



CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY  
SAN LUIS OBISPO

# Rose Doylemason

◆ *bass trombone* ◆

A Senior Recital in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for a Bachelor of Arts in Music

Paul Woodring, accompanist

April 9, 2016

Saturday at 3 p.m.

Davidson Music Center

Room 218



Sponsored by Cal Poly's Music Department and College of Liberal Arts

**CAL POLY**  
SAN LUIS OBISPO

# Program

## Senior Recital

Rose Doylemason, bass trombone

Paul Woodring, piano

*Unaccompanied Suite for Cello No. 4* ..... Johann Sebastian Bach  
Gigue (1685-1750)

*Canticles* ..... Johan de Meij  
(b. 1953)

*Sång till Lotta* ..... Jan Sandström  
(b. 1954)

— Intermission —

*Sonata Breve* ..... Walter S. Hartley  
Allegro Moderato (b. 1927)  
Presto

*Étoile des Profondeurs* ..... Jérôme Naulais  
Allegro (b. 1951)  
Ballade

*Torn' a Surriento* ..... Ernesto de Curtis  
(1875-1937)

**Taylor O'Hanlon, accordion**

# Program Notes

## **Bach Cello Suite No. 4: “Gigue”**

Several of the most popular works performed by trombonists today were not actually composed for the instrument. Johann Sebastian Bach's *Unaccompanied Suites for Cello* have provided trombonists a challenging escape from typical brass literature — but Bach might be surprised to see how his cello suites have now been put to use! As a member of a large musical family, young Johann Sebastian began learning violin and clavichord very early in life. After the death of his parents in short succession, ten-year-old Bach received the bulk of his tutelage from his oldest brother, Johann Christoph. Johann Sebastian was quickly recognized as a music student of great talent, and upon graduation, he began a steady stream of employment in various churches as the Kapellmeister — or choral and music director — and organist. Bach didn't attain his first position as a composer until 1736, when he was named the Royal Court Composer for Augustus III of Poland. But it wasn't until Felix Mendelssohn began to revive the works of Bach in the nineteenth century that Bach's compositions came to be recognized as among the greatest ever written.

Similarly, Bach's *Six Unaccompanied Suites for Cello* were rarely performed cello exercises until they were resurrected by cellist Pablo Casals in the twentieth century. Written sometime between 1717 and 1723 — during Bach's time as the Kappelmeister in Köthen — these cello suites have remained staples of the cello repertoire since their recovery. They have also been arranged for nearly two dozen solo instruments, including every member of the string family, piano, marimba, classical guitar, bassoon, trumpet, tuba, ukulele, charango, and, as will be heard today, trombone. Several composers have even adapted these small works for full orchestra and wind ensemble.

The gigue from Suite No. 4 is commonly performed by advanced trombonists because it presents special challenges to the instrument. Because of the nature of the trombone's sound, it is typically given cumbersome melodies. This makes the gigue — the flourishing conclusion to a dance suite — far different from a trombone's typical repertoire. While the piece may seem short to the audience, this gigue is exhausting for a trombonist to perform; during the two halves — each of which is repeated — not one breath-mark is written. While not having breath cues may be inconsequential to a cellist, it creates a problem for wind instrumentalists who typically enjoy breathing. Trombonists must take great care not to interrupt the natural phrasing of the piece when taking a breath. This monumental challenge, combined with the agility necessary to conquer Bach's far-ranging melody lines, requires unwavering focus.

## **Canticles**

Trained at the Hague's Royal Conservatory of Music, Dutch composer Johan de Meij is a modern-day Renaissance man. While maintaining a wildly successful career in composition, de Meij has won renown as an accomplished performer; he holds a chair in the New York Wind Symphony and the Kyushu Wind Orchestra in Fukuoka. He currently lives in Manhattan where he also runs his publishing company, Amstel Music. As a composer, de Meij favors large ensembles; his most famous work, the *Lord of the*

*Rings Symphony* (1988), has been performed by leading wind bands across Europe. His two solo works for trombone, *T-Bone Concerto* (1996) and *Canticles* (2007), are currently among the most popular concertos for trombonists.

Johan de Meij composed *Canticles* with two close relationships in mind; that with his friend Ben van Dijk and with van Dijk's father, Piet. Composed several years after Piet's death, *Canticles* was created to honor the older van Dijk, as he was "a [second] father" to de Meij. The contrasting moods of the concerto are representations of Piet's personality, and, according to the composer, "the music depicts the sadness about losing [Piet], but also the many happy moments and his wit and wonderful sense of humor." The piece was written to be performed by trombonist Ben van Dijk, and de Meij attributes Ben as integral to the creation of the piece, noting that he wrote the piece to highlight van Dijk's skills.

