The PEN Trio

LYNN
Conservatory of Music
Nora Lewis, oboe
Phillip O. Paglialonga, clarinet
Eric Van der Veer Varner, bassoon

Guest Artist Recital Program
Lynn University
March 11th, 2015, 7:30pm
Amarnick-Goldstein Concert Hall

In Threes (2011) M. Shawn Hundley

Found Objects: On the Beach (2013) Jenni Brandon
   I. Tumbled Stones
   II. Kelly Green Sea Glass
   III. Driftwood
   IV. Black Feather on the Sand
   V. White Sea Glass
   VI. Seashells

Intermission

Triple Dances (2014) Jon Jeffrey Grier
   I. Minuet and Duos
   II. Sarabande, after Händel
   III. A Freakin’ Gigue

5•4•3 (except after C) (2013) William Bradbury
   I. Freely, quietly
   II. Presto
   III. Majestic
   IV. Suspended, gently
   V. Forceful, dynamic
In Threes
Premiered at Radford University on October 24, 2011 by the PEN Trio.
Program Notes by Composer M. Shawn Hundley.

In Threes in reference to several ongoing ideas in this work. A few of them are quite obvious; others I will leave to the discretion of the listener. Essentially, the work begins with a recurring tutti separated by a solo section for each instrument. The music is never restated exactly the same way twice and gets a little more agitated each time. The final solo for the bassoon leads directly into the concluding section, which has some features reminiscent of the fugue. This work is dedicated to and premiered by the PEN Trio.

Found Objects: On the Beach
Premiered at the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music on September 30, 2013 by the PEN Trio.
Program Notes by Composer Jenni Brandon.

I have always loved the idea of finding objects in nature and knowing that they have a story to tell. It was while taking walks on the beach during the winter of 2013 in Long Beach, California when I spotted the black feather on the sand and wondered what its story was. Where was the bird it came from? Where had the bird travelled and how had that feather helped in this flight? As I began to see more objects on the beach – stones, shells, driftwood, even sea glass during those winter afternoons on the beach – I thought about their stories and how I might tell them. In “Tumbled Stones,” the ocean tosses and tumbles the stones in the waves, creating smooth stones, angular stones, and patterned stones through years of being in the ocean and on the sandy ocean floor. The Sea Glass solo movements tell of the beautiful colors of tumbled pieces of glass, tossed much like the stones by the sea. Once part of a jar or a bottle, these pieces of glass now reflect the smoothness that comes from years of the ocean’s effects. Also on the beach that winter was a gnarled, twisted, dark brown piece of driftwood. I imagined this piece of wood, drifting sadly on a lonely, cold sea. In “Driftwood” the movement ebbs and flows with the tide, the wood coming to rest on the sand near a black feather, which remembers its joyful, soaring flight. In the final movement “Seashells,” a joyful waltz tells the story of these beautiful, varied shells; colorful and scattered across the beach as far as the eye can see. These many shells form the backdrop on the sand, as the other “found objects” come to rest on the beach from the sea.

It is an honor to have the PEN Trio perform this work and to bring to life the stories of these found objects on the beach.
Triple Dances  
Premiered at the Greenville Fine Arts on November 5, 2014 by the PEN Trio.  
Program Notes by Composer Jon Jeffrey Grier.
This is a brief set of stylized dances that retain just enough character of their Baroque models to be recognizable as such.

I. Minuet & Duos  
In the minuet and trio, a popular stylized dance in triple meter of the 18th century, the trio section was typically contrasted by its thinner and simpler texture. Here the trio is thinned from 3 voices to 2, but the canons in the duets make for more complexity rather than less.

II. Sarabande, after Händel  
This is a paraphrase of the Sarabande from the Suite for Keyboard (Suite de piece), Vol.2, No.4 in D minor, HWV 437, by George Frederick Handel (1685-1759). As in Handel’s original, this is a set of variations, but in reverse of the more usual order—it becomes very quickly more ornate and tonally vague, and then slowly thins out and assumes a more traditional harmonic language.

III. A Freakin’ Gigue  
Usually reserved for the last dance of a suite, the 18th century gigue featured a fast tempo, triple divisions of the beat, and imitation between the parts. This one is true to that model and exaggerates the rollicking character of the gigue in two and a half minutes of maniacal laughter.

5•4•3 (except after C)  
Premiered at Miami University on October 5, 2013 by the PEN Trio.  
Program Notes by Composer William Bradbury.  
I was lucky enough to study gamelan for several years with Indonesian master musician Sumarsam while I was in graduate school. As a composer I was intrigued with the exciting pentatonic (five note) compositions in that tradition. A number of years ago I wrote a piece for flute, piano and bass entitled 5•4•3 (five notes for three players) that used only five pitches; I found it to be an interesting compositional challenge. In writing this new piece for the PEN Trio, I revisited the idea and began composing with a different set of five notes (the pentatonic scale is presented at the beginning and end of the piece and in used extensively throughout). As the composition unfolded, however, I felt somewhat limited by this constraint so I added a new “rule”; I would compose strictly pentatonic music with the caveat that I could insert the note C (which is not in the original scale) when it felt right. After any C the piece could go wherever it needed and use the full chromatic scale for a time. Then it returns to the pentatonic music... Hence the name 5•4•3 (except after C). The work is in several sections, with a middle section in C minor. Nearly all the rest is pentatonic music (with a few brief forays into chromatic territory). Many thanks to the wonderful musicians in the PEN Trio for commissioning and premiering this piece.
The **PEN Trio** was established in 2010 by Nora Lewis, Phillip O. Paglia longa, and Eric Van der Veer Varner to explore and expand the repertoire for the traditional *Trio d’Anches*. The ensemble has appeared throughout the United States and Canada, and has quickly become known for the quality and energy of their performances. The group has visited dozens of universities, and has performed at numerous academic conferences, chamber music series, and private functions. Recent highlights include featured performances at the College Music Society National Conference, International Double Reed Society Conference, as well as featured performances on both Michigan and Alabama Public Radio.

