

The Red Bank
Chamber Music Society

presents

Frisson

Marika Bournaki, piano
Bixby Kennedy, clarinet
Tom Gallant, oboe
Remy Taghavi, bassoon

Beethoven • Françaix • Glinka

Chopin • D'Rivera • Schmitt

Sunday Afternoon

September 11, 2022 • 4:30 PM

Trinity Church Auditorium

Red Bank, NJ

ADVANCE NOTES

PROGRAM

Variations on *La ci darem la mano* from *Don Giovanni* (1795)

Ludwig van Beethoven

Divertissement for oboe, clarinet and bassoon (1947) Jean Françaix

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------|
| I. Prélude | III. Elégie |
| II. Allegretto assai | IV. Scherzo |

Trio Pathétique (1832)

Mikhail Glinka

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| I. Allegro moderato | III. Largo |
| II. Scherzo. Vivacissimo | IV. Allegro con spirito |

INTERMISSION

Three Piano Pieces

Frédéric Chopin

- I. Nocturne Op 9 No. 2 in E flat major (1831)
- II. Mazurka Opus 6 No. 1 in F sharp minor (1830)
- III. Waltz Opus 64 No. 2 in C# minor (1847)

Habanera from "Aires Tropicales" (1994)

Paquita D'Rivera

A Tour d'Anches for winds and piano (1943)

Florent Schmitt

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| I. A courre | III. Nocturne-sarabande |
| II. Sur un rythme prévu | VI. Quasimodo |

Program Notes

Although not as well-known as the repertoire for strings, there are many wonderful chamber music works written for winds throughout musical history. Beethoven and Mozart wrote many wind chamber music works including wind serenades, octets and of course outstanding quintets for piano and winds. Mozart's Gran Partita for 13 instruments is certainly one of the greatest works ever written and Dvorak wrote a large-scale Serenade for Winds. In the 18th and 19th century wind instruments were still being developed into the much more sophisticated instruments that we have today and over time composers wrote more and more complex chamber music works as this development took place. Anton Reicha and Franz Danzi were some of the first composers to write rich and varied music for what is now a standard configuration known as the wind quintet. And in the 20th century a large amount of music was written for winds by such composers as Villa-Lobos, Francaix, Hindemith, Carter, Ligeti, Barber, Amy Beach, Carl Nielsen, and many more.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Variations on *La ci darem la mano* from *Don Giovanni* (1795)

(~10 minutes)



In the 18th and 19th century it was very common for composers to arrange popular tunes from operas for all sorts of instrumental combinations. Mozart's opera arias and overtures were often arranged for wind octet as in those days there was not always a full orchestra in many places and of course there were no recordings. This trio was taken from a popular tune from Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and was originally written for 2 oboes and English horn but was also published in a variety of instrumental combinations. The use of various instrumentations in the 19th century was quite common in order to make works playable by as many musicians as possible but more importantly to increase sales of sheet music. In the days before royalties this was one of the few ways composers could earn money. This is really a delightful

set of variations with some virtuosic playing demanded by all the instruments.



Jean Françaix (1912-1997)

Divertissement for oboe, clarinet and bassoon (1947)

(~11 minutes)



The Divertissement is one of the most charming works in the repertoire for winds and fiendishly difficult. Françaix himself wrote “I composed a reed trio which was quite an undertaking. There is the danger of squeezing all the breath out of the long-suffering musicians by expecting them to play impossibly long phrases. But I implore you to not to doze off if the piece goes on too long.” Françaix’s wit and humor of course was always present in any of his music and this work is no exception. The reed trio or “Trio d’Anches” is a type of ensemble that thrived in the 20th century when many composers wrote for this combination including Villa-Lobos, Jacques Ibert, Darius Milhaud and dozens more. The sound of these instruments is quite unique, sometimes rustic, and sometimes sublime.



Photo Credit:

<https://www.jeanfrancaix.com/en/>

Mikhail Glinka (1804-1857)

Trio Pathétique (1832)

(~16 minutes)



Glinka is reported to have said “I want my work to be completely national.” Often considered to be the father of the Russian nationalism movement in music, he was one of the first composers to advocate for a distinct Russian style influenced by folk music and folk rhythms. Other composers followed by composing in a similar style such as Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov and Mussorgsky.

Glinka’s Trio pathétique was composed in 1832 and although it was originally written for clarinet, bassoon and piano, it is often performed by violin, cello and piano. This is a rare chamber music work for winds by a Russian composer of this period and a wonderful showcase for all instruments.



Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

Nocturne Op 9 No. 2 in E flat major (1831)

(~5 minutes)

Mazurka Opus 6 No. 1 in F sharp minor (1830)

(~3 minutes)

Waltz Opus 64 No. 2 in C# minor (1847)

(~4 minutes)



Frédéric François Chopin was born and raised in Warsaw, but it was in Paris that he made his mark as one of the greatest composers for piano in history. Aside from two piano concertos and a set of variations for piano and orchestra, he wrote no symphonic works and no music which did not feature the piano. He is celebrated for the indelible stamp he placed on many forms of musical miniature, as with his sets of preludes and etudes and his numerous waltzes, mazurkas, polonaises and nocturnes, as well as scherzos, ballades (a form which Chopin pioneered) and an assortment of other stand-alone pieces. His genius as a composer was matched by his virtuosity on the keyboard, which was in marked contrast to his poor physical health. Sadly, he died from pericarditis in 1849 at only 39 years of age.

The first two of today's works are among Chopin's earliest published compositions; the third was one of his last. The Nocturne in E-flat Op. 9 No. 2 is not only one of his most well-known pieces, it is probably one of the most instantly recognizable works in all of piano music (to be sure, several of Chopin's compositions could be so classified). The "nocturne" (literally, "of the night") was originally an ensemble piece which became popular in the 18th century. Irish composer John Field recast the concept as a single movement for solo piano, and Chopin essentially made the form his own.

The mazurka is a Polish musical form in triple (3/4) time, with the accent falling on the second or third beat. Chopin retained a strong attachment to his homeland, and both his mazurkas and polonaises reflect this love. He had essentially perfected the form by the time of today's Op. 6 No. 1 in F-sharp minor, his first published mazurka.

The waltz (from German "walzer" - to roll or revolve) traces its roots to a dance form which emerged in pastoral Europe in the 16th century. By the late 1700's it had taken Vienna by storm, with other major cities soon to follow. Given Chopin's affinity for triple-time, he was a natural for writing waltzes and composed them throughout his life. Composed in 1847, Op. 64 No. 2 in C-sharp minor was one of three comprising his last published set.

Notes by Chris Hewitt



Paquito D’Rivera (1948 -)
Habanera from “Aires Tropicales” (1994)

(~3 minutes)



Paquito D’Rivera defies categorization. The winner of fourteen Grammy Awards, he is celebrated both for his artistry in Latin jazz and his achievements as a classical composer. Born in Havana, Cuba, he performed at age 10 with the National Theater Orchestra, studied at the Havana Conservatory of Music and, at 17, became a featured soloist with the Cuban National Symphony. As a founding member of the Orquesta Cubana de Musica Moderna, he directed that group for two years, while at the same time playing both the clarinet and saxophone with the Cuban National Symphony Orchestra. Originally from a wind quintet written by d’Rivera and premiered in 1994 by the Aspen Wind Quintet the work has 7 movements. The Habanera movement is for three woodwinds and is in the style of Ravel’s Habanera.

Florent Schmitt (1870-1958)
A Tour d’Anches for winds and piano (1943)

(~15 minutes)



Photo: Lipnitzki/Roger-Viollet

In his later career, the French composer Florent Schmitt would devote more of his energies to composing works for chamber wind ensemble. Among those works are his quartets for saxophones, flutes, trombones and tuba, and a sextet for clarinets. But Schmitt also composed two highly engaging chamber pieces for diverse winds: A Tour d’anches, Opus 97 dating from 1939-43, and Chants alizés, Opus 125, composed in the early 1950s. In focusing on chamber wind groups, Schmitt was following the same path as several other French composers — Jacques Ibert, Georges Auric, Francis Poulenc and Jean Françaix among them — who saw the potential for writing scores that exploited the interesting and contrasting

sonorities of various wind instruments.

A Tour d’anches (translated into English, it means “Reeds in Turn”) is scored for oboe, clarinet, bassoon and piano. The French music critic Pierre Barbier contends that the piece is a tribute to the 18th century spirit of Rameau, brought forward into the 20th century in the same manner as Maurice Ravel did with his Le Tombeau de Couperin.

The second movement is in a waltz tempo. But this is no ordinary waltz, as it's punctuated by unpredictable rhythms. Begun by the clarinet declaiming a sentimental melody reminiscent of Emmanuel Chabrier or Erik Satie — or Ibert of the *Divertissement* — the other instruments soon join in.

