

THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE, AND DANCE PRESENTS

VIRTUOSO SERIES CONCERT

GALIT KAUNITZ, OBOE
WITH **MICHAEL BUNCHMAN**, PIANO

BURIED TREASURE

*The Forgotten Music of
Elizabeth Gyking*

JANUARY 27, 2025 | 7:30 P.M.

ORGAN RECITAL HALL



COLORADO STATE
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VIRTUOSO SERIES CONCERT:

GALIT KAUNITZ, OBOE, AND MICHAEL BUNCHMAN, PIANO

BURIED TREASURE: THE FORGOTTEN MUSIC OF ELIZABETH GYRING

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PROGRAM

Concerto for Oboe and String Orchestra

Elizabeth Gyring (1886-1970)

- I. Maestoso
- II. Adagio
- III. Rondo (Finale)

Suite for Oboe and Piano

Elizabeth Gyring

- I. Andantino cantabile
- II. Theme and Variation
- III. Concert Piece

Sonata in B minor for Oboe and Piano, Op. 3

Alexander Wunderer (1877-1955)

- I. Andante
- II. Tempo giusto
- III. Adagio ma non troppo
- IV. Presto

PERFORMER BIOS

Oboist **GALIT KAUNITZ** is the Assistant Professor of Oboe at Colorado State University. She is a seasoned pedagogue with an active performing career including solo, chamber music, and orchestral concerts across the United States.

Galit explores themes of culture and identity through her solo and chamber music recitals. She is dedicated to expanding the canon to include works by underrepresented and displaced composers and enthusiastically collaborates with composers to commission new works for the oboe. She is rediscovering the music of Elizabeth Gyring, a Viennese Jewish composer who was displaced by World War II. In collaboration with pianist Michael Bunchman and musicologist Barbara Dietlinger, Galit is performing and recording Gyring's works for oboe so they may be rightfully enjoyed by oboists and audiences everywhere. Galit's research interests are not limited to historic rediscovery. She recorded *All Are Welcome: Works for Oboe and Bassoon* with Jacqueline Wilson, bassoon, and Fabio Menchetti, piano, on Washington State University Recordings in 2022. *All Are Welcome* is the culmination of the Double Reed Dish Commission Consortium project and includes works by Connor Chee, Kate Pukinskis, Mason Bynes, and Brin Solomon. Galit has been invited to perform both solo and chamber music repertoire at International Double Reed Society conferences (2015, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2024), and College Music Society National Conferences (2015, 2019).

Galit is an experienced orchestral musician. During her time in the southeast, she performed with the Mobile, Baton Rouge, Meridian, Gulf Coast, and Mississippi Symphony Orchestras and the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra. This season, she has been invited to perform with the Colorado Symphony, Colorado Bach Ensemble, Wyoming and Cheyenne Symphony Orchestras, and the Greeley Philharmonic Orchestra.

Galit is grateful to have studied under Eric Ohlsson, Rebecca Henderson, Humbert Lucarelli, and Marilyn Krentzman. She is proud to be a Marigaux artist and plays on a Marigaux 901/901P. She lives in Colorado with her wife and three rambunctious dogs.

Pianist Michael Bunchman maintains a fulfilling schedule as a collaborative pianist with both singers and instrumentalists throughout the United States and abroad. He is currently on faculty at the University of Southern Mississippi as the director of the Collaborative Piano Program, where he is honored to coach, teach and guide the next generation of collaborative pianists in both vocal and instrumental repertoire. He has given masterclasses at such institutions as Arizona State University, University of Texas at Austin, North Carolina School of the Arts, Texas Christian University, Illinois State University, Troy and the University of Albany

to name a few. Prior to working at the University of Southern Mississippi, Dr. Bunchman served as coordinator of Collaborative Piano at Truman State University from 2015 to 2017.

Dr. Bunchman maintains an active performance schedule outside of his work in academia. He has spent six seasons as a principal coach and collaborative pianist at the Utah Festival Opera and Musical Theater, as well as appointments with the Natchez Festival of Music and Las Cruces Symphony Orchestra. His many collaborations with opera companies also include Santa Barbara Opera, Opera Saratoga, the Princeton Festival and El Paso Opera. He has performed collaborative recitals with members of the Atlanta Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony and soloist from the Metropolitan Opera to name a few. In January 2024, he played a chamber concert in Carnegie Hall's Weill Hall to a sold-out crowd. Active as a concerto soloist, Dr. Bunchman has performed with the Festival Música nas Montanhas, in Poços de Caldas, Brazil, Ridgefield Symphony, the Breckenridge Music Festival, the Antara Ensemble in New York City, the Utah Festival Opera Orchestra and the National Repertory Orchestra.

