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A master's recital in flute

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A MASTER'S RECITAL IN FLUTE

An Abstract of a Recital
Submitted
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Music

Natalie Mahree Neshyba
University of Northern Iowa
May 2015

This Study by: Natalie Mahree Neshyba

Entitled: A MASTER'S RECITAL IN FLUTE

has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the

Degree of Master of Music

Date

Dr. Angeleita Floyd, Chair, Thesis Committee

Date

Dr. Heather Peyton, Thesis Committee Member

Date

Dr. Jonathan Schwabe, Thesis Committee Member

Date

Dr. April Chatham Carpenter, Interim Dean, Graduate College

This Recital Performance by: Natalie Mahree Neshyba

Entitled: A MASTER'S RECITAL IN FLUTE

Date of Recital: March 6, 2015

has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the

Degree of Master of Music

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ABSTRACT

Natalie Neshyba presented a graduate flute recital on Friday, March 6th, 2015 at 6:00 pm in Davis Hall of the Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center at the University of Northern Iowa. This recital was given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Music degree in flute performance. Dr. Polina Khatsko, pianist, performed alongside Ms. Neshyba on two selections. The program began with an unaccompanied work, *Les Folies d'Espagne*, by Marin Marais. Next on the program was Claude Debussy's *Sonata in G minor L140* for flute and piano, which was recently transcribed from the original violin version by Dr. Claudia Anderson and SoYoung Lee. The second half of the recital opened with two movements of André Jolivet's powerful solo flute work *Cinq Incantations*. To close the recital, Ms. Neshyba and Dr. Khatsko performed the two-movement *Sonata for Flute and Piano Op. 23*, composed by Lowell Liebermann, offering a dynamic and dramatic finish. This program showcased a variety of challenging repertoire requiring solid technical facility, contrasting tone color, and knowledge of appropriate style representative of a graduate level recital.

Les Folies d'Espagne for Solo Flute—Marin Marais

Marin Marais (1656-1728), a French composer and viol player, was born in Paris, where he spent his musical life. Marais was recognized and admired for his skilled performances and numerous compositions of viola de gamba music. The viol, or viola de gamba, was a bowed, fretted string instrument that was popular in

Spain in the 15th century. The term “viola de gamba” encompassed as many as nine different instruments of various shapes and sizes. Marais studied with Jean-Baptiste Lully, an important court composer, who helped him establish fame and fortune amongst French royalty. In 1685, Marais became one of the composers and musicians in the Royal Court of Versailles under King Louis XIV. He spent the remainder of his life as a court composer and gamba player to provide for his nineteen children.¹

Les Folies d’Espagne is based on an anonymous European sarabande that has been utilized by composers from Corelli to Scarlatti. “La folia” is one of the oldest remembered European musical themes. This Chaconne in $\frac{3}{4}$ time is the harmonic structure that provides the foundation of each of the twenty-four variations in the flute arrangement of *Les Folies d’Espagne* by Hans-Peter Schmitz. Marais’s original composition was written in 1701 with the intention of being transcribed for several instruments. The “la folia” theme evokes the regal stage presence of a Spanish dancer. Each variation offers a different character as interpreted by the performer including stylistically appropriate ornamentations from the French Baroque era.

The theme in *Les Folies d’Espagne* is an eight bar harmonic progression in E minor that ends on the dominant triad, B major, followed by another eight bars that cadences on the tonic. Each of these twenty-four variations follows the Chaconne form. The editor Hans-Peter Schmitz gave suggested dynamic markings, trills, and

¹ Jérôme de La Gorce and Sylvette Millot, “Marais, Marin,” in *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/17702> (accessed December 30, 2014).

mordents, but allows the performer to add many of his or her own ornamentations. Ms. Neshyba selected fifteen contrasting variations and finished with a reiteration of the opening theme. *Les Folies d'Espagne* encapsulates the French Baroque style of music with its double-dotted rhythms, extensive ornamentation, and the dance-like feel.

