

ORGAN RECITAL HALL THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 14 - 7:30PM

Grand Duos Recital



clarinetist WESLEY FERREIRA
pianist BRYAN WALLICK



COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

GRAND DUOS RECITAL

WESLEY FERREIRA, CLARINET
BRYAN WALLICK, PIANO

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Premiere Arabesque (1891)

Claude Debussy
(1862–1918)
arr. Berrod/Benzakoun

Grand Duo Concertant, Op.48 (1816)

Carl Maria von Weber
(1786 - 1826)

- I. Allegro con fuoco
- II. Andante con moto
- III. Rondo. Allegro

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano, No. 2 in E-flat major, Op. 120 (1894)

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

- I. Allegro amabile
- II. Appassionato, ma non troppo allegro
- III. Andante con moto - Allegro

Four Rags for Two Jons (2006)

John Novacek
(b. 1964)

- I. Schenectady
- II. 4th Street Drag
- III. Recuperation
- IV. Full Stride Ahead

PROGRAM NOTES:

Premiere Arabesque (from Deux Arabesques). Debussy's two arabesques were early works for piano, written when he was in his late twenties and beginning to come into his own as an "impressionist" composer. Drawing his ideas from the French symbolist movement in literature and art, which rejected naturalism and realism and embraced the enigmatic and indefinite, it was not uncommon for Debussy to talk about his music in artistic terms, as though the musical score was a work of visual art itself. Even the title of this early work, Deux Arabesques, equally references dance (a ballet position), prior musical tradition (the French Baroque dance form, which boasted an "Arabic" sound), and visual art (inspired by a complex, interlacing, and foliage-inspired pattern that references Islamic art). Debussy used the term "arabesque" to reference a wide range of music, though much of that exemplified the exoticism and filigree the term implies. This is certainly the case with his first Arabesque.

— Dr. Jessica Getman

Like Mozart before him and Brahms after, Carl Maria von Weber composed several important works for the clarinet that remain staples of the repertoire today. The well-known opera composer, Carl Maria von Weber's clarinet works (first and second Concertos, Concertino, Clarinet Quintet, Variations for clarinet and piano) were written for Heinrich Baermann, who was well known for his extreme musicality, and beautiful tone in all the registers. Interestingly enough, the **Grand Duo Concertant** is considered to have been written for Baermann's rival Johann Hermstedt, the muse for Louis Spohr's Clarinet Concertos.

The first movement, in E-flat major, opens with an animated theme, which quickly becomes more agitated as it moves toward G minor. A tranquil second theme in B-flat, however, soon emerges, and leads the movement into its development. Weber masterfully works out the material of the movement throughout the development section, and a recapitulation of the two major themes completes the sonata form movement. The middle *Andante* movement turns doleful as the key shifts to the relative minor, and a mournful theme presented by the clarinet is accompanied by low-voiced chords in the piano. At the close of the theme, the piano takes center stage from the clarinet by indulging in an extended solo section. The two instruments reunite with the reappearance of the principal melody in the key of C major, but the music inevitably turns back towards the minor concluding the movement beneath ominous dark clouds. The graceful opening rondo tune of the finale, however, dispels the gloom left by the *Andante*. Marked *Allegro*, the movement proceeds at an un-rushed pace, yet not without the energy necessary from a finale. Shadows briefly return during the second episode as a sustained melody in the clarinet appears atop tremolandi in the piano. However, the rondo tune makes its final return, and the movement concludes with brilliant writing for both instruments.

Weber began work on the piece in 1815. He wrote composed the rondo finale, then the middle *Andante*, and lastly, completed the first movement in November of the following year. Both instruments take on near equal roles throughout the work, stressing Weber's own virtuosity at the piano, and his ample knowledge of the clarinet. The Grand Duo Concertant, was first performed by Weber and Hermstedt in 1815 in Prague.

