



Two Bb clarinets, Two Bass clarinets
Musical moments with lightness and depth

The Stephen Bates Quartet is comprised of two soprano clarinets and two bass clarinets. The unusual choice of a second bass clarinet is because the voice that it occupies is like that of the viola in a string quartet, and the upper range of the bass clarinet has a distinctly alto-like quality, whereas that of a regular clarinet will sound more soprano-like. The upper range of the bass clarinet was used extensively by Wagner in his operas and has a powerful vocal beauty that we feel enhances the sound of the ensemble.

The creation of this ensemble allows us to play works written for orchestra, string quartet, and piano which have been transcribed and arranged by various composer for our quartet. This allows us to greatly expand our repertoire. In addition, we perform some pieces written specifically for this group.

Stephen Bates says "Being a bass clarinetist myself, I always dreamed of forming an ensemble like this, particularly for the purpose of playing the music of Bach. The pipe organ has a clarinet stop, and when we play a fugue by Bach written for keyboard, the resultant sound can be very organ-like, due to the addition of a second bass clarinet. Performances since our formation have been richly rewarding both musically and personally."

Chester Brezniak received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Bard College, N.Y. and his Master of Music degree from the New England Conservatory of Music. He studied with Gino Cioffi, BSO principal clarinet, and Charles Russo, principal clarinet, N. Y. City Opera; and took master classes with the late Robert Marcellus, Cleveland Orchestra, and Stanley Drucker, New York Philharmonic.

Brezniak debuted with the Vermeer String Quartet to critical acclaim in 1972. Since then, a sampling of his live performances includes the Fromm Foundation Series for Contemporary Music, Harvard University; US West Coast tour with soprano Benita Valente of Earl Kim's Exercises En Route; Frick Fine

Arts Series, University of Pittsburgh; Duo Recital with pianist Richard Goode; Entrée des Artistes Summer Series, Orliac, France; guest artist with the Raphael Trio Chamber Series, Ouray, CO; Alea 111; and Arthur Berger Memorial Concert in Jordan Hall.

In 1977, Mr. Brezniak joined flutist Robert Stallman as a founding member of the Cambridge Chamber Players / Marblehead Summer Music Festival in Massachusetts, where a unique series of chamber music concerts, broadcast regularly on WGBH and PBS was presented for twenty years. The CCP's 1986 Merkin Concert Hall concert was critically acclaimed in the New York Times.

As a sought after clarinetist, Mr. Brezniak's orchestral experience includes the Atlanta Ballet Orchestra, Sao Paulo Symphony, Poston Pops Orchestra, Czech Radio Symphony, Hanover Chamber Orchestra, Bridgeport Symphony Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Massachusetts Symphony Orchestra, and most recently, the Boston Orchestra for the Andrea Bocelli concert at TD Garden in Boston. His recordings are on Centaur Records, Northeastern Records, and as part of the soundtrack to the documentary "At Home with Gunther Schuller – The Past is in the Present."

Mr. Brezniak is clarinet instructor at Clark University, Worcester Polytechnic Institute; and UMass Boston.

Julie Stuckenschneider attended the University of Southern California where she studied with clarinet greats David Shifrin and Mitchell Lurie. She holds Bachelor's (magna cum laude) and Master's degrees in Clarinet Performance. Julie has also studied and performed with clarinetists Christie Lundquist (Utah Symphony) and Joaquin Valdepenas (Toronto Symphony). Julie has played with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the Los Angeles Opera, the Utah Symphony, and with musicians such as Placido Domingo, Sarah Vaughan, Chick Corea, and Little Anthony. Performing with various orchestras, she toured Italy, Switzerland, Germany, England, and Scotland. In Los Angeles, Julie co-founded the York Contemporary Ensemble, a chamber music group dedicated to commissioning new compositions and to teaching modern music in innovative ways to young people.

Currently, Julie is an active freelance performer throughout the New England area. She plays with the Plymouth Philharmonic, Symphony by the Sea, and Orchestra on the Hill; and has performed with the Portland Symphony, Granite State Orchestra and Opera, Masterworks Chorale, Indian Hill Symphony, and Alea III. Julie has been featured as guest soloist with the Arlington Philharmonic, All New England Band Festival, Arts Jubilee Symphony, the Metropolitan Wind Symphony, and has performed live on WGBH Radio.

