



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

Emerald Sun, Clarinet
DMA Recital II

Michelle Kim, Piano
Jaye Marsh, Flute
Eric Chow, Oboe
Chris Buchner, Horn
Christiane Sharpe, Bassoon

This recital is in partial fulfillment of the Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in Instrumental Performance. Emerald Sun is a student of Miles Haskins.

Monday, January 19th, 2026 at 12:30pm | Walter Hall, 80 Queen's Park

PROGRAM

3 Pieces for Clarinet and Piano (1994)

Paquito D'Rivera (b. 1948)

Contradanza
Habanera
Vals Venezolano

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano (1971)

Carlos Guastavino (1912–2000)

I. Allegro deciso
II. Andante
III. Rondo. Allegro spiritoso

Intermission

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

As part of the Faculty's commitment to improving Indigenous inclusion, we call upon all members of our community to start/continue their personal journeys towards understanding and acknowledging Indigenous peoples' histories, truths and cultures. Visit indigenous.utoronto.ca to learn more.

Pacific Serenade (1998)

Miguel del Águila (b. 1957)

- I. *Con nostalgia*
- II. *Semplice*

Aires Tropicales (1984)

Paquito D’Rivera (b. 1948)

1. *Alborada*
2. *Son*
3. *Habanera*
4. *Vals Venezolano*
5. *Dizzyness*
6. *Contradanza*
7. *Afro*

Jaye Marsh, *flute*; Eric Chow, *oboe*; Chris Buchner, *horn*; Christian Sharpe, *bassoon*

PROGRAM NOTES

This program features clarinet music written by South American composers and multiple genres including jazz, Latin American dance styles and Brahmsian romanticism.

3 Pieces for Clarinet and Piano – Paquito D’Rivera (1994)

Paquito D’Rivera is a Cuban alto saxophonist, clarinetist, and composer whose work bridges Afro-Cuban music, jazz, and classical traditions. Born in Havana in 1948, he was a child prodigy who later became known as a member of the songo band Irakere before immigrating to the United States in 1980. Alongside an acclaimed performing career, D’Rivera has established himself as a major composer, writing chamber, orchestral, and solo works commissioned and performed by leading ensembles and orchestras worldwide. His work ranges from jazz-infused concert pieces to classical music layered with Latin rhythms. A multiple Grammy Award winner across genres, he is celebrated for his expressive lyricism, catchy rhythms, and commitment to artistic freedom. D’Rivera remains a distinctive voice shaping contemporary music as both a performer and composer.

This piece features three of a collection of short dance themes written by D’Rivera. The contradanza is the Caribbean version of the 17th-century English country dance that quickly became popular not only in neighbouring European courts but also in the colonies of the Americas. In 19th-century Cuba, it was the first written music to use African rhythms. D’Rivera dedicated his *Contradanza* to Cuban composer Ernesto Lecuona, suggesting that the theme may

be inspired by Lecuona's music. The habanera shares a similar lineage and form but is much slower. Although both dances are in duple meter, the habanera famously features a dotted rhythm. D'Rivera's *Habanera* is dedicated to Ravel, a composer who frequently used the habanera form. Lastly, the *vals venezolano* (Venezuelan waltz), as the name suggests, is a Venezuelan take on the classic European dance form. This musical genre uses African and local South American rhythms and is mostly performed on the piano. D'Rivera dedicates his *Vals Venezolano* to the iconic Venezuelan composer and guitarist Antonio Lauro, who wrote many of these waltzes for guitar.

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano – Carlos Guastavino (1971)

Carlos Guastavino was an Argentine composer and pianist best known for his lyrical, folk-inspired art songs, popular songs, and piano music. Often described as a “romantic nationalist,” Guastavino drew heavily from Argentine folk tunes while maintaining a classically tonal style that stood in contrast to the avant-garde trends of the mid-20th century. He composed over five hundred songs, though only 165 were published, many of which have become staples of the Latin American vocal repertoire.

It is thanks to the urging of Luis Rossi, the Argentine clarinetist and clarinet maker, that Guastavino first took an interest in writing for the clarinet. Guastavino initially composed *Tonada y Cueca*, a short piece consisting of a sorrowful folk tune (*tonada*) and a lively dance movement (*cueca*). The clarinet's voice-like quality and instrumental versatility was instantly highlighted by Guastavino's writing. Following the success of Rossi's premiere of this piece, Guastavino decided to write a more substantial work for clarinet and piano. Likely inspired by the second Brahms sonata Rossi played for him in a private concert, Guastavino's *Clarinet Sonata* uses similar Romantic chamber writing, in which the piano functions as an equal duo partner rather than a mere accompaniment. The two instruments are constantly in dialogue, exchanging roles in thematic presentation.

