

DECLASSIFY

Episode 14: Performing the Isms

Guest: Mary Osborn

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SUMMARY

For our first episode of 2021, Declassify welcomes onboard a good friend and extraordinary performer, Paris-based Australian saxophonist, Mary Osborn. Having completed a Bachelors of music performance at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, a performance diploma and Masters of music at the Versailles Conservatoire and Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin, Mary is forming her career as a classical and contemporary performer, creator and teacher. Mary has won numerous awards at international music competitions, she has worked closely with many composers and premiered their works, and enjoys developing multi-disciplinary projects. She is currently studying chamber music at the Conservatoire de Paris with her saxophone quartet, Quatuor Lorient. This week Mary and Victoria unpack working as a performer, the importance of transcriptions, the agency of being an artist and the emerging musicians stage, and the 'isms' of the classical music world.

TRANSCRIPT

Victoria Pham (VP): Hello, hello. And we're back for 2021 – welcome back everyone and I hope you've all had an excellent and safe holiday season, and a Happy New Year. I'm so glad to be back with you all to finish off the first season with our final set of episodes – thank you to you all for following along on the experiment of a podcast that started off last July. But now it is my great pleasure to introduce a good friend of mine and today's guest, Paris-based Australian saxophonist, Mary Osborn! Mary is a classical and contemporary performer, creator and teacher, who has won numerous international music competitions and enjoys arranging, working closely with composers and interdisciplinary practice. So welcome on board Mary!

Mary Osborn (MO): Well, it's my pleasure. Thank you.

VP: I'm excited to talk about the saxophone and all the things you've experienced new music, etc. Well, I always wondered how you got to where you are now in that you're both a performing saxophonist, you're a teacher, and you contribute a lot to new music and repertoire in your instruments field.

MO: Yeah, well, I, I'm not really sure how I ended up here. But I mean, in terms of teaching, I think it's very, it's very normal for people to sort of start out as a student, and, and a lot of, well, pretty much all professional classical saxophone end up teaching a lot, because we don't really have that option of playing in an orchestra. Apart from like, when symphony orchestras. So, there's, it's sort of an obligation in a way, but very welcomed, for me, at least, because I really do enjoy teaching. And I get a lot out of it personally. But in terms of sort of contemporary contributions, yeah, it's something that's always been really important to me. And actually, it sort of started out. When I got to the Sydney con, and very early on, I made connections with connections sounds so professional, I made friends with composers, with composers in first year, such as some of my closest friends from that sort of era of life were Alice Chance and Kezia Yap, and we sort of met in the first couple of weeks. And I ended up sort of, in the beginning of my con studies, I had lunch with all the composer students pretty much everyday in the Botanic Gardens. And we went to the Paragon all the time for drinks and everything. But I got along really, really well with the with the composers, I really liked them just as people.

And then of course, well, as a composition student, you have to record and perform your works. And it's kind of difficult to do that if you don't know anyone, or if you don't play the instrument that you're writing for. And I think I can't remember which year it is. But in one of the years, I believe you have to study writing for saxophones, specifically, in one of the semesters, and so I got asked by Well, a lot of my friends and a lot of people that I met to perform their works. And of course, it was a pleasure because I really enjoyed working with them just as a person, but also, it was really interesting to discover their, their compositional style. So, it all sort of started out like that, and it didn't ever really feel like, like work or like, like something that I was obliged to do. It just felt like I don't know, just something that I enjoyed doing. It wasn't it was just a, it was like practising and performing. For me, it was sort of on the same level.

And, yeah, anyway, I just had lots of great experiences with friends that were composers. And so that inspired me to continue trying to work with composers, and made me realise that it's a really, really important thing to do as a musician. Because a lot of the time, we just, we just perform works that have been played a million times. And we get told quite often to play it in the same way as it's been played. Because if you play it differently, or out of the style or whatever, then then it's wrong. So, I think that it's extremely important to be performing your works, commissioning UX, and working directly with the composers. And I've sort of tried to continue that, since moving to France and have worked with Australian composers, and also composers based in France, with this new ensemble that I've been sort of developing with a friend which sort of got stopped in its tracks by COVID. So yeah, it's, it's really important to me, as well as arranging and transcribing pieces, because, for me, it's just simply a new way to, to perform work that already exists. And I think that it's extremely interesting to try and try and play a piece in a new way. As opposed to just playing it exactly the same as it's already been played, and may have already been played better than you could ever do it. So I think it's interesting to try and change the colours, and the timbres of the instruments playing. Obviously, a lot of the time, my arrangements and things have been for saxophone, but I have done a few I've been asked to do arrangements that don't have saxophone in them for friends and things. And that's been extremely interesting as well, and allowed me to discover lots of different colours, with different instruments and different ways of playing the instrument.

VP: That's so cool. I've always wanted when you mentioned like, playing music from the past, and we have an expectation that it will be the same every time because the saxophone it's not a brand new instrument, but it's relatively new in comparison to things like a piano

and violin, because I know when your repertoire you actually play things like Paganini. I've got what they call compressors, in your practices, attitudes, and things like that. Is there an expectation for that kind of Baroque music? Even though you're playing it on a different instrument? Is there still an expectation that you hold to the Baroque style?

MO: Yeah, well, that's a really interesting question. Because, yes, and no, it really depends entirely on the listener, which, in some ways is a shame. But also, it's an advantage, because if we're playing for a saxophone player audience, quite often, unfortunately, especially playing Baroque music, or classical music work, which was written before our instrument was actually invented. Quite often with sax. There's a lot less respect for, there's a lot less importance in respecting the original way of that the piece should be played and respecting the style. So, you hear a lot of recordings where people play, for example, the bar cello suites, they play them on any saxophone. And quite often gets played almost as if it's romantic music, which I kind of find a bit jarring to listen to. And I know that that sort of HIV before performance will kind of hate that, which is normal, and so do I. But also, I think that that playing on a different instrument can affect the way that we play, especially sort of playing a piece that was written for a stringed instrument on a saxophone or even playing a piece that was written for piano or harpsichord in an arrangement of quartet arrangement or a Jew arrangement completely changes the way that you interpret the phrases because we have to breathe. And even in, in circular breathing we have, we have to adapt. To play music written for different instruments, we have to, we have to change it in some ways. But I find that sometimes if we perform, for example, Baroque music, it, it can either be completely so it can be just completely hated by non Sax players, it can even be hated by sax, oftentimes, there are a lot of people I know that say, oh, why are you playing that, you know, that bar partita, it shouldn't be played on a saxophone, it should just be played to, to practice, it should just be used as a study. So there's actually a book of, of the saxophone of the, of the six cello suites transcribed for saxophone. But it's sort of transcribed in a book almost written like Etudes book. So, it's, it's made to be played at home or in a practice room by yourself and not to be performed too much. So, there are very, very differing views on that. And I personally believe that we should be able to do what we want. Everybody should be able to play whatever they'd like to play in whatever way they'd like to play it. As long as they're convincing in their approach to it as long if you listen to something, and you think, oh, I don't like that, how that is. That's fine. Not to not to enjoy it. But if it's convincing, then you can at least accept, accept it for what it is. So, I think that, for me, it's fine to play. I mean, I play a lot of Baroque music whenever I whenever I can. I really

