at the River*. Try listening for these motives and how they are used to create the vocal inflection of a revival sermon. There are several solo recitative sections that elucidate the saxophone’s ability to build tension and release. Call and response sections between the saxophone and piano also enhance the saxophone’s vocal qualities.

Libby Larsen is one of America’s most performed living composers. Her oeuvre spans five-hundred works from virtually every genre, from vocal to chamber music, to towering orchestral works and fifteen operas. There are over fifty CDs of her recorded works and is Grammy award-winning. Needless to say, she has established a permanent place in the concert repertory. Larsen was born in Wilmington, Delaware in 1950, and currently lives in Minnesota where she composes and nurtures the production of new operas as the Artistic Director of the John Duffy Institute for New Opera.

Rock Me!

This solo saxophone work is a synthesis of the entire rock genre in one composition. Here the saxophone imitates a distorted electric guitar, electric bass, drum set, didgeridoo, and occasionally an acoustic saxophone. *Rock Me!* deploys a litany of extended techniques to create these effects, such as slap tongue, growling, multiphonics, microtones, harmonic overtones, double tonguing, key clicks, and singing into the instrument to distort the sound. The evolution of these techniques in the form is gradual, each element is introduced individually. The resulting improvised nature of the music is intended to lead the audience through a process of discovery. It's helpful to imagine me performing it with sunglasses and a leather jacket. *Rock Me!* was written in 2007 for saxophonist Kenneth Tse.

Barry Cockcroft has successfully integrated his compositions into the mainstream repertoire by interpolating popular genres, rhythms, and structures with contemporary saxophone technique. By using familiar styles in tandem with unfamiliar techniques he innovates the contemporary language of the saxophone. In the composer’s own words, “I like taking an audience from the known to the unknown, without them realising they are on a journey of discovery.” He has written over one-hundred and twenty works and has been a concerto soloist with the United States Navy Band and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra among other international ensembles in Australia, Slovenia, Croatia, Costa Rica and Colombia. He studied in Australia with Dr. Peter Clinch for 5 years and for 2 years in Bordeaux France with saxophonists Jacques Net, Marie-Bernadette Charrier and Jean-Marie Londeix.

Sonata

In its entirety, William Albright's Sonata for alto saxophone and piano is a towering achievement of polystylism and an invaluable gem of the saxophone repertoire. Each movement references baroque styles but with a language unique to Albright. Movement one is a two part invention, movement two a chaconne, movement three a scherzo, and movement four a recitative and dance. These neo-baroque characteristics are interpreted with Albright's modern musical vocabulary and juxtaposed to create expressive contrast that simultaneously references the past and calls in the future.

Movement two is a lament to his deceased friend, George Cacciopo. They collaborated in Ann Arbor, Michigan on the recurring Once Music Festival, but they primarily focused on propelling contemporary electronic music through a radio show by Cacciopo. The F# minor tonality and descending melodies suggest laying someone to rest with sorrow, but are contrasted by ascending melodies in contrary motion with the descending chaconne in the piano. Interspersed in this minor context is a cold, desolate atonal section, reminiscent of Webern. The contrast between these two sections opens a way to understand Albright's post-modern stylistic opulence. Movement two ends with a final farewell to George Cacciopo, played into the piano as if it is a coffin.

As a composer, Albright is best known for his piano and organ works. His passion for ragtime would bring about a revival of the style, he even recorded the complete rags of Scott Joplin. His early training in music was at Juilliard and the Eastman School of Music, he later graduated from the University of Michigan with Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate degrees. From 1968-1969 he studied under another famous organist and composer at the Paris Conservatory, Olivier Messiaen. He became a professor of composition at the University of Michigan until the end of his life.