— Pamela Coats / Joseph DuBose

Around 1890, Brahms declared to friends and wrote to his publisher that he would retire as a composer. But he happened to witness a performance of the German clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld who Brahms called the greatest wind player in the world. Brahms was so inspired that he deferred his retirement long enough to write four final works all featuring the clarinet in a starring role. Comprising of a quintet, a trio and two sonatas, these last works have an aura that has been called autumnal due to the circumstances of Brahms' career, the mood of the music and the magic tone of the clarinet.

The **sonata in E-flat, Op. 120, No. 2** is the second of the two sonatas Brahms wrote for clarinet and piano. A glowing warmth pervades the first movement sonata perfectly matching word amabile in its title: sweet, tender, lovingly. The central movement is a lightly swaying scherzo typical of Brahms's intermezzi both in his chamber works and his late pieces for solo piano. The trio section of its ternary form takes a slightly more somber cast with music of a dignified procession, almost hymn-like, before the initial theme returns, slightly recast and developed to take on some of the solemnity of the trio. The finale begins with the same glowing warmth of the first movement merged with the poised promenade of the trio in the second movement suggesting a composite work of unified character with minimal contrasts. But this turns out to be a theme for generating a set of variations whose dreamy, almost wistful character once again suggests the indescribably gentle charm of the late piano intermezzi and these final clarinet compositions from this erstwhile lion of German romantic music softly humming his final notes.

Premiere performance on January 8, 1895 in Vienna at the Saal Bösendorfer with Richard Mühlfeld (clarinet) and Johannes Brahms (piano).

— Kai Christiansen

The captivating and eclectic world of American music comes alive in John Novacek's **Four Rags for Two Jons**, composed in 2006, for clarinetist Jon Manasse and pianist Jon Nakamatsu. The first movement, "Schenectady," is jaunty in rhythm: it starts out in a traditional Scott Joplin vein but quickly becomes wildly tricky in rhythm even as the clarinet part keeps a certain laid-back cool, with frequent glides from one note to the next that become more extravagant leaps near the end. The "4th Street Drag" is much slower and mellower; the title, alludes to the music's parallel fourths. "Recuperation" is brisk, and the concluding "Full Stride Ahead," with its abrupt pauses and changes of tempo, is more like a deconstruction of a rag. The whole suite is great fun. Novacek, a versatile composer, well-known arranger, and concert pianist, masterfully weaves together elements of ragtime, jazz, and classical idioms to create a vibrant and dynamic musical experience.

Four Rags for Two Jons by John Novacek serves as a celebration of both the rich history and the contemporary creativity of American music. Through his artful combination of ragtime, jazz, and classical elements, Novacek creates a captivating musical journey that bridges the past and the present. The suite's infectious rhythms, melodic charm, and virtuosic demands make it a thrilling showcase for pianists and a delightful experience for audiences, offering a glimpse into the musical tapestry that defines American musical innovation.

— John Milicia

BIOGRAPHIES:

With a charismatic blend of technical flair, polish, and grace, Portuguese-Canadian clarinetist **Wesley Ferreira** draws in audiences with his unabashed joy and passion for storytelling through music. Unafraid to display his uniqueness and originality, Wesley is widely considered a gifted expressionist whose engaging personality connects with people in an authentic and meaningful way. Equally at ease performing the masterworks as well as contemporary repertoire, he has been praised by critics for his “beautiful tone” and “technical prowess” (*The Clarinet Journal*) as well as his “remarkable sensitivity” (*CAML Review*). *Fanfare Magazine* notes, Ferreira is “clearly a major talent.”

As a recital clarinetist, his performances continually engage, prompting the Artistic Director of one recent concert series to remark that Ferreira “showcased a potent synthesis of serious musicianship, technical ferocity, and bravery of programming that was effectively tempered by a dynamic flair for showmanship. With this performance, Ferreira proved not only is he an artist of some consequence, but also a consummate showman capable of presenting even the most challenging works with the ease and fluency of a world-class player.”

