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### Sophomore Recital

Noel Coppedge  
*Chapman University*

Gary Letona  
*Chapman University*

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CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY  
*School of Music*

Doing  
Times on  
separate  
sheet

*presents*

Noel Coppedge, *clarinetist*

Gary Letona, *bassoonist*

in a sophomore recital

March 17, 1996  
8:00 P.M.  
Salmon Recital Hall

**Noel Coppedge** grew up in Virginia, where she began studying the clarinet with Fran Goldman at the age of eleven. She performed in her school ensembles, and performed as the principal clarinetist of the Bay Youth Symphony, in Norfolk, VA. After relocating to Southern California at the age of seventeen, she began studying with Michael Grego. Noel came to Chapman on a music scholarship and currently performs in Chapman's Symphony orchestra, Chamber Orchestra, and Wind Ensemble. After graduating, Noel would like to teach clarinet privately, and go into music education, primarily emphasizing woodwinds.

**Gary Letona** was born in 1975 in El Salvador, and moved to San Francisco when he was six. He began formal studies of the bassoon at the age of sixteen. In 1993 he earned the principal bassoon chair in the San Francisco State University Orchestra, and performance awards from the Marin Symphony, and the Young People's Symphony Orchestra. Gary came to Chapman in 1994 to study bassoon with John Campbell, and his performance experience at Chapman includes the principal bassoon chair in the University's Chamber Orchestra. Other performance credits include the Capistrano Valley Symphony, and frequent chamber music performances. Gary plans to continue studying at Chapman towards a Bachelor of Music degree in composition, and education.

## Program

Popule Meus

Gary Letona  
Kyeung Min, piano  
*Southern California Premiere*

Brian Banks  
(b. 1964)

Sonata for Clarinet in B flat and Piano

Allegro tristamente

Romanza

Allegro con fuoco

Noel Coppedge  
Ms. Min

Francis Poulenc  
(1899-1963)

Sonata for Bassoon and Piano

I. Moderately slow

IV. Fast

Mr. Letona  
Ms. Min

Alvin Etler  
(1913-1973)

10 minute Intermission

First Sonata for Clarinet and Piano

Allegro appassionato

Andante un poco adagio

Allegretto grazioso

Vivace

Ms. Coppedge  
Ms. Min

Johannes Brahms  
(1833-1897)

Concerto in B flat Major, "La Notte", P.401

Largo-Andante molto

Fantasm

Presto

Il Sono

Sorge l'Aurora

Mr. Letona  
Ms. Min

Antonio Vivaldi  
(1678-1741)

Bobby Wong, conductor; Rocky Lee, Heather  
Logsdon, Alan Agadzhanian, violins; Trung  
Vo, Amber Driscoll, violas; Josh Mikus-  
Mahoney, cello; Carlos Rivera, bass

*Kawai Piano Courtesy of  
Pacific Piano*

## Program Notes

### *Popule Meus*

Brian Banks, a native of Seattle, began his formal study of composition at age sixteen. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley, where his teachers included Andrew Imbrie, and Edwin Dugger. Brian was awarded the San Francisco Conservatory of Music's Composition Prize in 1988, and received the Nicola DeLorenzo Prize in 1993. Recent commissions include works for the U.C. San Diego Chamber Chorus and a solo work for soprano Maria Tegzes. About this piece Brian writes: *Popule Meus* (1994) is based on a Gregorian chant from the Good Friday service. The loosely episodic nature of the piece is characterized by three types of music: 1) an elegiac presentation of the chant melody by the bassoon, accompanied by low notes of the piano "bowed" with nylon fishing line; 2) a more agitated commentary on the chant by the bassoon and piano; and 3) the piano playing the final segment of the chant in imitation, eventually joined by the bassoon. *Popule Meus* was written at the special request of bassoonist Gary Letona.

