

SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE, AND DANCE



VIRTUOSO
SERIES CONCERT

WESLEY FERRIERA

CSU FACULTY CLARINET

NEW AMERICAN FLAVORS

SEPTEMBER 15, 2022



Colorado State University



WESLEY FERREIRA, CLARINET
TIMOTHY BURNS, PIANO

SEPTEMBER 15, 2022 - 7:30 P.M. / ORGAN RECITAL HALL

GNARLY BUTTONS

JOHN ADAMS (B. 1947)

- I. The Perilous Shore
- II. Hoedown (Mad Cow)
- III. Put Your Loving Arms Around Me

INTERMISSION

PEACHES AT MIDNIGHT

THERESA MARTIN (B. 1979)

COOKBOOK

KENJI BUNCH (B. 1973)

- I. Smokehouse
- II. Bubbles
- III. Heirloom
- IV. La ultima noche en la case del Flamenco*

* Palmas: Copper Ferreira

COMPOSER'S NOTES:

Gnarly Buttons - The clarinet was my first instrument. I learned it from my father, who played it in small swing bands in New England during the Depression era. He was my first and most important teacher, sitting in the front room with me, patiently counting out rhythms and checking my embouchure and fingering. Benny Goodman was a role model, and several of his recordings—in particular the 1938 Carnegie Hall jazz concert and a Mozart album with the Boston Symphony Orchestra—were played so often in the house that they almost became part of the furniture.

Later, as a teenager, I played in a local marching band with my father, and I also began to perform the other clarinet classics by Brahms, von Weber, Bartók, Stravinsky, and Copland. During my high school years I played the instrument alongside him in a small community orchestra that gave concerts before an audience of mental patients at the New Hampshire State Hospital.

But strangely enough, I never composed for the instrument until I was almost fifty. By that time my father had died, and the set of instruments I had played as a boy, a Selmer A and B-flat pair, had traveled back and forth across the country from me to my father (who played them until he fell victim to Alzheimer's disease) and ultimately back to me. During the latter stages of my father's illness, the clarinets became an obsession for him, and this gentle, infinitely patient man grew more and more convinced that someone was intent upon breaking into his New Hampshire house and stealing them. Finally, one day, my mother found the disassembled instruments hidden in a hamper of laundry. It was the end of my father's life with the instrument. The horns were sent to me in California where they grew dusty and stiff, sitting in a closet. But I brought them out again when I began to compose *Gnarly Buttons*, and the intimate history they embodied, stretching from Benny Goodman through Mozart, the marching band, the State Hospital to my father's final illness, became deeply embedded in the piece.

The scoring underlines the folk and vernacular roots of the music: a banjo player (who also plays mandolin and guitar); a trombone, two low double reeds (English horn and bassoon); piano; two samplers playing a variety of sounds including sampled accordion, clarinet, and cow; and strings (either solo or multiple). The third movement, "Put Your Loving Arms Around Me", harkens back to the "Chorus of Exiled Palestinians" in its extreme simplicity: a diatonic melody set against a strummed continuum of chords. This idea became the basis for a much larger exploration in the 1998 work for large orchestra, *Naïve and Sentimental Music*. The "naïve" affect that Schiller identified in his famous essay, "On the Naive and

Sentimental in Poetry”, is an element so beautifully employed in Mahler...and so decidedly missing in most contemporary music.

“Gnarly” means knotty, twisted or covered with gnarls...your basic village elder’s walking stick. In American school kid parlance it takes on additional connotations of something to be admired: “awesome,” “neat,” “fresh,” etc. etc. The “buttons” are probably lingering in my mind from Gertrude Stein’s “Tender Buttons,” but my evoking them here also acknowledges our lives at the end of the 20th century as being largely given over to pressing buttons of one sort or another. NB; clarinets have rings and keys, not buttons.

The three movements are each based on a “forgery” or imagined musical model. The idea for this goes back to the imagined “foxtrot” of my 1986 piece, The Chairman Dances, music to which Madame and Chairman Mao dance and make love, believing my foxtrot to be the genuine article. In this spirit we may believe the genuine articles of Gnarly Buttons to be:

I. “The Perilous Shore”: a trope on a Protestant shape-note hymn found in a 19th century volume, The Footsteps of Jesus, the first lines of which are:

*O Lord steer me from that Perilous Shore
Ease my soul through tempest’s roar.
Satan’s leering help me firmly turn away
Hurl me singing into that tremulous day!*

The melodic line is twisted and embellished from the start, appearing first in monody and eventually providing both micro and macro material for the ensuing musical structures.

II. “Hoedown (Mad Cow)”: normally associated with horses, this version of the traditional Western hoedown addresses the fault lines of international commerce from a distinctly American perspective.

III. “Put Your Loving Arms Around Me”: a simple song, quiet and tender up front, gnarled and crabbed at the end.

— John Adams

Peaches at Midnight - One night at midnight my two-year-old son woke up and sweetly asked if he could have some peaches. Normally I would have said “no,” but the idea seemed so absurd and hilarious that I decided to allow him to come downstairs for a midnight snack. I even took a picture to commemorate the event. When sharing the story and picture with friends, the phrase “Peaches at Midnight” stuck with me and inspired me to write this piece.

