



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

DMA Recital II

Zachary Senick, bassoon
Wesley Shen, piano

December 4th, 2022, at 7:30 pm
Walter Hall

PROGRAMME

Sorrow Elegy for Cello and Piano, op. 39	Mykola Lysenko (1842-1912)
Sonata for Bassoon and Piano, op. 70 Allegro non troppo Andante Allegretto	Yuri Levitin (1912-1993)
Fagotina for Bassoon and Piano	Oleksandr Zhylynsky (1955-2020)
Concerto for Bassoon and Chamber Orchestra, op. 29, arr. Con moto Largo Allegro	Yuri Povolotsky (1962-)

INTERMISSION

Three Pieces for Bassoon and Piano Improvvisazione Burlesca Dialogo	Volodymyr Runchak (1960-)
Humoresque for Bassoon and Piano	Vadym Homolyaka (1914-1980)
Concerto for Bassoon and String Orchestra, arr. Allegro giocoso Lento meditativo Allegro molto, ben ritmico	León Zuckert (1904-1992)

This recital is in partial fulfillment of the Doctor of Musical Arts in Performance
Zachary Senick is a student of Eric Hall

Program Notes:

The inspiration for the repertoire featured in this program is to celebrate and enjoy works by Ukrainian composers. All works this evening except Zuckert will receive their North American premiere. Ukrainian composers historically have not been performed in North America due to the political struggles and publication bans that were in place during the Soviet Era. Propaganda from the Soviet Union created a misinformed perspective of Ukrainian composers by Western audiences during the 20th century. This recital features seven different Ukrainian composers who have impacted Ukrainian Classical music through their evocative and imaginative compositions.

Sorrow Elegy for Cello and Piano, op. 39- Mykola Lysenko (Микола Лисенко)

Mykola Lysenko was born March 22nd, 1842, in Hrynky near Kremenchuk in the Poltava oblast of Ukraine. He was from a Cossack Starshyna family, who were aristocrats involved with the Ukrainian military. He grew up learning piano from his mother and initially attended the Kharkiv and Kyiv universities studying natural sciences. He went on to study composition with Rimsky-Korsakov in Saint-Petersburg from 1874-76 and Reinecke and Richter in Leipzig from 1867-69. After moving back to Ukraine, he opened the first music conservatory in Kyiv. He is considered the father of the nationalist movement in Ukrainian music, utilizing folk music in the classical realm. Lysenko published three operas, three operettas, and three children's operas, with the libretto only written in Ukrainian, refusing to be translated into Russian. This insistence went against the Russian Ems Ukase policy banning Ukrainian in publications. He was imprisoned for his patriotic actions during the 1905 Ukrainian revolution. Sorrow Elegy is the third piece in his collection of works "Album of Summer from 1901." This collection features various short works in a late romantic style for various instrumentations. Sorrow Elegy was originally written for cello and piano, which I have adapted for bassoon. It uses a beautiful, long vocal-like melody that develops with slight variations as the music unwinds, contrasted with a waltz section in the middle.

Sonata for Bassoon and Piano, op. 70 - Yuri Levitin (Юрій Левитин)

Yuri Levitin was born in Poltava, Ukraine, on December 28th, 1912. He graduated from the Leningrad Conservatory in 1935, studying composition under Dmitry Shostakovich. Levitin then worked briefly as a pianist with the Leningrad Philharmonic and Leningrad State Stage (Opera). From 1941-1942 he was the musical director of the Theatre in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. He finally settled in Moscow, working as a prolific film composer writing soundtracks for around 50 Soviet films and cartoons. Levitin's Bassoon Sonata was written in 1969 and recorded by bassoonist Valery Popov through the Soviet

recording label “Melodiya.” However, this work has never been performed or recorded outside of the Soviet Union and is currently out of print. I have been able to track down the original version published by “Muzyka” in Moscow. The first movement utilizes the conventional sonata-allegro form and adds clever variations to the expected elements of the form. The second movement uses different melodic lines that offset and interweave with one another. The third movement features short melodic fragments to create a dance-like character with unexpected syncopations.

