

NIELSEN ♦ SHIFRIN

CLARINET CONCERTO
CHAMBER MUSIC WITH CLARINET



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Nielsen ♦ Shifrin

Clarinet Concerto Chamber Music with Clarinet

Carl Nielsen (1865 – 1931)

Clarinet Concerto, Op. 57

Arranged for chamber ensemble by Rene Orth

Six Humorous Bagatelles, Op. 11

Arranged for clarinet and piano by Steven Cohen

Fantasy for Clarinet and Piano, CNW 66

Fantasy Pieces for Oboe and Piano, Op. 2

Transcribed for clarinet and piano by David Shifrin

Serenata in Vano, CNW 69

David Shifrin, *solo clarinet*

Ryan Reynolds, *bassoon*

William Purvis, *horn*

Jon Greeney, *snare drum*

Benjamin Hoffman, *violin*

Theodore Arm, *violin*

Jennifer Frautschi, *viola*

Mihai Marica, *cello*

Curtis Daily, *double bass*

Yevgeny Yontov, *piano*

Total Playing Time: 51:24



DAVID SHIFRIN • ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Yale SCHOOL OF MUSIC



NIELSEN ♦ SHIFRIN

CLARINET CONCERTO CHAMBER MUSIC WITH CLARINET

1. **Clarinet Concerto, Op. 57** (25:33)

*Arranged for chamber ensemble by Rene Orth**

Six Humorous Bagatelles, Op. 11 (6:52)

Arranged for clarinet and piano by Steven Cohen

2. Hello! Hello! (0:49)
3. The Spinning Top (0:57)
4. A Short Slow Waltz (1:47)
5. The Jumping Jack (0:52)
6. The Dolls' March (1:11)
7. The Musical Clock (0:56)

8. **Fantasy for Clarinet and Piano, CNW 66** (4:44)

Fantasy Pieces for Oboe and Piano, Op. 2 (6:24)

Transcribed for clarinet and piano by David Shifrin

9. Andante con duolo (3:41)
10. Allegretto scherzando (2:43)

11. **Serenata in Vano, CNW 69** (8:01)

*World premiere recording of the Clarinet Concerto with chamber ensemble

Total Playing Time: 51:24

David Shifrin, solo clarinet

Ryan Reynolds, *bassoon* (1, 11)

William Purvis, *horn* (1, 11)

Jon Greeney, *snare drum* (1)

Benjamin Hoffman, *violin* (1)

Theodore Arm, *violin* (1)

Jennifer Frautschi, *viola* (1)

Mihai Marica, *cello* (1, 11)

Curtis Daily, *double bass* (1, 11)

Yevgeny Yontov, *piano* (2–10)

PROGRAM NOTES

If there is a bel canto school of clarinet playing, Shifrin is surely its finest exponent," the *Los Angeles Times* wrote, and we agree. David Shifrin made his first recording for the Delos label in 1984: a masterful and beloved recording of Mozart's *Clarinet Concerto* and *Clarinet Quintet* (DE 2030). Mr. Shifrin has now recorded twenty albums for Delos, not counting another seventeen compilations and concept albums to which he has contributed. His recordings include so many highlights that it's difficult to single out a few, but *Beethoven in New York*, with the Septet and Serenade (DE 3177), *Chamber Music of Carl Maria von Weber* (DE 3194), music by David Schiff (DE 3058), and the Brahms Clarinet Quintet (DE 3066) stand out. As Artistic Director of Chamber Music Northwest, Mr. Shifrin regularly collaborates with some of the world's finest musicians, many of whom have partnered with him on Delos albums, including this one.

—David Brin

Danish musician and composer **Carl Nielsen** (1865–1931) was one of the most distinctive and original composers of the early twentieth century. He is best known for his six symphonies and three late works

for wind instruments: the Wind Quintet, Flute Concerto, and Clarinet Concerto, all written in the 1920s.

About the **Clarinet Concerto**

Nielsen, who was trained as a violinist, encountered the Copenhagen Wind Quintet in 1921 and was so impressed with their playing that he composed his Wind Quintet depicting the five players of the group. He planned to expand this portrait with five concertos but only completed two: the Flute Concerto, dedicated to Gilbert Jespersen, and the Clarinet Concerto, Opus 57, dedicated to Aage Oxenvad and completed in 1928. Both works are highly virtuosic and dramatic.

