

# Three Dissertation Bassoon Recitals

By

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Michael Cody Dean 2018

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## ABSTRACT

The bassoon's repertory is often misrepresented as limited in scope. It is the goal of these recitals to shine a light on the unexplored areas of the bassoon's vast repertoire and the versatility with which the bassoon is capable of performing this music. Each recital brings into focus very specific and often over-looked areas of the bassoon's repertoire. The first recital highlighted music by Asian composer that were inspired by traditional Asian instruments. The second recital was comprised of music written by composers that were members of Count Wenzel Morzin's orchestra during the first third of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The final recital showcased the bassoon as an amplified instrument in both popular and classical music.

Sunday, December 3, 2017, 12:00 PM, McIntosh Theater, University of Michigan. Assisted by Nich Roehler, piano, Maria Castillo Rodriguez, flute, Celia van den Bogert, harp, Jeremiah Quarles, oboe, Jakob Lenhardt, clarinet, Eddie Sundra, clarinet, Brian Allen, violin, Leo Singer, cello, Anthony DeMartinis, percussion. Yoshihisa Taïra *Monodrame II* (bassoon), Tôn Thất Tiet TỬ ĐÀI CA'NH: Quatre Grands Paysages (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, piano), Tôn Thất Tiet *Endless Murmuring II* (bassoon, harp), Yoshihisa Taïra *Prelude Bleu* (alto flute, bassoon, harp), Chen Yi *Wu Yu* (flute, clarinet, bassoon, violin, cello, percussion).

Sunday, March 11, 2018, 2:30 PM, Stamps Auditorium, University of Michigan. Assisted by David Belkovski, harpsichord, Andreas Oeste, oboe, Sagar Anupindi, oboe, Luke Randall, voice, Natsuko Takashima, violin, Laura Gamboa, violin, Clayton Penrose-Whitmore, violin, Alyssa Campbell, violin, Elizabeth Boyce, viola, Hsuan Lee, viola, Leo Singer, cello, Nathan Walhout, cello. Frantistek Jíranek *Concerto in g minor* (bassoon, violin, viola, cello, harpsichord), Jan Dismas Zelenka *Sonata IV in g minor ZWV 181* (two oboes, bassoon, basso continuo), Antonín Reichenauer *Cantata de Blessed Virgin Maria "Quae est ista"* (oboe,

bassoon, violin, bass voice, basso continuo), Antonín Reichenauer *Concerto in C Major* (bassoon, violin, viola, cello, harpsichord).

Sunday, April 8, 2018, 2:30 PM, Stamps Auditorium, University of Michigan. Assisted by Kyle Katynski, audio engineer, Conner Vanderbeek, piano. Édgar Guzmán *∞¿?* (bassoon, tape), Randall Woolf *Monster Garage* (bassoon, tape), Bon Iver *712 - CRΣΣKS* (bassoon, piano), Bret Bohamn *Traces* (bassoon, tape), Gene Pritsker *Electrically Tragic* (bassoon tape).



SCHOOL OF  
**MUSIC, THEATRE & DANCE**  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

FIRST DISSERTATION RECITAL

## **MICHAEL CODY DEAN, BASSOON**

*Sunday, December 3, 2017*  
*Moore Building, McIntosh Theatre*  
*12:00 PM*

**Monodrame II pour basson seul** (1986) Yoshihisa Taira  
(1937–2005)

**Endless Murmuring II pour basson et harpe** (1993) Tõn-Thát Tiêt  
(b. 1933)  
Celia van den Bogert, harp

**TỬ ĐÀI CA'NH: Quatre Grands Paysages** (1968) Tõn-Thát Tiêt  
Tranquillo  
Introduzione—Ritmico  
Agitato  
Cantante  
Maria Castillo Rodriguez, flute  
Jeremiah Quarles, oboe  
Jakob Lehnhardt, clarinet

*Intermission*

**Prelude Bleu** (1978) Yoshihisa Taira  
(1937–2005)  
Maria Castillo Rodriguez, alto flute  
Celia van den Bogert, harp

**Wu Yu** (2001) Chen Yi  
I. (b. 1953)  
II.  
Maria Castillo Rodriguez, flute  
Eddie Sundra, clarinet & bass clarinet  
Brian Allen, violin  
Leo Singer, cello  
Anthony DeMartinis, percussion