Sonata in G minor L140 for Flute and Piano—Claude Debussy

Natalie was given the opportunity to study with Dr. Claudia Anderson during her first semester at UNI, and was inspired by Dr. Anderson's musical creativity and innovations to the world of flute music. Dr. Anderson began a project in 2013 to record an album titled "In This World" with the collaboration of SoYoung Lee: a talented pianist who works with Dr. Anderson at the Rocky Ridge Music Center.² One of the tracks on this album is a transcription of the *Sonata in G Minor* by Claude Debussy, originally composed for violin, and arranged for flute and piano by Claudia Anderson and SoYoung Lee respectively. Anderson and Lee artfully crafted this arrangement to be effectively played on the flute without losing some of the stylistic tendencies of the violin.

Claude Debussy (1862-1918) was born in St Germain-en-Laye, France. Eight years later, the Franco-Prussian War forced Debussy and his family to take refuge in Cannes, where he had his first piano lesson. Debussy was admitted into the Paris Conservatoire despite minimal prior schooling. He explored several musical avenues

² Claudia Anderson and SoYoung Lee, *In This World*, CD-ROM, Rocky Ridge Center (Colorado), disc 1.

and found his niche in composition after realizing he was not destined to become a piano virtuoso.³ Although Debussy experienced financial insecurity during the beginning of his career, he soon began to develop his own style using whole tone scales and polytonality that helped showcase his originality as a composer.⁴ His solo flute piece, *Syrinx*, is a standard work in solo flute repertoire and has given flutists an opportunity to study and perform Impressionistic music. Debussy began work on the *Violin Sonata in G Minor* in 1917 and was diagnosed with cancer shortly after. Despite being ill, Debussy completed the work before his death in 1918.

The first movement, *Allegro vivo*, follows sonata form beginning with a four-bar theme that reoccurs in all three movements of the sonata. The second theme appears by the marking “En serrant” meaning “becoming quicker” in measure eighteen. This theme is omnipresent throughout the piece. The exposition ends at the *Meno mosso* section, where the key modulates from G minor to E major and the development section begins. The original theme is played in reminiscence to the beginning before entering into the recapitulation at the *Premier Tempo* at Rehearsal 4.

The second movement, *Intermède*, opens with a playful, fantasy-like cadenza section. This motive is repeated more insistently, then transforms into a phrase of a repeated B-flat in the flute line against sporadic chords in the piano. Debussy stretches the boundaries of tonality and harmonic structure by frequently shifting

³ François Lesure and Roy Howat. “Debussy, Claude,” *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, accessed December 30, 2014, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/07353>.

⁴ Lesure and Howat, “Debussy, Claude,” *Oxford Music Online*.

tonal centers and embracing polytonality.⁵ Intermède is highly interactive between the flute and piano, making it an added challenge for the duo to play together in a precise manner. The form is highly sectional with expanded and repeated themes. To close the movement, Debussy contrasts textures, tempos, and dynamics within the last two pages of the score. Measures 127-133 contain flourishing 32nd note runs, but then quickly transition to a slower feel with the marking “morendo”, meaning “dying”, in the last two measures of the movement. The tone is soft and slow and the mood is finite as the flute and piano die away.

Finale, the third and final movement, begins with the piano alternating soft chords to create an ambient, mysterious entrance. The flute enters with the familiar opening theme of the first movement but quickly transitions to an animated, bouncy theme in G major full of life and spirit, which embodies the general characteristic of the Finale. This mood then shifts upon measure eighty-five at the marking of “Le double plus lent” which translates to “twice as slow.” This new melody is played at a soft dynamic and includes grace notes that slide in between two notes chromatically, creating a mysterious and deeply sultry melody. The mood brightens at measure 106 with beautiful, light tremolos in the flute. At measure 116, Debussy masterfully alters the happy, animated theme to sound dark and questioning. The theme serves as the transition to what the listener anticipates to be a climatic conclusion in measure 145, but then Debussy surprises the listener with a subit-

⁵ Sylvia Elena Polendo. “A Brief Analysis of Debussy’s Violin Sonata, Brahms’s Violin Sonata, Op. 78, and Shostakovich’s Eighth String Quartet, Op. 110,” MM diss., University of Texas at El Paso, 1986.

piano reiteration of the first theme once more. Debussy plays with the use of modulation in the *Meno mosso* and *Cédez* sections that first appear in the key of E major, while then moving to the key of G major immediately after. At Rehearsal 5, the piano enters with a driving, chromatic figure that signifies the approaching climax of the movement. Fragments of the first theme are heard in the flute while the piano continues to build to the conclusion. The final section, “*Très animé*” or “very lively,” has the flute racing to the finish with descending triads and fortissimo trills with one final sweep from a grace note G in the middle octave to high G, in the style of a virtuosic violinist.

