

Ana Catalina Ramírez Castilla,

clarinet

with Dr. Stephen Sachs, piano

assisted by Maricel Méndez Salaza, viola

Tuesday, May 19, 2008

7:00 p.m.

University of Costa Rica

Room 107

PROGRAM

The Latin American Clarinet from Mexico to Argentina

Etude No. 3 for Solo Clarinet

Astor Piazzolla
(1921-1992)

Ana Catalina Ramírez, clarinet

Zarabandeo for Clarinet and Piano (1995)

Arturo Marquez
(b. 1950)

Ana Catalina Ramírez, clarinet; Dr. Stephen Sachs, piano

**Sonata de la Soledad for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano (2008)
(World Première)**

Luciano Eliécer Brenes Aguilar
(b. 1979)

I. La Sombra del Pasado (Allegreto)

II. Decepción, ira y despecho (Adagio – Allegro furioso)

Ana Catalina Ramírez, clarinet; Maricel Méndez Salaza, viola; Dr. Stephen Sachs, piano

INTERMISSION

Sonata No. 1

Ruvido ed ostinato

Alberto Ginastera
(1916-1983)

Cinco Danzas Cubanas

Festiva

José Maria Vitier
(b. 1954)

Dr. Stephen Sachs, piano

Valses Venezolano

Tatiana
Andreina
Natalia

Antonio Lauro/arr. Paquito D’Rivera
(1917-1986)/(b. 1948)

Ana Catalina Ramírez, clarinet

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano (1970)

Carlos Guastavino
(1912-2000)

- I. Allegro deciso
- II. Andante
- III. Rondo – Allegro spiritoso

Ana Catalina Ramírez, clarinet and Dr. Stephen Sachs, piano

Belhaven College Music Faculty Artist Bios:

Ana Catalina Ramírez Castrillo, principal clarinetist of the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra and Adjunct Faculty, Clarinet, is known for her versatility as a soloist, chamber and orchestral musician. As a soloist, Ms. Ramírez has performed solo recitals in Costa Rica, USA and Venezuela, where she has performed as a guest artist since 2004. She is twice winner of the Costa Rica Young Soloist Competition, winner of the Longy School of Music Honors Competition, and a semifinalist of the Young Artist Competition of the International Clarinet Association. In her native country, Costa Rica, she was first clarinet for the National Band of San Jose, principal of the Youth Symphony Orchestra, and second clarinet of the National Symphony Orchestra for one season. In USA, she has performed with the Youth Philharmonic Orchestra in New England, the Brockton Symphony Orchestra in Brockton Massachusetts, and Opera North in Lebanon, New Hampshire. She has also performed in the festivals Sewanee Music Festival, Interlochen Arts Camp, XIX International Orchestra Festival in Murcia, Spain, the International Clarinet Connection 2001 and 2002 (Boston, MA) the Youth Orchestra of the Americas Latin-American tour 2005 (Venezuela, Colombia, Argentina), and 38th International Winter Festival at “Campos do Jordão” in Brazil. Born in San José, Costa Rica, Ms. Ramírez first studied at the National Institute of Music of Costa Rica, with Marvin Araya, principal clarinetist of the National Symphony. In 2000, she studied with Frankie Kelly at Southeastern Louisiana University. After transferring to the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, MA, she obtained a Music Diploma in Performance under the guidance of soloist Jonathan Cohler. In December 2007, she obtained her Master degree in Performance and Music Education from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst MA, studying with clarinetist Michael Sussman. She has had the privilege to perform and learn in master classes with world renowned clarinetists Philippe Cuper, Ricardo Morales, Luis Rossi, Wenzel Fuchs, Paquito D’Rivera, Kalman Berkes, Alessandro Carbonare, and Charles Neidich. Ms. Ramírez teaches at Belhaven College and Mississippi College.

Dr. Stephen W. Sachs, Professor of Piano and Music Chair at Belhaven College, has been active as a piano soloist, duo-pianist, chamber musician and accompanist in the eastern US and France. Dr. Sachs is a founding member of the Belhaven Piano Trio with esteemed colleague Mr. Song Xie, Assistant Professor of Violin and String Ensembles, and Mr. Bennett Randman, Mississippi Orchestra Principal Cellist. He has appeared with many orchestras, most recently in October, 2007 with the MSO of Jackson, MS performing Rachmaninoff’s “Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini” under the direction of Maestro Crafton Beck. He received the D.M.A. degree in piano performance from The Catholic University of America studying with Thomas Mastroianni, the M.M. degree in piano performance from Ohio University studying with Richard Syracuse, a B.A. degree in music and a B.S. degree in music education from Lebanon Valley College studying with William Fairlamb. Dr. Sachs serves as Director of Music Ministries at Covenant Presbyterian Church of Jackson and is on the board of the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra. From 1978-2004, Dr. Sachs served on the faculty of Eastern Mennonite University teaching piano and music theory and directing instrumental ensembles.

