

Overlapping Sonorities

Fortunata Duo
Alicia Kosack, flute
Laura Armstrong, soprano saxophone

Mid-Atlantic Flute Convention
Hilton Washington Dulles Airport
February 19, 2023 – 9:15-10:00 am, Potomac III

Neon Flicker (2012)

Takuma Itoh (b. 1984)

Careening Into Freedom (2021)

Jonathan Cohen (b. 1954)

(Re)Inventions (2016)

Roger Zare (b. 1985)

Lively

Very Slow

Groovy

Program Notes from the Composers:

***Neon Flicker* – Takuma Itoh**

“The piece is full of short bursts of energy that – much like an old neon-lit sign that keeps stuttering on and off unpredictably – cannot seem to find a way to stay ‘on’ for any extended period of time. The music tries to find its footing and gain momentum but is usually thwarted before anything can be developed significantly. The frustration is eventually relieved when the music is allowed to blossom free of interruptions, but even that moment turns out to be fleeting, and the music eventually winds down to a stuttering halt.”

This piece was originally written for the Loeffert-Fukushima Duo in 2012. It is also available in two other duo combinations: soprano saxophone and alto saxophone, and soprano saxophone and bassoon. A full catalog of Takuma Itoh’s works and more information about the composer can be found at www.takumaitoh.com.

***Careening Into Freedom* – Jonathan Cohen**

“This piece was motivated by an episode from undergraduate school, so very long ago: It was the first day of classes about a year in. Having departed West Hall, I made my way to East Hall, a building few of us even knew existed. Between traveling completely across campus and having to locate the building and the room, I arrived a minute or two late. I was relieved to see that I was fine: I joined a crowd of people outside of the classroom who were waiting for the previous class to vacate. Eventually, it dawned on us that the group inside the closed room was actually our class, and that the appalling excuse for a teacher had started the class early, on the first day, on the fringe of campus, knowing that half of the attendees had not yet arrived. That should have been sufficient information for me, but I persisted. I endured two weeks of horror before choosing to do something I had never done, nor have ever repeated: I dropped the class. Later in the term, chance found me approaching that same building at what happened to be the time of that class. Through the open window I heard The Voice. It sent my heart careening with the joy of freedom in a way that has stuck with me. This piece is about that feeling and, more generally, the feeling that comes from having finally leapt headlong from a soul-killing situation into the light of possibilities. It begins with joy, pauses for a bit of reflection, and then flies into ecstatic abandon.”

For more information about Jonathan Cohen and his works, visit www.flutecomposer.com.

***(Re)Inventions* – Roger Zare**

“This work was written while I was serving as the composition fellow at the 2016 Bowdoin International Music Festival. The theme of the festival was *(Re)Invention*, suggesting that everything that we were doing as musicians, even though attached to a tradition that goes back hundreds of years, stays fresh in the present because we are constantly putting new perspectives into our art. Inspired by this theme, I wrote this series of duos in the form of Baroque inventions using 21st century compositional techniques. The first movement consists mostly of a tight eighth-note canon between the duo, and the leader of the canon is constantly switching between instruments. It is simultaneously an inversion canon with an axis of symmetry around the pitches E and B flat. Towards the end, I slip in a direct quotation from one of J.S. Bach's famous keyboard inventions, only to be raucously interrupted by its mirror image one bar later. The second movement is slow and more lyrical and significantly less strict in its construction. The two instruments' imitation is freer throughout. A quickly rustling figure that is partially improvised transports the music from calm and sustained to agitated and frenetic before the clarity of the opening returns. The final movement is a collapsing canon, starting at an interval of four quarter notes. Over the course of the movement, this interval gradually shortens until it is only one quarter note at the end. Highly pointed rhythmic hocketing lends to this movement's groovy nature, and it becomes increasingly jazzy as it goes along.”

(Re)Inventions was commissioned by the Centerline Duo in 2016 for flute and soprano saxophone. There are also other duo combinations of the work available: flute and oboe, flute and clarinet, clarinet and alto saxophone, two clarinets, bass clarinet and tenor saxophone, or any two saxophones in the same key. More information about Roger Zare and his compositions can be found at www.rogerzare.com.

ALICIA KOSACK enjoys a diverse career as a performer of both modern and Baroque flute. She has won numerous honors, and most recently placed 2nd in the 2022 National Flute Association Alto Flute Artist Competition. An active soloist and chamber musician, she regularly performs with the Fortunata Trio, and has performed with groups such as the Ash Lawn Opera Festival, Inscape Chamber Orchestra, Washington Bach Consort, Opera Vivente, the Handel Choir of Baltimore, and the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. She is equally committed to teaching and is currently on faculty at York College of Pennsylvania. Outside of performing and teaching, Alicia recently joined Arts for Learning Maryland as Executive Assistant after serving as Manager of the Baltimore Symphony Youth Orchestras for ten seasons. She has also served as Vice-President of the Flute Society of Washington and was the program chair for the 2007 and 2008 Mid-Atlantic Flute Fair. Alicia holds a DMA from the University of Maryland, College Park, and has received an MM from the Peabody Conservatory and a BM from the Harid Conservatory.

LAURA ARMSTRONG is a faculty member of Mount St. Mary's University and Frederick Community College, where she teaches clarinet and saxophone. Dr. Armstrong has performed in recitals in the Mid-Atlantic region and has performed as a soloist at the International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest held in Ostend, Belgium in 2018. Laura is a founding member of the Fortunata Trio and is also a member of the Peacherine Ragtime Society Orchestra and can also be heard on their most current album *Jazzin' the Blues Away*. As a freelance orchestral performer, Laura has played with a variety of orchestras including the Lancaster Symphony Orchestra, Maryland Symphony Orchestra, Shippensburg Festival Symphony, York Symphony Orchestra, HUB Opera Ensemble, Honolulu Symphony, and others. As a saxophonist, Laura has presented lectures and has been selected to perform at the International Saxophone Symposium, the North American Saxophone Alliance Conference, and the International Conference for Saxophone Pedagogy and Performance. She is also an advocate of contemporary music and has been involved in the commissioning of new works for both clarinet and saxophone, and she regularly performs with new music groups based in the Baltimore/Washington region. Laura holds a DMA from the University of Maryland, College Park, and has received an and holds an MM from Duquesne University and a BM from Susquehanna University. In 2015, Laura started her own reed making business, Aurora Winds. She lives in Baltimore, MD. For more information, please visit www.lauraarmstrong.net.

The **FORTUNATA DUO**, Alicia Kosack, flute; Laura Armstrong, clarinet and saxophone; celebrate the joy and good fortune of performing chamber music as good friends and strive to promote this unusual medium. Their performances have included numerous recitals throughout the Mid-Atlantic region, including the National Flute Association's convention in New Orleans and the International Saxophone Symposium at George Mason University.