Cinq Incantations pour flûte seule—André Jolivet

André Jolivet’s emotionally driven 20th century work *Cinq Incantations* provides a stark contrast to the regal sounds of Maris’ *Les Folies d’Espagne*. Although this is the second piece scored for flute alone on Ms. Neshyba’s program, the two pieces are quite contrasting in style, time period, and technique, given that they were composed over 200 years apart.

André Jolivet (1905-1974) was born in Paris, France, to artistically driven parents. His mother was a pianist and his father was a painter, but they urged Jolivet to become a teacher instead of supporting the early signs of their son’s musical talents. Jolivet pursued and thrived in music despite his parents’ best wishes, and gained great success in the field of composition. He later held various teaching jobs in Paris including a brief stint as an organist. Some of his greatest influences were

Claude Debussy, Paul Dukas, and Maurice Ravel.⁶ In addition to *Cinq Incantations*, Jolivet wrote several other prominent pieces for flute including a double concerto for flute and percussion soloists with orchestral accompaniment, three sonatines for flute and piano, and *Chant de Linos* for flute and strings.

Edgard Varèse, a French composer who lived in America, accepted Jolivet as his only student. He exposed Jolivet to a new realm of sound that greatly influenced Jolivet's compositional output. It was Varèse who influenced him to experiment with sound-masses, unconventional acoustical properties, and atonality.⁷ In an interview with Jolivet by Martine Cadieu, he says, "I must say, that it was Varèse, whose only pupil I was, and for whom I have the deepest admiration, who set me on my way. He helped me to discover one of music's most significant aspects: music as a magical and ritual expression of human society. I have learnt to attach great importance to the balance between man and the cosmos."⁸ Varèse had understandably made the biggest impact on Jolivet's music, but also impacted the incorporation of spirituality into his compositions.

Jolivet wrote *Cinq Incantations* in the summer of 1936 as a "suite" to represent the spiritual journey of a life cycle from birth to death. This compositional creation stemmed from a period in Jolivet's life of fascination with ancient magical

⁶ Barbara L. Kelly, "Jolivet, André," *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, accessed January 3, 2015, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/14433>.

⁷ Kelly, "Jolivet, André." In *Grove Music Online*.

⁸ Martine Cadieu, "A Conversation with André Jolivet," *Tempo* 59, no. 4 (Autumn 1961): 2-4, accessed January 3, 2015, Cambridge University Press.

cultures.⁹ The piece itself represents a spiritual phase in the life of Jolivet: one that emanates sorrow, anguish, hope, and prosperity. Spoken from the mouth of Jolivet:

In 1936 when I wrote *Cinq Incantations* for solo flute, I wanted to state the prime importance of the monodic element in music, i.e. melody...rhythm, volume and pitch. The only purpose, however, of the carefully measured combinations of these different elements is to generate musical feeling, and a feeling similar to the panic impulses of primitive man. I chose the flute which is the musical instrument par excellence because, endowed with life by the breath, man's deepest emanation, the flute charges sounds with what is both visceral and cosmic in us.¹⁰

Some believe that Jolivet possessed an affinity for the flute because the instrument breathes life into music, and serves as an excellent vehicle for the cosmic and spiritual elements of the piece.

For this recital, Ms. Neshyba selected to perform two movements from Jolivet's *Cinq Incantations*. The fourth movement, titled "*Pour une communion sereine de l'être avec le monde*," translates to "For a serene communion of humankind with the world." This movement explains the elevation of humankind with the divine universe through music. There are five parts to the movement that signify different steps in the human journey towards peace. The first, third, and fifth sections have similar characteristics, while the second and fourth sections serve a transitional function. The opening three-note motive of the movement is meant to symbolize a prayer; this prayer is altered throughout the movement by becoming

⁹ Sharon Winton, "André Jolivet's Spirituality: *Cinq Incantations* and *Ascèses*," *The Flutist Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (Winter 2007): 30-33.