The form of the piece is a “mirror” form, in which sections from the beginning return, but in the opposite order in which they first appeared. The beginning and the end suggest awakening and falling back asleep. The middle sections depict the joyful exuberance, creative imagination, energetic playfulness, and abrupt temperament changes of toddlers that make experiencing life with them so unpredictable and wonderful.

— Theresa Martin

Cookbook - I love food. I love haring it sizzle, smelling it waft out from other apartment doors, seeing it on a plate in front of me, and of course, I love eating it at any time, day or night. Cookbook for clarinet and piano was written in 2004 for clarinetist José Franch-Ballester. José and I share an appreciation for a variety of popular musical idioms, and it was his wish that this work somehow infuse those elements. The notion of blending together seemingly disparate ingredients recalled another of my creative passions, cooking. This work explores the parallels between cooking and musical composition, and on a more universal level, the parallels between the sensory experiences of the audible and the edible.

I. Smokehouse - I love the mysterious, soulful, and rich flavors a few hours in the smokehouse can elicit. I relate this image, musically, to a smoky nightclub where unknown figures murmur, laugh, and prowl about in the dark smoky haze, and at times dare to dance the tango.

II. Bubbles - Always a hopeful sign of imminent activity in a pot or pan, I wanted to capture the fleeting and fun energy of bubbles with this percolating perpetual motion. Here I refer to the bubbly rapid fire of bebop jazz, with a sudden switch to the world of opera buffs, and including the bubbles found in a champagne glass.

III. Heirloom - The idea of growing new tomatoes from old seeds is a wonderful metaphor for passing on authentic traditions and memories from one generation to the next. This movement offers a nostalgic “Old World” waltz wrapped up in a more contemporary,

plaintive ode. I mark the waltz “Tempo di Kreisler,” in honor of one of the violin heroes of my youth, the great Fritz Kreisler.

IV. La ultima noche en la case del Flamenco - (translated as “The last night at the House of Flamenco”, this movement commemorates an unforgettable experience I had enjoying a delicious Spanish meal and watching a live Flamenco ensemble at a tiny restaurant in Brooklyn, near my home. I went back to the House of Flamenco a month later only to find that the owners had lost their lease after thirty some years, and were forces to close down. This movement is my humble tribute to that wonderful evening, which remains one of the most riveting live performances I have ever witnessed.

— Kenji Bunch

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 for 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. Additionally, he is co-founder and artistic director of the Lift Clarinet Academy, a summer music festival and training institute which attracts students from around the world.

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. In fact, 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, with ten albums to his credit including the 2013 East Coast Music Awards winner - Classical Recording of the Year, and 2015 International Portuguese Music Awards winner in the Instrumental Category, he continues what he describes as his fruitful exploration of the recording art form. Wesley released his latest solo album *Into the Green* on the Ravello Records label in April 2022. The album consists of solo works for clarinet and electronics. His second album of the year is set for release in October 2022 on the Navona Records label. It is the debut album of his 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, he has 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 2017 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 Ríseling 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, reeds, and gold M/O ligature. To learn more, visit: www.wesleyferreira.com



Pianist **Timothy Burns** is a versatile performer and collaborator, with significant instrumental, vocal, and choral accompanying experience. He holds degrees in piano performance, music theory pedagogy, and collaborative piano from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, studying with Carol Schanely-Cahn, David Allen Wehr, and Jean Barr. Currently, Dr. Burns serves as supervisor of piano accompanying and coordinator of piano proficiency at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, where he frequently collaborates with faculty, guest artists, and students.

Dr. Burns has performed throughout the United States and Canada. He has served as staff accompanist for the 2010 King Award Competition, the 2012 International Viola Congress, the 2013 International Society of Bassists Competition and Conference, the 2017 and 2019 International Horn Competition of America, and the 2019 International Keyboard Odysiad, U.S.A. Recent performances include concert tours with saxophonist Peter Sommer, with clarinetist Wesley Ferreira, and as trio member with violinist John Michael Vaida and cellist Theodore Buchholz. Other major performances include the world premiere of James David's *Swing Landscapes* (2018) for Piano and Wind Orchestra, duo performances with clarinetist Wesley Ferreira at the 2016 ClarinetFest International Conference, and a 2015 chamber music performance on the Frick Collection's "Salon Evening" concert series in New York City with members of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra.

As an avid supporter for new and current music, Dr. Burns has performed works by current composers such as Mari Esabel Valverde, Margaret Brouwer, Mathjis van Dijk, Baljinder Sekhon, and James M. David. Past summer residences have included the New York State Summer School of the Arts Choral Studies Program in Fredonia, New York, the Performing Arts Institute at the Wyoming Seminary near Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, the Eastman School of Music's "Summer@Eastman" program in Rochester, New York, the Lift Clarinet Academy in Fort Collins, Colorado, and the Just Chamber Music program in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Dr. Burns currently resides in Broomfield, Colorado with his wife and collaborative pianist, Suyeon Kim, and his four-year old son, Stephen.

UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

FLORENCE PRICE: *SYMPHONY NO. 3*
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN: *SYMPHONY NO. 5 IN C MINOR*

A Dark and Stormy Night.

CONDUCTED BY
Wes Kenney

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22 AND
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 7:30 P.M.

Griffin Concert Hall



COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

CSUARTSTICKETS.COM



FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF
SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE, AND DANCE EVENTS

PLEASE VISIT:
WWW.CSUARTSTICKETS.COM