In the summer of 2017 Dr. Bunchman had the honor to be counted among the amazingly diverse and talented group of artists of *A Prairie Home Companion*, hosted by Garrison Keillor, on their multi-city European cruise. In 2024 Dr. Bunchman was named the Executive director of the Institute of the Performing Arts, International (IPAI) in Bavaria, Germany. In addition, Dr. Bunchman has served as the Director of Collaborative Piano at IPAI since 2018.

Dr. Bunchman holds a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance from the University of Colorado at Boulder, a Master of Music in Piano Performance from the Peabody Conservatory, and a Doctor of Musical Arts in Collaborative Piano Performance from the University of Texas at Austin. He spent three summers at the prestigious Aspen Music Festival. His teachers have included Anne Epperson, Rick Rowley, Marian Hahn, Joseph Kalichstein, Antoinette Perry, Adrienne Sielaff and Doris Pridonoff-Lehnert.

PROGRAM NOTES

In May 2022, I visited the Moldenhauer Music Manuscript Exchange Transaction Records Collection at Washington State University in search of handwritten scores by Elizabeth Gyring. I had come across the name Elizabeth Gyring—a Viennese, Jewish composer—and was intrigued by her story, which mirrored my own family’s experiences during World War II. My grandmother, Ursula, fled Berlin in 1939, the same year Gyring left Vienna. Both Elizabeth and Ursula eventually arrived in the same place: New York City.

Gyring was a rising star in the world of Viennese composers. She studied with Arnold Schoenberg, and their friendship—along with that of his student Alban Berg—is documented in surviving letters. Her musical accomplishments are well documented. In 1926 the *Wiener Zeitung*, a Viennese newspaper, wrote that her quintet for clarinet and strings was “cultivated and shows superb tone color.” She was praised for her talent and her music was performed by many notable ensembles, including the Vienna Philharmonic. She stayed for a brief time in London before continuing to New York, and her compositions impressed the musicians she met during her time there. The first solo cellist of the Vienna Philharmonic and State Opera, Friedrich Buxbaum, remarked, “this hard-working woman will surely have every opportunity available in every country and institution that cares for good music and progress. The city that she will choose will gain a valuable person.” Russian composer Julius Isserlis noted that her “compositions are original in harmony and structure and proof of her great gifts and mastery.” First oboist of the Vienna Philharmonic Alexander Wunderer, a composer himself whose Sonata for Oboe will appear later in this program, wrote that her work “exploits to the full the possibilities of wind instruments” and counts her compositional style as “original, modern, and not atonal.”

Gyring’s compositional voice is uniquely her own. She writes in the late Romantic style of Schoenberg and Strauss while simultaneously ignoring basic compositional rules. Her ideas flash quickly between characters, and the harmonic complexity remains subservient to the melodies. In the words of musicologist Dr. Barbara Dietlinger, “Gyring’s compositional style is neither a pale imitation of Schoenberg’s atonal style, nor his twelve-tone technique. It is the development of the thematic material, the shape of the melodies, the relationship of the harmonic sounds, and the ways all these elements grow into a convincing unity, all in a late-Romantic fashion.”

Gyring faced many challenges as in her new country. A new language, difficult financial position, and status as a female Jewish refugee all contributed to her meager compositional success, despite writing prolifically until her death in 1970. Performances of her music was

infrequent and subject to mixed reviews. One particularly bad one came from the *New York Times* in 1961: “a movement of a Wind Quintet by Gyring ha[d] a sort of wrong-note classicism that might have made greater impression if it had not been handicapped by a rather heavy rhythmic texture.” Her husband, Otto Geiringer, speculated about her curious lack of recognition in 1947: “[Elizabeth] has tried in vain to be recognized musically in the U.S. Thus far it did not bear any fruits. She has composed numerous, and from what I hear, good pieces, but it is almost impossible for to achieve something for a non-American born. She is not discouraged. She diligently keeps up her work.” Gyring herself wrote, “Maybe I am not entirely to blame for not having gained prominence. Maybe, it was lack of talent, but again, maybe, it was lack of opportunity and connections.” We cannot know whether her lack of success was because of her status as an immigrant, woman, or because she was Jewish, but we do know that in a letter to a publishing house, Gyring requested that her first name be published with the first initial only to avoid possible gender bias and revealing her suspicion that her identity as a woman was holding her back.

Gyring’s Concerto for Oboe and String Orchestra is undated but is likely either written in 1939, when Gyring came to the United States, or after 1950. Gyring transcribed the second and third movements of this concerto, giving it the title Adagio and Rondo. She likely reduced the string parts for piano to encourage more performances, though why she did not include the first movement is still a mystery. For tonight’s performance, I owe my deepest gratitude to Dr. Rebecca Chambers and Dr. Michael Bunchman, who spent many hours transcribing the first movement for oboe and piano.