Wesley leads an active and diverse career performing worldwide as soloist, orchestral and chamber musician, and as an engaging adjudicator, and clinician. Recent performances have taken him to Austria, Brazil, Canada, China, Ecuador, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, and Spain. Additionally, he has been broadcast nationally on RTP television in Portugal and on radio with the CBC in Canada and ABC in Australia. Currently based in the United States, he is part of the renowned faculty of Colorado State University’s School of Music, Theatre, and Dance where he maintains a thriving clarinet studio.

Wesley aims to live a life inspired by artistic and personal growth and to positively influence those around him. It comes as no surprise, then, his earned reputation as a skilled, dedicated, and imaginative educator. Certainly, his innovative teaching methods and outreach are acclaimed, including the development of the breath support training program for musicians, Air Revelation. Through knowledgeable instruction that integrates pedagogy, psychology, and philosophy, Wesley develops self-confidence in his students, empowering and mentoring them towards the achievement of career goals and unlocking their potential to become expressive, committed, and fearless performers in their own right. His teaching philosophy focuses on the whole human being, working to integrate musician - human - artist. Wesley continues to be deeply impacted by his heritage and unique upbringing. He credits much of his confidence, perseverance, and independent streak to the collective spirit of his immediate ancestors, all of whom hail from the Açores, a set of archipelago islands located in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. Born in Canada, Wesley grew up in an immigrant family within a tightly-knit Portuguese community, participating fully in the musical and traditional customs of the diaspora. A third-culture kid (TCK), his entry into music was through the Portuguese bandas filarmónicas tradition. From these humble beginnings Wesley has risen to impressive heights, paying homage to his past along the way. He has released three Portuguese-themed recordings including the 2019 solo album *Arrival* (on Centaur Records) which features works from prominent Portuguese composers. This advances his doctoral research of curating works for clarinet which included Portuguese folk elements. Indeed, as a means of artistic growth and furthering scholarship, Wesley demonstrates avid support for new music by frequently commissioning and premiering works, and he continues to champion Portuguese music in North America.

As a recording artist, appearing on eleven and with eight albums to his credit including the 2013 East Coast Music Awards winner - Classical Recording of the Year, and 2015 and 2023 International Portuguese Music Awards winner in the Instrumental Category, he continues what he describes as his “fruitful exploration of the recording art form.”

Wesley regularly engages in other artistic and musical projects including his work in the acclaimed clarinet and guitar duo Jâca. Through this uncommon pairing of instruments, Jâca combines classical and world music to bring an adventurous, passionate, and completely original musical style to the stage. However, it is not only through these avenues that we see Wesley’s exploration of increasingly stimulating projects and challenges. Of note, accepted the role of Artistic Director of the ClarinetFest® 2023 conference, a major event celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the International Clarinet Association. Undoubtedly, Wesley’s commitment to collaboration and advancing his field is further demonstrated when he was tapped by Selmer Paris in 2018 to be a lead consultant and team-developer on a new line of clarinets. In October 2021, the Muse professional clarinet was released to critical acclaim, and Wesley could not be more proud.

Wesley received his advanced musical training at the University of Western Ontario (B.M) and Arizona State University (M.M. and D.M.A) studying with Robert Riseling and Robert Spring, respectively. His industry endorsements include positions on the performing artist rosters of Selmer Paris and Vandoren. Wesley performs exclusively on Selmer Muse clarinets, and Vandoren BD4 mouthpiece, traditional reeds, and gold M/O ligature. To learn more, visit: www.wesleyferreira.com

Bryan Wallick is gaining recognition as one of the great American virtuoso pianists of his generation. Gold medalist of the 1997 Vladimir Horowitz International Piano Competition in Kiev, he has performed throughout the United States, Europe, and Africa.

Mr. Wallick made his New York recital debut in 1998 at Carnegie’s Weill Recital Hall and made his Wigmore Hall recital debut in London in 2003. He has also performed at London’s Queen Elizabeth Hall with the London Sinfonietta and at the St. Martin-in-the-Fields Church with the London Soloist’s Chamber Orchestra.

