

Music and Performing Arts Professions

Presents

Sean Frederick Biehn, Trombone

Gloria Kim, Piano

*In partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of Master of Music*

**Saturday, May 18, 2013
3:30 pm
Shorin Performance Studio
The Kimmel Center
60 Washington Square South
New York, NY**

Program

Marcel Bitsch (1921-2011)
Fifteen Rhythmical Studies for Trombone No. 2 (c. 1947)
Moderate, with freedom

Paul Creston (1906-1985)
Fantasy for Trombone and Orchestra (Piano) Op. 42 (1947)
I. *Moderately fast*
II. *Slower*
III. *Moderate*
IV. *Fast*

Serge Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)
Cello Sonata in G minor, Op. 19, Mvmt. III (1902)
Arranged by Sean F. Biehn (b. 1987) for Trombone, Cello, and Piano

Brittany Dagro, Cello

- Intermission -

Richard Peaslee (b. 1930)
Arrows of Time for Trombone and Piano (1997)
I. *Up, jazz feeling*
II. *Slow-freely*
III. *Fast*

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
Trois Chansons (1908)
Arranged by Michael Levin for Trombone Quartet (1986)
I. *Dieu! Qu'il la fait bon regarder!*
II. *Quant j'ai ouy le tabourin*
III. *Yver, vous n'estes qu'un villain*

Andrew Sharkey (2nd), Nate Reit (3rd), and Bradley Madsen (4th) Tb.

Modest Mussorgsky (1839-1881)
Pictures at an Exhibition (1874)
Edited by Christian Lindberg for Trombone and Piano (ca. 2000)
I. *La Cacabane de la Baba Yaga*
II. *La porte des Bohatyrs de Kiew*

Program Notes

Marcel Bitsch was a French composer, analyst, and teacher who studied at the Conservatoire de Paris. Later he taught counterpoint at the Conservatoire and has been known for his etudes for private practice. Some of his etudes include *Twelve Etudes for Flute*, *Twelve Etudes of Rhythm for Clarinet*, and the *Fifteen Rhythmical Studies for Trombone*. Flutist Jean-Pierre Rampal stated, “Bitsch’s etudes are not only intended for private practice but may be performed as a brief concert piece.”

My professor and I both agreed that one of Marcel Bitsch’s trombone etudes would be a great opener to a recital. All of his etudes are rhythmically challenging and explore the range of the instrument. The second piece, out of the fifteen, appealed to us the most since it had a jazz influence. The objective is to eliminate the sense of challenging rhythms by creating a compelling jazz feel and tone to the etude.

Paul Creston, born Giuseppe Guttovoggio in New York of Sicilian immigrants, taught himself music composition. He developed his own style, free of a teacher’s influence or a school’s approach to writing music. He emphasized shifting subdivisions of meter and focused his work around rhythmic phrases. Creston was successful in many genres of music including five symphonies, concertos for violin, piano, saxophone, and marimba, dance works, songs, choral, chamber, and solo instrumental works. Some of his well-known works include *Rapsodie for Alto Saxophone*, which was written for the virtuoso Jean-Marie Londeix. Another work, used for many professional auditions, was *Fantasy for Trombone and Orchestra*. This piece was premiered by Robert Marsteller and has since been performed with symphonic band, wind ensemble, orchestra, and piano accompaniment. Paul Creston was one of the most performed American composers during the 40s and 50s and later authored theoretical books, *Principals of Rhythm* (1964) and *Rational Metric Notation* (1979).

Fantasy for Trombone and Piano is rhythmically challenging, explores the upper register of the trombone, and requires precise slide technique. There are four distinct sections of the piece. The first section sets the mood for an epic adventure, with a sense of urgent tempo and yet light articulation. The second section calms the urgency for a moment, discovering soaring melodies and the singing voice of the trombone. After the calmness subsides, the third section increases intensity into a march feeling but keeping the light articulation as in the first section. The intensity is then combined with the melodic passage from the second section and turns towards the end of the journey with an epic fourth section. This section is fast, articulate, and continuously builds intensity.

