

SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE, AND DANCE



**VIRTUOSO**  
SERIES CONCERT

*Cayla Bellamy*  
CSU FACULTY BASSOON

***THE NEW AMERICAN BASSOON - PART I***

SEPTEMBER 24, 2020 | 7:30 P.M

O R G A N R E C I T A L H A L L



Colorado State University

*THE NEW AMERICAN BASSOON – PART I*

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# P R O G R A M :

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**VIDEO INTRODUCTION** / JENNI BRANDON

**COLORED STONES** / JENNI BRANDON (B. 1977)

I. Smoky Quartz

II. Lapis Lazuli

III. Tiger's Eye

**VIDEO INTRODUCTION** / ALEX SHAPIRO

**DEEP** / ALEX SHAPIRO (B. 1962)

**VIDEO INTRODUCTION** / MARC MELLITS

**DARK MATTER** / MARC MELLITS (B. 1966)

**VIDEO INTRODUCTION** / CAYLA BELLAMY

**RED MAPLE** / JOAN TOWER (B. 1938)

WITH THE WATERLOO-CEDAR FALLS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
JASON WEINBERGER, CONDUCTOR

# PROGRAM NOTES

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The sound of the bassoon is historically recognized as that of the ancient, the foolish, and often the tragic. With a new wave of music for this unique instrument, composers of diverse backgrounds are celebrating its possibilities as a painter of the contemplative, lush, resilient, and metallic. This evening's program presents four new characters, individually introduced by the composers themselves and collectively depicting the rise of a new American sound for an old instrument.

The program opens with Jenni Brandon's **Colored Stones** to paint the qualities of three distinct stones: smoky quartz, lapis lazuli, and tiger's eye. Jenni writes that "some cultures and spiritual practices believe these stones have powerful qualities such as the ability to heal, protect, and offer spiritual guidance. The bassoon explores these beautiful stones' unique qualities." This work was the winner of the 2014 Bassoon Chamber Music Competition and has risen rapidly in popularity after its subsequent inclusion in the competition repertoire for the 2016 Meg Quigley Vivaldi Competition.

Turning from more active energies, Alex Shapiro's **Deep** invites our stillness and introspection and encourages us to both connect more deeply and consider the life that exists below us. Alex writes the following of her experience with *Deep*:

I want truth and nakedness in my music; I want honesty. I want the listener to feel my heart and have their own stirred by what I offer in sound.

**Deep** was commissioned by Carolyn Beck, who has been the inspiration for much of my bassoon music. I was touched by her excitement when a gorgeous new contrabassoon, affectionately named Moby, came into her life. Listening to the profound resonance of the tones the two made together returned me to the depths of the translucent sea that enveloped my body on a recent visit to Belize. The lower I sank, the more beauty greeted my eyes. The flat color of the surface had hidden the truth below.

Sometimes I make the mistake of believing that I'm not being unless I'm *doing* and *moving*. This piece was my challenge to myself to be still and present. And in doing so, I've never been as much before. Like the sea, my truth lies below, and I am happiest when I am immersed.

Inhale. Exhale.

In the sharpest contrast of the evening, Marc Mellits' *Dark Matter* removes all stillness and characteristic woodwind timbre by way of a highly processed electric bassoon, complete with six different pedal effects. A consortium of twelve bassoonists commissioned this work in 2018, and the resulting eight minutes distorts the acoustic bassoon's natural reedy, bass-driven sound to unrecognizable ends. Notes to the performer indicate a precisely ordered chain of stomp box pedals, activated in specific sequences, though without designation of any given distortion parameters. With this, the resulting timbres from each individual's performance vary wildly. Rather than a traditional stomp-box and pedal setup, tonight's performance utilizes a pick-up pre-amplifier soldered directly into a non-concert bassoon bocal and processed through an iPad virtual stomp-box, controlled via bluetooth pedal board, and broadcast into the live performance venue, where it blends with the residual acoustic bassoon sound. This is streamed to you the audience via area microphones.

The final work this evening is a rebroadcast of Joan Tower's *Red Maple*, her most recent concerto and third only for woodwinds, following concertos for clarinet (1988) and flute (1989). This subtle, single-movement concerto strives to highlight and celebrate the various "wooden" sounds of the bassoon itself as it pairs with the diverse sounds possible on string instruments, its fellow maple-constructed counterparts in the orchestra. Bassoonist Peter Kolkay performed the premiere of *Red Maple* with the South Carolina Philharmonic in 2013, followed by Adrian Morejon with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project in 2018. The performance you are about to see is the third public performance of this concerto, which took place March 7, 2020, shortly before the cancellation of the remainder of the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony Orchestra season due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you for joining tonight's exploration of the colorful, deep, dark, and wooden sounds through part one of this "new American bassoon" project. Stay tuned for part two, which will include two new timely and programmatic works with piano, a world premiere performance, and more.

# BIOGRAPHY



**DR. CAYLA BELLAMY** is assistant professor of bassoon at Colorado State University, where she teaches courses in applied bassoon, chamber music, and contemporary music performance. Prior to this appointment, she served as assistant professor of bassoon at the University of Northern Iowa, where she also held positions as contrabassoonist for the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony Orchestra and Des Moines Metro Opera and was the founding bassoonist of the Kairos Trio. In the 2019-2020 season, Cayla

performed several new American bassoon concerti, including works by Joan Tower, Libby Larsen, and James Stephenson, and she is an upcoming premiering soloist for John Steinmetz' newest commission, *The Illusion of Separateness*.

As an active chamber musician, she has performed at both national and international conferences for the International Double Reed Society, Flute New Music Consortium, International Clarinet Association, North American Saxophone Alliance, National Association of Wind and Percussion Instructors, and College Music Society. Cayla released her debut album in 2018 entitled *Double or Nothing* under the Mark Records label, a collection of previously unrecorded bassoon solos and duos, and she will be heard on the upcoming release of *A Bassoonist's World*, the newest album of William Ludwig (Indiana University) in collaboration with Steve Vacchi (University of Oregon), Amy Pollard (University of Georgia), and Danielle Batchelder (West Virginia Symphony).

A multifaceted performer and educator, Cayla has also served on the conducting faculties for the New York Summer School of the Arts, Emory Youth Symphony Orchestra, the theatre department and opera programs at the University of Northern Iowa, and the Gwinnett County Public Schools (GA). Offstage, she is an amateur triathlete, and her research focuses on coaching methodologies and the intersections of artistic and athletic training, currently investigating the factors affecting burnout in high performing individuals. Cayla completed the Doctor of Music degree from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music with minor field coursework in music education and arts administration, and she also holds Bachelor and Master of Music degrees in Music Education and Bassoon Performance from the University of Georgia, where she was distinguished as a National Presser Scholar.



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