*[www.smt.d.umich.edu](http://www.smt.d.umich.edu)*

## Perspective: Asian Inspired Bassoon Recital

Composers have frequently exploited the bassoon's broad tonal palette to depict a wide variety of musical effects. Stravinsky capitalized on the strained tone of the highest register in the opening of *La Sacre du Printemps*. Donizetti used the tenor register in the aria "Una furtiva lagrima" to reflect the sorrow of the tenor voice in *L'elisir d'amore*. Prokofiev depicts Grandfather's frustration with Peter through the rough and gruff pitches in the lowest register, and there are many more examples across the repertoire. The bassoon's ability to access a wide variety of sounds is one of its most desirable attributes and is at the center of this recital. Yoshihisa Taïra, Ton-That Tiet, and Chen Yi identified in the bassoon an instrument that can mimic the sounds of their respective cultures. Instruments such as shakuhachi, shinobue, suona, Shifan Gong-and-drums, đing nãm, and m'buot are represented in varying ways on the bassoon throughout the recital. Taïara, Tõn Thât, and Yi use a myriad of different techniques to coax these traditional sounds out of the bassoons colors. Extended techniques, rhythmic patterns, and innovative harmonies are used to manipulate the bassoon's sound. These composers have pushed the boundaries of the bassoon's expressive capabilities in order to reveal the sounds of Japan, Vietnam, and China.

### Yoshihisa Taïra

Taïra was born in Tokyo on March 3 of 1937. He spent the first nineteen years of his life there, studying music at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music. Debussy's *La Cathédral engloutie* had a profound effect on Taïra when he was sixteen and thus began a lifelong obsession with the French music.<sup>1</sup> He left for the Paris Conservatoire in 1966 where he would begin studying with André Jolivet, Henri Dutilleux and Olivier Messiaen. In 1984, he began teaching composition at the École normale de Musique in Paris until his death in 2005.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Centre de documentation de la musique contemporaine. "Taira Yoshihisa (1937\*2005)." Created September 2009. Accessed November 15, 2017.

<http://www.cdmc.asso.fr/en/ressources/compositeurs/biographies/taira-yoshihisa-1937-2005>

<sup>2</sup> Herd, Judith. "Taïra, Yoshihisa." *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press, accessed November 19, 2017.

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/49729>.

Taira's musical language is imbued with patience and conflict. His "willingness to indulge in sustained sonorities" that are "sinuous and microtonal"<sup>3</sup> suggest a languid patience, letting the music reveal itself slowly to both the audience and performer. Yet, within this patience, a conflict arises. In 1968, Taira experienced a traditional *bunraku* performance in Paris which would renew his love of Japanese culture. He worked incessantly to combine his Japanese heritage with French musical aesthetics. This conflict can be heard throughout out his oeuvre beginning with the seminal *Hiérophonies* series in which the battle of culture was waged by modern French flutes imitating traditional bamboo flutes. This conflict would continue for the rest of his career and is amply present in the two selections presented in this recital.

### **Monodrame II by Yoshihisa Taira (1986)**

The *Monodrame* series is made up of four solo pieces for percussion, bassoon, guitar, and vibraphone respectively. The title refers to one character operas or plays in which a single character sings or speaks for the entirety of the piece. Taira's choice in calling these works Monodrame is revealed in the dramatic storytelling apparent in these works. In the *Monodrame II* for solo bassoon, Taira explores a wide array of sounds and techniques in order to achieve a vitality and texture that could be lost in a piece for solo instrument. The piece is entirely unmetered, instead relying on specific time designations given in seconds. Taira suspends time and meter by providing points of stasis throughout the piece in which fermata and breath marks are used to allow the piece to breathe organically unbound by metric divisions.

Taira's treatment of the bassoon throughout *Monodrame II* is radical to say the least. He takes advantage of the full range of the instrument and difficult extended techniques in order to create a dramatic story across the piece. One can hear the pitch bending and rhythmic freedom prevalent in shakuhachi flute in the first and last sections. The extreme high register recalls the higher pitched shinobue, with its narrow and nasally vibrato.

### **Prelude Bleu by Yoshihisa Taira (1978)**

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<sup>3</sup> Rockwell, John. "TANGLEWOOD: ANTONIOU LEADS." *New York Times*, Aug 06, 1981, Late Edition (East Coast). Accessed November 16, 2017

*Prelude Bleu* is written for Alto Flute, Bassoon, and Harp. Written eight years before *Monodrame II*, *Prelude Bleu* reveals the genesis of Taira's experimentation of the bassoon's capabilities. Taira had previously written for both flute and harp extensively and many of the techniques in *Prelude Bleu* were originated from *Hiérophonie IV* for 4 flutes (1971) and *Stratus* for flute and harp (1971). Large grace note leaps, pitch bending, lack of metric division, temporal relationships, extended techniques for the harp, and use of harmonics are techniques Taira had previously explored. In *Prelude Bleu*, the composer applies similar techniques to the bassoon. The only technique not used in *Prelude Bleu* but in *Monodrame II* is the extreme fast passage work. *Prelude Bleu* is a piece in which Taira explores the ability of the bassoon to mimic the sound of traditional Japanese flutes by pairing it with two instruments he had previously achieved such mimicry.