### *Sonata for Clarinet in B flat and Piano*

Francis Poulenc is a prominent member of the group of post impressionist composers known as *Les Six*. He was from a prominent and musical family who insured that his talent in music was cultivated from an early age. He began to study the piano at the age of five. He continued the piano with Ricardo Vines and composition with Charles Koechlin. Influenced by Eric Satie, Poulenc's earliest music revealed the wit, humor, and directness that would be characteristic of all his work. This sonata, commissioned by Benny Goodman, was completed in 1962, in memory of Arthur Honegger, who was a member of *Les Six*. The second movement perhaps shows Poulenc's feelings about the death of Honegger.

### *Sonata for Bassoon and Piano*

The music of Alvin Etler is better known among wind players, which is not surprising since Etler's primary instrument was the oboe. Etler was born a post-romantic, and his pre-1960 works are characterized by a mixture of lyricism, frank expression, and a

Germanic spirit much like that of Schumann and Schubert. This Bassoon sonata, written in 1952, displays his ability to write melodic lines that are strong, but still flowing. Etler paints a dark picture using a remorseful first movement, and a fourth movement filled with angst, dancing in a sinister way. About this piece, Etler wrote:

Though the work has a few potentially anxious moments. . . it is not intended for virtuostic display. It aims quite simply at player-listener enjoyment. The special qualities of the various registers of the bassoon are exploited to the full, as is the considerable expressive range of the instrument. . . Melodic directness and simplicity are the touchstones, while stylistic novelty is secondary.

The first of the four movements is a free fantasia emphasizing the interplay of extended melodic tones. . . [and] the finale plays with a recurring theme.

In the 1960's, Etler's music became "academic" in nature, and perhaps this explains his shortage of popularity today. Before his death, Etler had been professor of music and humanities at Smith College, in Massachusetts, since 1949.

### *First Sonata for Clarinet and Piano*

Johannes Brahms was born in Hamburg, Germany. He was born into a farming family, as their second son. He began music lessons at the age of seven, and quickly became a proficient pianist, giving his first solo concert in 1848. Though he lived during the Romantic period, his music features the ability to combine Romantic characteristics with a strong sense of form and order. He was influenced by the irregular rhythms in Hungarian music brought to Germany as a result of an uprising in Hungary at the time. Brahms wrote two clarinet sonatas which are similar to each other in style. This First Sonata is filled with passages which are lyrical, and epic, exploiting the passionate character of the clarinet, and ignoring the irony of the high register. The texture of the work is thick without being overwhelming.

### *Concerto in B flat Major, "La Notte", P. 401*

Composers, and concert audiences, do not often think of the bassoon as a solo instrument. Antonio Vivaldi is a rare composer in that he wrote thirty-six concertos with the bassoon. Vivaldi is

best remembered for his concertos, of which there are more than 400, which helped to standardize the three-movement concerto form. He taught in Venice in the Ospedale della Pieta where his students were orphaned girls. Vivaldi wrote many of his works for his students and, judging by the virtuosic demands of his concertos, these young musicians possessed incredible talent on their instruments. This concerto, *La Notte* (The Night), is one of two (possibly three) concertos which were given this title by Vivaldi, the other being a flute concerto (Op. 10 no. 2). Both of these concertos have movements named *I Fantasmi* (Ghosts), and *Il Sonno* (Sleep), but only the bassoon concerto has the movement named *Sorge l'Aurora* (Dawn). We know very little about the performance practices of Italian bassoonists of this period. There is a lot of freedom for interpretation in Vivaldi's concertos because usually only the continuo group (made up of harpsichord, cello, and bass) accompany the solo passages. Depending on who you ask, one bassoonist may tell you that Vivaldi must be played with extreme fidelity to the printed page, while another might tell you that Vivaldi needs to "swing."

Notes by G.L. and N.C.

*"When people play an instrument, it's very  
personal, because they are creating a  
complete reflection of their personality.  
What you create is what you are, and what  
you are is a product of your experiences in  
life"*

*-Steve Vai*