The first movement is not simply marked *allegro* but *allegro deciso*, suggesting a sturdier character than the usual *allegro*, and opens with a rhythmic motive that serves as an introduction. In the rest of the movement, a flowing melodic line is juxtaposed with a *marcato* character, and polyrhythms between the two instruments are frequently heard, reminiscent of Brahms's compositional techniques. The second movement is interestingly marked *andante* rather than *adagio*, suggesting a slower yet still moving pace. The movement opens with a rather improvisatory line in the clarinet, followed by long, singing phrases in a minor mode. Later, the theme undergoes development and shifts to a triumphant major key, followed by a dramatic buildup that leads to an emotional climax. The final movement is written in rondo form, with a primary recurring theme (A) and two contrasting themes (B and C) between each repetition. Influences from Guastavino's teacher, Manuel de Falla, and milonga rhythms can be heard in this movement. The B section is dance-like and rhythmic, while the C section is a *tonada* that alludes to the lyrical melody heard at the end of the first movement.

Pacific Serenade – Miguel del Águila (1998)

Miguel del Águila is a Uruguayan composer based primarily in the U.S. His music blends contemporary classical techniques with strong influences from Latin American folk traditions, tango, and popular music. Born in Montevideo, he studied piano and composition in Uruguay before continuing his training in the United States, where he earned a doctorate in composition from the University of California, Los Angeles. Del Águila has composed orchestral, chamber, vocal, and solo instrumental works and is particularly noted for his contributions to wind repertoire.

Pacific Serenade was originally a four-movement piece written for clarinet and string quartet. It was commissioned by the Pacific Serenades Ensemble, who inspired the work's title, and premiered in Los Angeles. In his program notes, del Águila describes the piece as a romantic serenade meant to be performed at night under the stars. He sought to present something "delicate, sensuous, and sentimental in the age of boom boxes, media bombardment, and an increasingly aggressive pop culture."

The first movement is written in the style of the Brazilian *choro*, a lively instrumental genre that originated in Rio de Janeiro in the late 19th century. The genre emerged as Brazilian musicians were first exposed to European dances—most notably the polka—within a musical environment already strongly influenced by African rhythms. Though del Águila's *con nostalgia* movement is calmer and more introspective, the underlying dance groove is unmistakable. The second movement features a sparkling piano introduction and slow, pensive, and plaintive lines in the clarinet. Subtle rhythmic variations and delicate harmonic shifts provide motion without disturbing the prevailing serenity, allowing the music to breathe naturally. Together, these two movements exemplify the intimate atmosphere the composer sought to create.

Aires Tropicales – Paquito D’Rivera (1984)

Aires Tropicales was commissioned and first premiered by the Aspen Wind Quintet in 1984. In this seven-movement work, D’Rivera incorporates rhythmic and tonal elements drawn from jazz and Latin dance genres. In fact, most of the movements are named after and based on distinct dance forms. Recurring rhythmic patterns include the *son* clave, polyrhythms, and Caribbean and African bass ostinatos.

The first movement serves as an introduction to the second movement. *Alborada* translates from Spanish as “dawn” or “sunrise.” The clarinet opens the piece with a rubato melody that will return later. When the rest of the ensemble enters in homophony, [a familiar Caribbean dance character emerges, and the bassoon introduces a fragment of the clave pattern that will fully unfold in *Son*.

In the second movement, the bassoon begins with a repeated two-bar ostinato based on the clave rhythm. D’Rivera distributes fragments of this rhythmic and motivic material among the instruments throughout the movement. Over the ostinato, different instruments take turns presenting the same solo melody, beginning with the English horn, until the clarinet recalls the opening theme from *Alborada*.

The third, fourth, and sixth movements are all arrangements of the same dance themes on which the earlier duo piece in the program is based.

The fifth movement, *Dizzyness*, is named in homage to Dizzy Gillespie, one of the most influential musicians in jazz history. As a trumpet player who rose to prominence during the bebop era, Gillespie's style became iconic for generations of jazz musicians. He was also a key figure in bringing Latin jazz to broader audiences. In this movement, D'Rivera incorporates motivic material from *Manteca* and *A Night in Tunisia*. A brief quote from *Con Alma* appears near the end, just before the *da capo* returns to the opening rubato theme.

The seventh movement was written to acknowledge the profound influence of African culture on music in the Americas. *Afro* begins with a slow alto flute solo that evokes a chant-like character. Although written in 4/4 time, the melody is performed freely, similar to how an unaccompanied plainchant would be sung. The melody is then restated by the full ensemble before the bassoon introduces a new ostinato. Two additional repeated musical ideas gradually layer over the bassoon line, creating a dense polyphonic texture that develops into increasingly intricate rhythmic interactions. At moments, this complexity is interrupted by a return of the chant-like melody, but the polyphony quickly resumes, building toward an energetic conclusion.