In its unusual form the Clarinet Concerto resembles Debussy's *Rhapsodie*. Instead of the normal three movements, the work unfolds unpredictably in many short, contrasting episodes that allow the soloist to explore a range of moods barely hinted at by the deceptively pastoral opening. Throughout the work an anti-soloist on a menacing snare drum seems to shadow the clarinet like a *doppelgänger*. The arrangement of the concerto for chamber ensemble by American composer Rene Orth preserves and perhaps even heightens the mysterious interplay between

two such different instrumental characters. Some listeners have heard this unusual dialogue as a sign of some inner conflict—either Nielsen’s or Oxenvad’s—or a reflection of historical events. In either case, the clarinet finally seems to prevail and, in the beautifully subsiding conclusion, leads the music back to a state of serenity.

—David Schiff

About the **Clarinet Concerto Arrangement**

In the fall of 2013, clarinetist Sam Boutris commissioned me to arrange Carl Nielsen’s Clarinet Concerto for a chamber group that he could present in concert at the Curtis Institute of Music in the spring.

I was not very familiar with the piece at the time, but as I delved deeper into the project, I grew to love the quirky and playful, yet extremely virtuosic qualities of the piece. When David Shifrin approached me about recording the arrangement, I could not have been more thrilled with the opportunity. It is my hope that this arrangement will provide more opportunities for the piece to be played and shared among audiences everywhere.

—Rene Orth

About the **Six Humorous Bagatelles and Their Arrangement for Clarinet and Piano**

While I was attending the Juilliard Prep School as a piano student in the mid-1960s, my regular teacher was on leave, and they brought in a wonderful young pianist, Peter Weiss. He was an inspiration to me and studying with him forever transformed my life.

Peter Weiss introduced me to numerous works by Carl Nielsen and I became enamored of Nielsen’s music. As a clarinetist, I knew about the Clarinet Concerto, but the *Six Humorous Bagatelles* were the first pieces of Nielsen’s that I learned. Nielsen had his own children in mind when he composed this work, from 1894–97; right away I loved their simplicity and childlike nature. Originally for piano solo, I decided to arrange the pieces for clarinet and piano, and first performed them in Copenhagen. The pieces are charming and fun to play; each has its own unique character from the simply put “Hello, Hello” to the ending “Musical Clock.” The arrangement combines lyricism and some virtuosity on the clarinet. I dedicate them to Peter Weiss, in whose memory I transcribed them.

—Steven Cohen, Professor of Clarinet,
Northwestern University

About the **Fantasy for Clarinet and Piano**

An early piece from about 1881, the Fantasy for Clarinet and Piano was written before Nielsen's official debut as a composer with his Op. 1, the *Suite for Strings*. Nielsen may have had Danish composer Niels Gade in mind when he wrote the *Fantasy for Clarinet and Piano*. Gade, the leading Danish composer of his generation, wrote *Four Fantasy Pieces for Clarinet and Piano* in the 1860s; and Gade's friend Robert Schumann also wrote a set of *Fantasy Pieces for Clarinet and Piano*. (David Shifrin's recording of Schumann's *Fantasy Pieces* with pianist Carol Rosenberger is available on the Delos recording *A Brahms/Schumann Soirée*, DE 3025.)

Perhaps Nielsen also had Gade in mind when he wrote, much later, "I wanted to protest against the typical Danish soft smoothing over. I wanted stronger rhythms and more advanced harmony."

About the **Fantasy Pieces for Oboe and Piano, Op. 2**

Another early composition, from 1889, the *Fantasy Pieces for Oboe and Piano* is performed here with the oboe part played on the clarinet. The composition's varying moods are perfectly expressed by the

clarinet, from the beginning phrase with its interesting harmonic twist to the ending phrase of the second Fantasy with its playful interplay between the clarinet and the piano. After the first public performance of these pieces in 1891, a reviewer presciently wrote, "One can safely pin great hopes to the future of the young composer."

