



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

Gizelle Guerrero, clarinet
Dr. Cecilia Lo-Chien Kao, piano

Saturday, April 11th, 2026

1:00pm

PepsiCo Recital Hall

Program

Fantaisie Italienne

Eugene Bozza
(1905-1991)

Soliloquies

Leslie Bassett
(1923-2016)

Three Romances for Clarinet and Piano, Op.94

Robert Schumann
(1810-1856)

Intermission

Clarinet Concerto

Aaron Copland
(1900-1990)

Trio for Clarinet, Violin and Piano
III. Moderato

Aram Khachaturian
(1903-1978)

Alejandro Sanchez, Violin

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Masters in Clarinet Performance. Ms. Guerrero is a student of Dr. Corey Mackey. The use of recording equipment or taking photographs is prohibited. Please silence all electronic devices including watches, pagers, and phones.

Fantaisie Italienne (1951)

French composer, violinist, and conductor **Eugène Bozza (1905–1991)** is best known for his chamber music. Born in Nice, France, he studied at the prestigious Paris Conservatoire, where he developed his skills in violin, composition, and conducting. In 1934, he was awarded the renowned Grand Prix de Rome, an honor that allowed him to study in Italy and helped shape his musical style. Bozza later served as a conductor at the Opéra-Comique and became director of the music school in Valenciennes, where he composed many works for students and performers.

Composed in 1951, *Fantaisie Italienne* is a vibrant and expressive work that reflects Bozza's admiration for Italian musical style, capturing its warmth, lyricism, and rhythmic vitality. Though specific folk tunes, the piece evokes an Italian character through its spirited melodies and contrasting sections. The work is highly expressive, featuring soaring lyrical lines alongside virtuosic passages that display the full range of the instrument. These technical moments are balanced by more melodic sections, requiring both precision and musical sensitivity from the performer. The piano accompaniment supports this contrast with rhythmic quaver motion and rich, spread chords, adding depth and momentum to the texture.

Soliloquies (1978)

Leslie Bassett (1923–2016) was an influential American composer known for his expressive and richly textured works. Trained in multiple instruments, including piano, trombone, and cello, he served during World War II as a trombonist, composer, and arranger with the U.S. Armored Division Band, an experience that shaped his musical voice. After earning a degree from California State University, Fresno, he continued his studies at the University of Michigan, where he completed his Master of Music and became the first recipient of a Doctor of Musical Arts in composition. Bassett later taught at the University of Michigan from 1952 to 1992 and was named Albert A. Stanley Distinguished University Professor Emeritus. His honors include the Pulitzer Prize in Music (1966), the Prix de Rome (1961–63), and multiple Guggenheim Fellowships, securing his place as a major figure in 20th-century American music.

Soliloquies is an intimate exploration of grief and the human response to loss, composed by Leslie Bassett shortly after the death of his teenage son. The work unfolds in four movements, each reflecting a stage of grief: anger, sadness, pleading, and acceptance.

The first movement, *Anger*, is raw and unrestrained, with sudden shifts in register and fleeting moments of repose. Persistent resonance trills and abrupt popping notes create tension, building toward a dramatic fortissimo multiphonic trill that conveys unresolved intensity. In contrast, the second movement, *Sadness*, flows with a singing, lyrical quality. Smooth, expressive lines are often accompanied by delicate grace notes, and upward-reaching resonance trills echo the restless energy of the previous movement, now transformed into sorrowful reflection.

The third movement, *Pleading*, is urgent and abrasive, portraying the bargaining and desperation inherent in grief. Sharp, rhythmic bursts escalate in intensity, culminating in a repeated figure that suddenly halts, giving way to a slow, rising cry that carries the movement to its end. The

final movement, *Acceptance*, is lyrical and meditative. Gentle melodies, paired with ascending grace notes, evoke a sense of calm understanding and the emergence of a new perspective. Each movement flows seamlessly into the next, with the conclusion of one foreshadowing the emotional tone of the following. The work closes with a long, shimmering resonance trill that fades to niente on a timbral rich note, leaving a lingering balance of rest and unrest.

Three Romances for Clarinet and Piano, Op. 94 (1849)

Robert Schumann (1810–1856) was a German composer and pianist, and one of the leading figures of the Romantic era. Celebrated for his lyrical and deeply humanistic music, Schumann initially trained in law before dedicating himself fully to music, studying piano with Friedrich Wieck while immersing himself in literature, poetry, and the arts. His dual passions for music and words shaped both his compositions and his influential writings as a music critic, through which he championed composers such as Chopin and Brahms.