Sergei Rachmaninoff was a Russian composer, pianist, and conductor. Due to his success as a pianist, his compositions would halt for years at a time. His family struggled to stay in Russia and Europe due to WWI and WWII, and in moving to North America, the performance tours hindered his composing. A few of his earlier works remain some of his most famous including *Prelude in C-sharp minor, Op. 3, No. 2* (1892) and *Cello Sonata in G minor, Op. 19* (1902). The *Cello Sonata* was originally completed in November of 1901 but was published a year later. Since Rachmaninoff thought the piano and cello were equal instruments, the piece is often known as *Sonata in G minor for Cello and Piano*. This is evident since the piano introduces most of the themes and is later embellished or expanded by the cello. The first performance of Rachmaninoff’s *Cello Sonata* were in Moscow with Anatoliy Brandukov (cello) and himself on piano. There are four movements containing *Lento - Allegro moderato*, *Allegro scherzando*, *Andante*, and *Allegro mosso*.

I chose his third movement of the *Cello and Piano Sonata* and decided to arrange it into a duet between cello and trombone while keeping the flowing connectivity of the piano. In a sense, it has become a trio, with all performers interacting with each note and moving line. The challenges are Serge Rachmaninoff’s triple over duple feel when performing the piece with a rubato touch. It may seem strange to combine a string instrument with a brass instrument, but knowing that they are both the tenor voices in their sections of the orchestra, I felt the voices or timbre would complement each other as if two sisters or brothers were singing side-by-side.

In addition to having tenor voices, I believe that the trombone and cello have similar qualities. The fingerboard on the cello or the slide on the trombone give each instrument the capability to pick out an infinite range of pitches. The performer then needs to grab each pitch, mostly by ear and experience, with four strings across a fingerboard, or amongst seven primary positions on the slide. The connection between notes or slurring from one note to the next can be achieved flawlessly with these two instruments. These instruments seek the closest imitation to the human voice.

The most difficult part in this trio is the trombone. The trombone performer needs to fill out each phrase, eliminating the urge to take a breath since the cello does not need varying amounts of air pressure. The other challenge is imitating the cello down-bow and up-bow to each note and phrase, having a sense for stronger and lighter expression. The cellist can also create many different starts and stops to each note due to its unique bow to string vibration. The trombone does not have that option with the slide and therefore the performer must have varying qualities of embouchure vibration and tonguing technique to create the same or similar expressions as a cellist. I hope you enjoy the debut of Serge Rachmaninoff's *Cello Sonata with Trombone, Cello, and Piano*. Please feel free to express your thoughts of this particular arrangement.

Richard Peaslee, an American composer, graduated from Yale University and the Juilliard School. Peaslee has a wide range of compositional style including jazz influences, folk-like expressions, extended techniques for various instruments, and electronic sounds. Many of his compositions sought out the very best performers on their respected instrument. A few performances include his *Chicago Concerto* (1967) for the virtuoso Gerry Mulligan (baritone saxophone), *Nightsongs* (1973) for Harold Lieberman (trumpet and flugelhorn), and *Arrows of Time* (1994-1996) for Joseph Alessi (trombone).

Arrows of Time is an example of Richard Peaslee's jazz influence. He mentions, "I once played trombone in high school and college but I needed virtuosic advice from two great players (Joe Alessi and Jim Pugh) to help write the piece and better understand the parameters of the trombone. Joe, giving this piece its first performances, was the ideal player for this work in that he can seamlessly combine both a classical and jazz technique in his playing." The piece is three movements long and explores many trombone techniques. The performer needs to have command over their embouchure, pitch range, double tonguing, and slurring technique. While writing this piece, Richard Peaslee was reading Stephen Hawking's *A Brief History of Time*, which influenced his title of the piece. *Arrows of Time* was originally written in 1993 and 1994 for trombone and piano but was later adapted for full orchestra.

Claude Debussy, a French composer, was born into a poor family but his success as a pianist sent him to the Paris Conservatory at age eleven. Debussy had many influences throughout his career including painters and poets during the 'impressionist' movement, Richard Wagner (1813-1883), and his acquaintance with Erik Satie (1866-1925). Claude Debussy was among some of the greatest composers of the twentieth century and is highly regarded as one of the greatest French composers. He creates a colorful imagery utilizing his technique of layering sounds in his orchestrations. Debussy's vocal works, *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1902) and *Trois Chansons* (1908), offer a lyrical style with an ethereal touch. Some of his other important works include *La mer* (1905), *Images for Orchestra* (1905-1912), and his *String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10* (1893).

