

University of Missouri School of Music

Graduate Recital • 2022-2023 Series

Kayla Modlin, Horn
Natalia Bolshakova, Piano

March 19th • 3:30 PM • Sheryl Crow Hall

En Forêt

Eugène Bozza (1905-1991)

Sonata for Horn and Piano in F Major, op. 17

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

- I. Allegro Moderato
- II. Poco Adagio, quasi Andante
- III. Rondo. Allegro moderato

Interval

Songs of a Wayfarer

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)

- II. "This Morning in the Fields"
- IV. "My Sweetheart's Blue Eyes"

arr. Eric Carlson

I Threw a Shoe at a Cat

Catherine Likhuta (b. 1982)

- I. Theme
- II. Waltz
- III. Yazz
- IV. Finale

Adagio and Allegro for Horn and Piano, op. 70

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

- I. Adagio
- II. Allegro

edited by Barry Tuckwell

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Music degree in Horn Performance. Kayla Modlin is a student of Amanda Collins.

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***En Forêt* (1941) — Eugene Bozza**

Eugène Bozza came into compositional stardom in Paris between the two World Wars, with a career that spanned a large portion of the twentieth century. Bozza's compositional voice sat outside all of the "-isms" (serialism, minimalism, romanticism, etc.) of the modern era, neither overly embracing modern compositional techniques nor clinging dearly to those of the recent past. His truly contemporary voice left him always on the outer edges of international fame, yet he achieved a magnificent career within France. His works reflect and capture the sharp wit and diverse stylings of mid-century Parisian popular and theatrical culture. Bozza conducted the *Opéra-Comique* in Paris from 1938 to 1948, throughout the German occupation of France, and three years later he took a position at the Conservatory in Valenciennes where he remained until his retirement in 1975. Although the trauma of the post-war era saw the rise of new compositional techniques all across Europe, Bozza's compositional voice remained firmly rooted in that bold Parisian witticism, as if unphased by catastrophe.

En forêt ("In a Forest") was written in 1941 as a commission from the Paris Conservatory intended as an examination piece for graduating students to demonstrate their mastery of the horn, showcasing both the technical capabilities of the mid-century valved horn, as well as the delicate lyricism popular with Romantic-era composers. Bozza himself spent several years studying at the conservatory, winning the *Première Prix* a total of three times in violin, composing, and conducting. *En Forêt* is a characteristic piece that gives the impression of a brief but spectacular adventure through the forest, opening with a bold, soaring motif. During the adventure, the listener encounters mysterious alternations of hand-stopped horn, a somber setting of an Easter chant, and a melody harkening back to the modern horn's ancestral origins, the hunting horn, all before returning back to that initial motif.

***Sonata for Horn and Piano in F Major, op. 17* (1800) — Ludwig van Beethoven**

Though Beethoven was primarily known for his large-scale symphonic works and virtuosic piano writing, the *Sonata for Horn and Piano* sits somewhere between the two as both a behemoth in the horn repertoire, and a technical headache for pianists. The sonata was written eight years into the up-and-coming Beethoven's time in Vienna, around the time as the first of his symphonies but long before the height of his fame. The inspiration for the piece came upon Beethoven's meeting and witnessing the virtuoso horn player Giovanni Punto (born Jan Václav Stich). Stich was born a serf in Bohemia to a Count von Thun who sent him around the country to be trained in violin, voice, and horn. Young Stich eventually fled his master's land, evading the Count's posse (who had orders to knock his front teeth out upon capture) all the way to Italy where he adopted the name and identity of Giovanni Punto, horn player extraordinaire.

Signor Punto, as he rather preferred to be called, had nearly perfected the art of the hand horn, a method of using one's hand to achieve extra pitches outside of the harmonic sequence of the valveless natural horn of the late eighteenth/early nineteenth century. Thus, the horn's role in the *Sonata* is largely more chromatic than other pieces in the horn repertoire of the era. At its premiere in a recital given by Punto and Beethoven in April of 1800, the piece was such a resounding success that an encore was performed. Beethoven claims that he only composed the horn part the night before, and that he entirely improvised the piano part for both performances, but the full validity of this statement is not confirmed. The piece was published the following year, but even the foremost horn players of the day struggled to meet Punto's capabilities. Thus, a re-voicing for cello was added to publications.

***Songs of a Wayfarer* (1884-85) — Gustav Mahler (arranged by Eric Carlson)**

Gustav Mahler's oeuvre consisted of predominantly uber-maximalist symphonic works, calling for vastly extended orchestration and even occasionally grand choral stagings. During his life, his compositions were somewhat controversial, derided by critics for their excess and unwieldy length. Much of the criticism he faced was fueled by antisemitic sentiments building in Vienna in the late nineteenth century - sentiments that would eventually lead the Jewish Mahler to convert to Catholicism in 1897 before his appointment as conductor of the Vienna State Opera, a position explicitly prohibited to Jews. Mahler's compositions are deeply personal, as the tone of the works reflect the triumphs and trials that he was concurrently facing in his tragic life. Following his marriage, the *Symphony no. 5* captures his joy and optimism. When his first daughter died, he was forced out of the Opera position, and he was diagnosed with a heart condition all in the same summer, the following *Das Lied von der Erde* ("Songs of the Earth") is calamitous, poetic, and inconsolable. Decades after Mahler's early death in 1911, a widespread adoration of his works erupted in the mid-1900s after a Nazi ban on the music of Jewish composers was lifted. Still today, despite the massive undertaking that comes with programming his symphonic works, Gustav Mahler is one of the most frequently performed composers.

