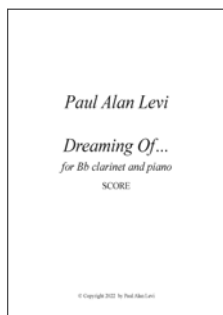


of the soul,” and the third, “The Homeward Road,” the arduous struggle to find a home, whether that means going back or onward. This is enjoyable and interesting music, skillfully crafted, that is

worthy of practicing and performing.

—Andrija Blagojević



Paul Alan Levi. *Dreaming Of...*, for B♭ clarinet and piano. www.paullevi.com. \$30.00

Paul Alan Levi, is an American composer born in 1941 in New York, who now resides in Washington, D.C. He received his musical education from Oberlin College and the Juilliard School, where he studied composition with noted professor Vincent Persichetti and his former student, composer and jazz pianist Hall Overton. Levi has taught at the Aaron Copland School of Music, Rutgers University, Manhattan School of Music, New York University, Lehman College and Baruch College. Levi's music has been performed in major venues in the United States (including Carnegie Hall) and Europe, and on national television.

Levi composes in a wide variety of styles and genres. His work *Dreaming Of...*, for B♭ clarinet and piano (also available in a version for violin and piano) excellently represents his approach to composing. In this five-movement work, the composer, in his own words, “...tried to inhabit the stylistic worlds of five different composers and idioms.”

The composition, “written during the COVID years of 2020-2022,” starts with the lyrical, ethereal “Dreaming of Schubert,”

which is followed by more contemporary sounds in the mysterious “Dreaming of Bartók.” The third movement is the fun, playful, and joyful “Dreaming in Ragtime,” the fourth is named “Dreaming of Ravel,” while the fifth, “Dreaming in Yiddish,” is inspired by Yiddish folk music, with a long solo cadenza at the beginning and klezmer-style ending.

The composer commented that he prefers performance in that exact order, but that any other order of the movements, or the performance of only selected movements, would be acceptable to him.

Up to now, only the last movement, “Dreaming in Yiddish,” has received a public performance—it was premiered on May 9, 2022, at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York by clarinetist Moran Katz and pianist Marika Bournaki. It is hoped that the whole composition, the duration of which is approximately 20 minutes, will receive its premiere soon and numerous performances afterwards. It is fresh and pleasant and the varied styles of its movements will excite the interest of the audience.

This composition, of moderate technical requirements, can also be used for teaching purposes to introduce different musical styles to students, who can perform either the composition in its entirety or separate movements in studio classes and public concerts.

PDFs of the score and clarinet part are available for purchase from the composer.

—Andrija Blagojević



Michael Lysight. *Prisme* for B♭ bass clarinet and piano. Gerard Billaudot Éditeur, 2022. €12.21

Outstanding composer Michel Lysight, of the Royal Brussels Conservatory, has written for colleague Jean-Marc Fessard a viscerally engaging and beautiful 10-minute duet for bass clarinet and piano. From the first notes the music draws one in on its journey of melody and images. In this medium-difficult work the bass clarinet

plays throughout a three-octave range from lowest C to altissimo D#. Most of the music is medium-paced, allowing the expressive nature of the music to breathe. For contrast (refraction through the prism?), faster sections are used with new rhythmic feels, including a very groovy syncopation. Minor and major modes are traversed, and the pleasing harmony is never astringent though there is enough bite that the music is not saccharine. From the gentle beginning to the rousing ending, *Prisme* is one of the best recent bass clarinet and piano pieces. It is a true duo work, and you should experience it as soon as possible. Highly recommended.

—Gregory Barrett



Amilcare Ponchielli. *Paolo e Virginia*, duet for violin, clarinet and piano, Op. 78. First modern edition by Francesco Ottonello. Da Vinci Edition, 2022. €26.90

Amilcare Ponchielli (1834-1886) was a prominent Italian opera composer from the second half of the 19th century. He was active as a teacher at the Conservatory of Milan (among his most celebrated pupils

were Giacomo Puccini and Pietro Mascagni) and as a band director in Cremona. His most significant compositions were his operas, such as *La Gioconda*, but he expressed his musical ideas in several musical genres—as represented by the enormous quantity of band music he wrote. Conducting the local band of Cremona, he got to know wind instruments very well; maybe this was the reason he dedicated to them brilliant and lovely works, almost always including clarinet.