*Prelude Bleu* opens with two harp notes a whole step apart and characterized by a pitch bend. Unlike *Monodrame II*, this piece is characterized by a whole step and not the half step. The opening notes in bassoon and flute maintain this whole step. The wind instruments continue in this vein while the harp provides percussive interjections replete with pitch bends. The flute and bassoon remain a whole step apart until the final minute and a half, when the whole step collapses into a half step with the introduction of the placid multiphonic section. The piece ends oscillating between a whole and half step distance that combines together to become a minor third in the final notes of the piece and confirmed by the harp's harmonics.

## **Tôn Thất Tiet**

Born in the central Vietnamese city of Hue in 1933, Tôn Thất Tiet grew up wanting to play the violin. His family was able to purchase one and have it sent from France. Taught by his cousin for a short time, Tôn Thất eventually had to rely on himself to continue his studies. Tôn Thất left for the Paris Conservatoire in 1958 at the age of 25.<sup>4</sup> He spent two years working with Georges Dandelot at the conservatoire and Madame Honegger at the Paris Ecole Normale de Musique in order to learn Western music theory and harmony.<sup>5</sup> He eventually applied and was accepted into the Conservatoire Composition studio of Jean Rivier. Rivier, and eventually Andre Jolivet who succeeded Rivier at the Conservatoire, pushed Tôn Thất towards Asian traditional music. Tôn Thất worked to wed Western musical idioms with Eastern philosophy. In this way, Tôn Thất's music inhabits a more Western musical harmony than that of Taira's music. Tôn Thất's

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<sup>4</sup> Tiet, Ton-That. *Biography*. Official Website. Accessed November 16, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Smith, Richard. *French music since Berlioz*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate. 2006. 345

understanding of Eastern Philosophies, specifically that of the Yi Ching and Buddhism, is revealed in his use of silence and the interaction of humanity and the universe.

### **TỬ ĐÀI CA'NH: Quatre Grands Paysages by Tôn Thất Tiet (1968)**

*TỬ ĐÀI CA'NH: Quatre Grands Paysages*, translates to Long Time: Four Great Landscapes and is written for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, and Piano. The piece is a tonal outlier on this recital as it is set firmly in the sound of French the avant-garde of the 1960's. Tôn Thất's Eastern influences are heard instead in the material itself. As mentioned before, Tôn Thất is interested in the interaction between humanity and the universe. The subtitle "Four Great Landscapes," points directly towards nature as a significant theme of the work. In the opening movement, one can imagine the composer's intent being similar to that which he described for a work written twenty-five years later: "(the performer should imagine) playing on the summit of a mountain and, from there, dialoguing with nature surrounding them..."[2]

The languid opening piano notes evoke a dark atmosphere in which the wind instruments interact with, as if the piano is the setting and the winds are the wildlife. The opening two minutes sets up the rest of the piece in this fashion. The piano sets the mood while the wind instruments interact with the atmosphere. The entrance of the flute is the first sign of life in the piano's primordial atmosphere. The entrance of the rest of the winds with their vague rhythmic disarray portrays the other animals awaking to the call of the flute as they come out to interact with the piano. The movement continues to unfurl in this way. The second movement begins with the flute, oboe, and clarinet interrupting each other in their highest registers before coming together in unison. The oboe has a short solo which chromatically slithers, imitating traditional Vietnamese melodies. This leads to a faster *Ritmico* section in which the piano's sixteenth note ostinato is interrupted by the woodwinds. The movement ends in a chaotic quasi-canon between the winds before ending abruptly. The third movement, *Agitato*, is defined by the constant sixteenth notes traded between winds interrupted by a frantic sextuplet section. The piano joins the sixteenth note chaos of the opening and ends the movement with a rhythm that harkens back to the opening of the second movement. The final movement is the most conjunct of the movements. Each instrument's line leads into the next entrance like a babbling brook that moves endlessly.

### **Endless Murmuring II by Tôn Thất Tiet (1993)**

Written 25 years after *TỬ ĐÀI CA'NH*, *Endless Murmuring II* sounds more in the vein of Eastern aesthetics and tonality. The idea of Endless Murmuring is present in two different ways throughout the piece. The first "endless murmur" is that of the single pitch F, specifically F4.