love the style. And a lot of the composers, as well as classical and even romantic pieces, and pretty much pieces from any era, we haven't played an arrangement, I made an arrangement of Monteverdi as well. So, on saxophones, and it was extremely appreciated by the audience. So, yeah, it really depends. But yeah, it doesn't. It does often get sort of rejected by certain types of people or types of audiences, especially people that don't play saxophone or aren't super open minded. Which is fine. I don't mind if people don't like it. Because that's not going to stop me from playing the music. But I don't, I don't know, I think I think we should try and respect the style as much as possible. But of course, everybody has their own interpretation. And the advantage of music that was written before recording existed is that well, there's not a lot of ways to know exactly how that music should be performed. I mean, we can't know for sure, because we don't have recordings of people playing those pieces. So I think that gives us a little bit more to play with, we can sort of push the boundaries, which is definitely what most sax performers do.

VP: Well, I was also wondering, because I know you are very experienced when it comes to transcribing and arranging music, is that for two reasons? Is it because of the lack of repertoire that the saxophone has access to simply because it's quite a new instrument? And also, that there should be flexibility in terms of instrumentation and performance?

MO: Yeah, well, nowadays, I think that we have quite a large repertoire. I think a lot of people say, oh, there's not enough music written for saxophone. But there's so many people writing for that front. I don't think we have the right to say that anymore. I think that it's always great to encourage composers to continue reading for the instrument, because obviously, that's very important. But yeah, it's true that we don't have pieces from certain musical eras. So, so we can't play certain styles of music unless we transcribe or, or we, well, we can read the music and transpose in our head. You know, or, or even play the pieces non-transposed. It's really not difficult to do. I think, yeah, I don't know if it's, if it's so much that we don't, that we're lacking music. Because when not really, it's just that I'm so curious about different styles that in the beginning of my sort of playing life, I didn't get to perform a lot of different styles of music because there wasn't music written for my instrument. Um, but a lot of the arrangements that I do will be not just transcribing a piece, but also changing the instruments. For example, I arranged the Schumann Schumann's three romances for oboe and piano. So I transcribed it for well arranged it for soprano saxophone or outer, and string quartet. And the string quartet well plays most plays the piano part. But I sort of split it into their four voices and change, it changes

completely the colour. And that piece already without having arranged it is, is a piece of chamber music. There's so much interplay between the, the, the oboe part and the piano part. That it sort of, it could be arranged into any, any setting, I guess. So it was really interesting to do and, and to try and explore different colours of different stringed instruments mixing with, with the counterpart as well. So most of the time when I when I choose to do an arrangement, so that I can sort of show the piece in a new light and play it in a new way. Not just simply to play a piece because I couldn't play it without transcribing it.

VP: One of my favourite ones I don't know if you arrange it or not, was the recording your quartet in Paris did have the Philip Glass String Quartet number three, but for saxophone quartet that worked so well.

MO: Yeah, I didn't I didn't arrange that one. Actually, it was this. This terrific sax quartet. From I think that based Yeah, they're based in Berlin. And the now soprano sax friend of that quartet is actually an Australian, Adrian Tully from, from Brisbane, who I met a couple of times while travelling in Europe. And they came to Australia as well. And I heard them perform that piece. And I wanted to play it so. So, I bought the arrangement. Yeah, so that's Yeah, but that's something that happens quite a lot is sax players will arrange String Quartet music, because it works pretty well. And sometimes they'll change sort of octaves and stuff so that it fits within our range. But, but quite often, we don't have to change too much apart from the insurance. And it works. It works pretty well.

VP: I have a weird, slightly potentially controversial question by the question, because I feel like we've talked about this before, is this move into contemporary music and delving into other styles of music slightly, or push back to the assumption that a lot of maybe young composers and other musicians, presumably the saxophone is that it's just a jazz instrument?

MO: Yeah, um, well, look, the saxophone when it was first invented, was a classical instrument to begin with, or, I don't know if I can really say classical instrument because it wasn't in the classical period. But it was invented as an instrument to be played in a military orchestra. So, a wind Symphony, because well out of saxophones, I believe, felt like the clarinet weren't ever able to play loud enough. And especially the bass clarinet, he actually invented the bell of the bass clarinet, which allowed it because before it was just a really, really long clarinet, it didn't have the curve neck and it didn't have the bell. So, it was extremely difficult to play. And so

he invented that and, and kind of revolutionised bass clarinet playing. But yeah, I think the saxophone was invented to have an instrument that could have the agility of a wind instrument so could play as a sort of fast and effortlessly as a clarinet and also So as loud and powerful as a brass instrument So, so I think it does that job and in the beginning it was it was invented to be performed in wind ensembles and to be playing classical music and not jazz music. And then it was sort of discovered by, by jazz musicians and they, they realised that it works so well in that setting. And the reason that it works so well in, in jazz and classical music is because we have such a broad range of, of tone colours available to us. In the instrument, you can manipulate your ambiture, your throat position, a tongue position, you can completely change your sound, even keeping the same mouthpiece and the same saxophone and the same materials that you're playing with, you can completely change the sound, just by changing the way that you play. And then, of course, if you change the instrument and the and the mouthpiece and the reed and everything, that's going to allow you to change even more. And so that's why if you listen to a jazz musician, or a classical musician, you, you get two completely different sounds. And then within those two worlds, you get a million different sounds.