The *Convegno* (1857) for two clarinets and piano (or orchestra) is perhaps the most popular and most performed work, being a real

show piece, very suitable to impress audiences. Other works of his early period in the chamber music field are the *Quartet* for flute, oboe, B \flat , and E \flat clarinets and piano and *Ricordanze dalla Traviata* (*Memories from Traviata*) for flute, oboe, clarinet, and piano. A late composition, written in 1877, in comparison to the above cited works, is the duet *Paolo e Virginia* for violin, clarinet, and piano. With this piece we find a direct connection with the novel *Paul et Virginie* by Jacques-Henri Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. Lyrical and cantabile sections alternate with virtuoso passages where the violin and clarinet show off their technical abilities. The novel was also the

basis of an opera of the same name by Victor Massé that premiered in Paris in 1876.

This new Da Vinci edition of FrancESCO Ottonello (first edition in modern times!) is very accurate in every respect. The introduction and critical remarks of Pietro Zappalà are very informative and detailed. This publication (volume 2 in their Ponchielli series) was made possible through the funding of the Centro Studi Ponchielli of Cremona. Very highly recommended, indeed!

– Luigi Magistrelli



Karol Beffa. *Les Ombres Errantes* trio pour clarinette en si \flat , cor et piano. Gérard Billaudot Éditeur, 2022. €31.74

French and Swiss composer Karol Beffa has recently published his *Les Ombres Errantes*, which roughly translates to *The Wandering Shadows*. This arrangement for clarinet, horn, and piano is preceded by two others, which have their own titles: *Les Ombres Qui Passent* for violin, cello, and piano, and *Cortège des Ombres* for clarinet, viola, and piano.

The piece is approximately 20 minutes in length, and consists of a fast, rhythmic second movement that contrasts with the two slow outer movements. The composer has included a foreword about his

compositional method. Beffa describes the wide leaps and disparate melodic lines of the first and third movements as “almost Webernian” and emphasizes the contrast that the second movement provides.

The clarinet part is in a comfortable range throughout, but does include many wide intervals, as well as a significant amount of flutter tonguing. The oversized parts are printed on heavy paper and are easy to read. The score is in C, and the parts for clarinet and horn include lines for both instruments, which should be helpful in keeping rehearsals efficient. The overall mood of *Les Ombres Errantes* shifts from lovely, flowing lines to intense weighty material and back. The distinctive style of this composition, as well as its dark, troubling tonal palate will make it a unique and intriguing addition to a recital.

– Madelyn Moore



Pavel Haas. *Wind Quintet*, Op. 10. Edited by Robert Simon for Bärenreiter Urtext, 2022. Publication supported by the Terezin Composers’ Institute. Study score €24.95, parts €30.95

“A bird took off for the sun... flew, flew, and did not arrive...” So wrote Czech composer Pavel Haas (1899-1944) on the draft of his *Wind Quintet* (1929). If this line is autobiographical, then Haas’s birth in Brno is his takeoff. His flight is his early demon-

stration of composition skill and further development influenced by Moravian folk music, Hebrew chant, study with Janáček, and study of neoclassical and jazz idioms; then his death at Auschwitz was his own prophecy realized.

The quintet is about 15 minutes in four movements. “Preludio” is rhythmically advanced with cross-rhythms and tempo modulations in abundance, makes good use of each instrument as leader and in a great variety of instrument pairings, and has a *fortissimo* ending. The chromatic, stepwise primary motive is from an earlier song, *Černý les* (*Black Forest*). Low register, solo flute begins “Preghiera” (Prayer) with an oscillating minor third melody of an improvisatory character. Central to the movement is the clarinet’s elaboration of the flute melody culminating in a three-measure cadenza. Just as in the first movement, the horn has its share of melodic lead, dramatically playing to high C. “Ballo eccentrico”

resounds with folk dance, and like Hindemith in his *Quintett für Klarinette und Streichquartett*, Op. 30 (first version 1923) and Janáček in his *Concertino* (1925), Haas asks the clarinetist to pick up an E \flat clarinet for its syncopated romp. This good humor is reinforced by piccolo in place of flute and two sections played *vivace*. The 66-bar “Epilogo” does bring it all together with soloistic use of each instrument, contrasting tempos and instrument pairings, chant-like and folk-like melody, multiple meters, and with the robust conclusion, a solid sense of purpose.

Editor Robert Simon provides an insightful preface, and in his critical report details the sources and specific editorial problems (including an issue with the E \flat clarinet part), and identifies many small inconsistencies from the 1935 printed score with autograph corrections. This wonderful quintet is highly recommended for advanced ensembles with an eagerness to engage with an important historic composer.

– Gregory Barrett