Bassoon and harp both explore different ways to play this single note i.e. no vibrato, singing and playing simultaneously, bisbigliando, enharmonic, and multiphonics. This continues throughout the piece as Tôn Thất works his way around the pitch getting farther and farther from it before returning once more at the end of the piece, there is an inescapability of the pitch which anchors the piece. The second “endless murmur” is Tôn Thất’s use of an obbligato rhythmic passage. The following rhythm occurs throughout the piece in both the bassoon and harp.

It begins first in the harp as a repeated F (though often spelled as an E-Sharp) the bassoon then plays the same rhythm shortly after. The rhythm remains, but Tiet introduces D-Sharps and G-Flats into the harps, second iteration of the pattern. This same pattern returns one last time a slight variation. In the fourth and final iteration, harp and bassoon play the same rhythm for the first time in the piece (bassoon is slap tonguing).

## Chen Yi

Chen Yi was born in Guangzhou, China on April 4, 1953. In her youth, she studied violin and piano from a very young age. Chen Yi was sent to work in a forced labor camp during the Cultural Revolution. Taking her violin with her, she learned about the music of her culture from the farmers who worked alongside her.<sup>6</sup> Upon return to her hometown, Chen began studying composition and Chinese traditional music at the Beijing Central Conservatory. She was the first woman in China to earn a Master of Arts in composition in 1986. This distinction led to a large performance of her orchestral works as a celebration of her achievement. Chen continued her education in America receiving her DMA from Columbia in 1993.<sup>7</sup> Chen’s music is imbued with Chinese traditional elements but is written in the Western Classical style. The melodies and harmonies are often based on folk songs or working songs, but avoid the micro-tonality present in the traditional songs. With regards to her fusion of Chinese and Western music, Chen recalls:

In the countryside, I found that when I translated my own as well as peasants’ languages into music, it was not the same as what I was practicing every day! For this reason, I believed that I really needed a deeper and more extensive study in order to find a way to express my feeling through a real

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<sup>6</sup> Kelly, Jennifer. *In her own words: conversations with composers in the United States*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press 2013.

<sup>7</sup> Guo, Xin. "Chinese Musical Language Interpreted by Western Idioms: Fusion Process in the Instrumental Works by Chen Yi," Diss. The Florida State University. 2002.

fusion of Chinese and Western music. The resulting music should be a natural integration of both cultures, but not an artificial or superficial combination.<sup>8</sup>

This “combination” led Chen to develop her own style, mixing traditional Chinese folk songs with Western instruments.

### **Wu Yu by Chen Yi (2001)**

*Wu Yu* is a superb example of Chen’s distinct style. The piece is written for flute, clarinet (doubling bass clarinet), bassoon, violin, cello, and percussion in two movements. “Wu Yu was a ritual dance in ancient China, which includes song and dance performed with ox tails in hands. It’s a ceremony of praying to the deity for rain.”<sup>9</sup> The piece represents this “ritual dance” through its repetition and strong forward momentum towards the ultimate goal: rain fall. The first movement is a representation of the suona and sheng instruments. The melodic material given to the winds is imitating a “group of suona players in a village ceremony.”<sup>10</sup> The winds move in and out of unisons, though the texture remains strongly heterophonic. The overall tonality is decidedly pentatonic throughout the movement. The winds have little to no break through the entirety of the movement, constantly pushing forward as the rhythms and tempo become increasingly more difficult. Chen states that the strings and percussion mimic the free-reed mouth organ sheng, this occurs predominantly in the second half of the movement. The first half uses the strings and percussion in a constant quintuplet obbligato that essentially creates a sustained flurry. The texture of the piece is relentless and the tempo pushes forward until the very end of the piece.

The second movement the instruments “imitate a whole group of Chinese traditional percussion instruments played in the folk ensemble music Shifan Gong-and-drum in Southeast Asia.”<sup>11</sup> The movement opens with the three winds playing very rapid

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<sup>8</sup> Pineiro, John de Clef. “An Interview with Chen Yi,” July 26, 2001. From [www.newmusicon.org/v9n4/v94chen\\_yi.htm](http://www.newmusicon.org/v9n4/v94chen_yi.htm).

<sup>9</sup> Yi, Chen. *Wu Yu*, King of Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser Co. 2003

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

sixteenth note passages built on major seconds ascending chromatically. The winds are always two against one; meaning two instruments play a line in unison with the third playing a different passage but still ending together. The strings and percussion are the rhythmic backbone of the piece, playing in rhythmic unison for almost the entire piece. Both movements are very repetitive (as would be suggested in traditional ceremonial music) but always drive forward towards a final climax at the very end.



