

Notes on the Program by DR. RICHARD E. RODDA

Sonata for Flute, Clarinet, and Piano, Op. 11

Maurice Emmanuel

Born May 2, 1862 in Bar-sur-Aube, France.

Died December 14, 1938 in Paris.

Composed in 1907.

Duration: 13 minutes

Maurice Emmanuel was born in the northeastern region of Champagne-Ardenne, and moved with his family when he was seven to Beaune, in the heart of Burgundian wine country — the music, art, landscapes, and monuments of Burgundy were profound influences on him for the rest of his life. As a boy, Emmanuel became interested in Burgundy's traditional songs, whose old modes defied modern major-minor categorization, and sang in the choir of the city's Hôtel-Dieu (site of the famous annual wine auction that benefits the charitable work of the hospital with which it has been affiliated since its founding in 1443), where he became enthralled with the liturgy and its music. He showed pronounced musical gifts during his study at Dijon as a teenager, and the Burgundian composer Charles d'Ivry recommended him in 1880 as a student to his alma mater, the Paris Conservatoire. There Emmanuel studied composition with Léo Delibes, harmony with Théodore Dubois, and, perhaps most influentially, music history with Louis-Albert Bourgault-Ducoudray, a pioneer in the study of foreign and ancient music who composed the first Western piece using Cambodian scales and gamelan instruments, in 1882. When Emmanuel employed medieval modes in his Cello Sonata of 1887, Delibes became so incensed that he called the piece "baroque and unperformable" and refused to allow his student to compete for the Prix de Rome; Emmanuel thereafter studied composition privately with the more liberal New Orleans-born Ernest Guiraud and attended the classes of César Franck, about whom he wrote a short book in 1930. Emmanuel also studied art history at the École du Louvre and classics, poetics, and philology at the Sorbonne, and in 1896 he received a doctorate for his thesis on ancient Greek music and dance. An attempt by supporters in 1898 to create a position for him as professor of music history at the Collège de France was thwarted by the conservative minister of education, Marcellin Berthelot, so Emmanuel taught art history at the secondary level for the next six years. In 1904, he was appointed choir director at Ste.-Clothilde (where César Franck had been organist until his death, in 1890) but he was dismissed two years later for trying to introduce Gregorian chant into the services. He was finally named to the music history faculty of the Conservatoire in 1909 to succeed Bourgault-Ducoudray, and was recognized as one of the school's most distinguished teachers until his retirement in 1936. Maurice Emmanuel died in Paris on December 14, 1938.

In addition to his scholarly publications — important studies of the history of musical language, modal accompaniment of the Psalms, sacred polyphony, Baroque embellishments, ancient Greek dance and music, Anton Reicha, and Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* — Emmanuel composed some 70 works between 1877 and 1938 but destroyed all but 30, many of those influenced by Medieval modes, unconventional harmonic and rhythmic practices, and Burgundian folksong.

Emmanuel's Sonata for Flute, Clarinet, and Piano of 1907 begins with a piano introduction to the jaunty, folk-like main theme, presented by the clarinet; a lyrical idea, with harmonic reminders of the Impressionism of the music of the composer's friend Claude Debussy, provides contrast. The main theme is given a gentle working-out in the central section before a recall of the earlier materials and a bracing coda round out the movement. Emmanuel's characteristic harmonic modalism, hovering at the edge of traditional tonality, gives the *Adagio*

the character of an elegy. The finale more than lives up to its tempo marking — *Molto allegro e leggierissimo*: *Very fast* (literally, in Italian, “*happy, merry*”) and *very lightly* — though it twice pauses for reminiscences of the folk-like theme with which the sonata began.

Circumambulation for Flute

Yan Maresz

Born November 14, 1966 in Monaco.

Composed in 1993; revised in 1996.

Premiered on January 16, 1998 in Rome by Manuel Zurria.

