



DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Saturday, February 28, 2026 • 7:00 PM

NICKOLI KUMM

Junior Recital

Brennan Family Recital Hall
2330 North Halsted Street • Chicago

Saturday, February 28, 2026 • 7:00 PM
Brennan Recital Hall

NICKOLI KUMM, SAXOPHONE

Junior Recital

SHARON PETERSON, PIANO

PROGRAM

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)
Fantasia para Saxophone, W490 (1948)
I. Animé-Moins
II. Lent
III. Très animé

Paul Creston (1906-1985)
Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano (1939)
I. With Vigor
II. With Tranquility
III. With Gaiety

Jacques Ibert (1890-1962)
Concertino da Camera (1935)
I. Allegro con moto
II. Larghetto - Animato molto

- Intermission -

Alfred Desenclos (1912-1971)
Prélude, Cadence et Finale (1956)

Jules Demersseman (1833-1866); arr. Fredrick Hemke
Carnival of Venice (1986)

Nickoli Kumm is from the studio of Jeremy Ruthrauff. This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the degree Bachelor of Music.

As a courtesy to those around you, please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices. Flash photography is not permitted.

PROGRAM NOTES

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887–1959)

Fantasia para Saxophone, W490 (1948)

Duration: 11 minutes

Written by Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos, the *Fantasia para Saxophone* is a staple in the classical saxophone repertoire. Villa-Lobos dedicated the work to Marcel Mule, the renowned French saxophonist who taught at the Paris Conservatory. The piece was originally written a whole step higher, but was lowered when Mule commented on the difficulty of executing the highest notes. However, despite his role in the fate of the piece, Mule never performed the *Fantasia*. Instead, it was premiered by Brazilian saxophonist Waldemar Szpilman. Orchestrated for strings and three horns, the *Fantasia* can be performed on either soprano or tenor saxophone.

The *Fantasia* is written in three movements: *Animé-Moins*, *Lent*, and *Très animé*. The *Animé* opens the piece with a lively introduction, which transitions into a second section of floating melodic lines conversing with the accompaniment in the piano. The technical flourishes weave through broad thematic statements. The *Lent* introduces a haunting melody that we hear three times. A rondo that is not energetic, but rather nostalgic, exploring memories and reminiscing on ideas presented in the first movement. The second movement ends with a restatement of the figure that opens the whole piece, leading us into the third and final movement. The *Très animé* dances in a lively seven-four, embodying Brazilian dance rhythms with the melodic intricacy of the second movement.

Paul Creston (1906–1985)

Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano (1939)

Duration: 15 minutes

Giuseppe Guttovveggi, who changed his name to Paul Creston, wrote his *Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano* in 1939. A staple in the classical repertoire recognizable to most by its opening statement, the work is a collaboration between the saxophonist and pianist, as Creston was a pianist himself. Writing for his friend Cecil Leeson, Creston presents the work in three movements.

The first movement, marked “with vigor,” opens with a figure that will be repeated throughout the movement. This figure is developed as Creston explores the range of the saxophone. The movement contains a mid-section that changes in character, rolling triplets, and a slight decrease in tempo before returning to the opening themes. “With Tranquility,” the second movement opens with a luscious piano

solo that the saxophone develops throughout the rest of the movement. The movement is meditative, pushing the performer to explore lyricism in new ways. Jovial and bouncy, "With Gaiety," the final movement, shows the agility of both saxophonist and pianist in a rondo that plays with large intervals and ornamentation that can't help but make one smile.

Jacques Ibert (1890–1962)

Concertino da Camera (1935)

Duration: 13 minutes

Jacques Ibert, writing for the renowned pioneer of classical saxophone Sigurd Rascher, presented his "Concertino da Camera" in 1935. Meaning "little chamber concerto," the piece was written for a small orchestra of eleven with a solo saxophone. The first movement, marked *Allegro con Moto*, opens with a familiar figure to those familiar with Ibert's work. Ibert's masterful use of syncopation creates a sonic landscape that grabs the listener's attention before the saxophone ascends into a soaring melody over the piano. Before the recapitulation, the saxophonist acts as the accompanist to the pianist, executing continuous scalar passages while the underlying orchestration takes the melody.

The second movement is divided into two parts, a *largetto* and an *animato molto*. The *largetto* opens with a quasi-recitative before ushering the orchestra to join in the haunting melodic lines. This meditation is short-lived before the pianist takes over and introduces the *animato*. The flurry of notes in the second part of the final movement dazzles the audience even before Ibert introduces the *cadenza*. The restatement concludes with a flourish, giving the masterpiece an ending worthy of a renowned performer. Ibert pushes the saxophonist through the natural range of the instrument and beyond into the *altissimo* register, adding extra difficulty and flourish to an already marvelous piece.

Alfred Desenclos (1912–1971)

Prélude, Cadence et Finale (1956)

Duration: 11 minutes

Written for Marcel Mule for the 1956 competition at the Paris Conservatory, Alfred Desenclos explores the range and agility of the saxophone in three parts. The *Prélude*, marked *grave*, introduces the piece in a semi-recitative as the saxophone climbs through different tessituras over the piano's steady lines. The theme, also introduced in the *Prelude*, introduces the listener to figures that will be heard throughout the rest of the piece. Emerging out of the piano, the

saxophone takes the reins during the Cadence. The saxophone climbs through the range of the instrument in virtuosic arpeggios before ushering in the piano with a decisive introduction into the Finale. The finale begins with an energetic piano solo, which is joined by the saxophone. After the introduction and interweaving of the piano and saxophone, we again hear the material stated in the Prélude, marked *allegro* rather than *grave*. The Finale ends with a quasi-cadenza in the saxophone, followed by a memory of the Prélude, before returning to the *allegro* and ending the piece in unison.

Jules Demersseman (1833–1866); arr. Fredrick Hemke

Carnival of Venice (1986)

Duration: 6 minutes

The Carnival of Venice is a common showpiece for many instruments. This version, written by Jules Demersseman and arranged by Fredrick Hemke, demonstrates the wide capabilities of the saxophone through the familiar melody. This arrangement consists of an introduction, theme, and four variations. The introduction, with its sweeping melody, leads directly into the first statement of the theme. From there, each variation increases in complexity, with the final variation challenging the saxophonist to play both an accompaniment figure and the melody. Though the underlying tempo is consistent, the saxophonist is challenged with figures that subdivide the beat further and further. The finale of the Carnival of Venice is decisive and closes out the piece with an exclamation point that one could only expect at a carnival.

Notes by Nickoli Kumm

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