Fagotina for Bassoon and Piano - Oleksandr Zhylynsky (Олександр Жилінський)

*Information provided by Oleksandra Mordvynova-Zhylynska

Oleksandr Zhylynsky was a Ukrainian composer, singer, and actor born on December 1st, 1955, in Berdyansk, Zaporizhia oblast of Ukraine. In 1977, he graduated from the Kyiv State Institute of Theatrical Art studying acting and singing. Later he studied composition under Levko Kolodub at the Kyiv Conservatory, graduating in 1987. He taught and staged various works at the Kyiv School of Circus and Variety Arts and the Kyiv State Institute of Theatrical Arts. He is most well-known for his vocal music and wrote music to over 200 texts by Ukrainian poets such as Yuri Rybchinsky. This piece was written in 1983 while Zhylynsky was a student at the Kyiv Conservatory. The piece was then revised in 1986 and included as a required piece for the All-Ukraine Bassoon Competition. Zhylynsky’s compositions achieve indescribable drama, subtle lyricism, invincible power, and energy, which allow his instrumental works to breathe love for Ukraine.

Concerto for Bassoon and Chamber Orchestra, op. 29 - Yuri Povolotsky (Юрій Поволоцький)

*Information provided by the composer

Yuri Povolotsky was born in Odesa, Ukraine, on February 14th, 1962. In 1986, Povolotsky graduated from the Gnessin Russian Music Academy in Moscow, studying composition with Heinrich Litinsky and Alexei Muravlev. He moved to Israel in 1991 and has lived there ever since. He has won two Israel Prizes in composition and participated in many Contemporary Music Festivals, such as Two Days & Two Nights of New Music in Ukraine, Music Fest Kreuth in Germany, and Ethnic Music Festivals in Israel, Croatia, Poland, Holland, Russia & Uzbekistan. The Bassoon Concerto was composed in 1997, with the second edition in 2010. The tripartite composition is imbued with the spirit of neoclassicism, which is reflected both in style (despite the contemporary musical language) and in the instrumental moments (the orchestral version includes strings, two French horns, and timpani). Each of the movements is a reference to a different musical period. The first movement is reminiscent of the Baroque era, despite the

pronounced sonata form that reminds one of a Concerto Grosso with its aspiration to rhythmic unity, when the bassoon is treated as one of the solo instruments within the dense sound of the orchestra. In the Adagio, the combination of depth and elevation of internal content, with an almost ascetic means of presenting the thematic material, evokes a direct association with Bach's arias. In the reprise, the French horn solo enhances the spatial effect and serves as a preparation for the bassoon's virtuoso cadenza, which acts as a bridge between the second and third movements. The finale of the Concerto can rightly be called "Mozartean." The thematic idioms and cadences evoke a kaleidoscope of "recognition" with a highly anticipated quote from Mozart's Symphony № 40, which leads back to the recapitulation. This collage stops the motion for a moment, as in the first movement but without anxiety and intensification. An elated coda brings the logical outcome of the composition, evoking meaningful parallels with Shostakovich's symphony finales.

Three Pieces for Bassoon and Piano - Volodymyr Runchak (Володимир Рунчак)

*Information provided by the composer

Volodymyr Runchak was born in Lutsk, Ukraine, on June 12th, 1960. He graduated from the Kyiv Conservatory in 1986, studying composition, conducting, and accordion. Runchak has been the Artistic Director of the New Music in Ukraine Concert Series since 1986. As a conductor, he is an advocate of contemporary music giving premieres of over 400 works. He has guest-conducted many orchestras in Ukraine and worldwide, such as the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine, the Symphony Orchestra of the Bulgaria National Radio Company, and the State Symphony Orchestra of Kazakhstan. As a composer his works have been performed at festivals in Ukraine and abroad. Three Pieces for Bassoon and Piano are from a collection of works titled "The Bassoonist's Notebook," which also includes an additional two unaccompanied works for bassoon. This cycle was written when Runchak was a student at the Kyiv Conservatory between 1979-1984. The premiere of the whole cycle was performed by his fellow conservatory classmate Taras Osadchy, current principal bassoonist of the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine. The principal concept and inspiration throughout the work is the idea of contrasting characters.