SECOND DISSERTATION RECITAL

## MICHAEL CODY DEAN, BASSOON

*Saturday, March 20, 2018*  
*Walgreen Drama Center, Stamps Auditorium*  
*2:30 PM*

**Concerto in G Minor**

Frantisek Jíranek  
(1698–1778)

**Sonata IV in G Minor, ZWV 181**

Jan Dismas Zelenka  
(1679–1745)

Andreas Oeste & Sagar Anupindi, oboes

*Intermission*

**“Quae est ista” from *Cantata de Blessed Virgin Maria ad Montem Sanctum*** Antonín Reichenauer  
(1694–1730)

Luke Randall, bass  
Andreas Oeste, oboe  
Natsuko Takashima, violin

**Concerto in C Major**

Antonín Reichenauer

Natsuko Takashima, Laura Gamboa, Clayton Penrose-Whitmore & Alyssa Campbell, violins  
Elizabeth Boyce & Hsuan Lee, violas  
Leo Singer, Nathan Walhout, cello  
David Belkovski, harpsichord

*smt.d.umich.edu*

## Bohemian Baroque

Count Wenzel Morzin of Prague (1637-1737) maintained one of the premiere European orchestras during the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The orchestra was a home to many virtuosi who would go on to emigrated to many of the great Catholic court orchestras. The orchestra has been the subject of very little musicological research despite its reputation during its time.<sup>12</sup> Antonio Vivaldi is the most familiar composer among those listed Count's payroll ledger. As Morzin's *maestro di musica in Italia*, he was expected to provide the orchestra with compositions. Morzin scholar, Vaclav Kapsa, discovered nineteen receipts and payments between Vivaldi and Morzin between 1719-1729. The dedication to Vivaldi's Op. 8 (which includes *The Four Seasons*) cites the Count's "virtuosissimo orchestra;" with that said, very little is known about the orchestra's repertory outside of Vivaldi's dedication with no extant archive. Kapsa has been attempted to rebuild the repertoire through several methodologies. In order to do this, account books and composer works shine a bright light. Morzin's account books show that outside of the Vivaldi, the principal violinist Jan Pelikán and the bassoonist Anton Möser were the highest paid members of the orchestra. The significant difference in salaries suggests Pelikán and Möser were unrivaled virtuosi. This is especially the case of Möser playing an instrument that was rarely represented at the top of payroll.

Morzin also employed an impressive roster of composers. Account books include the names Johann Friedrich Fasch, Anton Reichenauer, and Frantisek Jíranek in addition to Vivaldi among others. These composers wrote many violin concertos and sonatas in addition to a surprising number of works for oboe and bassoon. Works featuring oboe and bassoon were otherwise rare during the early decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but the oeuvre of Morzin's composers boasts a significant number of such works. This leads scholars to believe that an oboe virtuoso was also present in the Count's orchestra. Robert Rawson suggests that identifying works with the combination of virtuosic music for violin, oboe, and bassoon together or alone written by composers associated with Morzin is critical in reconstructing a repertoire for the orchestra.

Today's recital presents works for bassoon that were likely written for Morzin's orchestra and Anton Möser in particular. Jíranek and Reichenauer were "house composers" for Morzin during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The virtuosity of the concertos is unmatched in baroque bassoon writing with the exception of Vivaldi's concertos and some 17<sup>th</sup> century fantasies. Considering the difficulty of these works, it is likely the composers wrote the concertos with a player in mind. Möser, as a virtuoso and a leader in the orchestra, was likely the inspiration for all of the pieces on this recital.

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<sup>12</sup> See Kapsa, Václav, and Lenka Kapsová. "Account Books, Names and Music: Count Wenzel Von Morzin's "Virtuosissima Orchestra"." *Early Music* 40, no. 4 (2012): 605-20; Kapsa, Václav. *Hudebníci hraběte Morzina*. Prague: Etnologicky ustay Akademi ved 2010; Talbot, Michael. *Vivaldi*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

## **Concerto in g minor--Frantistek Jíranek**

Jíranek was born in Bohemia to parents who were Count Morzin's servants. Jíranek studied music throughout his childhood, as was customary in the Bohemian lands, and joined Morzin's orchestra sometime before 1724. In 1724, Morzin sent Jíranek to study with Vivaldi in Venice for a year and a half before returning to Prague in 1725. He stayed with Morzin's orchestra until the Count's death in 1737 when he left for Dresden. Jíranek lived until he was 80 in 1778 and died in Dresden.