Program Notes:

Astor Piazzolla was born in 1921 in Mar de Plata, Argentina. His first instrument was the bandoneon, with which he recorded his first non commercial disk in New York at age 10. As a teenager Astor began to play in Tango orchestras, advancing his career in Buenos Aires. In 1941 he began studies with composer Alberto Ginastera, and pianist Raúl Spivak. In 1943 he began his "classical" works, and in 1946 his own orchestra. At that time, he began to develop his creative new tango style, for which he is known: more modern and different, with big dynamics and harmonic content, creating the first controversies among traditional tangueros. In 1949 he dissolves his orchestra and goes in the search of something altogether different. He studies conducting, the music of Stravinsky and Bartok, and listens to

lots of jazz. As a result he composes a series of works that are clearly different from the conception of tango at the time. In 1953 he won the Fabien Sevitzky competition with his work "Buenos Aires" (three symphonic pieces). Its performance created a full blown scandal, because of the use of bandoneon in the "cult" setting of a symphonic orchestra. Winning a scholarship from the French government as well, he left to study with Nadia Boulanger, hoping to become a classical composer. Boulanger quickly pointed out that his classical pieces are well written, but that the true Piazzola is there, in his tango. Piazzolla then returns to tango and his instrument, integrating both sophisticated music and tango. In 1955 he returned to Argentina, and completely revolutionizee tango. He broke away from the "orquesta tipica" and created chamber music instead, without singer or dancers. He became the target of extreme criticism. Later on his music gained acceptance in Europe and North America, as well as in some liberal segments of Argentine society. Today, he is one of the most recognized Latin-American composers. He died in 1992 in Buenos Aires. **Etude Number Three** is part of his Six Tango Etudes. These were composed originally for flute in 1987. A couple years later Claude Delangle arranged them for solo saxophone and solo clarinet, as well as saxophone and piano, and clarinet and piano, using Piazzolla's harmonization of them.

Arturo Márquez was born in Alamos Sonora in 1950. Today, he is widely recognized as the most outstanding Mexican composer of his generation. He began formal music studies in 1966 in California. In 1969 and 1970 he was conductor of the Navojoa Sonora Band. He pursued further studies at the Conservatory of Music of Mexico; The Taller de Composicion of the Institute of Fine Arts of Mexico, in Paris with Jacques Casterède and Ivo Malec; and at the California Institute of the Arts. He has received grants from the Institute of Fine Arts of Mexico, the French Government, and the Fulbright Foundation. He was part of the interdisciplinary group MUSICA DE CAMERA with Angel Cosmos and Juan Jose Diaz Infante. He is the composer for Irene Martinez's modern dance troupe MANDINGA. He has received commissions from the OAS, Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, Festival Cervantino, Festival del Caribe, Festival de la Ciudad de Mexico, and the Rockefeller Foundation. He has taught at the National University of Mexico Superior School of Music, and worked for CENIDIM (National Center of Research, Documentation and Information of Mexican Music). In 1991, he received the composition scholarship of the Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, and in 1994 he received a three year scholarship from the Sistema Nacional de Creadores. Besides the numerous performances of his work in Mexico, his music has been performed in Europe, Latin America and the United States. **Zarabando for Clarinet and Piano (1995)** was commissioned by the Director of Music Activities of UNAM, and was first performed by pianist Joseph Olechovsky and clarinetist Luis Humberto Ramos to whom it was dedicated. The Zarabanda (Sarabande) was a popular dance of unknown origin. There are records of this dance being performed in Mexico during the second half of the sixteenth century. During this same period, the dance was condemned and its performance was prohibited in Spain. In the next century, the Sarabande "reappeared" as part of the Baroque instrumental "suite" form, but in a character very different from the original. These concepts were introduced to the composer by the Cuban musicologist Rolando Perez. Even though the composer has no idea how the original Zarabanda sounded, he feels certain that its prohibition came about due to the fact that it was a very sensual dance. In his "Zarabando," he incorporated a "Tanguero" and a "Danzoneo," two of his favorite dances, because of the relationship between people, music and dance, and because he hoped to write something for clarinet and piano that might inflame the passions.