¹⁰ Andrew Darlison, "Programme Note for André Jolivet (1905-1974): *Cinq Incantations pour flute seule*," accessed January 2, 2015, <http://www.andrew-darlison.co.uk/notes/joli.htm>.

bigger, louder, and more intense. The soft, tranquil ending represents the laborer who has communed successfully with the earth and is at peace.¹¹

The fifth movement titled “*Aux funerailles du chef—pour obtenir la protection de son ame*” means “At the funeral of the chief—to obtain the protection of his soul.” This final incantation portrays a belief that the spirit lives on after death. Like the fourth incantation, there are also five sections within this movement, which are marked by tempi changes. The fast hammering of the G-sharp in the beginning, middle, and ending sections of the movement represent the mournful cries for the chief by his people, and the grief they possess. The alternating fast and slow sections represent the people’s negotiation with the spirits to obtain protection of the chief’s soul, which is finally granted during the dramatic ending of the piece.

Sonata Op. 23 for Flute and Piano—Lowell Liebermann

Lowell Liebermann was born in Manhattan in 1961 where he began piano studies at the age of eight with a series of influential women pianists. By age fourteen, he began to experiment with creating his own music. Liebermann composed *Piano Sonata Op. 1* at age fifteen and performed it two years later in Carnegie Hall. He received his Bachelor, Master, and Doctoral degrees from the Juilliard School of Music. Since then, Liebermann has written many commissioned pieces for musicians and symphonies all over the globe. Perhaps one of the world’s best-known flutists, Sir James Galway, commissioned three works from Mr.

¹¹ Sharon Winton, “André Jolivet’s Spirituality: Cinq Incantations and Ascèses,” *The Flutist Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (Winter 2007): 30-33.

Liebermann: the *Concerto for Flute and Orchestra*, the *Concerto for Flute, Harp, and Orchestra*, and *Trio No. 1 for Flute, Cello, and Piano*.

Liebermann is a skilled performer and composer as well as a talented conductor. With over 100 works in his catalogue spanning multiple genres, Liebermann's compositions have become standard flute repertoire, being frequently performed and recorded. After attending a flute masterclass given by Mr. Liebermann, Ms. Neshyba learned from the composer himself about his flute music and the intentions of his compositions. He held each performer accountable for precise attention to dynamics, tempo, and rhythms. He composes with contrast as a musical feature that helps define his style; this element can be found anywhere from contrast between tempos in different sections to contrast between the high range of the flute against the low range of the piano. If contrast was missing from a performance, he encouraged the performers to notice the intricacies in the scoring that provided contrast and adhere to them. He also showed his audience how passionately he feels about the tempo markings that he provides: they are not approximate, and they are not to be taken lightly.

Sonata for Flute and Piano Op. 23 begins gravely at the tempo of forty beats per minute. This speed makes it difficult to finish the long phrases in one breath, but the contrast created between the slow first movement and the fast second movement is incredibly dynamic and helps contribute to an electrifying performance. The excitement of contrast is especially present in Liebermann's *Concerto for Piccolo and Orchestra, Op. 50*, another standard in the modern

flute/piccolo repertoire.¹² Learning these significant aspects about Liebermann and his music enhanced Ms. Neshyba's understanding of *Sonata Op. 23 for Flute and Piano*, therefore increasing the effectiveness of her performance.

Liebermann's flute sonata was commissioned by and dedicated to flutist Paula Robison and was first performed at The Spoleto Festival Chamber Music Series in Charleston, South Carolina. The premiere performance was on May 20th, 1988 with flutist Paula Robison and Jean-Yves Thibaudet playing piano. This powerful piece was awarded the "Best Newly Published Flute Work" by the National Flute Association in 1989.

Sonata for Flute and Piano Op. 23 begins with a hauntingly soft melody from the flute with a light texture in the accompaniment. The piano plays one note at a time with a pianissimo dynamic. Liebermann slowly builds the opening phrase by increasing the tempo bit by bit. By measure seventeen, the tempo marking has changed to forty-eight beats per minute with the phrase "un poco più mosso" which translates to "a little more movement". In this new section, the texture thickens with large ascending sweeps in the piano and the tempo rises again to sixty beats per minute. Here, the flute line continues to be soft and slow, but there are a few ornaments (grace notes and trills) and a higher range to add interest to the line. The music becomes unexpectedly bombastic shortly after that with a subito fortissimo first in the piano and then followed by the flute. The main scalar focus in this section

¹² "Lowell Liebermann". <http://www.lowellliebermann.com/biography/> (accessed January 2, 2015).