And then you have pop saxophone, and, and can more contemporary saxophone, as opposed to very, very classical saxophone. I mean, it's just got such a huge spectrum of different colours and hampers available that that would be a shame not to play in all its ways possible. And there are also quite a lot of musicians that will cross over and play both sort of styles, which is extremely, extremely difficult to do well, because you could spend your whole life studying classical saxophone and your whole life studying jazz saxophone, which many people do, and to do both demands a lot of time and work. And, for the most part, and this is my personal opinion, a lot of people can't sort of never end up being very, very good at both. It's very rare. I know, I know, a few people that that do play all sounds of music very, very competently, and, and even well, but it's quite rare, a rare skill to have to be able to do play everything, because it's a massive time investment. And, and it's, it's difficult to sort of to switch as well, because when you end up practising a lot of jazz, then it sort of affects how you play classically, if you don't sort of balance it out very well. So yeah, there is, there are a lot of people that that think the saxophone is, is just a jazz instrument, um, which is a shame, because we have so much potential in the classical field. And one of the reasons for that is probably because of the lack of orchestral music, with saxophone in it. And also, because the, the instrument was sort of rejected in the classical world. For a while, not a lot of composers, not a lot of great, great

composers wrote for the instrument, even though it was possible to do so. And we do have a lot of great pieces. Even since the very the very beginning.

Like the very first few years that sax after the saxophone was invented, in the 1840s. There, there already started to be really, really great pieces written for the instrument, but obviously a lot less than all the other instruments. And one of the problems that we have, in the classical side is that a lot of our best pieces are written by sort of less than our composers. And then there are very well-known composers that have written for the instrument that the pieces aren't, aren't that great. They're not the composer's greatest work, for example. Um, so, so it's sort of complicated, because we're not going to I mean, we're not, we're not going to ever have the same recognition as other classical instruments. But now in the in the contemporary side of things, I mean, the saxophone is a lot more capable because we've always been playing contemporary music. It's sort of obligation for us to learn contemporary music. And now, well, the meaning the definition of contemporaries is changing over time, obviously. Because now, you know, for example, we were obliged to play to learn the barrier sequences, which were not written for saxophone, but number seven, which was for the oboe, that was later. Then he made a version for soprano. And then number 10, which is for clarinet that's played on Alto. And I found out that the 10th was actually a barrier personally preferred it to be played on saxophone, then clarinet. Oh, I just, that's the way it is. Anyway, what I was going to say, and we, we have to learn the various sequences as part of our musical development as a student. And it's funny, because nowadays, these sequences are starting to be less looked at. Some people will say, Oh, is that still contemporary? Because barrier? That's, it's been a while now that that, that, you know, he's, you know, it's been written so long ago that we don't know if it's, it should be still considered contemporary music that maybe they're going to give. Give it a new name, a new title, but yeah, we do have the advantage of being very popular in contemporary music, because musicians are saxophone players are very versatile. In general, and, and very able to play contemporary music, sir. So yeah, unfortunately, a lot of people see it as only a jazz instrument. And that's not really the case. It was invented to be a classical instrument. And, and I think that I think that it's getting to be more and more accepted, or at least I hope, but. But with time, we'll see.

INTERMISSION I

VP: For our first intermission is a recording by Mary's saxophone quartet, Quatour Lorient from Paris. This is an arrangement by Christoph Enzel of Philip Glass' third string quartet, "Mishima". This excerpt is from movement VI – Closing/Mishima.

VP: I hope so. I think the saxophone has cropped up a few times in some orchestral pieces, but they tend to be really big components like John Adams from the States who constantly tries to slip the saxophone into the orchestra. It's a bit harder when you're emerging to try and convince a professional orchestra to include the saxophone. I'm sure you know.

MO: Yeah. Well, I've been told by, by many composers, younger composers that they actually have asked orchestras if they can write saxophone in their, in their orchestral piece, like they've been commissioned to write an orchestral piece. And they say, Oh, can I include saxophone and the orchestra refuses because of, well, money? probably pretty much the main reason they have to pay another musician to come and play. So they don't want to do that. But I don't think that I mean, those are stories I've heard from, from Australian composer friends. I don't know if it's the case, everywhere. I know that in, for example, contemporary ensembles, there's quite often a very large place for saxophone. And it's sort of a regular saxophonist that will play in on contemporary ensembles. And so when they commission works, then they will let the composer choose the instruments that they that they want to even ask specifically for, for instruments and include saxophone. So that's great.

VP: Has it been like that in France? Has it been a bit more varied in terms of the instrumentation you get in these chamber groups, orchestras?

MO: Well, with the sort of classical orchestra, I haven't seen much of a difference. I mean, you still get it's funny how, no matter where in the world you are. All the other big orchestras of every city are playing the same. Mozart, Brahms, Bruckner, all of the world's favourite composers, just replaying and replaying over and over and over again. These pieces Debussy, I mean, they're beautiful pieces really, really amazing. work so I can understand why and also, it attracts a very large audience because I mean, that's why they're playing the pieces as well as so they can sell tickets. And often a strategy is to sort of pair a really, really, really well-

known work with a contemporary work or a new work in the same content and that happens so much, especially when, when they decide to programme a saxophone concerto. Now always be one of the most well-known works in the same concept because they know that audience will, audiences will look at the programme and be like, saxophone concerto. What's that? Oh, well, at least they're playing Brahms. Three. So, I guess I'll go.

I think that yeah, it's I mean, it's, it's the technique is to, I mean, they, they're sort of obliged, because if they don't get sales, then then they can't put on concerts. So, I get it. But yeah, I think that there isn't...it's not really going in that direction for saxophone. There's not more and more composers saying, Oh, I have to write saxophone in my orchestral piece. I think that instead of doing that they're writing chamber music works, or solo works, or works for saxophone and piano, which could be also considered chamber music or concertos. With saxophone. I think that's, that's quite a prominent thing. And it's happening more and more, but it really depends on the composer. And because there are so many saxophonists willing to play new works, I think, and, and being friendly with composers. I think that it certainly helps. Because you'll have, you know, other instrumentalists will sort of finish their studies and then spend, spend some time doing orchestral auditions to try and get a spot in an orchestra somewhere, somewhere in the world. Um, so a lot of people will sort of end up doing that, and sort of working doing sort of casual gigs on the side or teaching where a saxophonist, we sort of finish on we go, Oh, we don't really have that many possibilities for our future. So we often end up doing a lot of chamber music, trying to organise our own projects, contemporary projects, so working with composers, working in sort of diverse chamber ensembles, trying to promote ourselves as soloists. During competitions, although that often happens at the same time, as we're studying, some people will audition for wind symphonies or, or military bands. And the most people will, will be teaching, even if they have a job in in a military band, they'll also be teaching on the side. So, it's kind of a way to have a stable income, which obviously is important for most people. But we don't end up you know, teaching sort of part time. And then we have time to continue working on projects, working with composers. Doing whatever we want with our careers, which I think is something special to sax players.