Schumann's music explores the full range of human emotion, from exuberant joy to profound introspection. His works often combine literary inspiration with musical innovation, creating vivid character pieces and expressive narratives. Despite personal struggles with mental health, his artistry remained deeply human and profoundly influential, helping define the Romantic tradition and inspiring generations of composers who followed.

The *Three Romances, Drei Romanzen*, originally written for oboe and later transcribed for other instruments, includes vocal-like melodies with subtle harmonic shifts, continuing the expressive spirit of *Fantasiestücke, Op. 73*.

The first movement, *Nicht schnell* ("not fast"), presents a call-and-response between piano and trombone, remaining dark and haunting except for a brief moment of solace, and concludes softly in the opening key. The second movement, *Einfach, innig* ("simply, heartfelt"), contrasts with a joyful, tender character, briefly interrupted by a stormy B section of dissonance before returning to its comforting opening melody. The final movement, also *Nicht schnell*, begins in slow unison before evolving into an expressive dialogue. Schumann playfully deceives the listener in the coda, resolving peacefully bringing the work to a serene close.

Clarinet Concerto (1948)

Aaron Copland (1900–1990) was an American composer, conductor, and teacher, widely regarded as one of the defining voices of 20th-century American music. His style, which matured in the 1930s and '40s, combined folk-inspired melodies with irregular, often jazzy rhythms and spacious harmonies, creating a sound that is distinctly American. Born in Brooklyn, New York, Copland studied both in the United States and in Paris with Nadia Boulanger, developing a clarity of texture and lyricism that became hallmarks of his work.

The *Clarinet Concerto* was commissioned in 1947 by the renowned jazz clarinetist Benny Goodman and completed in the fall of 1948 after Copland returned from a four-month Latin

American tour, the influence of which subtly shadows the rhythms and melodic gestures of the work. Goodman, initially reluctant to perform the original version, premiered it in 1950. Today, two versions exist: the original “Goodman version” and the revised version that is most frequently performed.

The concerto opens with a melancholy and lyrical first movement, where the clarinet sings over a delicate, airy orchestral accompaniment. Copland crafts long, expressive lines that feel spontaneous yet carefully sculpted, immediately establishing a reflective, intimate tone. The cadenza, lasting approximately two and a half minutes, serves as a seamless bridge between the first and second movements, transforming the lyrical mood into the playful, rhythmic energy of the finale.

The second movement is quirky, jazz-inflected, and rhythmically unpredictable. Syncopated motifs, swinging rhythms, and playful dialogue between the clarinet and orchestra reflect Goodman’s jazz background while remaining grounded in Copland’s unique harmonic language. Throughout the concerto, Copland combines folk-like melodic inflections with irregular rhythms and spacious harmonies, creating a work that balances sophistication, and lyricism. The concerto ends with a lively flourish, leaving a sense of joyful exuberance tempered by the introspective qualities of the opening.

Trio for Violin, Clarinet, and Piano (1932)

Aram Khachaturian (1903–1978) was a Soviet Armenian composer and conductor, celebrated for his vibrant orchestration, memorable melodies, and masterful synthesis of Eurasian folk music with Western compositional techniques. Born in Tiflis (now Tbilisi, Georgia), Khachaturian grew up immersed in Armenian and Caucasian folk traditions, which became a hallmark of his musical style. He studied at the Moscow Conservatory, where he trained in composition, piano, and conducting. Over his career, he arranged approximately twenty-five patriotic film scores and is perhaps best known for his ballet music and his *Piano Concerto*, works that combine dramatic intensity with folk-inspired lyricism.

The *Trio for Violin, Clarinet, and Piano* was composed while Khachaturian was still a student at the Moscow Conservatory and reflects his early interest in folk music from the Caucasus. The Trio exhibits the composer’s distinct Armenian style, quoting traditional melodies and rhythms throughout. The final *Moderato* movement serves as the heart of the Trio, presenting a set of variations on a folk-inspired tune. The instruments engage in intricate dialogue, exploring rhythmic and intervallic textures reminiscent of ethnic music. The movement gradually evolves from intimate unison passages to more animated interplay, across all three instruments, evoking the colors and textures of ethnic folk music, balancing tension and release, before resolving peacefully in a manner that celebrates both the melodic charm and the folk character at the core of Khachaturian’s style.