Luciano Eliecer Brenes Aguilar was born in Cartago, Costa Rica, in 1979. At age twelve he started learning piano and recorder, and a year later clarinet, which became his main instrument. He started composing organ pieces for mass, at age 14, and at age 17 his first band piece was performed. To date he has composed more than 50 pieces, 8 for band, 2 for orchestra, and a lot of chamber music. He won the Costa Rica Band Composing Competition, in 2000. Today he is principal clarinet of Alajuela National Band in Costa Rica, and teaches privately in the area. Mostly self taught, his compositions tend to mix classical, popular and contemporary currents. **Sonata de la Soledad (2008)** [The Sonata of the Solitude] was written in a personal mode by the composer. It depicts a story between two lovers who have conflicting emotions where the past always seems to separate them. The title comes from a neighborhood

called *La Soledad* in San Jose Costa Rica, were the composer's muse (woman who inspires him) lives. In this piece the clarinet is the muse, the viola is the composer, and the piano is the place, the environment in which everything takes place. The first movement is continues the fight to try to forget the past, that always comes back. The second movement is the feeling of deception and anguish for not being able to be with the loved one. The third section is a fight between the lovers at a bar, therefore the tango inspired music for this movement. After the fight there is only total solitude.

Antonio Lauro was born in 1917 in Venezuela. As a child, he learned to sing and play the guitar from his Italian father. After moving to Caracas with his family, he pursued formal musical study in piano and composition. In 1932, after listening to legendary Paraguayan guitarist and composer, Agustín Barrios, he abandoned the piano and violin in favor of the guitar. Lauro studied guitar with Raúl Borges, who introduced him to the traditional classical guitar repertoire. Lauro was a member of the "Trio Cantores del Trópico" between 1935 and 1943, with whom he toured nearby countries performing Venezuelan music. After 1952 Lauro's compositions were published, recorded, and performed through out the world. In his later years he became guitar professor at distinguished schools in Venezuela and the president of the Venezuela Symphony Orchestra. Convinced by peers and friends, he embarked on a solo tour which culminated in London's Wigmore Hall in 1980. Shortly before his death in 1986, he was presented with the "Premio Nacional de Musica", the country's highest artistic award. Lauro was a fervent cultural nationalist, determined to rescue and celebrate his nation's musical heritage. He was particularly attracted to the myriad colonial parlour vales (waltzes) created in the previous century by Ramón Delgado Palacios. These were unfailingly melodic, alternately wistful and brilliant, and characterized by distinctive syncopation. The waltzes Tatiana, Andreina and Natalia, composed sometime between 1938 and 1940, are one of his first efforts in composing waltzes for the guitar. Their instant popularity inspired still others. He also composed dozens of works for orchestra, choir, piano and voice, some of which remain unpublished. Even though he experimented with some modern techniques, his style remained "Calle real" (main street), and expression used at the time to refer to a straight and direct route, without distracting harmonic detours. Today Lauro is considered one of the foremost South American composers for the Guitar in the 20th century. Paquito D'Rivera, jazz saxophonist and clarinetist, Grammy award winner and recording artist, arranged this Venezuelan Waltz suite for clarinet in 1998 as **Vals Venezolano**.

Carlos Guastavino was born in Santa Fe, Argentina, in 1912. He studied piano at an early age. In his twenties he studied chemical engineering at the University, before receiving a grant to study music in 1938. He studied composition privately with Athos Plama and Rafael González. In the mid 1940s his music gained increasing local and international acclaim, thanks to his own performances and those by other artists. Guastavino toured performing his music through London, Ireland, Latin America, China, and the former Soviet Union. In 1960, the composer accepted various teaching positions in Argentina, and dedicated more time to composing. He died in Santa Fe, Argentina in 2000. His music is mostly nationalistic, invoking Argentine folk idioms. He never diverged from tonal harmony and traditional forms, actually he was totally against some of the most radical forms of modernism. He is best known for his piano pieces, chamber music, and above all vocal music: art songs, songs for schoolchildren, and choral arrangements of his own songs. The **Sonata for Clarinet and Piano (1970)** is considered one of his outstanding instrumental works, as are "Diez cantilenas argentinas" for piano, and "Presencias" (for various media).