The piece, *Trois Chansons*, is originally based on poems by Charles Duc d'Orleans (1394-1465) and written for acapella voices. There are three songs or movements in the piece inspired by the three settings from the poems. The first is entitled "*Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder!*" (*Lord! lovely hast thou made my dear!*). The movement expresses a Renaissance and religious mood along with some modern harmonic orchestration. The second poetic setting is entitled "*Quant j'ai ouy le tabourin*" (*Whene'er the tambourine I hear*). This movement is lighter, more colorful, and full of exciting energy. The final setting is "*Yver, vous n'estes qu'un villain*" (*Cold winter, villian that thou art*). This last movement is also colorful and full of energy but might be considered the heaviest out of the three movements. There are sections to be light

in approach but have the finale quality of a symphonic composition. The entire piece was completed and published in 1908 for the acapella voices, but was later arranged for a trombone quartet by Michael Levin in 1986.

Modest Mussorgsky, a Russian composer, born into a wealthy family would later find himself close knit with a gifted group of composers. The group of composers Mily Balakirev (1837-1910), Alexander Borodin (1833-1887), César Cui (1835-1918), Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908), and Mussorgsky, are known as "The Five" who met in St. Petersburg and were considered part of the ideals behind the 'Romantic Nationalist' movement in Russia. Mussorgsky had trouble revising or completing his works with the exception of a few of his major works including his opera *Boris Godunov* (1872), tone poem *Night on Bare Mountain* (1867), and the piano suite *Pictures at an Exhibition* (1874).

Pictures at an Exhibition ('*Kartinki s vystavki*') is a cycle of piano pieces dedicated to the memory of a Russian artist, friend of Mussorgsky, Victor Hartmann (1834-1873). After his death, a memorial exhibition of his works were displayed and Modest Mussorgsky chose ten pictures to influence his piece. Between the primary pictures in the piece, a *Promenade* is performed five times creating what some consider to be the eleventh picture or self-portrait of Modest Mussorgsky. The *Promenade* depicts the travel from one picture to the next, therefore a reflection of Mussorgsky moving through the exhibit space. With the exception of the *Promenade*, the ten pictures in order are "*Gnomus*" (Latin: *The Gnome*), "*Il vecchio castello*" (Italian: *The Old Castle*), "*Tuileries*" (French: *Tuileries* or *Dispute between Children at Play*), "*Bydlo*" (Polish: *Cattle*), "*Balet nevylyupivshikhsya ptentsov*" (Russian: *Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks*), "*Samuel*" *Goldenberg und "Schmuyle"* (Yiddish: *Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle*), "*Limoges, le marché*" (French: *The Market at Limoges* or *The Great News*), "*Catacombæ*" (Latin: *The Catacombs*), "*Izbushka na kuryikh nozhkakh (Baba-Yagá)*" (Russian: *The Hut on Fowl's Legs, Baba-Yagá*), and last "*Bogatyrskiye vorota (V stolnom gorode Kiyeve)*" (Russian: *The Bogatyr Gates, in the Capital in Kiev* or *The Great Gate of Kiev*).

There are many different translations to each picture and many different revisions and orchestrations since the original piano suite.

The most famous revised orchestration of *Pictures at an Exhibition* is Maurice Ravel's (1875-1937) arrangement for orchestra performed by the Paris Opera on October 19, 1922. I heard a recording of Christian Lindberg (b. 1958) perform his edition (2000) of *Pictures at an Exhibition for Trombone and Piano* and decided to perform the last two pictures. No. 9, *The Hut on Fowl's Legs* picture depicts a hut standing on a hen's legs with a vicious witch named Baba Yagá, who flew around in a mortar carrying a pestle. The witch flies right into No. 10, *The Great Gate of Kiev*, which depicts a gate that was designed by Victor Hartmann for the city of Kiev. The finale transforms the welcoming *Promenade* theme into an ascension to the heavens. Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* was published five years after his death but continues to inspire and influence many arrangements and orchestrations of this brilliant work.