A "canticle" is defined as a hymn or chant typically set to a Bible verse, but de Meij insists that neither he nor the dedicatee have religious convictions. Instead, *Canticles* captures the imagination of the audience with a score akin to any great film. The piece alternates between glorious conviction and inner struggle. At times it is light, at other times burdened; parts are triumphant and glorious, while other sections are soft and conservative. These various sections provide great contrast for the substantial concerto while representing de Meij's memories of Piet van Dijk and his personality. De Meij uses short groupings of three notes — and at some points juxtaposes contrasting rhythms — to give several recurring sections a dance-like lightness. These light rhythms give the piece energetic motion and convey Piet's humor. The glorious, triumphant melody illustrates the deep impression van Dijk made on de Meij. *Canticles'* whirlwind finish is truly a celebration of Piet van Dijk's life.

### ***Sonata Breve***

*Sonata Breve* (1969) remains the most well-known piece of American composer Walter Hartley's expansive compositional catalogue. Hartley earned his undergraduate, master's, and doctorate degrees in composition from the prestigious Eastman School of Music and is a highly awarded composer. Hartley began composing at the age of five, and published his first piece at the age of twenty-two. Since then, he has published over three hundred pieces ranging across a variety of styles, including concertos for orchestra and wind band, pieces for brass choir, and many solo works for saxophone. Hartley is a member of the American Society for Composers, Authors, and Publishers, and retains a professor emeritus position at the State University of New York in Fredonia.

*Sonata Breve* was immediately popular in the decades following its debut in 1969, and only twelve years later, it was found by a survey to be the most-played bass trombone recital piece in America. Despite its immediate success, *Sonata Breve* remains Hartley's only work written specifically for the bass trombone. Bass trombonist Thomas Everett commissioned the piece for himself, adding to his collection of nearly fifty pieces of personally inspired bass trombone pieces. *Sonata Breve* solidified the bass trombone as a competent solo instrument, and it remains one of the most popular recital pieces to this day.

The first movement, “Allegro Moderato,” surprises the audience at every turn. Although the piece sounds as if it has no tonal center, it outlines a dark-sounding minor chord on C sharp, the first and last pitch of the piece. Throughout “Allegro Moderato,” the melody seems as if it is about to come to a harmonious conclusion, but instead whisks into further dissonance. The melody transitions unexpectedly between incredible loudness and softness, and between lyrical sections and agitated, quick passages. This movement demands that the performer make extreme jumps from low to high notes, and almost always in quick succession. Hartley achieved an eccentricity that continues to excite and surprise throughout the rest of the piece.

The second movement, “Presto,” evokes the complex inner-workings of a machine. This movement plays into the wheel-house of the bass trombone by featuring the instrument’s large range and its ability to be percussive as well as lyrical. Hartley highlights flutter-tonguing, an advanced brass technique that is achieved within the mouth of the performer. The spray of notes achieved by flutter-tonguing during the first and last section is starkly contrasted by the middle section, which slows the melody to a languid and deliberate speed. This middle section allows the instrument to display its sonorous tone and lyrical capabilities. The flutter-tonguing returns to launch us into the final section, which ends the work in a flourish of notes.

### ***Sång till Lotta***

Jan Sandström, a native of Stockholm, has dedicated his compositional career to exploring and celebrating “the naïve, ordinary feelings” of regular people. This approach has proved immensely popular; Sandström has been the premier Swedish composer for the last three decades. Sandström studied composition and theory at the Piteå School of Music where he became professor of composition in 1989. Sandström has composed pieces for a wide variety of solo instruments, full orchestra, and wind band.

His most famous work, the *Motorbike Concerto* (1988), was composed for trombone, and was dedicated to — and created as a result of collaboration with — lauded soloist Christian Lindberg. As the concerto began its world tour, the daughter of a close friend of the composer, Lotta, began to play the trombone. Sandström promised the young musician that if she continued to play the trombone, he would write for her a concerto as he had for Lindberg. Shortly after, the composer composed the piece *Sång till Lotta*, or “Song for Lotta,” for the little girl’s birthday. The simple accompaniment was written to be played by Lotta’s father. Sandström writes on his website that, although Lotta didn’t continue with the trombone, she has gone on to make a wonderful impact on the world with her career at the United Nations.