Duration: 5 minutes

The life and work of Yan Maresz reflect the current temper of our global, multi-cultural musical world. Maresz started studying piano and percussion as a youngster but he soon developed an interest in jazz and began to teach himself guitar. In 1983 he was accepted as a student by John McLaughlin, the English guitarist and composer who earned notoriety in the 1970s with the Mahavishnu Orchestra, which fused eclectic jazz and rock with Eastern and Indian influences; Maresz came to the United States the following year to study jazz at the Berklee College of Music in Boston. His interest in composition blossomed in America, and in 1987 he received a grant from the Princess Grace of Monaco Foundation to study at The Juilliard School with David Diamond. Maresz remained in New York until his graduation in 1992, holding a teaching fellowship and winning the George Gershwin Memorial Prize for Composition at Juilliard, serving as associate director of the ensemble Music Mobile, and working as John McLaughlin’s arranger and guitarist, notably on the albums *The Promise*, *Time Remembered*, and *Thieves & Poets*. In 1993 Maresz moved to Paris to study composition and computer music with Tristan Murail at IRCAM, the *Institut de Recherche et de Coordination Acoustique/Musique* established by Pierre Boulez in 1969 to research acoustical, scientific, and computer technology as related to music. Maresz has since become a prominent figure on the international music scene: he has held residencies with the Académie de France at the Villa Medici in Rome, the European College of the Arts in Berlin, McGill University in Montreal, and the Strasbourg Conservatory; led master classes in Europe and the United States; fulfilled commissions from many prominent European ensembles and musicians; and, since 2006, served as professor of electronic music at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris and director of the composition courses at IRCAM.

Of his *Circumambulation*, Maresz wrote, “Sketched in 1993 in the spirit of an étude with a compositional problem to be solved (in the mathematical sense), this short piece plays with the perception of creating a type of polyphony from a monophonic [‘one-sound,’ i.e., melody] instrument. One possible response to this problem is polyrhythmic, and I have juxtaposed two contrasting musical ideas reconciled into a continuous discourse: a constrained, percussive treatment of the flute (regular pulse, almost metronomic) and a more traditional melody that is limited by its coexistence with the other idea. From the tension created by this duality emerges little by little the unexpected sensation of an incantation, accentuated by a throbbing pulse that gives the piece something of a ritualistic quality. The main difficulties in performing *Circumambulation* lie in maintaining a steady tempo (which must not fluctuate!), in the precision of the rhythmic articulation, and in constantly differentiating the tone colors of the two ‘voices.’”

Quintet for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, and Horn

Jean Françaix

Born May 23, 1912 in Le Mans.

Died September 25, 1997 in Paris.

Composed in 1948.

Duration: 20 minutes

Jean Françaix, the French composer, pianist, and advocate of Debussy's artistic philosophy of "*faire plaisir*" ("*giving pleasure*"), was born into a musical family in Le Mans in May 1912. His father was a pianist and composer and director of the Le Mans Conservatory; his mother taught voice and founded a local chorus. Jean received his earliest training from his parents, but showed such precocious talent that he was regularly commuting to Paris for private lessons at the Conservatoire by the time he was nine. He was much upset by news of the death of Camille Saint-Saëns in that year (1921) and vowed to his father that he would "take his place" as a *musicien français*; Françaix's earliest published work, a suite for piano, appeared the next year. He settled in Paris a few years later for regular study at the Conservatoire and won first prize in piano when he was just 18; two years later he gained recognition as a composer with a symphony that was premiered in Paris by Pierre Monteux in November 1932. He played the first performance of his own Concertino for Piano and Orchestra with much success in 1934, and came to international prominence when he presented the work at a festival of contemporary music in Baden-Baden two years later. He subsequently made numerous tours throughout Europe and the United States as composer and pianist. The 1933 ballet *Scuola di ballo*, choreographed by Léonide Massine for the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo, marked Françaix's entry into the genres of musical theater, for which he produced five operas and a total of 16 ballets as well as many film scores before his death in Paris on September 25, 1997.