is found in the descending lines in the flute with chromaticism in both the flute and piano. Settling into a quieter dynamic again at Tempo I, the flute and piano have an interesting interaction as if one is sneaking up on the other. The height of this “chase” arrives at measure fifty-eight with a third octave C in the flute and a triple forte chord in the piano. From there, Liebermann inserts the word “estatico” or “static” to describe the long, slow flute phrase. The recapitulation of the “chase” theme at Tempo I occurs twice more before slowing into the three-bar coda that diminishes to a triple piano dynamic, with an echo of the introductory two-bar piano motive to finish. The overarching form of this movement is sectional, with stark contrast in dynamic level, tempi, and texture between sections.

The second movement, *Presto energico*, is a seemingly impossible tempo of dotted-eighth=176. Meter changes between 9/16, 12/16, 15/16, and 6/16 contribute to the overall sense of frenetic, chaotic intensity. Measure twenty-seven begins the second major theme of the movement, which is highly contrasting to the first theme. It is almost entirely slurred and in quarter and half notes while the first theme is filled with staccato sixteenth notes. Despite this change in style for the melody, the forward drive of the piece only continues to increase. The first theme is reintroduced in measure sixty-one, but this time it is modulated down several steps and is played at the dynamic of piano instead of fortissimo like the entrance at the beginning. Liebermann’s “masterful manipulation of thematic material”¹³ is

¹³ Lisa Santa Garner, “Lowell Liebermann: A Stylistic Analysis and Discussion of the Sonata for Flute and Piano, Op. 23, Sonata for Flute and Guitar, Op. 25, and *Soliloquy* for Flute Solo, Op. 44,” PhD diss., Rice University, 1997.

showcased in this section as fragments of the first theme re-enter in many different tonal centers, building the suspense for the climax of the movement. A variant of the second theme reappears at measure 123 followed by a true, intact recapitulation of the first entrance of the first theme. Next, Liebermann deceptively rushes the flute into new material that hints that the end is near. With eight ascending triadic runs in the flute and dense, pounding chords in the piano, the intensity continues to build. Then, with a two-bar “crescendo molto” or “large increase in volume” leading into the final measure, the flute hits the loudest and highest note of the entire piece: a triple-forte, third-octave D. This note represents the most climactic moment of the entire piece, which also happens to be the very end, excluding the short, triplet tag in both piano and flute immediately after.

Lisa Garner Santa notes the sophistication of Liebermann’s affinity for contrast and the dramatic element it brings to the music in her interview with him for *FluteTalk* magazine. Garner Santa describes his compositional style: “Liebermann creates drama in this piece by frequently utilizing a change in texture. Thick, dense piano chords and loud, held notes on the flute are sometimes quickly segued into a very sparse and mysterious texture.”¹⁴ Music scholars and theorists revel in his manipulation of thematic material and emphasis on form and structure while first-time listeners respond positively to all the different and exciting sounds and textures they are receiving in the span of just under fourteen minutes.

¹⁴ Lisa Santa Garner. “Lowell Liebermann: A Stylistic Analysis of the Sonata for Flute and Piano, Op. 23.” PhD diss.

The repertoire chosen for Ms. Neshyba's recital showcased the development of the flute from the Baroque period to the 21st century. The program included standard flute repertoire as well as transcriptions from the music of string instruments. The difficult technical demands and wide range of musical styles requiring a deep understanding of the music's background warrant this recital to be at an appropriate level for that of a Master's degree student.

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School of Music
University of Northern Iowa

presents

Natalie Neshyba, Flute
In a Graduate Recital

assisted by:
Polina Khatsko, piano

In partial fulfillment of the requirement
for the Master's degree in Flute Performance
From the Studio of Dr. Angeleita Floyd

Les Folies d'Espagne
Theme and Variations

Marin Marais
(1656-1728)

Sonata in G minor for Flute and Piano
Allegro vivo
Intermède
Finale

Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)
arr. Claudia Anderson
(b. 1949)

Intermission

Cinq Incantations
Pour une communion sereine de l'être avec le monde
Aux funerailles du chef—pour obtenir la protection de son ame

André Jolivet
(1905-1974)

Sonata Opus No. 23 for Flute and Piano
Lento con rubato
Presto energico

Lowell Liebermann
(b. 1961)