

Bre Ledbetter Senior Recital

May 7th, 2026

7:30pm

Kirmser Hall, Kansas State University

PROGRAM

Five Bagatelles, Op. 23 (1945).....Gerald Finzi (1901-1956)

Bre Ledbetter, Bb Clarinet
Amanda Arrington, Piano

Four Characteristic Pieces (1899)..... William Hurlstone (1876-1906)

Bre Ledbetter, Bb Clarinet
Amanda Arrington, Piano

Three Progressive Duets (1821) Henry Crusell (1775-1838)
Duet No. 2 in D minor

Bre Ledbetter, Bb Clarinet
Jackie Cook, Bb Clarinet

she danced in the rain (2018) Cait Nishimura (b. 1991)

Bre Ledbetter, Trombone
Amanda Arrington, Piano

KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY

School of Music,
Theatre, and Dance

Program Notes

Five Bagatelles, Op. 23 (1945)

Five Bagatelles for Clarinet and Piano started as three-character pieces for "20-year-old bits and pieces", which he had been working on since 1938" (Burn 2011). The first movement was added for the world premiere in 1943, and the fifth was added for official publication in 1945. Finzi was drawn to the clarinet's deep, dark sounds and wanted to showcase its range in his Bagatelles. The first movement, "Prelude", takes inspiration from "Bach's two-part invention" (Burn 2011). The syncopated scalar movements are accompanied by cascading piano chord changes, highlighting the clarinet's character and charm. Movement two, "Romance", is a peaceful piece meant to give the feeling of weightlessness. The middle section features syncopation and triplet figures that provide forward momentum, leading to the short reprise of the central theme "Carol"; the third movement, "Carol", was a reworked piece Finzi had already written. This piece served as the setting for a poem of the same name in Ivor Gurney's collection *Severn and Somme* (Burn 2011). This slower movement provides a sense of calm and serenity one would get on a cozy winter day, as suggested by the clarinet's clarion register. Based on an English folk tune by the same name, "Foriana" is a calmer dance of the piece. The piece's finale, "Fughetta", is an animated, fast-paced work that ends with a bang. The clarinet's high octave and syncopated melodies highlight the soloist's technical ability.

Four Characteristic Pieces (1899)

Four Characteristic Pieces was composed by William Yeates Hurlstone. Hurlstone states that he dedicated "Four Characteristic Pieces to GA Clinton, a leading British clarinetist during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, who died in 1913. The piece's first movement, "Ballade," originally titled "Suite in G minor," is a compelling opening to the work. Spanning around six minutes, it establishes a robust and expressive character. "Influences of works such as Dvorák's New World Symphony" are often heard throughout the clarinet's melodic lines (Performer's Edition). The second movement, "Croon Song," is the lullaby of the piece. This piece is described as having a "Celtic mistiness," which is evident in the 6/8 time signature. The third movement, Intermezzo, is often described as sounding like "Palm Court" music, a light, elegant style popular in the early 20th century. Many people compare this movement to a "Brahmsian Intermezzo (due to its) moderate tempo with a brisk middle section. (Hyperion). The final movement, Scherzo, was later rearranged for flute, oboe, horn, and piano. While sticking with the traditional sonata style, it is often the most critiqued movement as it can cause a struggle with balance in the other movements. It sometimes is" felt as the add-on to a three-movement work" (Performer's Edition).

Three Progressive Duets (1821)

The Three Progressive Clarinet Duets serve as a bridge between the pedagogical and the professional. While the title suggests a "progressive" increase in difficulty, the duets are generally considered to be at an advanced-intermediate level, with only slight shifts in technical demand. Unlike many instructional duets of the era that favor a "master and student" dynamic, Crusell wrote these parts with equal difficulty, allowing both performers to engage in the musical dialogue as peers. Duet No. 2 in D minor stands out for its tonal character. Written in a key often associated with drama and introspection, this duet draws on Crusell's "experience."

she danced in the rain (2018)

she danced in the rain was composed in 2018 for tuba and piano for the composer's friend, Caitlin Jodoin, whom Nishimura describes as someone who "always embodied" a brave and openhearted approach to life. The solo part has since been arranged for various brass instruments, including this version for trombone, completed in 2023. The piece centers on the inspiring phrase: "Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass; it's about learning to dance in the rain."