The trio is passionate about the music of our time and has premiered new works by several distinguished composers including: William Bradbury, Jenni Brandon, Allen Cohen, M. Shawn Hundley, and Aleks Sternfeld-Dunn. The 2014-5 season will include premieres of works by Jon Jeffrey Grier and Peter James Learm. The trio has also recently partnered with TrevCo Music Publishing to create the **PEN Trio Collection**, which features critical editions of existing works as well as works written for the **PEN Trio**.

More information about the **PEN Trio** is available online at www.PENtrio.com
Nora Lewis is Associate Professor of Music at Kansas State University, where she teaches oboe, music history, and chamber music. She is oboist in the Konza Winds faculty quintet at KSU and in the PEN Trio. For the past ten summers she has enjoyed teaching and performing at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Michigan. Lewis has performed with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Wichita Symphony Orchestra, Camerata Chicago, Boston Lyric Opera, and International Contemporary Ensemble and has held positions in the Elmhurst Symphony, Plymouth Philharmonic, and was a founding member of Ensemble dal Niente. Lewis has performed or presented at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago, six International Double Reed Society conferences, the College Music Society’s (CMS) International, National, and Regional conferences, at the National Conference for NACWPI (National Association for College Woodwind and Percussion Instructors), and CBDNA’s Southwest Regional Conference. She has also presented at Music Educator’s Association conferences in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Tennessee and has given master classes and performances at more than forty universities nationwide, as well as in the United Kingdom, Canada, and Haiti. Lewis has written articles for several publications including The Instrumentalist and currently serves as a consulting editor for that publication. Lewis was honored to receive a Yale Alumni Ventures Award to help support her work with L’École de Musique Dessaix-Baptiste in Jacmel, Haiti, a Big-12 Faculty Fellowship to collaborate with colleagues at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and distinguished membership in Sigma Alpha Iota, as a National Arts Associate. Lewis received a bachelor of music degree in performance and a bachelor of arts degree in philosophy from Lawrence University, a master of music degree from Yale University, and a doctor of music degree from Northwestern University. Nora Lewis is a Buffet Group USA Performing Artist/Clinician and plays Buffet Greenline oboes exclusively.
Phillip O. Paglialonga currently serves on the faculty at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia. Previously he held positions with the Sarasota Opera Orchestra, Haddonfield Symphony, and the Walt Disney World Orchestra and has appeared with numerous other groups including the Florida Orchestra, Fort Wayne Philharmonic, Kalamazoo Symphony, Orlando Philharmonic, Sarasota Orchestra, and the Windsor Symphony in Ontario. He has also performed at several summer festivals including the National Repertory Orchestra, the Music Academy of the West, and Lake George Opera. In the summer months Dr. Paglialonga is on the faculty at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Michigan where he also performs with the Festival Orchestra. Dr. Paglialonga has authored several articles for the Clarinet, Keynotes Magazine and School Band & Orchestra which are available on his website (www.thefirstgissilent.com). He recently completed a new clarinet pedagogy book, Squeak Big: Practical Fundamentals for the Successful Clarinetist that will be published by Imagine Music Publishing and available worldwide in 2015. He did his undergraduate study at DePaul University as a student of Larry Combs and earned a masters and a doctorate from the University of Michigan as a student of Fred Ormand and Daniel Gilbert. Dr. Paglialonga performs on Gonzalez GD reeds exclusively and is a Gonzalez Artist. Dr. Paglialonga is an avid sports fan and enjoys traveling and studying art history.
Eric Van der Veer Varner has enjoyed a particularly rich and varied musical career. He has held principal bassoon chair with the Windsor Symphony Orchestra since 2004, appearing as a soloist with the orchestra on numerous occasions, where his playing has been critically hailed as that “of ineffable liquid beauty”. He has previously held positions with the Ann Arbor Symphony, Michigan Opera Theater, Sarasota Opera, and the Mannheim Chamber Orchestra in Germany. He performs in numerous summer festivals, including the Bellingham Festival of Music, the Michigan City Chamber Music Festival, and the Interlochen Arts Festival. Currently the Associate Professor of Bassoon and Wind Department Chair at the Lynn Conservatory, Varner has previously held faculty appointments at Miami (Ohio) University, Heidelberg University, and the University of Windsor. Additionally, he spent fourteen summers working at the Interlochen Arts Camp, where he was the Assistant Director of the High Schools Boys Division. Varner is also the owner of TrevCo-Varner Music, “the world’s foremost purveyor of fine sheet music for double reeds”. TrevCo-Varner Music is the largest company in the world dedicated solely to double reed music, with over 12,000 titles in stock from publishers all over the world. In his capacity as owner, Dr. Varner is at the forefront of the new music scene, commissioning new works, creating new editions of forgotten gems, and striving to make all more accessible to the public. Dr. Varner holds the Doctor of Musical Arts (2004) from the University of Michigan, where he also earned a Master of Music (2002) and a Bachelor of Music (1996) degree. Additionally, he holds a degree in Artistic Education (1998) from the Mannheim-Heidelberg Conservatory in Mannheim, Germany. His primary teachers were Richard Beene, Alfred Rindespacher, Hugh Cooper and Michael Dicker. When he is not busy playing and teaching, he enjoys watching college football, reading, and playing with his dogs, Lulu and Oscar.