The Suite for Oboe and Piano was composed in 1949 and is a charming three movement work. When compared to the Concerto, the Suite is light and pleasant while the Concerto feels quite a bit denser and more serious. Together, these pieces show Gyring’s range of compositional skill and her unique compositional voice.

This Virtuoso Series recital is part of a larger, long-term project by Dr. Galit Kaunitz, Dr. Michael Bunchman, and Dr. Barbara Dietlinger to bring Gyring’s music out from the shadows. Thanks to the Moldenhauer Music Manuscript Exchange Transaction Records Collection at Washington State University, we can immerse ourselves in Gyring’s world and bring her music into the light. We are recording these works at Washington State University in February 2025 and are collaborating on critical editions so oboists everywhere can play her music. This project is not possible without Bunchman, Dietlinger, Chambers, and the support of the Colorado State University School of Music, Theatre, and Dance and the College of Liberal Arts.

— Program notes adapted from a lecture by Dr. Barbara Dietlinger given on October 17, 2023.

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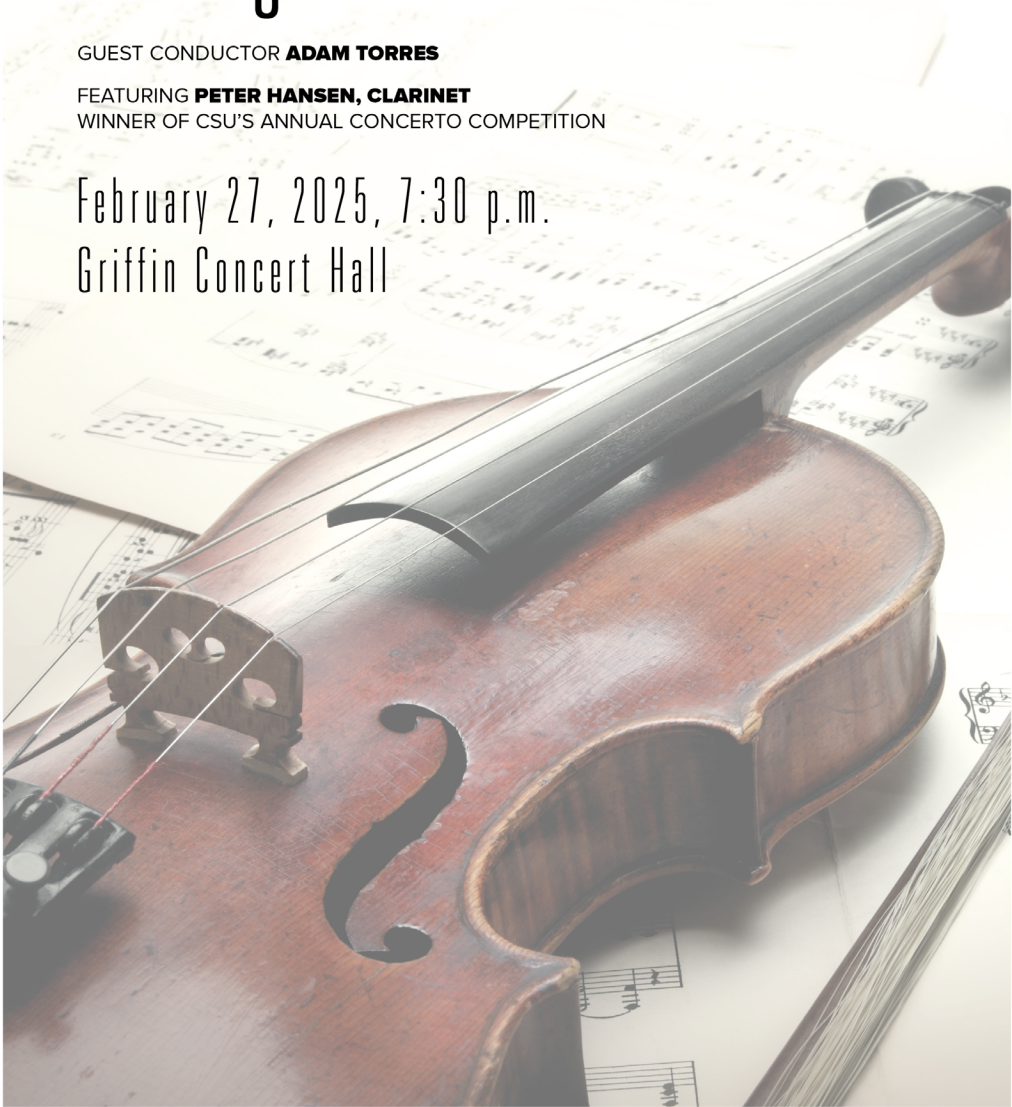
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