Minuet in G-minor from Pièces de clavecin (1687) — Élisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre (1665-1729)

Elisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre could be considered the French pop star of her time—similar to Beyonce Knowles of today. She wrote many pieces for harpsichord and was a prodigy who played in the courts of King Louis XIV of France. This piece was originally composed for harpsichord, and was a part of her “Pièces de Clavecin, Livre 1” published in 1687. It was later written for trumpet and organ, and then arranged into the format presented this evening. This piece is composed in the Baroque style, specifically the dance form of the minuet, which was a vibrant dance with a 1-2-3, 1-2-3 feel. Elisabeth was known for writing music that challenged her performers, and this piece is no exception. Though the trumpet is featured in this piece, each group of instruments, including the bass instruments, are presented with fast passages mirroring the soloist.

--Diana Barlow

Pastoral, Op. 51 (1942) — Mrs. Amy Beach (1867-1944)

Amy Beach was born in New Hampshire in 1867. At a very young age, she was able to sing many tunes as well as improvise a counter melody for them. She began to write simple waltzes when she was five, and at the age of six, she began to have formal piano lessons. She had received a few years of formal training in composition at age eight after enrolling in a European conservatory, but other than that, she mostly studied other works to teach herself. In 1910, following the death of her husband, she had begun to tour in Europe to establish a reputation as a performer and composer. She later returned to America where she used her title as the top American female composer to lead young musicians into a musical career. She was also the first president of the Society of American Women Composers. A heart disease caused her to retire in 1940 as well as her death in 1944.

A pastorale is a piece written to evoke the sound of nature. This pastorale for a woodwind quintet is no exception. Written in compound time, this piece has a laid back feel to it and it's easy to feel the fluid ebb and flow. Beach wrote “Pastoral” to allow listeners to feel the peace of a summer afternoon in the woods. This is the only piece by Beach that was written for woodwind quintet. It is also based off of two of her previous works; she took similar themes of both pieces, and revised them to create this pastorale. This resulted in one of Beach's most famous pieces for winds; it is said that this piece was greatly favored by Beach, and was one of her last pieces in public performance.

--Jenna Kane
Deep (2007)  
Alex Shapiro  
(b. 1962)

I want truth and nakedness in my music; I want honesty. I want the listener to feel my heart and have their own stirred by what I offer in sound.

Deep was commissioned by Carolyn Beck and later transcribed for Marco Mazzinni on contrabass clarinet. I was touched by Carolyn’s excitement when a gorgeous new contrabassoon, affectionately named Moby, came into her life. Listening to the profound resonance of the tones the two made together returned me to the depths of the translucent sea that enveloped my body on a recent visit to Belize. The lower I sank, the more beauty greeted my eyes. The flat color of the surface had hidden the truth below.

Sometimes I make the mistake of believing that I’m not being unless I’m doing and moving. This piece was my challenge to myself to be still and present. And in doing so, I’ve never been as much before. Like the sea, my truth lies below, and I am happiest when I am immersed.

Inhale. Exhale.  

--Alex Shapiro

Marche à Instruments à vent (ca. 1824)  
Nannette Streicher  
(1769-1833)

Anna Maria was a German pianist born in 1769. She and her husband were most famous for their piano factory in Germany, and their close friendship with the infamous Ludwig van Beethoven. Anna Maria, however, in addition to her ability as a pianist was also a composer. Unfortunately, during this time in Germany, German women were unable to publish, or present music publically. In France, however women were not hindered from presenting compositions. In order to have her works published and presented to the public, she composed under a French name, “Nannette” Streicher.

Very few of her works exist today in published engraved format—mostly manuscripts of unfinished pieces. The march for winds we are soon to play for you originally began as an exercise for composition. Because she was a pianist, she did not know how to write music for wind instruments. So, this piece was how she practiced composition for winds and was completed in 1824. Themes from this march were later taken and used in a sketch of what would have been her first symphony; however, the piece was never completed.

--Monica Schreiber

Prelude and Fugue, Op. 16, No. 3 (1845)  
Clara Schumann  
(1819-1896)

Clara Wieck Schumann was born on Sept 1, 1819 in Leipzig, Germany. She was considered a distinguished pianist of the Romantic era. Some of her major works include “9 Caprices en forme de valse” (1832), “Romance variée in C Major” (1833) and, “Valses romantiques” (1833). Schumann was known for changing the format and
reertoire of the piano recital and the taste of the listening public. She died of a stroke on May 20, 1896 in Frankfurt, Germany.

Around the time that the “Preludes and Fugues: III Praeludien und fugen für das pianoforte, Op. 16” was written, Clara Wieck married Robert Schumann (Sept 12, 1840). Some years later, she endured great pain: four of her eight children, and husband died, and fell into depression which influenced much of her later work. This piece was composed in 1845, and first published in 1846. There are three movements in the "Prelude & Fugue": 1. G minor, 2. B-flat major, 3. D minor. Audience members should try to listen for the changing musical statements and re-statements of ideas and variation in instrumentation throughout each movement.

--Arnelle Fonlon

**Soar: Melody of the Birds** from *Meadow Woods Suite* (2011/2014*)                Kimberly Myers  
*premiere performance*  
(b.1960)

This piece was originally written for oboe, two flutes and piano. This arrangement of “Soar” for 12 instrumentalists (oboe, English horn, two flutes, three clarinets, trumpet, alto saxophone, bassoon, contra bass clarinet and piano) incorporates a series of avian melodies throughout that echo and intertwine to aurally “depict” a variety of birds in flight.

“I am delighted to have had the opportunity to expand this piece to include the many wonderful voices of the other instruments in the wind ensemble, and incorporate several additional underlying themes throughout. The uniqueness and rich, full sound of the additional timbres is a wonderful contrast and enhancement to the original composition.”

--Kimberly Myers