

 **Bard College Conservatory of Music**

**Instrumental Arts Recital**

**Maya Yokanovich, clarinet**

**Saturday, May 6, 2023 at 1:30 pm**  
**László Z. Bitó '60 Conservatory Building**

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Cantilène

Louis Cahuzac (1880-1960)

Viktoria Sarkadi, *piano*

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano, FP184

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Allegro tristamente

Romanza

Allegro con fuoco

Viktoria Sarkadi, *piano*

Hommage á Manuel De Falla

Béla Kovács (1937-2021)

Clarinet Trio in A minor, Op.114

Johannes Brahms (1833-97)

Allegro

Adagio

Andantino grazioso

Allegro

Neilson Chen, *piano*

Chris van Zyl, *cello*

## Cantilene, Louis Cahuzac

Louis Cahuzac (1880-1960) was a renowned clarinetist and conductor in Europe during the first half of the twentieth century. Cahuzac studied at the Paris Conservatoire with Cyrille Rose, composer of the most widely-used etude repertoire book in the clarinet curriculum. Cahuzac worked with many composers, most notably Claude Debussy and Igor Stravinsky, as he performed their famous clarinet works; Debussy's Première Rhapsodie and Stravinsky's Three Pieces for Clarinet. Cantilène, which translates to "song" or "melody," features a sustained lyrical melody and relaxed accompaniment. Throughout the piece, the melody is given to the piano while the clarinet sustains held notes.

## Clarinet Sonata, FP184 Francis Poulenc (1962)

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963) was a member of Les Six, a group of prominent French composers in the 1920's. The group was united by their disdain for French impressionism (Debussy and Ravel) and German romanticism (Wagner and Strauss). The composers in Les Six chose to write more simplified and sophisticated music. The Clarinet Sonata was one of Poulenc's final works written in 1962. The piece is dedicated to his longtime friend and colleague in Les Six, Arthur Honneger who passed away in 1955. The piece was premiered shortly after Poulenc's death in 1963 by clarinetist Benny Goodman and pianist Leonard Bernstein. The first movement "Allegro tristamente" (fast sad) begins with a skittish theme broken up between clarinet and piano. A new mood emerges half way through the movement as a melancholy theme is introduced evoking a sense of longing. "Romanza" is a heartbreaking movement full of emotion. The long sustained notes in the clarinet create a haunting yet hopeful melody. The third and final movement, marked "Allegro con fuoco," is a quick virtuosic movement featuring a jazzy melody in homage to the great Benny Goodman for whom the piece was commissioned.

## Hommage á Manuel De Falla, Béla Kovács (1994)

In 1944, Hungarian clarinetist Béla Kovács composed a collection of nine solo works. Each of the pieces are written in homage to a different composer in which Kovács masterfully emulates the unique style of each. The nine hommages include tributes to Bach, Paganini, Weber, Debussy, de Falla, Strauss, Bartók, Kodály, and Khatschaturian. Kovács's method in writing these pieces involved a sort of musical borrowing. He would either borrow ideas from a certain piece by that composer or simply borrow their melodic and harmonic language. The Hommage á Manuel de Falla is a tribute to the Spanish composer known for his dance-like rhythms and folk melodies. The piece is composed in the style of a traditional Spanish dance known as flamenco. Kovács wrote this for unaccompanied clarinet with the intent of the clarinet emulating multiple instruments, such as a trumpet fanfare and, towards the end of the piece, the sound of strumming a guitar.

## Clarinet Trio in A minor, Op.114, Johannes Brahms (1891)

By 1890, the romantic composer Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) had decided his best works were behind him and he would retire from his illustrious composition career. He remarked, "I have worked enough; now let the young folks take over." In 1891, Brahms encountered a talented clarinetist by the name of Richard Mühlfeld. He found himself enamored with the sound of the clarinet and was inspired to compose again. In the following three years, Brahms composed four works featuring clarinet: two sonatas, a quintet, and a trio. In each of these, Brahms embraces and writes to support the warm and mellow sounds of the clarinet. The clarinet trio contains a wealth of romantic themes, moods, and developments balanced amongst the three instruments. The first and final movements display a melancholic, romantic theme in the opening cello line that is answered by the clarinet. The inner movements are characterized by their highly expressive melodic lines and the utilization of each instrument's full range. One of Brahms's close friends stated, "It is though the instruments were in love with each other."