—David Brin

About the **Serenata in Vano**

Nielsen's affinity for wind instruments and quirky, playful sensibility can be heard in the short *Serenata in Vano*, composed in 1914 for a touring chamber ensemble that was also playing Beethoven's Septet, hence the unusual instrumentation of clarinet, bassoon, horn, cello, and bass. The serenade is a one-movement work in three contrasting sections. Nielsen offered this description: "*Serenata in Vano* is a humorous trifle. First the gentlemen play in a somewhat chivalric and showy manner to lure the fair one out onto the balcony, but she does not appear. Then they play in a slightly languorous strain (*Poco adagio*), but that hasn't any effect either. Since they have played in vain (*in vano*), they don't care a straw and shuffle off home to the strains of the

little final march, which they play for their own amusement.”

—David Schiff

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Clarinetist **David Shifrin** is sought after as an orchestral soloist, recitalist, and chamber music performer, and is a three-time Grammy Award nominee. Artistic Director of Chamber Music Northwest since 1981 and of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center from 1992 to 2004, Mr. Shifrin has appeared with such distinguished en-

sembles as the Emerson, Tokyo, and Guarneri string quartets, and as a soloist with the symphony orchestras of Philadelphia, Minnesota, Dallas, Seattle, Houston, Milwaukee, and Detroit as well as many others. A frequent guest at numerous summer festivals, he has appeared at the Santa Fe and La Jolla chamber music festivals, and at the Mostly Mozart Festival at Lincoln Center and the Kennedy Center. One of only three wind players to have been awarded the coveted Avery Fisher Prize, he has also been the recipient of the 2018 Chamber Music America Bogomolny National Service Award, the Concert Artists Guild Virtuoso award, and the Yale University Cultural Leadership Citation. The



Delos recording by Mr. Shifrin and the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra of the Mozart Clarinet Concerto (DE 3020) received the Record of the Year award from *Stereo Review*. A professor of music at Yale University, David Shifrin has recorded for the Delos, Nonesuch, Arabesque, Angel, Deutsche Grammophon, and CRI labels. For more information, please visit www.davidshifrin.com.

Violinist **Theodore Arm** has appeared throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia as soloist, recitalist, and guest artist with such organizations as the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Group for Contemporary Music, and the Boston Chamber Music Society. A member of the acclaimed chamber group Tashi since 1976, he has performed with Lukas Foss, Chick Corea, and Gary Burton. Mr. Arm is also a favorite with summer chamber music festival audiences, and has been a regular artist at the Sarasota Music Festival and Music from Angel Fire. He has recorded for Delos, RCA, Koch, Musical Heritage Society, and ECM. Theodore Arm is an emeritus professor at the University of Connecticut and a 2010 recipient of the University's Lifetime Achievement Award from the School of Fine Arts. He holds a doctorate from The Juilliard School, where he studied with Christine De-thier and Joseph Fuchs.

For more than twenty-five years, bassist **Curtis Daily** has focused on the historical performance practice of Baroque and Classical music. Principal bassist of the Portland Baroque Orchestra, he is also a founding member of the Seattle Baroque Orchestra. In addition, he performs with early music groups and festivals across North America. In the world of modern performance, Mr. Daily has performed with the Honolulu Symphony, jazz groups, and rock bands, as well as with Chamber Music Northwest for many years. He was a member of the Oregon Bach Festival Orchestra for the Grammy-winning recording of *Credo* by Krzysztof Penderecki on Hannsler Records, and is also heard on recordings for Virgin Classics, Koch, Centaur, and Sub-Pop Records.