Biographies

Sean F. Biehn was born 1987, in New Jersey, and currently resides in Staten Island, New York. Mr. Biehn is a classically trained tenor trombone performer whom explores many different genres and styles of music and continues to explore his own unique sound as a trombonist. Mr. Biehn is currently attending New York University Steinhardt School of Music for his Masters in Orchestral Trombone Performance and has been accepted into DMA programs for Arizona State University, Minnesota University, University of Southern California, Colorado University Boulder, and Michigan State University. Currently, Sean Biehn studies with Thomas Hutchinson, and has studied with Dr. Sean Reed, and Tyrone Breuninger. He wishes to continue exploring the many techniques and sounds of playing the trombone while continuing to pursue becoming a professor and performing in a professional setting.

In addition to Mr. Biehn's trombone endeavors, he has explored the writing area of music, composing and arranging music for orchestra, jazz groups, chamber ensembles, and student films. Mr. Biehn has been privileged to have one of his arrangements published by Cherry Classics Inc. in which he recorded on his Senior Recital at Rowan University. Mr. Gordon Cherry mentions that, "*The Adagio in G minor for Trombone and Strings* is a wonderful arrangement of the work attributed to Tomaso Albinoni (1671-1751) and a beautiful live performance by the arranger, Sean F. Biehn." Mr. Biehn is currently working on publishing a few of his original compositions for brass choir and brass quintet.

Some of Mr. Biehn's accomplishments include performances with Morten Lauridsen, Sir David Wilcox, and Tyrone Breuninger. He has also performed with the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra, Haddonfield Plays and Players, New Jersey Philharmonic, and was principal trombone of the 2011 Atlantic Brass Band NABBA champions. Mr. Biehn will continue studying composition and the art of playing tenor trombone in hopes of making both a professional career. Sean Biehn will be attending Michigan State University for a Doctorate in Musical Arts studies for trombone performance with a three year Teaching Assistantship and full scholarship.

An adept and versatile musician of the New York City metropolitan area, **Gloria Kim** has performed across the United States, Europe, and Mexico as a collaborative pianist, soloist, and orchestral violinist. Recent engagements include recital collaborations with Weston Sprott of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Carnegie's Weill Hall, "Trout Quintet" at the Bruno Walter Auditorium at Lincoln Center, Jake Heggie's "*Three Decembers*" under Paul Nadler of the Metropolitan Opera, and serving as music director and violinist for the International Fringe Festival in New York. She has been a part of the music staff for International Vocal Arts Institute collaborating closely with Joan Dornemann and Maestro Paul Nadler of the Metropolitan Opera, Sacramento Opera, Opera New Jersey, Glimmerglass Opera, Austrian-American Mozart Opera Academy, and the Juilliard School's trombone studio. She has also served on faculty at Montclair State University, Concordia University in Austin (Violin), New York University, and has taught master classes at the University of Texas, University of Missouri-Columbia, and University of Memphis. A native of Austin, TX, Kim completed her Doctor of Musical Arts degree in collaborative piano and coaching at the University of Minnesota, received her B.M. in piano performance and M.M. in piano performance with a minor in organ performance at the University of Texas. An accomplished violinist, she was an active member of the University of Minnesota and University of Texas Symphony Orchestras as well as numerous chamber ensembles.

Brittany Dagro is on the Adjunct Cello Faculty at NYU Steinhardt teaching non-music majors. She received her Bachelor of Music degree in Cello Performance from the Manhattan School of Music, where she studied with and continues to study with her mentor, Marion Feldman. She is currently a candidate for the Master of Music degree in Cello Performance from New York University. Brittany started her musical training at the age of eight on Long Island, New York. Ms. Dagro started giving solo performances on Long Island at the age of twelve at corporate events, ceremonies, weddings, and parties. Additional studies were with David Geber, Maureen Hynes, and Carol Purdy.

