

Yale SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Robert Blocker, Dean

DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS DEGREE RECITAL

Bora Kim, *violin*

Thursday, November 10, 2022 | 7:30 p.m. | Morse Recital Hall in Sprague Memorial Hall

Kyunga Lee, *piano*

Pyotr Ilyich
Tchaikovsky
1840–1893

Souvenir d'un lieu cher, Op. 42

- I. Méditation. Andante molto cantabile
- II. Scherzo. Presto giocoso
- III. Mélodie. Moderato con moto

Johannes Brahms
1833–1897

Violin Sonata No. 2 in A major, Op. 100

- I. Allegro amabile
- II. Andante tranquillo – Vivace
- III. Allegretto grazioso, quasi Andante

INTERMISSION

Robert Schumann
1810–1856

Violin Sonata No. 1 in A minor, Op. 105

- I. Mit leidenschaftlichem Ausdruck
- II. Allegretto
- III. Lebhaft

André Prévost
1934–2001

Improvisation for solo violin (1976)

Tchaikovsky

Valse–Scherzo, Op. 34

This performance is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree. As a courtesy to others, please silence all devices. Photography and recording of any kind is strictly prohibited. Please do not leave the hall during musical selections. Thank you.

Artist Profile

Bora Kim, *violin*

Violinist Bora Kim is from Toronto, Canada, where she made her soloist debut with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in 2009, performing 7 concerts at Roy Thomson Hall. Highlights include performances at Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, and Steinway Hall in New York, solo recitals across North America, Australia, and the Netherlands, chamber collaborations with pianist Emanuel Ax and the International Sejong Soloists, and masterclass for the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. As a winner of the Canada Council's 2018 Instrument Bank Competition, Bora was awarded the four-year loan of the 1747 "Palmason" Januarius Gagliano violin.

Bora is currently a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate at the Yale School of Music, where she also completed Master of Music and Master of Musical Arts degrees under the tutelage of Hyo Kang. She holds double Bachelor of Music degrees in both Violin and Piano Performance from the Colburn Conservatory of Music, as the first double-major graduate in the school's history. Bora is an alumna of numerous festivals including Sarasota, Aspen, Norfolk, Banff, and Orford.

Program Notes *by the performer*

Souvenir d'un lieu cher

TCHAIKOVSKY

Tchaikovsky composed *Souvenir d'un lieu cher* ("Memory of a dear place") during the spring of 1878, after the tumultuous end of his failed marriage. In search of much-needed tranquility, he briefly sought refuge at Brailov, the Ukrainian country estate of his devoted patroness Nadezhda von Meck, and the work is dedicated to this special place. Tchaikovsky had a rather unique relationship with the wealthy widow; Mme. von Meck was a fervent supporter of the arts and provided him with over 13 years of enormous financial support. They exchanged hundreds of letters, which reveal a deep respect and friendship towards each other. However, their correspondence remained exclusively through writings – under mutual agreement, the two were never to meet in person.

The first piece of the suite, "Méditation," was originally conceived as the slow movement of his Violin Concerto, before being replaced by the famous "Canzonetta." It is in ternary form; the opening section features a melancholic, dark melody that builds to an impassioned outburst, while the middle section provides a glimpse of sunshine with its dolce, dancing triplets. The reprise incorporates elements of both sections and ends in a silvery glow of D major.

The stormy scherzo movement is also in ternary form, and the outer sections simmer with an undercurrent of anxious energy. The contrasting middle section is a hopeful song, supported by rocking figures in the piano.

The most famous piece of the set is "Mélodie," which Tchaikovsky described as a song without words. The lush and warm melody, full of nostalgia, is decorated with fleeting, *grazioso* passages. The work ends with a charming *codetta*.

Violin Sonata No. 2 in A major

BRAHMS

Brahms spent the summer of 1886 in the idyllic town of Thun, Switzerland. Rejuvenated by the splendor of the Alps and the peaceful countryside, he proclaimed the area to be "so full of melodies that one must be careful not to step on any." Whilst there, Brahms turned to more intimate genres, and composed some of his most beloved chamber works: the Second Cello Sonata, C minor Piano Trio, various songs, drafts of the Violin Sonata No. 3 in D minor, and, nestled in their midst, the Violin Sonata No. 2 in A major. The work was premiered by Brahms himself on keyboard, with famed violinist Joseph Hellmesberger.

The A-major Sonata is the shortest and the most vocal of the three violin sonatas. Its tender nature reveals the introspective and contemplative side of Brahms. The first movement, descriptively marked *Allegro amabile*, breathes with the lyricism of his songs, with seemingly endless melodies that flow between the instruments. In fact, the second theme recalls his own song, "Wie melodien zieht es mir" ("Like melodies it steals softly through my mind"), also composed during the same summer. The second movement cleverly fuses together the roles of the slow movement and scherzo; the serene *Andante tranquillo* alternates with

folk-like Vivace episodes. The finale, marked *Allegretto grazioso*, is an elegant rondo, which also recalls thematic material from his previous songs. The main theme, with its warm and expansive contour, is contrasted with episodes of fleeting, shadowy arpeggios, and passionate outbursts. Perhaps Clara Schumann's remark best captures the essence of the work: "I wish the last movement could accompany me in my journey from here to the next world."