VP: So, would you say you have a bit more agency then because you have to kind of self-manage everything that's going on in your career, whether it's teaching or solo work, or arranging and particularly commissioning music? That's quite cool, because you have kind of

control over the relationships you build with other musicians, and then the stories you get to tell.

MO: Yeah, yeah, definitely, we sort of have a forced agency, because it's kind of, I mean, everybody can do that any, any musician can do that. And I think that a lot of people don't really realise that that's an option, because it seems like a very difficult and unstable way of making a living, which it is, in a way. But it's definitely possible, a possible pathway to take in your career and I think it's sort of imposed upon us, because we don't have as many options. And I feel kind of lucky in a way to be exposed to that because I don't know if I would have worked on as many new pieces and worked with as many composers if, you know, if I decided to audition for an orchestra and you know, have an orchestral career.

VP: Do you have any advice for other young musicians in terms of commissioning music?

MP: Well, I don't know. I'm still a young musician. So, I don't know if I'm, I'm ready to be giving advice. No, I think, I think that it's important to find your own way of doing things. And so, in a way, I don't really feel I don't really believe in giving advice as such, because I think everybody's different. And everybody enjoys doing different things, and has different ideas, I think it's really important to, to, to look at yourself and really think about what it is you want to do, what your kind of goals are, and not just goals, like, Oh, I want to be able to play this piece. And I want to play a concerto with this orchestra. I mean, you know, what, you want your musical output to be? What impact do you want to make on the world, on the world around you on the music world, but what exactly you want to do, and that's something that changes all the time, or at least, I think it should be changing all the time. And, um, I think it's just important to try and do, do what you want. And obviously, you have to make money to live. Um, I don't know, for me, I mean, I talk about this a lot with friends. And, and even students, sometimes, I'm not really somebody that, that cares that much about being rich and having lots of, and having lots of objects around me. You know, I think it's nice to be able to afford to buy food and pay your rent, and all that, and I kind of live my life in a way that I just want to make enough to get by. And if I make more than great, but the most important thing for me is, is to be doing what I love doing. And what I feel is important, what's important to me personally. And if I find a job position where I can get paid to do what I love doing, then that's, that's fantastic. If I can't, then I'll do whatever I can to, to make ends meet and continue doing the things that I that I'm passionate about. Without necessarily being very, very well paid until the

until I find a way for it to sort of work out. So, um, I don't know, I think I think that, um, that you shouldn't just do what other people tell you to do. Because quite often it's not the right thing for you.

VP: It's actually good advice that you said don't always do what other people do. Because sometimes if I mean, I've spoken to other musicians say like a clarinettist, they have a really, seemingly clear path of what they can do either work the competition circuit to become a soloist, or go down there auditioning for orchestra is often doing both when they're a student. And those are the two options. But actually, there are so many other options that no one really talks about, because they don't feel as formal as the competition or the orchestra route.

MO: Yeah, there is there is no. Like, there is no perfect pathway after you finish studying and everything. There is no kind of ideal career to take. And I think that trying to sort of just following just being a sheep and following what everybody does, I think it's just quite often it's not at all the right thing for you. And I always find it. I mean, I make people that sort of say, Oh, yeah, you know, I was, I was doing this and then. And then at some point, I realised that I didn't enjoy it anymore. And so, I just stopped doing music completely. And I always find it sad because I'm like, Well, I don't think that it's music that that was difficult. I think it was just all the little choices that that we make that we have to make that end up you know, shaping our our career and our lives. And if we don't make the right choices, if we just do whatever everybody else is doing. You know, it's not necessarily the right thing to do for us It's such a personal thing. And I think it's it, you could say that for just about any career, except that for, you know, if you're going to be a doctor, then you finish your, your studies, and then you go and work in hospital, and then you go and do this, and maybe you specialise in something, but it's very, a very clear path. Whereas for music, you know, I know people that absolutely hate teaching, but they do it because they don't have any other way to earn money, and then they end up unhappy, and with students that aren't really progressing as much as they could, because, because they're not invested in their work. And I think, you know, and I've taken, I've done jobs I haven't enjoyed doing and then months later, I realised, oh, I don't actually like this, and I sort of quit my job and start doing something else. And I think that's great to do that, I think the best thing you can do is make a mistake. And then react to a mistake. Because sometimes you can't really know that you don't, that you don't like something until you've tried it. This is, um, you know, you don't if you don't enjoy teaching, then then you can do so many other things. But yeah, I think that's, that's probably the only advice I could give. And if you do know what

you want to do, then then do it. Like if you really, really want to go, for example, I really, really wanted to go overseas and study. And finally I, you know, sort of saved up and, and figured out how I could do it all. And it's one of the best things I've ever done. Really, I would never regret it. And it was completely different than what I expected. There are a lot of things that were as I would expect, you know, sort of having a culture shock, discovering a new country, discovering a new city, you know, everything that I really, really was excited about. But there are a lot of things that were not at all how I expected, you know, and I didn't know how long I was going to move overseas for I didn't know, I didn't, I had no idea what I was doing. Really, I didn't. Yeah, I had no idea what I was doing. I just sort of jumped in and did it. And I'm so glad that I did. And so, if you ever have even the slightest inkling to do something, whatever it is, I would say go for it.

VP: That's great advice. Great advice. And while you're still in Paris after all these years.

INTERMISSION II:

VP: For our second intermission is a special work. This is an arrangement of Debussy's La Syrinx done by Mary as well as improvisations and field recordings by Mary herself. If you wish to check it out, I'll drop the link to the full video and film work for you below.

VP: And I was actually wondering because you're I just realised the other day going through all the programme that sealed the second perform I've ever had on the podcast. And the first one was Lolita Emanuel, the pianist, I was wondering if you would want it to like, give us some insights into basically what the competition circuit is like?

