



Tonight's recital celebrates the rich and diverse repertoire for bassoon, spanning multiple eras and showcasing the versatility of this expressive instrument. From Baroque elegance to Romantic lyricism and contemporary innovation, this program highlights the bassoon's ability to navigate both virtuosic demands and profound musical depth.

Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826)
Bassoon Concerto in F Major, Op. 75

Composed in 1811, Carl Maria von Weber's Bassoon Concerto in F Major is a cornerstone of the bassoon repertoire. Written for the celebrated bassoonist Wilhelm, Weber's concerto pushes the boundaries of the instrument, blending technical brilliance with lyrical beauty. The three-movement work presents the bassoon in a wide variety of musical colors and character:

- I. Allegro opens with an energetic, playful theme, full of rhythmic drive and sharp contrasts. The bassoon is featured in rapid passages and ornamented lines, demanding both dexterity and expressiveness.
- II. Andante provides a more lyrical contrast, with the bassoon's warmth and depth coming to the forefront. This movement is characterized by its tender, song-like phrases, allowing the soloist to showcase the instrument's emotional range.
- III. Finale: Allegro is a lively and joyful conclusion to the concerto, brimming with energy and virtuosic display. This movement highlights the bassoon's agility, with spirited exchanges between the soloist and orchestra.

Weber's Bassoon Concerto is a defining work for the instrument, blending lyricism, virtuosity, and rich orchestration in a manner that remains both technically demanding and musically rewarding for performers and audiences alike.

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741), edited by Leonard Sharrow
Bassoon Concerto in E Minor, RV 484

Vivaldi's Bassoon Concerto in E Minor, RV 484 is an iconic example of Baroque concerto writing. The piece stands out in its brilliant use of the bassoon's full range, from its dark, mournful tones to its lighter, playful passages. Written during Vivaldi's prolific period at the Ospedale della Pietà in Venice, this concerto embodies the drama and virtuosity for which the composer is celebrated. The concerto is in three movements:

- I. Allegro presents a bold and energetic opening, filled with striking rhythmic patterns and vivid exchanges between the bassoon and the orchestra.
- II. Largo offers a stark contrast, bringing a sense of stillness and introspection. The bassoon sings its melancholic theme with a plaintive, almost vocal quality.
- III. Allegro is a spirited conclusion, marked by lively motion and playful dialogue. The bassoon is tasked with quick, agile passagework, demanding both precision and expression.

Edited by Leonard Sharrow, this version of the concerto allows the bassoonist to explore the full expressive potential of the instrument while remaining faithful to Vivaldi's Baroque style, offering a delightful blend of technical challenge and emotional resonance.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH Cello Suite no.1 in G major BMW 1007 I. Courante,II. Sarabande,III. Menuetto play on contrabassoon

Today recital explores a unique interpretation of one of the most iconic works in the Western classical canon, Johann Sebastian Bach's Cello Suite No. 1 in G Major, BWV 1007. Originally composed for unaccompanied cello, the suite has transcended its original instrumentation and has been adapted for a variety of instruments, offering new dimensions to Bach's timeless music. Here, we present a version of the suite arranged for contrabassoon, an instrument with a rich, resonant voice that adds a profound depth to Bach's melodic lines.

The Cello Suite No. 1 consists of a series of dance movements, each displaying Bach's mastery of melody, counterpoint, and emotional expression. While the full suite includes six movements, tonight's program highlights three of them: the Courante, Sarabande, and Menuetto.

William Hurlstone (1876-1906) Bassoon Sonata in F Major

William Hurlstone's Bassoon Sonata in F Major is a charming and largely underappreciated gem in the bassoon repertoire. Composed in the early 20th century, the sonata presents a blend of late-Romantic expressiveness and an emerging sense of modernity. With lush harmonic language and engaging melodic themes, the work is both a technical showcase and an opportunity for expressive interpretation. The sonata is in three movements:

- **I. Allegro – The first movement features lyrical themes that are immediately engaging, paired with virtuosic passagework and rhythmic drive.**
- **II. Andante – A lyrical, introspective movement that highlights the bassoon's rich, mellow tones, allowing the performer to explore subtle nuances and depth of expression.**
- **III. Allegro molto – The final movement is energetic and playful, with quick changes of mood and frequent shifts in thematic material, demanding both technical proficiency and musical agility from the performer.**

Hurlstone's Bassoon Sonata offers a beautiful blend of Romantic style and technical flair, providing an opportunity for both lyrical expression and virtuosic display, making it a standout addition to the bassoon's repertoire.

This program showcases a remarkable variety of styles, eras, and technical demands, from the Baroque elegance of Vivaldi and Bach, to the romantic lyricism of Weber and Hurlstone, culminating intricate idea for contrabassoon that brings new life to Bach's timeless Cello Suite. These works illustrate the rich and varied history of the bassoon as an instrument capable of profound musical expression, virtuosity, and beauty.