

Cinq Pieces en Trio

MSgt Coreen Levin, oboe

MSgt Christy Bailes, clarinet

A1C Daniel Shifren, bassoon

Jacques Ibert

(1890-1962)

French composer Jacques Ibert studied at the Paris Conservatory and on his very first try, won its top prize, the Prix de Rome. This would be an impressive feat on its own, but even more so because his studies were interrupted by his service as a naval officer in World War I.

Many commentators have categorized Jacques Ibert's musical style as "eclectic." Biographer Alexander Laederich writes, "His music can be festive and gay... lyrical and inspired, or descriptive and evocative... often tinged with gentle humour..." For example, his early orchestral works, such as *Escales*, can be described as being in a "lush Impressionistic style." Yet, Ibert is also well-known for his lighthearted pieces.

Written in 1935, the *Cinq Pieces en Trio* is one of Ibert's more lighthearted works. The first movement, *Allegro vivo*, introduces all three instruments at the very beginning in a lively musical theme. The slower second movement, *Andantino*, begins with an introspective duet between the oboe and clarinet. The bassoon joins in about a third of the way through, lending its rich low register throughout the rest of the movement. The third movement, *Allegro assai*, features solo clarinet in a quick, catchy 6/8 theme, which is restated in the oboe part a short time later. The bassoon part serves to propel the short movement along, accelerating the tempo to the very end. The fourth movement, *Andante*, is the longest of the five movements; in this movement, Ibert wrote each instrument's line as if it is a solo line, yet at the same time, each voice supports the other two lines. The overall result could be described as kaleidoscopic. The fifth movement, *allegro quasi marziale*, is full of energy from the start. In contrast to the fourth movement, each of the musical lines appears to compete for the audience's attention.

Andante

Gabriel Ruiz-Bernal

SSgt Matthew Garza

SSgt Robert Barnes

Andante is a modern composition written in traditional musical language, featuring two themes, one slower and more meditative where the trumpet leads and the piano provides a fluid background, followed by a more dynamic theme in which both instruments complement each other.

This piece was composed and premiered in 2012, and then Gabriel Ruiz-Bernal revised it in 2015 especially for today's performance by SSgt Matthew Lee Garza.

Gabriel Ruiz-Bernal is a composer and pianist from Spain, established in the Washington DC area. His compositions range from solo instruments and vocal ensembles to orchestra and film projects. He obtained a PhD from the University of Seville in Spain and is currently Senior Faculty at the Levine School of Music in Washington DC. Gabriel had the pleasure to meet Matthew last November at the U.S. premiere of his composition "Magnificat" performed by Camerata California in Sacramento in which Matthew played trumpet in the orchestra and Gabriel traveled from Washington to attend the premiere. On a program-related note, the composer is married into a family of three-generations U.S. Air-Force veterans.

Concerto Grosso for Three Trombones and Tuba Arcady Dubensky

A1C James Wright, Trombone

(1890-1966)

A1C David Julian, Trombone

A1C Gary Jones, Trombone

A1C Lee Jarzembak, Tuba

Arcady Dubensky's Concerto Grosso for Three Trombones and tuba was written in 1949 for the low brass section of the New York Philharmonic. Dubensky himself was a member of the New York Philharmonic's violin section from 1928 to 1953, leaving to focus on composition. The piece received its world premiere on November 3, 1949 by The New York Philharmonic, conducted by Leopold Stokowski. The members of the low brass section that performed the

premier were Gordon Pulis, Lewis Van Haney, and Allen Ostrander, on trombones, and William Bell, on tuba. These musicians are considered to be the founding fathers of the modern orchestral low brass sound. Written in three movements Prelude, Toccata and Fugue, this piece showcases the lyrical and technical qualities of the low brass instruments that are sometimes lost in the back of the band or orchestra. The Concerto Grosso is considered to be Neoclassical, which is a type of composition that borrows harmony and compositional techniques from earlier centuries.

Oboe Sonata, Op. 166, Mvt. 3

TSgt Timothy Shaw, Steel Drums
SrA Alaina Shaw, Piano

Camille Saint-Saëns
(1835-1921)

In the last year of his life, at the age of 85, Camille Saint-Saëns was still active as a composer and conductor, traveling between Algiers and Paris. His last completed works were three sonatas, one each for oboe, clarinet, and bassoon. Although all three sonatas were published before Saint-Saëns' death, they were not premiered until later.