MO: Oh, gosh, yeah. Sure. Let's talk about the worst part of being a being a musician. No, I'm kidding. Look, it really depends. Yeah, I did think quite a lot about this. Because competitions are something that's, I sort of have to, I'm in two minds about it. because on one hand, it's something that's really important for your career, and to get sort of known in your industry. And it's good for your CV obviously, sort of allows you to prove that you can play your instrument with just a piece of paper, so. And on the other hand, it's just, I mean, where musicians we're not horses, we're not supposed to be in competition. So, in some ways, I find

it extremely bizarre to be using music as a competitive thing, because it's, in essence, that's not what it is. It's art. And art is not about being better and being the best. And that's what a lot of competitions are about. So, I don't know, I'm very torn because especially as a saxophonist, I think that taking part participating in competitions is almost essential. Because we don't have orchestral editions use orchestras or, or sort of things like that, to get us noticed to get people to know who we are. I've had the chance, very lucky chance of being able to play with the Australian Youth Orchestra twice in two of their seasons. And it was amazing, but, um, but the it's a very rare thing for a saxophonist to be able to do. And I didn't I mean, I feel sort of strange about it because I didn't audition. The times because an audition wasn't available, they just sort of asked me to do it. So I was really happy about that. But sort of in a way, I felt internally guilty, because I was like, oh, what about all the other people that want this opportunity, and I get to do it, because I don't know why I just do. So obviously, I did it, because because it was an incredible, an enriching experience. But, you know, I think that it's something that's definitely lacking in, in the classical saxophone awareness sort of life. And I think now they've, they've, they may have started to do more auditions, I'm not sure, but I definitely talked to them about it a lot. As much as possible, trying to support my peers in a way. So since we don't have that, that kind of the orchestral side of things, I think that cup competitions can be really important because they, if you do well in a competition, or even just participate, and somebody sees you perform, you can get so many opportunities out of that. So for Yeah, maybe the last four years, I sort of tried to participate in the most as many competitions as possible without overlapping. And at the beginning, I definitely did way too much. And I just, literally all I was doing was playing competitions, but allowed me to play such a huge range of repertoire that I maybe wouldn't normally practice or choose to play, because it wasn't, you know, my favourite piece, it sort of forced me to learn pieces that I don't particularly like, and find a way to like them and discover new pieces where I thought, Oh, I don't like this piece by listening to it. And then I sort of spent a few months learning it and realise that I did like it, or there were certain aspects to it that I found really interesting. You know, allow, it allows you to develop your technique as well, because you have a goal of playing well, in the competition, you have sort of the date that you have to play, and you prepare it for that date, and you want it to be perfect, and you want it, you want to play well.

So, it's very, very motivating. And it's and it's always good in terms of networking, and meeting people at the competition, you meet other musicians that are also good to spending and you meet the jury and you meet, maybe the pianos that you'll play with all sorts of things. Um, so I

have participated in a lot of competitions. And sometimes I've, you know, gone into the finals, and other times I haven't even passed the first round, it's, it's very, and I've heard a lot of musicians speak of competitions in the same way that it's sort of, you never know how you're going to go. Even if you're extremely prepared, and you have like, all the pieces from memory, and you're playing Super Well, at that moment, you may not pass the first round, because you didn't have a good day or the jury prefer the other musicians. So I think it's, it's something extremely tough mentally, and emotionally to prepare for. Because you have to, you have to sort of believe really, really strongly in yourself, in preparation, in preparing and also in, in performing, you have to have this extreme amount of confidence. But then you also have to be okay, if you don't, when you sort of have to be like, yeah, I'm the best. And then at the same time, if somebody's like, Oh, no, actually, you're not the best. You're like, Well, okay, that's fine with me. And it's really hard to do. Because when you're sort of being confident, you're you don't want to accept that, that somebody doesn't like the way that you play. And so in some ways, it's really good to try and build up your confidence. And it's also good to be told, you know, to have people tell you that tell you negative comments, or constructive criticism, I guess is a better way to say it. Because it helps you develop as a musician and also as a person. It sort of gives you a stronger character. Yeah, so in terms of preparing for a competition, it's, it's already extremely difficult than actually playing extremely difficult because your audience instead of being people, you know that to experience the music that you're playing, there are a jury of people that are there to criticise you. And if you're lucky, it's a jury that's on. There are people in the jury who find that the musical side much more important than the technical side. Because really, it's music so it shouldn't be about You know, if you play one wrong note, then you're out. But at the same time, sometimes it's impossible to judge it any other way. Interesting have two musicians that play both incredibly well but completely differently. And one of them makes a mistake in their performance. Sometimes, sometimes the person that makes the mistake will lose, and sometimes they'll win, because the jury will decide that their performance was more daring, and that they took more risks. So, it's really, I mean, in the beginning, it was really hard for me, because I didn't really understand competitions very much until I've sort of taken part in, in quite a lot of them. And when I started to do a lot of competitions in the beginning, I was sort of getting going really well. And so I was like, Oh, yeah, I love competitions, it's so much fun. Because when you do well, it's really fun. And then I remember having this sort of bad experience where wasn't really a bad experience, I just didn't feel great, because I didn't do as well as I thought that I would, I was sort of expecting to do well, which, in a competition, you should never really expect that you're going to win, you

should want to you should fight for your prize. But you shouldn't ever expect to win, you should never feel like you deserve a prize, because that's not at all how it works.

And so I remember having a bad experience and then being and then thinking I never want to do a competition again. And then, a few months later, a sort of reflection, I sort of realised that, you know, that it was okay, that I didn't do well, obviously, because it's not really a big deal. And that and that the comments that I received were very useful. And it made me sort of think about the way I played in a different way, it made me work on things that I needed to work on, that I hadn't realised before. So you can always I mean, like anything you have to you have to look at it in a positive way. Otherwise, it's not worth doing a competition, you know, you're not going to try and look at the positive side, even if you don't do well, you can still get a lot out of it. And this thing about competitions is they're so subjective. So that's why results can vary so much. Anytime you do it. Um, and yeah, unfortunately, I've had sort of very complicated experiences in competitions with, with juries that have been either not impartial, so have been sort of supporting their own students which which can happen very easily, even if they don't allow the jury to vote to vote for their insurance or to give their own students marks. Sometimes those, sometimes the jury will, will take will mark more harshly all of the other participants so that their overall Mark ends up being lower than that of their students. So that's something that can happen too. And there's no way around it really. We just need people to be more honest. And it's extremely difficult I can imagine to be on a jury and to be impartial. Especially if you have students that you see, you know, every week that you really believe in and you love the way they play, and you have seen their progression, it's extremely difficult to be to compare them to people that you don't know. And I've had sort of weird sort of sexist experiences, because I haven't really mentioned this yet, but quite often. I mean, I think maybe the majority of sax players are men or it's not, it's not exactly evenly spread. I could be wrong because I don't have I don't know if we've ever done any tests to prove this, but it does feel like more male dominated instrument I guess. Or at least the people that I'm the most well-known.