Songs of a Wayfarer (in German *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellsen*) is one of Mahler's earlier works, composed before his first symphony, yet it still displays many of the characteristic traits of his work (colloquially referred to as "Mahlerisms") such as maximal instrumentation, and sudden, dramatic mood changes. The set of four songs originally for tenor voice and orchestra follows the emotional journey of a narrator spurned as his love marries another man, inspired by Mahler's own doomed romance with soprano Johanna Richter. Through the four songs the narrator first laments that the world should be so beautiful on the day his sweetheart gets married, then he takes a joyous stroll through the field where he delights in the wonders of nature before being overcome by sadness that such wonder should remind him of her, then he expresses his anger and sorrow for the "burning knife" he feels in his chest, then finally he allows himself to mourn his loss, and through that mourning he begins to heal. The translated lyrics to the selections are as follows:

"This Morning in the Fields"

*This morning I went through the fields,
Dew still clung to the grass,
The gay finch said to me:
"How is it? Good morning! How goes it?
Isn't it a beautiful world?
How I love the world!"*

*The bluebell by the field with its little bells,
has so has so gayly, sprightly rung out its morning greeting:
"Isn't it a beautiful world?
A beautiful thing!
How I love the world!"*

*The world began to sparkle in the sunshine!
Everything gained sound and color!
In the sunshine!
Flower and bird, large and small!
Good day!
Isn't it a beautiful world?
Isn't it? Isn't it?*

*Now won't my happiness begin too?
No! No!
That which I seek can never more blossom for me!*

“My Sweetheart’s Blue Eyes”
*My sweetheart’s two blue eyes
have sent me away into the wide world.
I had to leave my most beloved place.
Oh blue eyes, why did you ever gaze at me?
Now I am forever in pain and sorrow.*

*I’ve gone out into the Silent night.
No one bid me farewell.
My only comrades were love and sorrow.*

*A linden tree stands by the road.
Under it, for the first time I rested in sleep.
It snowed blossoms over me.
Then I forgot how life can hurt.
Everything was well again.
Everything...Love and sorrow,
world, and dream.*

***I Threw a Shoe at a Cat* (2017) — Catherine Likhuta**

Catherine Likhuta’s pieces span the modern musical family, encompassing ensemble, chamber, and solo works for a great variety of instruments. Likhuta’s works are grand, often programmatic, highly emotional, and rhythmically complex. She has been performed by many prominent ensembles worldwide at many venues, and she has received many accolades and awards for her compositions, such as the 2020 International Horn Society’s Virtuoso Division Composition for *I Threw a Shoe at a Cat*, and the 2022 American Prize for Denise Tryon’s performance of her solo horn piece *Vivid Dreams*. Several of Likhuta’s compositions feature elements of the Ukrainian folk music of her Ukrainian-Australian upbringing.

In September 2016, Australian horn player Peter Luff attempted to break up a cat fight by throwing a shoe at a stray outside his home, resulting in a shoulder injury that required surgery and a long recovery. A dear friend of Luff, Likhuta composed this piece with his blessings and collaboration. The two acknowledged that, despite the glum consequence, there was much humor and irony in the situation. *I Threw a Shoe at a Cat* proposes a conversation between both faulting parties: the cat that fought and the man who threw the shoe. From Likhuta’s own program notes: “The music in Theme mimics the cat’s apologetic confession (shouldn’t have fought). Waltz is a little dialogue between the cat and its injured human. Yazz...has a steady and somewhat lazy ostinato as its base, with short sudden splashes of fast energetic bits. Those represent the human’s attempts to be active at the early stages of recovery, but he gets constantly reminded that he still needs to take it easy and hold back. In Finale, the human is back to being his witty, fun and energetic self, with a friendly little conversation with the cat towards the end, reflecting on their joint endeavor.”

Adagio and Allegro for Horn and Piano, op. 70 (1849) — Robert Schumann

Robert Schumann began early adulthood working toward a career in law, as all the men in his family had, but shortly after entering law school he decided to pursue his love for music instead. Though an accomplished pianist, he had a passion for music journalism, co-founding the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (The New Journal for Music) for which he frequently wrote reviews and articles. Much of Schumann's journal writings were written under pseudonyms that came with their own personalities - the wise and introspective Eusebius, and the more impulsive and brash Florestan. Historians believe that Schumann may have had schizophrenia or a multiple personality disorder, and that Florestan and Eusebius were more than just pseudonyms. He married the daughter of his teacher and journal co-founder, Clara Wieck, a well respected concert pianist and teacher herself, who performed many of his compositions, including the premiere of *Adagio and Allegro*. Eventually, an injury left Robert unable to play the piano, and he returned to composing for as long as his mental facilities allowed him, though health issues and his declining state left him in an asylum for the last two years of his life.

Adagio and Allegro was written alongside three other brief solo character pieces for oboe, clarinet, and cello in 1849. All four were intended as *Hausmusik*, pieces of music intended for amateur or hobbyist musicians to perform at home for family and friends rather than a professional stage setting, a relatively new concept that arose with the emerging middle class during the Romantic era. Despite the supposedly amateur intentions, *Adagio and Allegro* fully embraced the newly valved horn - the lightning quick and intensely chromatic passages would have been nigh-on impossible on the previously unvalved natural horn of the early nineteenth century. The adagio captures the idyllic, delicate musical sensibilities of the Biedermeier period, with lines flowing gracefully and lovingly between the piano and horn. Then, in the blink of an eye, that gentleness is overtaken by the raucous fanfare-like allegro that bounds up and down the horn's register. Briefly, the adagio peers its head into the action again before once more being overtaken by the rampant allegro. It is often speculated that the interplay of the two may represent a dialogue between Florestan and Eusebius, each one trying to say their piece in the conversation.

- Program notes written by Kayla Modlin

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