

University of Missouri School of Music  
Degree Recital (MM) • 2021-2022 Series

**Andrew Wiele, Clarinet**  
**Natalia Bolshakova, piano**

October 29, 2021 • 7:00PM • Sinquefield Music Center 132

**Program**

**Solo de Concours (1899).....André-Charles Messager**  
(1853-1929)

**Vier Stücke, Op. 5 (1913) .....Alban Berg**  
(1885-1935)

Mäßig  
Sehr langsam  
Sehr rasch  
Langsam

**5 Bagatelles, Op. 23 (1938) .....Gerald Finzi**  
(1901-1956)

Prelude  
Romance  
Carol  
Forlana  
Fughetta

**Sonata in Eb major, Op. 120 no. 2 (1894) .....Johannes Brahms**  
(1833-1897)

Allegro amabile  
Allegro appassionato  
Andante con moto

**Chips off the Ol' Block (1999) .....Eric Mandat**  
(b. 1957)

*This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Music degree in Clarinet performance. Andrew Wiele is a student of Wesley Warnhoff.*

## Program Notes

**André Messager** was a French composer and conductor who worked through the late nineteenth century until his death in 1929. He is best known for his stage works, especially at the French Opéra-Comique, Paris Opéra, and the Royal Opera House. He wrote eight ballets, thirty opéra comiques, along with several songs and limited instrumental works. His ballet *Le Deux Pigeons* (1866) and opéra comique *Véronique* are still performed today.

Messager studied composition with Camille Saint-Saëns and Gabriel Fauré and spent his musical career in Paris and London. While his compositional output is prominently lighter works, he also conducted a wide range of operas, including those by Mozart, Strauss, and Wagner. The *Solo de Concours* was commissioned by the Paris Conservatory in 1899 and is Messager's only chamber work for a wind instrument. The only other chamber work aside from his art songs that includes more than piano is his *Trois Pieces* for violin and piano (1897).

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**Alban Berg** joined Arnold Schoenberg and Anton Webern in the invention and advocacy of the twelve-tone or serial technique. This group, the self-proclaimed Second Viennese School, aimed to use every note equally in pieces using this technique. This is also known as “the liberation of dissonance”: ideas of rest and tension are rethought in ways that do not incorporate traditional western harmony. *Vier Stücke*, an early work of Berg, is not a serial piece, though it is atonal. Short but complex, the four miniatures offer structural relationships rather than a thematic melody.

Four Pieces for Clarinet and Piano, Op. 5, was written in 1913. Musicologists have placed the composition in the spring of 1913, but written evidence from Berg's wife suggest the piece was composed in June, the same month as a traumatic meeting with his former teacher Arnold Schoenberg. The teacher had criticized Berg's choice of compositions, urging him toward larger-scale instrumental works instead of small chamber works and art songs. Musicologist Brian Archibald states Schoenberg gave “strong criticism of Berg's recent work, and possibly even of his personality.” All of this may have been because of the Four Pieces. Regardless, the pieces were premiered at a Schoenberg Society for Private Musical Performances in 1919.

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**Gerald Finzi** was a British composer in the 20<sup>th</sup> century most famous for his vocal works. He studied composition with Ernest Farrar and Edward Bairstow at York Minster and moved to London in 1926, where his career truly began. However, World War II put a halt to his career, as he was drafted into the Ministry of War Transport. His style greatly changed after the war, and in 1951, he was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease. Despite his death in 1956, his broad catalog of music for choir and instrumental or vocal soloist helped him to be recognized as a popular 20<sup>th</sup> century British composer.

Three of the Five Bagatelles were written in 1938, and were created using “20-year-old bits and pieces” according to the composer. The fourth was written in 1942, and these four were premiered by Pauline Juler (clarinet) and Howard Ferguson (piano) in 1943. When discussing publishing with Leslie Boosey of Boosey & Hawkes, Boosey thought they should be printed separately. Finzi, however, convinced her to print them together, along with a fifth additional fast movement. The work quickly became Finzi's most popular piece, much to the composer's frustration. He called them “only trifles” and “not worth much, but got better notices than my decent stuff.” Their accessibility to musicians of all skill levels has cemented the Five Bagatelles in the clarinet repertoire and serve as an excellent introduction to his Clarinet Concerto (1948).

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The story of **Johannes Brahms'** clarinet works is perhaps the most important story in the history of the clarinet, and one of the most touching in music. Born in Meiningen in 1856, Richard Mühlfeld was a self-taught musician. He first played violin under his father's tutelage, before turning to the clarinet as early as age ten. Richard Wagner himself complimented the clarinetist when he played Beethoven's Egmont in Bayreuth for Christmas 1878, saying, "Young friend, continue in this way and the whole world is open to you." The citizens and musicians around Mühlfeld quickly took note of the artistic mastery he possessed. Mühlfeld would become first clarinetist at the orchestra of Meiningen under the service of Duke Georg in 1881 and would remain there until his death.

By the time of their meeting, Brahms had put away his pen and retired from composing. When he visited Meiningen in March 1891, the orchestra's conductor drew Brahms's attention to the clarinetist. Mühlfeld played his entire repertoire for Brahms, including the Mozart Quintet and Weber Concertos. Brahms became enamored with Mühlfeld's artistry and told everyone he knew about the clarinetist. The two became very close friends, and Brahms set about writing clarinet chamber works immediately. By the end of the summer, the Trio and Quintet were completed and were performed by the end of the year. Two sonatas for clarinet came in 1894. Brahms wrote the sonatas for his own enjoyment, and in a letter to Clara Schumann called the sonatas the "first clever thing I'm publishing! (A little late, you are thinking!)" The two also toured and performed the new clarinet works often until the death of Brahms, and Mühlfeld performed Brahms' works frequently until his own death in 1907, over 645 times in 138 cities.

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Eric Mandat has been on the cutting edge of clarinet extended techniques for the past three and a half decades. Born in 1957, Mandat studied with Richard Joiner, Lee Gibson, Keith Wilson, Stanley Hasty, and Charles Neidich. He currently teaches at Southern Illinois University as a Professor and Distinguished Scholar and continues to perform around the world. Mandat is also a member of Tone Road Rambles, a sextet that specializes in improvisation and experimental music.

*Chips off the Ol' Block* was commissioned by the International Clarinet Association in 1999. The following are his program notes: "The premise behind *Chips Off the Ol' Block* is quite simple: a little motive is introduced and begins to develop, but suddenly the development is either interrupted by or morphs into a new motive. After all the motives have had their solo moments, they begin to coalesce into one "super motive," at first retaining their original rhythmic and dynamic characteristics, but eventually dissolving into a fiery cauldron of reckless abandon. I premiered the piece on a faculty recital at Southern Illinois University Carbondale on April 14, 1999."

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