The discourse becomes ever more animated, leading to an abrupt finish. It's a waltz, certainly ... but the whole enterprise seems a bit "off."

The third movement is the centerpiece of the suite — a fervent nocturne and sarabande reminiscent not only of Claude Debussy but also of Schmitt's mentor, Gabriel Fauré. The movement opens with an oboe solo that then becomes interwoven with the other wind instruments. Florid piano writing helps bring the movement to a powerful climax before subsiding into quietude. The emotional arc of this movement, which is as lengthy as the entire rest of the suite, is powerfully effective.

The finale returns to the spirit and humor of the first two movements. In this case, it's a musical portrait of Quasimodo, the Hunchback of Notre-Dame. One can clearly picture Victor Hugo's character as he moves purposefully among the bells in the cathedral's tower.

A *Tour d'anches* was composed by Schmitt over a four year-period from 1939 to 1943. The score was dedicated to the French bassoonist, teacher and conductor Fernand Oubradous, who was among the players who premiered the piece in Paris in 1947.

From www.florentshmitt.com

Notes by Tom Gallant, except as indicated



Steinway piano selected from Jacobs Music Company

Artists

Frisson is explosive!

From New York City, Frisson features the best and brightest of classical music's rising stars. Frisson showcases a myriad of rarely-performed masterworks, and the group expands and contracts into a variety of ensembles, including quintets, sextets, nonets, and a small chamber orchestra. The ensemble performs in over 25 cities annually including appearances in such diverse venues as the Morgan Library and Museum in New York City, for the Da Camera Society in Los Angeles and at the Bermuda Festival.



With unparalleled technical, musical and communication skills, **Marika Bournaki** is at once, a world class performer, outstanding pianist, vivacious young woman... and the freshest face on the classical music scene. Marika's innovative approach to her art and performance is reflected in her recent collaboration, "Let's Play", with cutting-edge and world-renowned multimedia creative shop, Moment Factory. Her role as Ambassador to the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal's summer event, "A Cool Classical Journey" was an exceptional opportunity to explore new and exciting ways to share her music with the public. Marika not only brings distinctive interpretations to favourite standards, she also extends her passion for music by commissioning works by younger composers and collaborating with artists from various fields.

The award-winning documentary, "I am not a rock star", directed by Bobbi Jo Hart and featuring Marika, has captivated audiences of all ages in festivals around the world. The feature-length film... (see it at <http://vimeo.com/50312292>) ... chronicles Marika's evolution as an artist from the age of 12 to 20. A runaway success at multiple international film festivals, "I am not a rock star" was screened at, among others, the 30th International Festival of Films on Art in Montreal, the Thessaloniki International Documentary Festival in Greece, the Barcelona Music Documentary Film Festival, the DocsDF Festival in Mexico, the Napa Valley Film Festival in California. Marika's unique approach and intense passion have also been heard over the airwaves on Radio-Canada, Radio-France, BBC, WQXR in New York City, and Toronto's Classical 96.3 FM. She has been featured on television networks such as ERT, TF1, France 2, CTV, Global, Radio-Canada, CBC, and Canal+.

Recent performances include a recital at the Onassis Cultural Centre in Athens, Greece, a recital at Plaza Hidalgo in Mexico, a benefit recital for the Glenn Gould Foundation at New York's Carnegie Hall, a guest solo appearance in Montreal with the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, recitals at the National Arts Center in Ottawa, at the Flanders Festival in Belgium, the Konzert Accordate Series in Aachen Germany, the EMMA Concert Association in Florida, Chamber Music Northwest in Oregon, and the Luminato Festival in Toronto. Other engagements include performances with the St. Petersburg Symphony Orchestra in Russia, as well as recitals in South Korea, Romania, Italy, Switzerland, and England. Marika holds a Bachelor's degree from the Juilliard School of Music, in New York. She participated in the International Academy Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria, as well as the Internationale Mendelssohn Akademie in Leipzig, playing in master classes for Dmitri Bashkirov, Andras Schiff, Karl-Heinz Kammerling and Arie Vardi.