The Sonata for oboe and piano, Op. 166, was the first of the three to be completed over the course of a couple of months in early 1921. The structure and lines of the sonata are not unlike what other French and neo-Classical composers were using around the same period. The final movement, Molto allegro, is almost dance-like with shades of the energy of Saint-Saëns' more youthful works. All in all, the sonata is a standard work in the oboe repertoire, giving the performer a gratifying match between technical challenges and melodic expression.

Sextet for winds in E flat, Op. 71

SrA Brian Wilmer, Clarinet
MSgt Christy Bailes, Clarinet
SrA Daniel Nebel, Horn
TSgt Scott Wise, Horn
A1C Daniel Shifren, Bassoon
MSgt Jeremiah True, Bassoon

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Ludwig van Beethoven wrote his Sextet for Winds in 1796, according to his biographer Alexander Thayer, although it was not performed until 1805 nor published until 1810, thus the work has an opus number that is much later than one would expect. Beethoven's early employer Maximilian Franz, the Archbishop and Elector of Cologne, believed that listening to wind music during dinner aided his digestion, so he regularly employed a wind ensemble consisting of pairs of oboes, clarinets, horns, and bassoons, so Beethoven was no doubt familiar with the ensemble.

The Sextet was premiered on a benefit concert for violinist Ignaz Schuppanzigh in Vienna in 1805, and the Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung described it as "a composition which shines resplendent by reason of its lively melodies, unconstrained harmonies, and a wealth of new and surprising ideas."

The four movements of the Sextet follow a typical classical style symphony consisting of an allegro-sonata, a beautifully expressive adagio, a traditional minuet and trio, and a rollicking rondo.

(Notes paraphrased from John Henken's notes for the Los Angeles Philharmonic)

Gershwin Medley

SSgt Robert Barnes, Piano

George Gershwin

(1898-1937)

George Gershwin was one of the most significant American composers of the 20th century. Known for popular stage & screen songs as well as classical compositions, his works are truly timeless. SSgt Robert Barnes put together a medley of his favorite tunes by Gershwin: *S'wonderful* from the 1927 Broadway musical "Funny Face", *Our love is here to stay* from "An American in Paris" in 1951, *Summertime* from the 1935 opera "Porgy & Bess", *Someone to watch over me* from the 1926 musical "Oh, Kay!", and *They can't take that away from me* from the 1937 film "Shall We Dance". You might even here a segment of *Rhapsody in Blue* interwoven throughout the medley.

Romance

A1C James Wright, Trombone
SSgt Robert Barnes, Piano

Carl Maria von Weber
(1786-1826)

Carl Maria von Weber was primarily a German operatic composer. His romantic style is evident throughout his Romance for Trombone. Weber's "Romance" was probably written between 1811 and 1821, which would put it towards the end of his life as one of his final works. There is no hard evidence that it was actually written by Weber from any source close to him, but since one of the first editions on record appeared with his name on it, he is given credit. Weber's Romance was almost surely not written for the trombone because some of the low registers of the work are not playable on historical instruments. The piece was more likely written for the oboe or bassoon. In any case, it has been adopted by trombonists, and is one of the most popular romantic works for the instrument.

Cantina Band from "Star Wars"

TSgt Timothy Shaw, Steel Drums
MSgt Coreen Levin, Oboe
SrA Alaina Shaw, Clarinet
SrA Daniel Nebel, Horn
A1C Daniel Shifren, Bassoon

John Williams
(b. 1932)

Figrin D'an and the Modal Nodes (also known as the Cantina Band), is a fictional band from the original Star Wars movie, which made its debut in 1977. The group of musicians are depicted as hairless aliens with dome-shaped heads and large, round black eyes and are a race known as the Bliths. The band had enjoyed popularity across the Galaxy during the Clone Wars, touring the frontlines and entertaining the Republic Soldiers. However, by the time they are featured in Star Wars, they have been reduced to playing in seedy cantinas for a living. Film composer John Williams was assigned to the U.S. Air Force Band in 1952 and spent 3 years active duty composing and arranging for the band.