**Maya Yokanovich** is a clarinetist from Minneapolis, Minnesota with a passion for chamber and orchestral music. Maya graduated with degrees in Sociology and Clarinet Performance from the University of Minnesota in 2022 where she received her training from clarinetists Jennifer Gerth and Sang Yoon Kim. She has performed in venues such as Orchestra Hall and the Kennedy Center. As a soloist, Maya performed the Weber Clarinet Concerto no.1 with string orchestra in 2018. She has performed multiple recitals featuring solo works ranging from Debussy, Mozart, Stravinsky, and Saint-Saens. Maya is an avid chamber musician most recently performing works by Bruch, Mozart, Brahms, and Mendelssohn. Maya is passionate about collaborating with a wide range of musicians and playing in different musical styles. She teaches a small private studio of clarinetists ranging from beginners to advanced students.

In 2022, Maya began her Masters Degree at Bard Conservatory where she studies with NY Philharmonic clarinetist, Pascual Martinez Forteza and renowned soloist, David Krakauer. Maya performs with the Bard Conservatory Orchestra under the direction of Leon Botstein.

**Viktória Sarkadi** is a Hungarian collaborative pianist and music educator. She has earned her bachelor's and master's degree in performance at The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland(RCS), and upon graduating, she became Collaborative Pianist at The University of Edinburgh's music department. As a chamber musician, she has performed in venues across Europe and the UK, and is regularly appearing in competitions alongside singers and instrumentalists, as well as in special events, notably, a celebratory concert for Classic FM's 25th anniversary in the presence of HRH King Charles, and Members of the Parliament's visit to The RCS. She has worked

with the charity organization Live Music Now, aiming to bring live music to people of vulnerable groups, including people in hospitals, hospices, care homes. She is passionate about making music accessible outside of traditional spaces. From 2019, she is co-artistic director and chamber music coach of the Allegro Summer School in Hungary, an annual short course introducing the early experiences of chamber music to children aged 9-18. Viktoria is currently in her first year as Collaborative Piano Fellow at Bard Conservatory.

**Dr. Po Hsun (Neilson) Chen** a native of Taiwan is a highly sought-after recitalist and collaborative pianist whose dazzling technique and thoughtful interpretations have been praised by the L.A. Times as “stunning.” A doctoral graduate of Arizona State University, Dr. Chen also holds two Master of Music degrees from Taipei University of the Arts and University of Texas at Austin. Over the course of his career, Neilson has been the recipient of many prestigious honors and awards, including winning the inaugural duo competition at Music Academy of the West in 2019. As an active recitalist, chamber music artist and collaborative pianist, Neilson has performed extensively throughout the United States and given performances in Canada, Germany, Luxemburg, France, Ireland, Japan, South Korea. Highlights include performing at the National Concert Hall in Taiwan in conjunction with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and a performance of Tchaikovsky’s Piano Trio in A minor, Op.50, “In Memory of a Great Artist” on the Tempe Center for the Arts’ concert series Performance with a View. Besides these accomplishments, Neilson is highly active in his community and passionate about promoting new works by a new generation of composers. Dr. Chen is currently serving as a Collaborative Pianist at Bard College Conservatory of Music and Collaborative Piano Artist in Residence at Meadowmount School of Music. More info at [www.neilsonchenpianist.com](http://www.neilsonchenpianist.com).

**Christiaan van Zyl** started his career as cellist at the age of seven under the tutelage of Michael Haller, then cellist of the Odeion String Quartet at the University of the Free State. In 2011, he was appointed principal cellist of the Stellenbosch Chamber Music Festival Orchestra, and performed the solo cello part in the world premiere of "Kasi", composed by Hendrik Hofmeyr. In 2012, he obtained the Advanced Performance Certificate in cello (Trinity College London) with distinction and was awarded the Trinity College Exhibition Award for the highest achievement in cello in South Africa. In 2013, he joined the OSM Camerata and participated in the International Orchestra Festival in St Petersburg, Russia. In 2016, Chris attended master classes at the Gulbenkian Institute in Portugal under Varoujan Bartikian. In 2018, he toured as the principal cellist with the MIAGI orchestra which included performances in world-renowned concert halls like the Elbphilharmonie (Hamburg), the Royal Concertgebouw (Netherlands) and the Konzerthaus (Berlin). Chris is currently enrolled for his Master’s degree in music performance at Bard College Conservatory of Music and studies in the studio of cellist Peter Wiley.