Two-time Grammy nominee and recipient of the Avery Fisher Career Grant, violinist and violist **Jennifer Frautschi** has garnered worldwide acclaim as an adventurous musician with a remarkably wide-ranging repertoire. In the 2015–16 season Ms. Frautschi appeared as soloist with the Boston Philharmonic and the Austin, Boise, New Jersey, Norwalk, Pasadena, Pensacola, Toledo, and Valdosta Symphonies. Highlights of recent seasons include performing the world premiere of James Stephenson's Violin Concerto, a

piece written for her, with the Minnesota Orchestra and Osmo Vänskä, and the Barber Concerto with James Conlon conducting the Orchestra of the Teatro di San Carlo in Naples. She performs regularly at the Caramoor Center for the Arts, where she was first invited by André Previn to play as a Rising Star at the age of eighteen, during her freshman year at Harvard. Ms. Frautschi has premiered new works by Barbara White, Mason Bates, Oliver Knussen, Krzysztof Penderecki, Michael Hersch, and others. Her most recent releases are with pianist John Blacklow on Albany Records.

For more about Jennifer Frautschi, please visit her website, www.jenniferfrautschi.com.

Principal timpanist of the Oregon Symphony, **Jon Greeney** is also an adjunct professor of percussion studies at Portland State University. He holds a Bachelor of Music Degree in performance from the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University and a Master of Music Degree in performance from Cleveland State University. His teachers at Peabody included percussion virtuosos Robert van Sice and Jonathan Haas, and at Cleveland State he studied with Tom Freer of the Cleveland Orchestra. Mr. Greeney has performed as an orchestral percussionist and timpanist as well as a chamber musician in

numerous concerts and venues, including Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center. In 2006 he won a position in the Orquesta Sinfonica de Xalapa in Veracruz, Mexico, where he performed as a full-time section percussionist until the summer of 2008. He joined the Oregon Symphony in the fall of 2010.

Italian-American violinist **Benjamin Hoffman** was selected as a fellow for the New York Philharmonic's Global Academy Program. As a chamber musician he has played alongside mentors Peter Frankl, Wolfram Christ, Jorja Fleezanis, and Gary Hoffman, and recently performed Aaron Jay Kernis's *Mozart en Route* and Hindemith's *Kammermusik No. 1* at Carnegie Hall. He also performs with his mother, father, and sister as part of the piano quartet Onibatan. As a soloist, he enjoys performing music ranging from Vivaldi to Bach, Mozart, and Korngold, as well as contemporary music with orchestra. He recently premiered a double concerto by his father, Joel Hoffman, with his sister as the cello soloist in the National Centre for Performing Arts in Beijing. Mr. Hoffman began studying the violin at age four under his mother's tutelage and continued his studies with Gabriel Pegis of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Latica Honda-Rosenberg at the Hochschule für

Musik in Freiburg, Germany, and Alexander Kerr at Indiana University. He is currently pursuing his Doctor of Musical Arts Degree at Yale University, where his principal studies are with Ani Kavafian.

Romanian-born cellist **Mihai Marica** won first prize in the Dr. Luis Sigall International Competition in Viña del Mar, Chile, and in 2005 he was awarded the first prize in the Irving M. Klein International Competition. He has collaborated with artists including Ani Kavafian, Mihae Lee, Peter Frankl, André Watts, and Edgar Meyer at festivals such as Chamber Music Northwest, Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, and the Aspen Music Festival. Mr. Marica is a founding member of the award-winning Amphion String Quartet and a former member of The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's CMS Two Program, which identifies and nourishes a select number of individuals and ensembles chosen from an international pool of candidates through highly competitive auditions. Mr. Marica studied with Aldo Parisot at the Yale School of Music, where he earned a Master of Music Degree and an Artist Diploma.

William Purvis pursues a multifaceted career both in the United States and

abroad as a horn soloist, chamber musician, conductor, and educator. He has participated in numerous premieres including horn concertos by Peter Lieberson, Bayan Northcott, Krzysztof Penderecki, and Paul Lansky. He is a member of the New York Woodwind Quintet, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the Yale Brass Trio, and the Triton Horn Trio, as well as an emeritus member of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. Mr. Purvis is also a frequent guest artist with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and the Boston Chamber Music Society. A Grammy Award-winner, he has recorded extensively on numerous labels including Deutsche Grammophon, Sony Classical, Naxos, Koch, and Bridge. Currently he is Professor in the Practice of Horn and Chamber Music at the Yale School of Music, where he also serves as coordinator of winds and brasses and as director of the Yale Collection of Musical Instruments.