Sax performers and musicians and often the most well-known teachers and performance are men. You know, I often will ask people when they say no, there's no inequality in in music. I'll say Okay, tell me all the all the female sax musicians you know. And now, tell me about the male sax players that you know, and it's not an it's not an equal list. And it is improving, um, because obviously people are becoming more and more accepting at large. And also, I think women are feeling more and more empowered in, in our field. In fact, as my sax playing isn't

any profession. So we're sort of seeing more and more sort of female musicians doing well in their fields and winning jobs and winning competitions, or, you know, becoming teachers and very important conservatories and universities. So that's really important. But yeah, I have sort of had jury members making snide comments, you know, saying things like, you know, in a screened audition, I pass the first round, and, and after we were allowed to speak to the jury to get comments before the final round. And as I met the jury, one of them sort of took out his paper, you know, where he'd written comments for me. And he said, Ah, I remember you, as soon as you started playing, I knew that you were a girl. And I was sort of like, okay, and I didn't know that I didn't know if it was if I should be offended, or if, if I should be in any way affected by the comment, I didn't know that I didn't understand really the relevance of that comment, as well. Because and then, and then afterwards, he sort of was complimentary of my playing, saying, Oh, yeah, you played a lot more expressively than all the other players, you know, you took a slightly slower tempo, and it allowed us to, to understand your phrasing and your expression a lot better. But I didn't really understand what the rapport was between that and being a woman.

So, if you're saying that all women musicians are better than Thank you. Um, but I don't I don't really know if that was his point. You know, I've heard very prominent figures speaking about women saying, saying, Oh, no, female sax players aren't able to play as well, as well as men, because they're, they don't have the power, they don't have the lung, the lung capacity. They're not physically capable of doing of doing of playing the saxophone, as well as, as a man. Which is not true. It's just random. Yeah, I don't, I don't know where that comes from. I don't know where that idea comes from. Because there isn't really a difference between a female or male musician, I think for any instrument, were able to play, anybody can play any instrument. It just takes practice. So yeah, and another thing with competitions, I have had very positive experiences. And one of I wanted to share one of the best experiences that I had in the competition. So, I was lucky enough to be put through to the final round of this competition in Andorra. Long time ago now, maybe four years ago, and, um, and I was extremely shocked, you know, it was it was one of the first international big international competitions I've ever done. So, I was, I was over the moon. And so, before the fight around, we played with orchestra. And so, we're able to rehearse with them twice before, before the final concert, which is, which is fantastic. And it was the first time that I really played or maybe the second time that I played as a soloist with orchestra.

So, I was extremely intimidated. And two of my friends that were on that had participated in the concert in the competition as well. And they asked me if, if, if I wanted them to come and listen to me in the rehearsals to tell me, you know, how it sounded from the audience and everything. And I was just so warmed by the fact that they were, you know, willing to support me even though we were in a competition, you know, they weren't competing against me. So, I was extremely hot, hot warmed up, warm, hot. And then, you know, they they're two of my best friends that have been impressed. France and they listen to both of their hospitals, and they, they afterwards talk to me for, you know, hours about what was good, you know, they gave me positive comments, they also gave me positive, constructive criticism, you know, which I felt so lucky to have friends that would be willing to tell me what they really thought, with the with hope that that would help me do better than the competition. And, you know, when I got up on stage, you know, I was thinking of them as I was playing, because I knew that, um, that they were supporting me 100%. And I knew that they, all they wanted was for me to do well. And so, I tried to focus on that idea, rather than on the idea that, you know, the jury was judging me and the other competitors were judging me, I was sort of tried to treat the, the last round of the competition as, as more of a concept than an actual competition. And I think that's the best possible way to experience that. And unfortunately, that's not always the case. But sometimes it is, and, and, you know, there are competitions that have a very nice ambience, and a friendly, supportive sort of vibe, rather than competitiveness, even though it's a competition. So, it really depends. And, you know, I just feel very lucky that I had really nice experiences like that.

VP: That's also lovely. Yeah, I don't know about you. But sometimes I need like a little prod to remind me that, like making music or making art is about working with all these people. And it's about a community, rather than ever feeling super competitive, which for me, it only really felt like that when I was studying or while I was beginning to study.

MP: Yeah, yeah, it's really, um, it's really difficult to get out of the competitive mindset. When even just doing projects in concert, you should have, for some reason, you're, you're always thinking, Oh, yeah, I've got to be the best. And I've got to see it and everything. And what does that even mean in music? You know, for me now, I mean, it changes all the time. Now I feel like succeeding is, is, is simply succeeding in, in portraying whatever it is that you want to portray in the moment. It's not, you know, making the most money or winning the first prize

in every competition, or, you know, having somebody tell you that you're the best musician I've ever met. But that doesn't really mean a whole lot in terms of Success to me.

VP: I like to think of us as telling stories.

MO: Yeah, that's really nice.

INTERMISSION III:

For our third intermission is something quite special. An excerpt from a recording of an arrangement done by Mary herself. This is arrangement for solo saxophone, piano and string quintet of Jacob Ter Veldhius' work Tallahatchie Concerto.

VP: I hope I hope it works. No, because I was thinking before when you mentioned the, oh, I knew you were ago that comment. I always like it comes to my mind, I hear these two things, particularly with performance. A kind of with composition I've had Someone once asked me when I was in my second year, my undergrad, aren't you worried that your music is going to sound really feminine? And I was like, I don't know what that really means. Like, it's the same thing. I don't quite I don't understand what the implication is. But when it comes to performance, and I've seen particularly with soloists when they're female, actually, no, sometimes when they're male, the line I hear is, "she played like a girl", or "he played like a girl". And I'm like, I know that's derogatory, but I don't understand. The implication is... does it mean they're weaker? So that's one thing and the other comment is the idea that female soloists are not, like what you mentioned before, they're not as powerful as a male soloist, or they are incapable of conveying enough emotion, despite the fact that being over emotional, it tends to be the criticism that women have.