Admired for his “marvelous ringing tone” (Joseph Dalton, Albany Times Union) **Bixby Kennedy** is one of the most versatile clarinetists of his generation. He has performed concerti with orchestras including the Minnesota Orchestra, Houston Symphony, and New Haven Symphony Orchestra. As a chamber musician, Bixby has performed throughout the US and Europe in venues including Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, The Kennedy Center, Marlboro Music Festival, and is the clarinetist for the “explosive” New York City based chamber ensemble Frisson. He has appeared as a guest artist with Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and The Knights. As an orchestral musician, Bixby has performed with the MET Opera and NY Philharmonic in addition to regular engagements with the Albany and New Haven Symphony Orchestras. On period instruments, Bixby has performed classical repertoire on original and replica instruments throughout the US with Grand Harmonie Orchestra. He is a former member of Ensemble Connect and works as a teaching artist throughout the US. As an arranger, his works have been performed by Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Ensemble Schumann, Frisson, Ensemble Connect, and Symphony in C. He loves traveling, trying new foods, laughing, hiking, and playing tennis.



Considered by many to be the most difficult of all the musical instruments, the oboe is often called the “ill wind that no one blows good.” **Tom Gallant** is a First Prize Winner of the Concert Artists Guild International New York Competition and one of very few musicians ever to win this competition as an oboe soloist. His solo and chamber music performances have taken him to David Geffen Hall, Weill Recital Hall and the Frick Collection in New York City, to Washington, DC, Los Angeles, Chicago, to the Spoleto Festival in Italy, and to the Mostly Mozart Festival at Lincoln Center. He has appeared as guest soloist with the Kronos Quartet at the Ravinia Festival and has collaborated with flutist Jean-Pierre Rampal, with Cuarteto Casals from Spain, the Calder, Tesla and Lark Quartets, Cuarteto Latinoamericano from Mexico and with the Adaskin String Trio. Notable performances include a concert of solo and chamber music works for the oboe at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, and tours across the United States as soloist with Camerata Bariloche from Argentina and the String Orchestra of New York City performing concerti by Bach and Vaughan-Williams.

Tom Gallant was born into a large working-class family to a Madeiran mother and French father outside of Boston. When he first brought home an oboe from the local band program his family was rather disappointed as they did not know what an oboe was and asked him to “go back to school and return it for an instrument like all the other kids play such as the trumpet or clarinet”. After initial successes at a young age, he stopped performing for many years and only in recent years has he returned to performing on “the ill wind that no one blows good.”

Tom Gallant has always worn many hats as a professional musician, concert producer, host and as an artist manager. Over the years he has been involved in managing several summer music festivals and produced concerts in a wide variety of places from Carnegie Hall in New York City to Queen Elizabeth Hall in London. Tom produced his first concerts in his backyard as a child at the age of 12. He lives in New York City and keeps busy doing stand-up comedy, waiting in line at airport security, and traveling to exotic places.



Noted for his “bubbling, charming” playing, **Rémy Taghavi** is a highly sought-after bassoonist and educator based in the Northeast, and has performed, toured and recorded with numerous groups across North America, South America, and Asia. Rémy has held the position of principal bassoon with the New Haven Symphony Orchestra since 2018 and has been a guest artist with the American Youth, Cape, and Princeton Symphonies. He has previously been an associate member of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and a substitute with Symphony in C, and has played under conductors including Sir Simon Rattle, Alan Gilbert, and James Conlon. Mr. Taghavi has performed as a soloist with the Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra and the New York Symphonic Ensemble at Fukuoka Symphony Hall and the United Nations.

As a chamber musician, Rémy has given performances at the Banff Centre, Domaine Forget, Bravo! Vail, the Atlantic Music Festival, FIMAC, Montréal/New Musics Festival, and the Annapolis Chamber Music Festival, of which he is co-director and founder. Mr. Taghavi is the bassoonist in Frisson, the New York-based nonet whose performances have been called “musical perfection” (Royal Gazette, Bermuda). He is also a member of SoundMind, a modern wind quintet which performs music by living composers alongside re-imagined works from across an expanse of style, genre, and instrumentation. Rémy is an alumnus of Ensemble Connect, a chamber music and career-development fellowship of Carnegie Hall and the Juilliard School.

Mr. Taghavi is currently Lecturer of Bassoon at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, faculty at the Rocky Ridge Music Center’s Young Artist Seminar (Colorado), and an instructor in the Evening Division at the Juilliard School. He has been a guest lecturer at Skidmore College and the University of Cuenca (Ecuador). Rémy graduated magna cum laude from the University of Southern California, received a Master’s degree from the Juilliard School, and recently completed his doctorate at Stony Brook University. His primary teachers include Frank Morelli, Judith Farmer, and Norbert Nielubowski.