Françaix's Quintet for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, and Horn, written in 1948 for the solo woodwind players of the Orchestre National de Paris, opens with a soft, slow, expressively ambiguous introduction that pauses on a dying chord before launching into the movement's buoyant principal section. Quick repeated notes on the horn herald the main theme, a sweeping clarinet display to which the horn then gives a raucous Bronx cheer. The horn takes for itself the second theme, a vaguely waltz-like melody with quirky chromatic motion. The main theme shows up again after a little pause, and the movement comes round full circle with a broad transformation of the melody from the introduction. The second movement is an insouciant scherzo with a gentle central trio upon which the faster music of the opening section makes a couple of clattering intrusions. The third movement is a theme with five contrasting variations. The finale — "in the style of a French march," according to the score — is a brilliant showpiece for the ensemble.

***Trois pièces brèves* for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, and Horn**

Jacques Ibert

Born August 15, 1890 in Paris.

Died there on February 5, 1962.

Composed in 1930.

Duration: 7 minutes

Jacques Ibert was the son of a Parisian businessman and it was his father's intention that the boy follow in the paternal footsteps when it came time to choose a career. Jacques had

other ideas, however, and he studied music in secret so as not to incur Papa's displeasure. Curiously, Ibert chose to be admitted to the Paris Conservatoire not as a musician but as an actor, another of his ambitions since childhood, though he studied music along with drama. His musical instincts soon won out, however, and he decided that composition offered the more fruitful future course. He studied with Fauré and became friends with his classmates Arthur Honegger and Darius Milhaud. Ibert interrupted his studies during the First World War to serve with the French Navy, eventually becoming an officer in the Naval Reserve. He continued his education after the war at the Paris Conservatoire with Paul Vidal, and in 1919 won the *Prix de Rome*. It was during his residency in Rome that he produced the work that brought him his first recognition, the *Ballade of Reading Gaol*, based on a poem by Oscar Wilde. From 1937 to 1955, Ibert served as director of the Academy of Rome, then left Italy to become head of the united management of the Paris Opéra and the Opéra Comique, a post he held for two years. His only visit to the United States was during the summer of 1950 to conduct master classes at the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood.

Ibert's fine craft, good humor, and distinctive Gallic sensibilities are all embodied in the *Trois pièces brèves* that he composed for woodwind quintet in 1930. The first movement opens with a spirited introduction which leads to a cheerful theme that sounds like an English jig on holiday in Paris. Some ideas from the introduction are bandied about before the jig tune returns to round out the movement. The *Andante* is a delicate duet for flute and clarinet modeled on the two-part inventions of Bach; the other instruments enter only to provide a tiny coda. The finale is a vest-pocket sonata form, with a mock-serious introduction, a bounding main theme begun by the clarinet, a parody waltz as the second subject (also initiated by the clarinet), a brief development section, and a recapitulation of both themes.

Sextet for Piano, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, and Horn

Francis Poulenc

Born January 7, 1899 in Paris.

Died there on January 30, 1963.

Composed in 1932; revised 1939.

Duration: 18 minutes

Poulenc originally composed his Sextet in 1932, but after a trial performance of the piece, he was dissatisfied enough to withdraw the score. He thoroughly renovated the composition in 1939, and the revised version has become one of his most popular works. His writing for the wind instruments in the sextet is thoroughly idiomatic, both in the technical handling of the individual members of the ensemble and in the blending of their tone colors.

The opening movement is divided into three large sections. The first, in quick tempo, exploits the agility of the instruments in the witty interchange of snippets of the melodic material. A bassoon recitative leads to the central section, a bittersweet strain derived from the theme of the movement's opening. The fast tempo and the opening section return before a mock-military coda draws the movement to a bustling close. The second movement, marked *Divertissement*, is related to the three-part structure of the first, but with the tempos reversed. Here, the fast music occurs in the center with the slow tempos flanking it at beginning and end. The *Finale* is a progeny of the Parisian music hall filtered through the singular vision of the great musical iconoclast Eric Satie. In formal type, it most closely corresponds to the Classical rondo, with the boisterous rondo theme appearing twice after its initial presentation. The intervening episodes employ a slightly tipsy lyricism, giving the peculiar impression of a *chanteuse* coming on stage for her last set after perhaps one glass of *Sauternes* too many. As

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postlude to this midnight merriment, the sextet finishes with a nostalgic coda at once sweet and hauntingly sad in its simplicity.

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