Humoresque for Bassoon and Piano - Vadym Homolyaka (Вадим Гомоляка)

Vadym Homolyaka was born on October 17th, 1914, in Kyiv, Ukraine, to a family of actors. He initially studied music history and theory at the Kyiv Conservatory from 1939-1941. He began studying composition at the Tashkent Conservatory, interrupted when he was drafted for the Soviet-German War

from 1942-1945. Afterward, he continued his studies as a composition student of Lev Revutsky at the Kyiv Conservatory. He held several positions throughout his career such as a theory professor at the Kyiv Conservatory, a secretary for the National Union of Ukrainian Composers, and head of the Ukrainian branch of the Soviet Music Fund. He is best known for his ballets and film music. Humoresque for Bassoon and Piano was written in 1952, in the folklorism movement that was popular in Ukraine during the mid-20th century. This style utilizes elements of Ukrainian folk music as a form of resistance to the Soviet propaganda narrative that all the different ethnic groups throughout Eastern Europe had the same folk culture and history. Folklorism utilizes folk melodies and dances combined with Western Classical music traditions. Humoresque features a bouncy, short melody interrupted by accented syncopated figures over harmonies in the Ukrainian minor scale (natural minor scale with raised 4th and 6th scale degrees), which are typically found in Ukrainian folk music. This theme is contrasted with a more melodic middle section featuring a long vocal-like line overtop of an unwinding accompaniment that changes slowly over time.

Concerto for Bassoon and String Orchestra -León Zuckert (Леон Зукерт)

*Information about the work and premiere provided by Christopher Weait

León Zuckert is a Ukrainian-Canadian composer from Poltava, Ukraine, born on May 4th, 1904, to a Jewish family. He studied violin with Boris Brodsky at the Imperial Music Society School in Poltava. During the Ukrainian revolution of 1915, his father was arrested and died in prison, prompting his family to move to Poland. While in Poland, he worked in a lumber yard and freelanced playing violin in cafes, eventually joining a Polish military orchestra. In 1923, he moved to Argentina and worked in movie theatre orchestras. Finally, in 1929, he immigrated to Canada, performing with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, the Halifax Symphony Orchestra, and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. He also hosted a classical music radio show on CBC. His Bassoon Concerto was written in 1976 and is dedicated to Christopher Weait, bassoonist of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Christopher Weait and pianist Nancy Antonacci premiered this work as part of Canada Music Week at Weait's home in Toronto on November 21st, 1978. The concerto has never been performed since. This concerto features Zuckert's compositional style of writing involving a melodic line with carefully placed dissonances. He also uses broad gestures mixed with Spanish-influenced rhythms and harmonies.

I hope you enjoy this celebration of Ukrainian bassoon music this evening. Hopefully, these exciting works will be included in the repertoire played by North American bassoonists in the future.
Слава Україні! (Glory to Ukraine!)

Zachary Senick (Захар Сенюк) is a bassoonist originally from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. He began his studies at age 16 with Marie Sellars. In 2019, he completed his BMus in Orchestral Performance at McGill University under Stéphane Lévesque. Then in 2021, Senick completed a MMus in Instrumental Performance at the University of Toronto under Eric Hall. He has been a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Canada, Orchestre de la Francophonie, and a substitute with the Windsor Symphony Orchestra. Currently, Senick is the substitute second bassoonist for the Ontario Philharmonic's 2022-2023 season. He is pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts in Performance at the University of Toronto, researching works for bassoon by Ukrainian composers. In addition to performing, he has been a music instructor at the Vernon Cadet Training Centre's summer program for 2018-2019, and a music librarian at the International Music Camp in 2017. In his free time, Senick is an avid cook, and his favorite things to make are вареники (varenyky/perogies) and борщ (borsch).