Although seemingly simple, *Sång till Lotta*’s difficulty lies in its musical expression. At first glance, the sheet music of the piece seems incomplete; the composer provides no direction to the performer on how to phrase the melody, or when to swell or diminish. Sandström has left the task of musical expression completely to the whim of the performer, a liberty not often allowed us in contemporary music. By omitting specific musical guidance, the composer ensured that every performance of the

piece is unlike any other. As the piece moves forward, the mood shifts very slightly, encapsulating the wonder and possibilities of a young child viewing the world. Curiosity and awe increases as the melody gets higher and louder, and as the piece moves along, it gains momentum. After a glorious burst of energy, the piece settles back down to its original calm, returning to the original tempo (speed) and soft dynamic level (volume). Much like a young child returning home after a day of exploring new places, the melody ends as softly as it began.

### ***Étoile des Profondeurs***

French composer Jérôme Naulais was born into a musical family and was recognized for his inordinate musical talents at the age of six. After winning first prize in both violin and double bass performance at the Conservatoire National de Boulogne, Naulais studied composition at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris. There he continued to excel across a swath of musical fields, winning first prize in solfège (or sight-singing) in 1970 and first prize in trombone in 1971. From 1974 to 1976, Naulais pursued a successful solo career in several prominent orchestras from 1974 to 1982. He can be heard in studio recordings with many famous musicians, including Charles Aznavour, Harry Belafonte, Marlene Dietrich, and Shirley Bassey, and continues to teach at nearly half a dozen conservatories and academies across France and greater Europe. His compositions, although popular, only supplement his successful performing and pedagogical career.

*Étoile des Profondeurs*, or “Star of the Depths,” is a gem that has remained relatively obscure since its composition in 1999. Dedicated to Yves Bauer, professional soloist and bass trombonist with the Lille National Orchestra in France, the piece was originally composed for bass trombone and wind band. It has been professionally recorded only twice, once by the dedicatee and once again, with piano, by Denson Paul Pollard of New York’s Metropolitan Opera. Several other arrangements have been made for brass band, but the piece has not gained a foothold among American bass trombonists in the way that *Sonata Breve* has.

In “Allegro,” the soloist is required to soar across styles, transitioning seamlessly between jazz and classical influences. Frequent glissandos make the first section sound jazzy, like a movie score, or a cruise ship theme. The second passage launches into a virtuosic cadenza that eases into a delicate ballad. After a short piano interlude, the third section transitions completely into a Latin jazz groove, and occasionally the accompaniment provides rhythmic off-beats that move the piece forward. The jazzy moments never fully take over “Allegro,” and are interlaced with traditional, non-jazz harmonies and classically rooted rhythms. We return to the initial movie-score style to end the movement in a flourish.

Although, by definition, a “ballad” tells a story, the second movement has no words. Instead, Naulais has used tempo and dynamic level to create multiple moods that convey emotional development. “Ballade” begins with a simple, beautiful melody. Gradually, the melody quickens and becomes more aggressive, suggesting an inner struggle or issue. As the piece transitions into a middle section, the beautiful

melody has completely transformed and sounds much like the first movement. Again gradually, the melody relaxes back into the original languid melody, but retains some quick, contentious notes from the tumultuous middle section. Although “Ballade” is melancholy and dark, it retains sonorous and singing qualities.

### ***Torn’ a Surriento***

A yearning song reminiscent of Italian folk ballads, *Torn’ a Surriento* — or Return to Sorrento — is instantly recognized by lovers of Italian vocal music. Ernesto de Curtis (1875-1937) was a masterful composer of songs, writing more than one hundred ballads and songs during his lifetime. Curtis studied piano and received a diploma from the Conservatory of San Pietro a Maiella in Naples. Widely celebrated in Italy for his contributions to Italian music, a statue of the composer and his brother Giambattista — the lyricist for the piece — stands in the town square of Sorrento to this day.

Written in 1902 and published in 1905, the song has been performed in many languages by more than three dozen distinguished professional singers. The original version in Italian has been sung by world-renowned performers such as Enrico Caruso, Plácido Domingo, and Luciano Pavarotti. Frank Sinatra sang Claude Aveling’s English translation of the song, but many English speakers recognize the piece solely by its melody. Dean Martin performed the tune with altered lyrics as “Take Me in Your Arms,” and Elvis Presley modernized it as “Surrender.”

The dreamy and singing melody of *Torn’ a Surriento* allows the colors of the bass trombone to blend and resonate with the accordion and the lute. Written to be sung by a tenor, the melody lets the trombone “sing out” in its most comfortable range. At one point, the accordion takes over the melody and the trombone plays along softly as accompaniment. While the beginning of the piece is dark and sonorous, the middle relaxes into uplifting harmonies. The song then returns to the original, dark section as the singer begs his love to return to beautiful Sorrento.

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