

25 April 2022 | MONDAY

# *Cheng Xinle Bassoon Recital*

Liu Jia, *piano*

## **Programme**

SAINT-SAËNS

Sonata for Bassoon and Piano, Op. 168

I. Allegro Moderato

II. Allegro Scherzando

III. Molto Adagio

IV. Allegro Moderato

– Intermission 10 mins –

MOZART

Bassoon Concerto in B-flat Major

I. Allegro

II. Andante ma Adagio

III. Rondo: Tempo di Minuetto

WILLIAM HURLSTONEIN

Sonata in F for Bassoon and Piano

I. Vivace

II. Ballade: Moderato, ma sempre a piacere

III. Allegretto

IV. Moderato – Animato

## ***About the Performer***

Xinle was born in Shanghai China in September 2000. He started studying music since he was six years old time and started playing piano as a hobby. Xinle began learning the bassoon when he was nine years old. He graduated from The Music Middle School affiliated to the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, studying with Prof Zhi Hong Song. He has participated in many chamber music and orchestra, and went to Australia and Spain for exchange performances and participated in some music competitions. Xinle is currently a fourth-year student of Prof Zhang Jin Min.

## ***Programme Notes***

### **Saint-Saëns Sonata for bassoon and piano, Op. 168**

Bassoon Sonata, Op.168 is a piece for solo bassoon and piano composed between May and June 1921 by Camille Saint-Saëns. It was published the same year it was composed, in Paris by Durand. The piece has three movements with an average performance time

of 13 minutes. In the last year of his life, at the age of 85, Camille Saint-Saëns was still active as a composer and conductor, traveling between Algiers and Paris. Besides a final piano album leaf, his last completed works were three sonatas, one each for oboe, clarinet, and bassoon. He sensed that he did not have much time left; he wrote to a friend, "I am using my last energies to add to the repertoire for these otherwise neglected instruments." He intended to write sonatas for another three wind instruments, but was never able to. Saint-Saëns began the pieces early in the year while in Algeria and completed them in April in Paris. The Bassoon Sonata, Op. 168, was dedicated to Saint-Saëns' friend, Clément-Léon Letellier, a bassoon professor at the Paris Conservatoire.

The opening *Allegro moderato* is liltily charming as it drifts between major and minor, building to a not too dramatic climax in its development section. The second movement, *Allegro scherzando*, begins in minor mode, but it, too, changes frequently between major and minor during its lighthearted jaunt. The final movement is in two parts, *Molto adagio* and

Allegro moderato. The Adagio, the longest section of the entire sonata at over five minutes, features a florid melody over a simple, essentially chordal accompaniment. It leads to the cadenza-like, minute-long final Allegro.

## **Mozart Bassoon Concerto in B-flat Major**

The Bassoon Concerto in B-flat major, K. 191/186e, is a bassoon concerto written in 1774 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. It is the most often performed and studied piece in the entire bassoon repertory. Nearly all professional bassoonists will perform the piece at some stage in their career, and it is probably the most commonly requested piece in orchestral auditions – it is usually requested that the player perform excerpts from the concerto's first two movements in every audition.

Although the autograph score is lost, the exact date of its completion is known: 4 June 1774. Mozart wrote the bassoon concerto when he was 18 years old, and it was his first concerto for a wind instrument. Although it is believed that it was commissioned by an aristocratic

amateur bassoon player Thaddäus Freiherr von Dürnitz, who owned seventy-four works by Mozart, this is a claim that is supported by little evidence. Scholars believe that Mozart may have written five bassoon concertos, but that only the first has survived.

When Mozart wrote this piece, he didn't write any dynamics. Now what's on the score is written by later composers. So when playing this piece, I think you can have more own processing, but it can't be out of Mozart's habit. The first movement is written in the common sonata form with an orchestral introduction. The second movement is a slow and lyrical sonata without development that contains a theme which was later featured in the Countess's aria "Porgi, Amor" at the beginning of the second act of Mozart's opera *Le nozze di Figaro*. The final movement is in rondo form.

## **William Hurlstone in Sonata in F Major for Bassoon and Piano**

The Sonata in F major is a bassoon sonata with piano accompaniment written by William Hurlstone in 1904, two years before his death.

It was first published by Avison in 1907, and was later re-issued by Emerson in 1976.

The first movement is divided into six sections. It opens in 6/8 with a forte statement of the theme on the bassoon.

The second movement (ballade) is in G minor. It remains in 4/4 throughout. The piano opens with the melody, a very legato one with many dotted notes.

The third movement is a clumsy waltz. Although marked Allegretto, there is much give and take with the tempo. It has many runs that are cut short by sharp staccatos.

The final movement opens with an ad lib statement of the theme from the second movement. Soon, however, the sprightly Vivace in F is reached. The melody uses many syncopated rhythms, along with many sixteenth notes.

*Programme notes by Cheng Xinle.*