In recent seasons, Mr. Wallick has performed with the Arizona Musicfest All-Star Orchestra, Boise Philharmonic, Boulder Symphony, Brevard Symphony, Cape Town Philharmonic, Cincinnati Pops, Evansville Philharmonic, Fort Collins Symphony, Illinois Philharmonic, Johannesburg Philharmonic, Kentucky Symphony, Kwa-Zulu Natal Philharmonic, Memphis Symphony, Phoenix Symphony, Portland Symphony, Winston-Salem Symphony, Western Piedmont Symphony, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra; and collaborated with conductors Erich Kunzel, Marvin Hamlisch, Robert Moody, Daniel Raikin, Bernhard Gueller, Adrian Prabava, Daniel Boico, Arjen Tien, Yasuo Shinozaki, Andrew Sewell, Vladimir Verbitsky, Victor Yampolsky, Josep Vicent, Leslie Dunner, Alfred Savia, Christopher Confessore, Matthew Troy, and Wes Kenney among others. Mr. Wallick has performed recitals at the Chateau Differdange in Luxembourg, on the Tivoli Artists Series in Copenhagen, Ravinia’s Rising Star Series, Grand Teton Music Festival, Xavier Piano Series (Cincinnati), Scottsdale Center’s Virginia Piper Series, Sanibel Island Music Festival, Tri-C Classical Series at the Cleveland Museum of Art, and the Classics in the Atrium Series in the British Virgin Islands. In March

2002, Mr. Wallick played two solo performances at Ledreborg Palace for HRH Princess Marie Gabrielle Luxembourg, and HRH Prince Philip Bourbon de Parme.

Bryan Wallick is an avid chamber musician and has performed with violinists Nikita Borisoglebsky, Rachel Lee Priday, Yi-Jia Susanne Hou, Miriam Contzen, Sergei Malov, and cellists Zuill Bailey, Alexander Buzlov, Alexander Ramm, and Wolfgang Emmanuel Schmidt. He has recently joined the Mendelssohn Trio which is in residence at Colorado State University and most recently performed on a European tour with them in September 2022 visiting Switzerland, Austria and Germany. In 2015 he took over as Artistic Director of Schalk Visser/Bryan Wallick Concert Promotions which hosts many international musicians who perform concert tours throughout South Africa. Mr. Wallick was invited to be a guest soloist at the July 2019 International Keyboard Odysiad and Festival in Colorado and was also invited to judge the 2nd Olga Kern International Piano Competition in Albuquerque, New Mexico (November 2019). George Plimpton's feature article on Bryan Wallick appeared in the March 2002 edition of *Contents* magazine.

Bryan Wallick has performed on Chicago's WFMT *Fazioli Series* and "Live on WFMT," on BBC's radio show "In Tune," National Ukrainian Television and Radio, on Danish National Radio, and on NPR's "Performance Today." He was given a grant in 2006 by the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts to explore his synesthetic realities in a multimedia project that allows the audience to see the colors he experiences while performing. Synesthesia is the ability to experience two or more sensory experiences with one stimulus. Bryan Wallick sees colors with each musical pitch and has created a computer program that projects images of his colored visions to the audience.

Mr. Wallick studied with Jerome Lowenthal in New York City where he was the first Juilliard School graduate to receive both an undergraduate Honors Diploma (2000) and an accelerated master's Degree (2001). He continued his studies with Christopher Elton in London at the Royal Academy of Music where he was the recipient of the Associated Board International Scholarship, receiving a Post-graduate Diploma with Distinction. He previously studied with Eugene and Elisabeth Pridonoff from the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music. Mr. Wallick is assistant-professor of piano at Colorado State University where he lives with his wife and three children. His latest album entitled *Virtuosic Fugue* was released on Navona Records in July 2023 and is available everywhere.



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