Scholars Robert Rawson and Michael Beckerman have identified characteristics in music by Czech composers which create a Bohemian style. Accented downbeats, syncopated rhythms that mimic folk songs, harmonic movement a third apart, and modal borrowing are among the most apparent of these characteristics which appear the pieces on this recital.<sup>13</sup> The g minor concerto is rife with examples of the Bohemian style and a composition style inspired by Vivaldi. The first movement begins with a florid embellishment of a g-harmonic minor emphasizing the characteristic augmented second. A circle of fifth progression leads us into the main theme announced by the string section. Vivaldi-esque techniques are present throughout the movement. The large leaps, rapid passage work, and broken arpeggiations are very reminiscent of the Vivaldi bassoon concertos. The constant use of suspensions and rapid harmonic rhythm are examples further of Bohemian characteristics.

The syncopated patterns in the second movement represents both a break from the lyricism often heard in the second movements of Vivaldi concertos and a distinctive Bohemian feel. Half step movement and chromaticism provide a mysterious beauty in the movement's "B section." The third movement is much more traditional in composition. The short two bar phrasing is peculiar but becomes rather predictable through its repetition.

## **Sonata IV in g minor ZWV 181 by Jan Dismas Zelenka**

Zelenka was born in Prague in 1679 and studied music with his father and at the Jesuit College until 1710 when he became a viol player in the Dresden orchestra. His earliest compositions date to 1704 and were written for the Jesuit Collegium Clemintinum of Prague. He never worked for Count Morzin, but his connection to the orchestra is undeniable. He certainly had contact with members of the orchestra during his time in Prague and during visits. Evidence of this of this fact comes from the current sonatas for two oboes, bassoon, and basso continuo. Virtuosity for oboe and bassoon is rare in the Dresden orchestra. In fact, the impressive Shrank II archive in Dresden of 18<sup>th</sup> century music only contains works for bassoon and oboe by three composers: Reichenauer, Jíranek, and Zelenka. Connection to the Morzin orchestra is further deepened by the six orchestral works with the handwritten inscription "Praha:1723." The coronation of Charles the VI as King of Bohemia in Prague brought leading Hapsburg musicians

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<sup>13</sup> Beckerman, Michael. "In Search of Czechness in Music." *19th-Century Music* 10, no. 1 (1986): 61-73 and Rawson, R. *Bohemian Baroque: Czech musical culture and style, 1600-1750*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2013

into the city and was the most significant musical event of the first half of the century. Zelenka joined the festivities officially with a Jesuit play and unofficially with the composition of these six orchestral works. The inclusion of obbligato oboe and difficult bassoon writing suggests the participation of Morzin's orchestra.

Sonata IV is in sonata da Chiesa form: slow-fast-slow-fast. The first movement relies on dramatic suspensions throughout which brings forth the Bohemian character. What begin as traditional cadences end in evaded, unexpected cadences until the end of the movement. The sprightly second movement is a prime example of Zelenka's virtuosic writing. All three double reed parts exhibit extremely difficult passagework, especially the oboes. Chromaticism adds an element of mystery, while the oboes near constant sixteenth notes push the movement to its end. The obbligato bassoon line of the third movement further defies tradition with its lilting dotted sixteenth and thirty second note pattern. Zelenka's odd harmonic writing becomes even more evident in this movement as suspensions, anticipations, and chromaticism dominate the lyrical oboe parts. The 6/8 fourth movement relies heavily on instrumental virtuosity and unexpected polyrhythms that sound far ahead of its time. The dizzying and relentless writing drives the movement with vigor until the final cadence.

#### ***Cantata de Blessed Virgin Maria ad Montem Sanctum by Antonín Reichenauer***

Very little is known of Reichenauer's early life, however we know he joined Morzin's orchestra as composer and keyboardist in 1724. His extant works are dominated by religious works. Concertos for bassoon, oboe, and bassoon and oboe together are preserved in the previously mentioned Schrank II archive in Dresden. These works were likely brought to Dresden when Jíranek joined the Dresden Hofkappelle. They represent some of the most virtuosic works for double reed instruments.

The present cantata is a quintessential example of Morzin's repertory with virtuoso violin, oboe, and bassoon parts. This odd instrumentation is Morzin's calling card. The basso continuo was likely played by Reichenauer himself. The cantata is a prayer to the Virgin Mary and asks for her guidance in troubled times. The opening recitative features the bass soloist and continuo. The aria then proceeds with an orchestral introduction with idiosyncratic writing for all three obbligato instruments. The bassoon figuration in the fifth measure is extremely typical of Reichenauer and Vivaldi with rapidly articulated leaps.

#### ***Concerto in C Major by Antonín Reichenauer***

The first movement of Reichenauer's Concerto in C Major is a virtuosic showcase. The simple opening melodic material quickly develops into fast figurations with large counterpunctal leaps and articulations. The three concertino sections get progressively more difficult culminating in the final section's 32<sup>nd</sup> note passage. The second movement's stunning lyrical melody is reminiscent of Vivaldi's beautiful second movements. The third and final movement plays dupe against triple up to the final cadence. The final ripieno's intensely articulated sixteenth notes closes the piece with an exclamation.