MO: Yeah, it's, it's really strange, actually. Because you often see that those times associated with sport, you know, when people say, Oh, don't throw like a girl. One of the dumbest things that has ever used and especially in music, because, you know, it's sort of inherently an emotional, an emotional form of art. Right. And, and if we're saying that women are too emotional, then isn't that a good thing? For? No, but I think I think that people will take any excuse to try and belittle you, as a woman. in any field, so. So why should it be any different

from music? So yeah, I mean, we're always going to be fighting, fighting the same fight, hopefully. I mean, I feel like it's, it's getting to be less and less people are like getting to realise that, that, that women are just as capable, if not more capable than men in many in any situation. But it is a very strange thing that comes up in music. I know, a couple of my female sax musician friends have sort of this this joke, there was a saxophone teacher that said a lot. He said, um, I don't know how many times but he would often use the phrase, you know, try and play that more feminine. Like, as a feminine was an adjective, like a way of phrasing, I don't know. And in some ways, I mean, if you if you completely divorce the word from being female, then you haven't an argument, I suppose. But using the femininity as a way of describing how to how to phrase something I, I just think that it's misguided, and, and that it's sort of riddled with stereotypes that are completely useless. And don't actually mean anything to what does it mean to be feminine? There is no one answer to that. There is no one single feminism. And feminists can't even say it. Feminism is such a broad spread spectrum. Everybody has their own personal definition of what it means to be female and feminine. So, if you're using that to describe a way, a style or way to phrase something, it really doesn't mean anything at all.

And I did I had this debate with my previous teacher, Vincent David, who luckily, he took it very lightly, because he once told me in a lesson to play, to play more to phrase more feminine Lee or something like that. And I sort of just looked at him and laughed, and he was like, laughing What's so funny? I was like, Well, what do you mean, feminine? What does that mean? And we had this huge discussion about it. And, and he ended up sort of agreeing with me, I think, it's always hard to tell with him, but it was, it was interesting, because he sort of said, well, men and women are different. And I was like, well, everybody's different. And his sort of argument was, well, men and women are different. And so, we should embrace the difference. And I was like, Well, what about all the people that aren't necessarily don't necessarily fit into those two categories? And what about all the women that feel more masculine and all the men that feel more feminine? and everything in between, I mean, what is the point in generalising and creating stereotypes to convey something when we have so many other ways to say what we want to say? Um, yeah, anyway, it was interesting. But it was nice to be able to talk openly about that to a male who is very, very prominent in in the classical saxophone, world, and to felt to feel heard, and, and really respected and in like he, he really respected my opinion and my thoughts and didn't sort of dismiss whatever Saying as me sort of being a whiny feminist, or whatever it was, it was really nice to have that kind of discussion.

VP: So it's nice to know that that happened as well. Because sometimes I've worked with choral conductors who said very similar things. light and airy, you know, like a breathy female voice. But it's the tenors singing. It's really odd. But I think you're right, it is getting much, much better. I think people are more open to have these, to having these sorts of conversations with their fellow musicians or their students.

MO: Yeah, it's getting much, much better. I like to, I said, it's happening. It's it's progressing the same everywhere. But to be seen, we still have to keep sort of fighting. I feel like every female is in sort of a warrior in their own field. And we don't choose to be but but we are.

VP: By default, when you're a minority, you kind of become the representative for everyone else that well, sounds like you.

VP: What do you think you're experienced as a performer? And both because you have experienced commissioning music, as well as arranging and transcribing it has that given you a greater understanding of what diversity is like, within the classical music industry, and how it will change and can be affected by your own agency?

MO: That's a very loaded question. Yes, definitely. I think being a female musician, it kind of forces you to see the diversity and the importance of diversity in, in the classical music industry. And it's sort of I guess, it's something and also being part of the LGBTQ community, it's, it sort of makes you realise a lot of things that you wouldn't necessarily realise if you want, if you want a minority, and I feel like, I'm definitely I guess, more conscious of, of any kind of minority experience, especially like, for, for people of colour, or for any, any minority, even if I'm not necessarily concerned, because of experiences. And I think it's, it's interesting. Because, you know, it's, like we said before, it's happening less and less, the community sort of growing and becoming more accepting of diversity in the industry, which is inevitable, and it's great and everything, and it would be great if it could just happen a little bit faster. But at least you know, at least it's, it's happening, I feel like it's improving, and I do feel like we have a long way to go. Um, but it's interesting because I don't, I'm not often open about, about my sexuality, because I don't have to be because being bi, I can kind of hide behind. Well, I don't have to necessarily be open about it, I don't know necessarily have to tell people, it's not something that you would, you would notice and even, I mean, any sexuality, it's not something that you can see. Like you can see a woman or a person of colour you it's something that you sort of,

you can notice straightaway. So, it's quite a complicated thing. And I've had experiences where people have spoken about, about LGBTQ people in a negative way, unfortunately, which is something that happens in any sphere of life. And when it happens in sort of professional situations, it's extremely complicated and difficult to deal with. And I've had situations where people have spoken about, you know, negatively about other people because of their sexuality. And they've spoken openly about it in my company, because they don't know that it directly concerns me. And they kind of think for some reason people think that it's okay to speak negatively about, about other people based on based on their sexuality or, or their gender or their race. I still, well, I'll never understand why people think that that's okay. to even think that, but especially to talk openly about it, it's kind of horrific. But I've been in situations, you know, very, very uncomfortable situations where people I've spoken about other people that I know, and that that I love, and said really inappropriate things. And it's extremely uncomfortable, but also I feel, in some ways, glad that I've been in those situations in order to be able to speak out about it. Because, you know, coming from people that wouldn't normally, I mean, if they knew that it concerns me, and that it would deeply offend me, they wouldn't speak about it in front of me. So being able to say, hang on, that's not okay, you shouldn't be speaking about that. That's not the way that we speak about other people to somebody directly when they said something incredibly offensive is, is hard to do. But I think it's extremely important. And I feel, I feel sort of glad that I've been able to, to speak out about it. Um, but then at the same time, I've had sort of this internal conflict, because, you know, I would love to be more open about everything. But, um, but it's extremely difficult to, to be open about it. And so I feel sometimes, like, I'm hiding a part of myself, to reap the advantages of, you know, not being a minority, when I should be, you know, being honest, and, you know, representing my, myself and my sexuality, but, um, you know, it's complicated, I think that it's awful, that, that we have to, that we have to sort of hide things about ourselves or, or, you know, we have to be apologetic about certain parts of ourselves.