Julie teaches clarinet students at Ipswich High School and coaches chamber music for Northeast Massachusetts Youth Orchestra.

Clarinetist **Karen Luttik**, freelancer in the Boston area, relocated to the New England area after performing and teaching in the Netherlands for 20 years among others with Trio Aleotti, the Kurios Klarinet Kwartet and MusicaLeren.

Karen has served for years as Solo Clarinet for the Singapore Symphony Orchestra and currently performs in the New England area as clarinetist with the Cape Cod Chamber Orchestra and Vermont Virtuosi. She regularly performs with the Vermont Symphony Orchestra, Cape Cod Symphony, Symphony NH, the Longfellow Festival Orchestra and Sound Icon.

Karen teaches enthusiastic clarinetists of all ages at St. Anselm College in Manchester NH, the Nashua Community Music School, Tufts Community Music Program, Souhegan H. S., Bishop Guertin H. S. and at her private clarinet studio in Wilmington Mass.

Karen's musical studies took her to Manhattan School of Music, New York, the Royal Conservatory of Music in the Hague, the Sweelink Conservatory of Music in Amsterdam, Longy School of Music of Bard College in Boston, and Boston University, where she received her Doctorate of Musical Arts. She has worked with wonderful teachers such as George Pieterse (Concertgebouw Orchestra), Charles Russo (NY City Opera), Jonathan Cohler (soloist), Jorge Montilla (Simon Bolivar Orchestra), Michael Wayne (Boston Symphony Orchestra), Stephen Bates (Kennedy Center Opera and Ballet Orchestra), Ethan Sloane (Boston University) and David Martins (Boston University and Boston Symphony Orchestra)

Karen performs on instruments commonly found in the Netherlands: Wurlitzer clarinets (Eb, Bb, A; Reform Boehm) using a Viotto N1+3 mouthpiece and Benno Kruger reeds. Her bass and basset horns are Schwenk & Seggelke Reform Boehm instruments which descend to low C.

Stephen Bates graduated from the Mannes College of Music (BS, 1967) and Catholic University (DMA, 1974). He studied clarinet with Leon Russianoff and Harold Wright. His first professional job was with the President's Own U. S. Marine Band which performed at the White House during the terms of Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon. He joined the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra (Washington, D.C.) in 1973, where he played clarinet and held the bass clarinet chair for 36 years. While with the Opera House, he played in productions of 70 different operas and performed for most of the world's ballet companies.

In Washington, Bates helped form the Contemporary Music Forum and the National Chamber Orchestra, in which he played principal clarinet. He was also a member of the National Gallery Orchestra.

Along with music, he has pursued painting and had many art exhibits in Washington. After retiring from the Kennedy Center, Bates has been teaching silk painting in Gloucester, playing in chamber music concerts, and has brought together the players comprising the Clarone Clarinet Quartet.

Program

Zequinha de Abreu (1880-1935)
(expanded by Alan Bates from
Trio arr. Tony Wakefield;
Intro by Chester Brezniak)

Tico Tico

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)
(arr. Armando Ghidoni)

Pavanne Op. 50

Béla Bartók (1881-1945)
(arr. Ioan Dobrinescu)

from *Suite Op. 14*, Allegro Molto

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Fugue XVII in Bb Major from the *Well-Tempered Clavier*

Badinerie

Claude Debussy (1862-1924)
(arr. Stephen Kleiman)

The Girl with the Flaxen Hair

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
(arr. Ioan Dobrinescu)

Arabesque

George Gershwin (1898-1937)
(arr. Ioan Dobrinescu)

Prelude II

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)
(arr. Armando Ghidoni)

Sicilienne from *Pelléas and Mélisande*

Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992)
(transcribed by Jean-Pierre Labaste)

Tango: Villeguita

More info on the Stephen Bates Quartet can be found at www.thestephenbatesquartet.com .