Violin Sonata No. 1 in A minor SCHUMANN

In 1850, Schumann was appointed with great fanfare as the music director of the orchestra in Düsseldorf. However, his initial delight was ill-fated and short lived. What began as a new creative venture turned sour rather quickly, as Schumann's mental health took a rapid decline, and relations between the orchestral musicians and conductor became strained. It was during this period of unrest and uncertainty that the Violin Sonata No. 1 in A minor was composed, and much of it reflects this inner turmoil.

The first movement, marked *Mit leidenschaftlichem Ausdruck* ("With passionate expression"), begins in a brooding, dark manner, exploring the lower registers of the violin, amidst crashing, arpeggiated waves in the piano. The theme is passed between the instruments, often seemingly overlapping, and always with an undercurrent of nervous anxiety. A moment of sweetness, although short lived, appears in the development, before the opening theme creeps in, masterfully blurring the structural boundaries of the recapitulation.

The second movement is perhaps the most Schumann-esque, recalling the whimsical writings of youthful, happier days, particularly that of his character piano pieces. The charming theme is full of sweet questionings, sweeping upwards into gentle pauses, before meandering into different directions, as if answering one's own thoughts. We are interrupted by episodes that bring to mind the contrasting personalities of Eusebius and Florestan, before the movement drifts into a tender calmness, fading into a dream.

The third movement jolts us awake from the wistful slumber of the slow movement, and we are immediately thrown into a stormy perpetual motion. The theme rises and falls rapidly, interrupted only by resolute chords that dissolve into shorter, disjointed lines. A beautiful, major-mode theme suddenly appears in the middle of the movement, providing a fleeting glimpse of warmth and hopeful longing, before dissipating into the nervous and relentless sixteenth-note motor. As the piece approaches the end, a fragment of the opening theme from the first movement returns, as if an eerie figment of our imagination, before the work comes to a tumultuous, crashing close.

Improvisation for solo violin PRÉVOST

André Prévost was one of Canada's most notable composers, gaining international acclaim through his diverse output of orchestral, choral, chamber, and solo works. Born into a family of musicians, he studied at the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal before going abroad to Paris after receiving grants from the Canada Arts Council and

Program Notes *cont.*

the Quebec government. In Paris, he was a pupil of Olivier Messiaen at the Paris Conservatoire, and studied composition with Henri Dutilleux at École normale. Upon his return to Canada, he won the Prix d'Europe in 1963, which funded a second trip to Paris, where he delved into electroacoustics at Maison de la Radio. In the summer of 1965, he attended the Berkshire Music Center to take classes from Zoltan Kodály, Aaron Copland, Gunther Schuller, and Elliott Carter. Perhaps his most memorable collaboration was with the great violinist Yehudi Menuhin, who commissioned his Cantata for Strings (1987). Prévost's musical vocabulary reflects a personal style, enriched with his various influences.

Improvisation for solo violin was composed in 1976. It begins with a slow and mysterious introduction, a series of sighs that explore the outer registers of the instrument, before growing to a shrieking, impassioned cry. The ensuing Allegro vivace section is pulsated by a piercing eighth-note motor, relentlessly driving forward to an unexpected quasi cadenza, featuring crashing waves that rise and fall tumultuously. After a reprise of both the opening Largo as well as a shadowy version of the Allegro vivace, the work ends in mystery, punctuated by nervous jolts.

Valse-Scherzo TCHAIKOVSKY

During the second half of the 19th century, the waltz was all the rage across Europe. Tchaikovsky was a champion of encapsulating his waltzes with the fullest spectrum of characters and colors, featuring them

not only in his three famous ballets, but also in his symphonies, operas, piano collections, and other works. In the Valse-Scherzo, it is the violin's turn to dance, and Tchaikovsky uses the waltz as a vehicle to showcase the instrument's technical brilliance and graceful allure. The work was composed in 1877, immediately preceding his mammoth Violin Concerto; in fact, it almost resembles a miniature concerto itself. The playful and elegant waltz frames a poignant middle section, which builds to a virtuoso cadenza. A sparkling coda gains momentum to bring the work to a dazzling conclusion.

Upcoming Events at YSM

- NOV 13 **Ingram Marshall Tribute Concert, with Benjamin Verdery & Friends**
Faculty Artist Series
3:00 p.m. | Morse Recital Hall
Free admission
- NOV 16 **Lunchtime Chamber Music**
12:30 p.m. | Morse Recital Hall
Free admission
- NOV 17 **Meadow Bridgham, *composition***
Doctor of Musical Arts Degree Recital
7:30 p.m. | Morse Recital Hall
Free admission
- NOV 18 **Peter Oundjian, *principal conductor***
Yale Philharmonia
7:30 p.m. | Woolsey Hall
Tickets start at \$12, Yale faculty/staff start at \$8, Students FREE*
- DEC 1 **Nate May, *composition***
Doctor of Musical Arts Degree Recital
7:30 p.m. | Morse Recital Hall
Free admission
- DEC 2 **George Coleman**
Ellington Jazz Series
7:30 p.m. | Morse Recital Hall
Tickets start at \$23, Students start at \$10
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