SECOND DISSERTATION RECITAL

## MICHAEL CODY DEAN, BASSOON

KYLE KATYNSKI, SOUND ENGINEER

*Sunday, April 8, 2018*  
*Walgreen Drama Center, Stamps Auditorium*  
*2:30 PM*

**∞:?** (2008)

Édgar Guzmán  
(b. 1981)

**Monster Garage**

Randall Woolf  
(b. 1959)

**715- CRΣΣKS** (2016)

Bon Iver

**Traces** (2015)

Bret Bohman

**Electrically Tragic**

Gene Pritsker  
(b. 1971)

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## Electrically Tragic

The term “electronic music” is a minefield of connotations. A minefield whose boundaries are blurred beyond understanding. John Cage’s *Imaginary Landscape No. 1* and Johnny Greenwood’s score to *There Will Be Blood* both fit within the all-encompassing term “electronic classical music.” Electronic music is both elite and populist at the same time. Stockhausen’s *Kontakte*, Babbitt’s *Philomel*, Varèse’s *Déserts* all radiate the avant-garde nature of the genre; using electronic technology as a musical instrument. The Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center and Cologne’s Studio for Electronic Music were the testing grounds for the experimental, avant-garde production of music. Meanwhile, Samuel Hoffman was using electronic instruments for his film scores to *Spellbound* and *the Day the Earth Stood Still* and the BBC Radiophonic Workshop was experimenting with electronic music for its television shows. The same instruments and techniques were being utilized for fundamentally different goals. This paradox underlines the challenge of a label as uninformative as “electronic music.”

The reality is, we hear electronic music hundreds of times every single day. It has infiltrated and saturated our everyday lives. The electronic “fuzz” heard in the first piece on today’s recital are sounds we have heard throughout our lives, only repurposed as foreground music. Today’s listeners know electronic music better than any other time in history. The musicality of the noise we hear daily is revealed through the composers’ creativity and openness. Electronic music as classical medium is far more democratic than the academic experimentation of the 1950’s and 60’s, because of the listener’s ability to connect to the sounds. The blurred lines between “serious” and “popular” electronic classical music creates a musical genre that is familiar and relevant to all listeners.

Electronic music has been underperformed in classical music institutions for many reasons. First, the genre has yet to be sufficiently explored due to the rapid rate of technological advances. Classical music genres are grounded in traditions that reach back hundreds of years. The speed at which technology has been developing make it difficult for composers to latch on to and further tradition. By the time tape music was being explored and perfected, the tape became obsolete. Pre-recorded sounds were overtaken by midi samples. Midi samples by sound patches. The technological advancements made it impossible for composers to perfect their technique, performers to adjust their performances, and listeners to grow familiar with the new sounds. Secondly, performance of electronic music is too often confronted with technical difficulties. With the rapid rise in technology, there must be a secondary rise in the technology used to perform the music. Composers, inspired by new sounds, are quick to write music before the technology to perform it has been perfected. This leads to many difficulties integrating electronic and acoustic performance.

Today’s recital is an attempt to highlight and reconcile the diverse implications of introducing electronics into musical performance. The works are academic, populist, and somewhere in the middle. Rock, blues, heavy metal, hip-hop, and folk are presented alongside a chaconne, samples of Debussy’s *La Mer*, and extended techniques. The bassoon sound is presented through a natural and amplified tones as well as through distortion and delay. This is not a

“electronic music” concert, but rather a concert of music and sounds we have all heard and are familiar with.

### **∞¿? By Édgar Guzmán (2008)**

Édgar Guzmán, born in Mexico in 1981, works to blur the lines between acoustic and electronic music in ways that mask the true source of the sound. His work focuses on the “correlated and particular use of electronic processes and acoustic sounds.”<sup>14</sup> Guzmán’s music disorients the listener forcing them to absorb the sounds rather than understand them. ∞¿? “exists in the world of uncertainty between sounds that are intentionally crafted by a creator versus sounds that are the ‘accidental’ result of the unpredictable.”<sup>15</sup> The rough edges of a low electronic tone and the bassoon’s low B-flat flicker in and out and become indistinguishable from each other. Abrasive multiphonics, undulating sound waves, and rapid articulations combine together to blur the line between performer and recording.