When that has nothing to do with our profession that has nothing to do with our career. And it should not affect anything to do with our career, or professional life. So, unfortunately, it's something that, that continues to be a problem. And, you know, it's, it's really difficult to do anything about because, you know, some people will just believe what they believe and, and we'll never change their mind about it, but at least at least we can try and speak, speak up about it. And I think it's important to talk about it in a public way. so that people can realise, you know, what they're doing wrong, and I know, there are so many people that wouldn't feel

comfortable speaking out, about it, and I've been in situations where haven't, you know, I've sort of not said anything, because of the company, because of the other people around, you know, especially, especially as a woman, you know, experiencing? Yes. Yeah, you understand? Any woman, any woman would understand? No, I had a group of friends at one point that were all boys and sort of saw me as, as they would say, one of the guys, you know, they didn't see me as a woman. And so, they sort of speak freely about everything, as if, as if I wasn't there. And they would say that, you know, to me, so they would say, you know, you know, you're just like one of the one of the guys you know, you're one of us and I said I always hesitantly would nod and laugh, I'm not really understanding fully what they meant. And then, you know, they would speak about other women in a objectifying way they would, you know, just say inappropriate things, not inappropriate, because they were, you know, they would bother me but inappropriate in the way to speak about another human being. And then I would sort of have to sit there in silence because I didn't want to exclude myself, I, I want it to be included in my circle of friends. And so, I never really spoke up about it. And I think it, I mean, I was really relieved when I didn't see those people anymore. And it was, because I always felt like, Oh, I should say something. But I didn't know how to, to say anything or what to say. Right? even had a friend. Or I don't know if I can really call them a friend. I was, you know, at the Sydney con once wearing a short skirt, which I think is okay, and everyone should be allowed to wear whatever they want. And I walked up the stairs and everybody that's been to the con knows that the stairs are very, very,

So, I was walking up the stairs. And, you know, I turned around and wave to my two of my friends. And one of my friends said to the other friend. Oh, I can see what Mary had for breakfast from here. Oh, yeah, yeah. Because just because I was wearing a skirt. And, you know, it was somebody that I consider to be a friend. And luckily for me, the other friend said to him, I'm sorry, what did you just say and spoke up for me. And so, I was very, very, very humbled that he that he felt, you know, like, he could defend me in that situation. And then actually told me about it. And it was upsetting at the time, but I was also glad that, you know, he told me about it. And, and I kind of knew who was really supporting me and, you know, but this kind of thing happens all the time.

VP: And yes. It can be exhausting. I've definitely had similar situations like that. I've also, unlike, it's not so much about sexuality around me, but more about race. So be a group of people, often they're not people of colour, and I'll be the only person of colour there. But they're

like, Oh, you don't count because you're Asian, which is, you're not a person of colour. I'm like, No, I definitely am. But we saying mildly racist things. And I think I've been in a situation where I just don't know what to say. Because you do want to not cause a scene, especially if you're in public, or your you know, a cafe, and you don't want to be left out or make people feel like they're being attacked. Because you know, when you do call someone out, they're immediately going to defend themselves. But then I feel the same kind of sense of guilt afterwards, because I am a person of colour and they say racist things around me. If I don't say something, have I then kind of by default, consented and been like, Oh, that's okay. And then they can go tell people that it was fine, because a person of colour was there. They didn't say anything. So, I definitely know. Yeah, like, it's difficult to tread that line, especially when you're in public. Yeah. And it can be exhausting if it keeps happening.

MO: And, and it's something unfortunately, that I think the same people will keep doing if nobody says anything about it,. Although that said, even if you do say something about that doesn't necessarily mean that that's going to change anything for the person that that said something. Um, but at least you feel less guilty. Yeah. It shouldn't really be about the guilt. Evil, obviously. But, um, yeah, it's really difficult subjects. And I think, I mean, I know that it's sort of something that applies to everybody, not necessarily just the music industry, but I think it's quite prominent in the music industry, and sometimes the times where it gets associated with, with the way that you're playing, or with your ability to do something or, you know, for people that are sexist, homophobic or racist, it would it could affect Your ability to be hired and get a job, which is an extreme circumstances, I guess. But yeah, it's something that's that happens casually a lot. And, and I think I wanted to talk about it, because I think that the more that we talk about it, the more that it helps the cause. Because it's a subject that needs to be talked about, and it needs to be in, people need to understand the consequences of the way that they speak about other people. And the more we talk about it, the more we normalise that it's a great thing, that we have diverse people, or working together to do different things.

I mean, the industry is becoming more and more diverse. And, and it's very, very uplifting and motivating to see all the all the diversity sort of taking over. I mean, not taking over, but it's very uplifting the, every time you see somebody that that is, you know, a person of colour or a woman or, or anybody from a sort of minority, sort of being successful in something or putting on a concert or doing anything and being supported. It just feels good to see it personally. And it, I think it's motivating in a way that you know, it makes everybody feel like they are able to

achieve whatever it is that they want to do, which is important. And yeah, the only thing that that can kind of get in the way is the idea of you know, that the tokenism that sometimes comes into play where it's sort of like, we need to have a female composer, we need to have a female musician we need to have a person of colour to compose this piece or, or LGBTQ person. I think that's that, that it's sort of, you know, sometimes people feel obliged to, to include something just for the sake of including it rather, rather than realising its merit.

VP: Yeah, and that there's a person behind that category.

MO: Yeah, exactly. Because the categories don't in the end that don't really mean anything. It's just a product of the fact that we were unwilling to, to accept something that's different from us.

VP: That's such a beautiful and perfect way to wrap it up, although I feel like we could keep talking for ages! Thank you so much for your time and your words today.

MO: Aww thank you. It was my pleasure.

VP: I'm sure everyone at home will join me in thanking the marvellous performer that is Mary Osborn. If you're interested in checking out Mary's work, performances and upcoming (probably on-line) concert, I'll drop the links below. Thanks for listening to our first episode of 2021, and catch you all next time!

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RESOURCES

Mary Osborn

Syrinx Revisted: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y99s_RnHSz0

Quatuor Lorient

<https://www.facebook.com/quatuorloriot/about/>

Mary's Arragmenet of Tallahatchie Concerto by Jacob Ter Veldhius

(JacobTV): <https://www.boomboxshop.net/tallahatchie---ensemble.html>

Merism Duo

<https://singaporesaxophonesymposium.com/2018/performers/merism-duo/>