



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

Joe Eckert, Saxophone
with
Michael Bukhman, Piano
Cecilia Kao, Piano
Edward Newman, Piano
Joey Carter, Piano
Tom Burchill, Guitar
Kyp Green, Bass
Alan Eckert, Drums

Monday, September 26, 2022

7:00 pm

PepsiCo Recital Hall

Program

Sonata

- I. Largo
- II. Courante
- III. Adagio
- IV. Presto

Henri Eccles
(1670-1742)
Trans. Sigurd Rascher

Sonata in C# (1943)

- I. Tres modere, expressif
- II. Noel
- III. Fileuse
- IV. Nocturne et Rondel

Fernande Decruck
(1896-1954)

Saxophone Concerto in Eb (1936)

Alexander Glazounov
(1865-1936)

Intermission

Jazz Selections will be announced from the stage

Program Notes:

Henri Eccles (1670 -1742) was a respected composer in London when Handel arrived on the scene. He soon moved to Paris where he published twelve sonatas for Gamba and Figured Bass in 1732. Copyright laws did not exist in those days, and since Eccles was greatly impressed by the music of the Italian composer, Valentini, he “borrowed” quite liberally from him. In this work the original key of G minor has been retained, consequently it necessitated the transposition of the solo part, which now sounds one octave higher than the Gamba. There need not be any misgivings about the fact that the Saxophone did not exist in Eccles’ day as his contemporaries were rather liberal in transcribing their own works as well as those of other composers. J. S. Bach, for example, transcribed Vivaldi’s Concerto for Four Violins for such an unusual combination as Four Harpsichords. It is altogether a question of style. A Saxophone player can develop such style by playing this music. * *(*Rascher’s original notes*)

The first movement (Largo) is perhaps one of the most “romantic” of the slower movements you’ll hear in the baroque tradition. The second (Courante) is a typical dance in three and suggests a certain playfulness throughout. The third movement (Adagio) is somewhat melancholy and plaintive, ending on the dominant and suggesting resolution to the fourth movement “attaca” or without pause. The fourth movement (Presto) takes us out with a flourish in dramatic fashion. This is a piece I enjoy playing and often use it to introduce the baroque style to my saxophone students.

Sigurd Rascher (1908 – 2001) was one of the most important figures in the development of the 20th century repertoire for classical saxophone. He also encouraged saxophonists to explore the music of the baroque and classical period and is responsible for a sizeable number of the transcriptions available for the classical saxophonist.

Fernande Decruck (1896-1954) began studying piano at the age of eight at the Conservatoire de Toulouse and was later admitted to the Conservatoire de Paris in 1918 where she studied organ and composition. Her studies eventually took her to the United States where her husband, Maurice Decruck played both string bass and saxophone with the New York Philharmonic. She composed many works for saxophone quartets and solo saxophone and the Sonata in C#, written in 1943, was “rediscovered” by many classical saxophonists in the mid 1970’s to include myself and former Professor, Dr. Galan Kral. There is also a version written for viola.

The first movement is as stated, slow and expressive, and includes a rather virtuosic section resembling a “babbling brook” behind the melodic statement by the piano. The saxophone retakes the melody at this point with further melodic and rhythmic development, closing with a similar display of virtuosity as the piano retakes the theme to close the movement. The second movement (Noel) is very delicate and expressive with a more lyrical section mid-movement. The title of the third movement (Fileuse) refers to a female who “spins thread,” thus the “spinning” lines you’ll hear throughout from both the saxophone and piano. The fourth movement (Nocturne et Rondel) starts slowly with saxophone alone in a very expressive and lyrical fashion. This is followed by a much more animated section which flows into a vibrant and appassionato finale.

Alexander Glazounov (1865-1936) was a Russian Composer of the late Russian Romantic period. He studied as a private student with Rimsky-Korsakov and was later the director of the Saint Petersburg Conservatory, from 1905-1928. Perhaps his most notable student was Dimitri Shostakovich. Saxophonist Sigurd Rascher was enamored with Glazounov’s music and asked him to compose a concerto for saxophone. Glazounov was hesitant at first to begin the piece, but Rascher kept on communicating with him and eventually Glazounov gave in to the request. The piece is perhaps one of the staples of the saxophone literature and one of the few written in this style (Romantic) for the instrument. It is composed in one movement, where the theme is first stated in the piano (orchestra) and then the saxophone and goes through a series of developments to include a rather virtuosic cadenza, a fugue, and ends with some of the extended range that Rascher promoted as a saxophonist. Glazounov died before he was able to hear the full performance of the piece, although Marcel Mule recalled that he read through the piece with Glazounov at the piano upon its completion in 1934.