Ms. Dagro has been and continues to be an avid orchestral and chamber musician. Brittany made her solo debut at the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall as a winner of the Associated Teachers Music League Young Musicians Concert Competition in May 2013. She is

the former Principal Cellist of the New York Youth Symphony, under Ryan McAdams during the 2009-2010 season at Carnegie Hall. She has also held Principal positions in the Long Island Youth Symphony in 2004-05 and the Long Island Gemini Orchestra for the 2003-04 season. Ms. Dagro has played at Carnegie Hall thirteen times in her past fifteen years of experience, eleven of which were with the New York Youth Symphony, starting in 2006 under Paul Haas. She was principal cellist of the NYU String Orchestra that performed with the iconic band, The Eagles at NYU Steinhardt's First Annual Gala in November 2013.

During her time at MSM, she played in various performing orchestras including the Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia, Jazz Orchestra, and Composers Orchestra. Conductors include Kent Tritle, George Manhanan, Justin DiCioccio, Kenneth Kiesler, David Gilbert and various guest conductors. While at the Manhattan School of Music and NYU, Brittany was a part of various chamber ensembles as well, including but not limited to string quartets, piano trios, quartets, and quintets, and the Baroque Aria Ensemble. Her chamber coaches include Kenneth Cooper, Jeffrey Cohen, Wolfram Koessel from the American String Quartet, and Karen Ritscher.

Since moving to New York in 2010, **Andrew Sharkey** has enjoyed a diverse and active freelance career. In 2011, his work with the Mannes Opera Orchestra was "lively...leaving [the audience] wanting more" with "clear, energetic playing" - New York Times. In early 2013, his work playing Verdi Requiem at Carnegie Hall was praised by one audience member for its "dramatic vitality" and "incredible dynamic range." In past Summers, he has performed in orchestras at the Pierre Monteux School, the Masterworks and Colorado College Music festivals and sold out a 1,150 seat Philippe Performing Arts Center (Marion, IN) as featured soloist with the Mississinewa Valley Band. As a jazz soloist, Wayne Bergeron hailed Mr. Sharkey's playing as having "beautiful sound and pitch" at the Elmhurst Jazz Festival.

As a big band player, he has premiered new works by Rich Shemaria and shared the stage with jazz luminaries such as Chris Potter, Charli Persip, and the late Austin Peralta. Recent professional credits include the Ureuk Symphony, Manhattan Symphonie, the Stan Rubin Orchestra, The Pendulum Swings, Brooklyn College Opera, Fort Wayne Philharmonic and Steinhardt's NYU Philharmonia. His

teachers are Tom Riccobono, Weston Sprott, Adam Johnson and John Rojak; Mr. Sharkey is a 2012 graduate of the NYU MM program in Brass Studies.

Nate Reit is a very talented, up-and-coming trombonist in New York City. A student of music for almost 20 years, his experience and expertise ranges from solo, chamber and orchestral music to jazz, funk, Latin, Dixieland, and many other sorts of improvisatory and contemporary music. A uniquely versatile musician, Nate also composes and arranges his own creative work. In 2009 he earned a BM from the Eastman School of Music, where he studied with Mark Kellogg, principal trombonist of the Rochester Philharmonic, as well as the renowned Dr. John Marcellus. Nate is a full time member of New Age Brass, with whom he performs regularly throughout the Northeast. Also a bass trombonist, he keeps a very diverse and exciting playing schedule! Nate currently lives in Brooklyn and free-lances full time in New York.

A highly skilled low brass specialist, **Bradley Madsen** has performed all over the country with Foxy Moon Baby and The Sharp Things, and has performed internationally while working for Carnival Cruise Lines. Since settling in New York, Brad has had the pleasure of playing with some of the top working bands and musicians in town, including Charli Persip, Bobby Sanabria, Soul Be It, Russ Spiegel's Big Band, and Artificial Flavor. He is also the trombonist for the off-broadway show Burlesque to Broadway, currently running short tours to various parts of the country. Classically, he has performed with the Chamberlain Brass Quintet, Yonkers Philharmonic, Richmond County Symphony Orchestra, Brooklyn Symphony Orchestra, as well as at Mayor Michael Bloomberg's 3rd Inauguration.