### **Monster Garage by Randall Woolf (1993)**

Randall Woolf’s *Monster Garage* blends together blues and electronic heavy metal guitar riffs to create an intriguing fusion. The first section features a looping guitar/drum riff with intermittent strings while the bassoon play a rhythmic blues lick with lots of pitch bends reminiscent of guitar bends. A pre-recorded bassoon enters on a walking bass line while the live bassoon plays an extremely high riff ascending to a high F. The second section features a prerecorded bassoon playing an ostinato line while the live bassoon plays a twisting counterpoint line above which is later developed through octave displacement. The piece closes with the return of the looping guitar/drum riff and the bassoon ripping through very fast riffs that are reminiscent of a wailing guitar solo.

### **712 - CRΣΣKS by Bon Iver (2017)**

This work comes off of Bon Iver’s newest album *22, A Million*. I chose to cover this song because of its melodic material and use of vocoder. The vocoder is a sound patch in which the bassoon sound is transmitted into a keyboard and is then out a speaker so that the chords in the piano sound like they are being played by bassoon. The deeply emotional studio recording is powerful in its execution and sound. The broad sound of the bassoon and vocoder lends itself to the haunting beauty of the work.

Down along the creek  
I remember something  
Her, the heron hurried away  
When first I breeched that last Sunday

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<sup>14</sup> Édgar Guzmán liner notes to *Différance*, Edgar Guzmán, New Focus Records. Fcr113, 2009.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

Low moon don the yellow road  
I remember something  
That leaving wasn't easing  
All that heaving in my vines  
And as certain it is evening 'at is now is not the time

Tolling with your blood  
I remember something  
In B, unrationed kissing on a night second to last  
Finding both your hands as second sun came past the glass  
And oh, I know it felt right and I had you in my grasp

Oh, then how we gonna cry  
Cause it once might not mean something  
Love, a second glance it is not something that we'll need  
Honey, understand that I have been left here in the reeds  
But all I'm trying to do is get my feet out from the crease

And I'll see you

Turn around, you're my A-Team  
Turn around now, you're my A-Team  
God damn, turn around now, you're my A-Team

### **Traces by Bret Bohman (2015)**

Bret Bohman composes both acoustic and electric music that deal with the ideas of identity, memory loss, anxiety in art, and interaction of virtual and real spaces.<sup>16</sup> After receiving his Doctorate from University of Michigan in 2014, Bohman co-founded the Khemia Ensemble, a group dedicated to commissioning diverse contemporary music. Bohman is an active performer and professor at the University of Missouri in Columbia.

"The conception for Traces started with the sound quality of the bassoon. For me, the timbre of the instrument has the ability to evoke an ancient sound world. I ruminated on this quality and began by asking the question: how did ancient humans react to their own echo? Before the advent of recording technology and the use of analogue and digital sound playback this was the only instance when sound was disconnected from its source; able to be heard by the maker but disconnected from the instance of vocalization. Humans could actually hear the sound of their own voices separated from their bodies. There has been quite a bit of interest recently in the research of acoustic properties of ancient sites. Steven J. Waller, a researcher of

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<sup>16</sup> Bohman, Bret. *About*. [www.bretbohman.com](http://www.bretbohman.com). 2018.

archeoacoustics, proposes that the echoes in caves may have conjured ancestral spirits for early humans. Other research in this field includes mapping the acoustics of the underground tunnels of Lanzon in the Chavín de Huántar of Peru, though to shaped as part of a rite of passage ritual which included inducing audio hallucinations. Reading about this research helped give shape to this work as I imagined an ancient sound world with magical acoustic properties yielding unnatural echoes as the bassoon traverses through this sonic landscape.”<sup>17</sup>

### **Electrically Tragic by Gene Pritsker (2013)**

Gene Pritsker is a composer, guitarist, rapper, and DJ based in New York. The New York Times described him as “audacious....multitalented.” Pritsker’s music engages in a vast array of musical styles ranging from rock, rap, hip-hop, and classical among many others. His integration of so many popular genres and styles creates a singular vocabulary specific to Pritsker.

“Electrically Tragic” for bassoon and Samplestra (pre-recorded electronics) is based on my bassoon concerto “Essentially Tragic” which takes its title form the first lines of D. H. Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* “Ours is essentially a tragic age, so we refuse to take it tragically.” Samplestra is what I call all of my compositions with pre-recorded electronics, an orchestra of samples, since they are all notated and scored like an orchestra. The Samplestra part of the first movemenet contains samples of harps from Debussys’ *La Mer* and a Male Sammi voice. The music is based on a melancholy piano melody and hip-hop rhythms. The second movement is a chaconne (a Tragic Chaconne). A melody is developed over the chaconne chords, the tragedy grows and subsides. The 3rd movement is based on heavy metal rhythms. Fast, loud, virtuosic, and certainly tragic. The piece is an overview of various tragic music filter through my own sentiment.”

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<sup>17</sup> Bohman, Bret. *Traces*. 2015.