Ryan Reynolds chose the bassoon in fifth grade under the impression that it produced only one note and would therefore be the easiest instrument to play. His disappointment upon discovering that the range of the bassoon is actually three-and-a-half octaves quickly turned to fascination and intrigue. Mr. Reynolds is currently the Graduate Teaching Assistant for

the Florida State University bassoon studio, and has performed with the Traverse and Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestras in Michigan. In 2009, he toured Michigan's Upper Peninsula with the Sonrisa Wind Quintet as an artist in residence for the Pine Mountain Music Festival, and in 2012 he was a member of the Interlochen Ensemble, a wind quintet comprised entirely of Interlochen alumni. Mr. Reynolds is currently pursuing his DMA degree at Florida State University under the tutelage of Jeff Keesecker.

A finalist in the 2017 Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Master Competition, **Yevgeny Yontov** has established himself as one of the most promising Israeli pianists of his generation. A founding member of icarus Quartet, a two piano/two percussion chamber group, he is also artistic director of The Second Movement Chamber Concert Series in New Haven, Connecticut.

As a chamber musician, Mr. Yontov has appeared in Israel, Europe, the United States, Canada, and South America, in venues that include Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center. His debut CD, *Schubert: Piano Variations*, was released on Naxos Records in 2017, and includes seldom-performed piano variations and



fragments by Schubert. Mr. Yontov began his musical studies at the age of six with Adela Umansky, and later received his Bachelor of Music Degree summa cum laude from the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music at Tel Aviv University, where he studied with Arie Vardi. He then moved to the United States to study with Boris Berman at the Yale School of Music, where he received his M.M. Degree. He is currently pursuing his D.M.A. degree at Yale. To read more about Yevgeny Yontov, please visit his website at <http://yevgenyyontov.com>.

Producer: Matthew LeFevre

Recording engineers: For the Clarinet Concerto and Seranata in Vano, Rod Evenson. For the Six Humorous Bagatelles, Fantasy for Clarinet and Piano, and Fantasy Pieces: Matthew LeFevre .

Editing and mastering: Matthew LeFevre
Resident engineer: Matthew Snyder
Booklet editing: David Brin, Lindsay Koob, and Anne Maley
Graphic design and layout: Lonnie Kunkel

The Clarinet Concerto and Seranata in Vano were recorded live at Chamber Music Northwest in Kaul Auditorium, Reed College, Portland, OR on July 21, 2016

The Six Humorous Bagatelles, Fantasy for Clarinet and Piano, and Fantasy Pieces for Oboe and Piano were recorded at Morse Recital Hall, Sprague Hall, Yale School of Music, New Haven, CT on September 26, 2017 (Bagatelles) and November 22, 2016 (Fantasies).

Mr. Shifrin performs on "MoBa" clarinets made of cocobola wood by Backun Musical Services, www.backunmusicalservices.com and on Légère synthetic reeds.

This recording was made possible with help from Chamber Music Northwest, Backun Musical Services, and by a grant from the Yale School of Music.

Special thanks to Peter Bilotta and Rob Whipple of Chamber Music Northwest; Joel Jaffe of Backun Musical Services; and Matthew LeFevre and Dean Robert Blocker of Yale School of Music.

The manuscript on the back cover is from Nielsen's original score of the Fantasy Pieces for Oboe and Piano.

We are grateful to Tara Helen O'Connor for her extraordinary help in coaching and producing the performance recording of Nielsen's Clarinet Concerto. —*David Shifrin*

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Handwritten musical notation for the first system, featuring a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with triplets and slurs. The bass staff contains a bass line with triplets and slurs. There are some markings like 'Ped' and '*' in the bass staff.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system, including a treble staff and a 'dim' marking. The treble staff continues the melodic line with slurs. The 'dim' marking is written below the staff.

Handwritten musical notation for the third system, including a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a '3.' marking above it. The bass staff has 'Ped' markings with '*' symbols.

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system, including a treble staff with a 'dim' marking. The treble staff contains a melodic line with slurs. The 'dim' marking is written below the staff.

Handwritten musical notation for the fifth system, including a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a '*' marking above it. The bass staff contains a complex rhythmic pattern with slurs.

DE 3527

molto accelerando