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to thank everyone who came out this afternoon. I realize that some of you had to make arrangements to take a plane, train, subway, taxi, or in my case swim across the Hudson Bay, but you made it and I am grateful to have such a supportive family, great group of friends, and a myriad of colleagues. I am especially fortunate to know some of the talented and expressive musicians you will hear during the program. Gloria Kim is an amazing pianist and accompanist. I find expressing myself comes easier knowing that she is sitting at the piano connecting every note and every musical phrase into one tapestry. Brit Dagro has always fascinated me with her incredible cello voice and expression. I enjoy attempting to fit my voice with hers in the Rachmaninoff piece. Andy Sharkey, a great trombonist, has always been one to push me to be a better musician and to discover the best sound I can make on each note playing the trombone. I follow his example and I am glad to have met him and performed next to him during my time at NYU. Nate Reit and Bradley Madsen, whom I have recently met for the first time, have shown great musicianship and talent in our trombone quartet. I am glad to have the opportunity to perform with a great group of trombonists.

There are a few trombone teachers during my journey at NYU that need to be recognized. First, my professor Dr. Sean Reed, proved to be a great segue into the big city life and introducing me to the world class competition in music. Unfortunately he had to leave New York and continue his own journey in music and take care of his newborn son. I enjoyed my time with him and the opportunities he gave me to boost my confidence. When Dr. Reed left, I had to find another trombone professor at NYU. Accepting me as his student, professor Thomas Hutchinson has taught me many different trombone techniques and styles and has managed to bridge the gap between my athletic abilities and musical abilities. He has an incredible trombone voice and leads by example. Tom has given insight to my weaknesses with encouragement and has shown me the way for a promising future. I will never forget these two amazing teachers and I hope to have a long-lasting friendship.

I would like to give a special thank you to my sister, Erin, her husband Eric, and her two children Evelyn and Leonard. They made the trek here and I especially wanted this performance to be a great experience

for them. My sister and I have always been close and have gone through many different challenges but we seem to conquer in our own fashion. I am dedicating this recital to my niece and nephew, Evey and L.J. I hope you will find your own unique voice in music and someday play with your Uncle Sean.

The last in recognition and first in thought, are my parents. To my Mom and Dad, thank you so much for being there every step of the way. You have taught me so much, and have shown me how to be the humble man I am today. I only wish to become as wise and successful as you have become for my sister and me. I love you both and I will miss your presence in Michigan. Don't worry; I will call you if I am hanging off of a cliff somewhere, or when I get lost on a kayaking trip and find myself ten feet from the edge of the Niagara Falls. I will always find my way back for that delicious turkey dinner. I wish everyone a safe trip back home and thank you for sharing this experience.

NYU STEINHARDT

MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS PROFESSIONS

NYU Steinhardt's Department of Music and Performing Arts Professions was established in 1925. Since that time, Steinhardt Music and Performing Arts Professions has functioned as NYU's "school" of music and developed into a major research and practice center in music technology, music business, music composition, film scoring, music performance practices, performing arts therapies, and the performing arts-in-education (music, dance, and drama). Today, 1,600 students majoring in renowned programs- baccalaureate through Ph.D.- are guided by more than 400 faculty who share The Steinhardt School's spirit of openness and innovation. Faculty include international performing and recording artists, music business and technology leaders while others sit on leading journal editorial boards and publish some of the most significant music technology and performing arts research on the scene today. This depth and breadth of resources offers unparalleled opportunities for artistic, professional, and scholarly growth.

We recognize that in addition to substantial training in individual specializations, our graduates require multiple skills. To that end we encourage students to benefit from rich and varied courses throughout The Steinhardt School and the University. In addition, our campus is surrounded by and blends into the world's capital and epicenter of the performing arts, New York City. Alumni have major performing careers and coveted professional positions in the music industry and in universities throughout the world. Prominent alumni include: jazz great Wayne Shorter, multiple Tony and Grammy Award winning music theatre composer and songwriter Cy Coleman, multiple Tony and Grammy Award winning lyricist Betty Comden, multiple Oscar winning film composer Elmer Bernstein, and Tony Award, Oscar and Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and film writer John Patrick Shanley.

Dr. Robert Rowe, Director