



June Chung Graduation Recital

Student of Paul Biss

With pianist Pualina Lim

Recital in partial fulfillment of Master of Music degree 2024

Suite Italienne

I. Stravinsky (1882–1971) [arr. S. Dushkin]

Introduzione

Serenata

Tarantella

Gavotta con due variazioni

Scherzino

Minuetto e Finale

Violin Sonata No. 4 in A Major, D 574 "Grand Duo"

F. Schubert (1797–1828)

Allegro moderato

Scherzo

Andantino

Allegro vivace

Break

Violin Sonata No. 2 in D Major Op. 94a

S. Prokofiev (1891–1953)

Moderato

Presto

Andante

Allegro con brio

Friday, November 10, 2023 8:30pm | Burnes Hall, New England Conservatory



Program Notes

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)

Suite Italienne for violin and piano

In 1919, Stravinsky met old friend and founder of the Ballets Russes, Sergei Diaghilev, who presented to the composer an idea to write music for a new ballet. Knowing Stravinsky admired Italian Baroque composer Pergolesi, Diaghilev brought several of his unfinished manuscripts and urged Stravinsky to use them as inspiration for the adventures of Pulcinella. This proposal included scenery and costumes by Picasso, another artist whom Stravinsky highly respected, as well as choreography by Massine. The potential to collaborate with dear friends and colleagues eventually overrode Stravinsky's initial reluctance, as he wrote in his autobiography, "Diaghilev used all his diplomatic talents to entice me....back into the fold of the Russian Ballet...for it was a delicate task to breathe the new life into scattered fragments and to create a whole from the isolated pages of a musician for whom I felt a special liking and tenderness".

Interestingly, it was later discovered that most of the manuscripts Diaghilev found were in fact, not composed by Pergolesi, but by other composers of the 18th century. The Introduzione, Tarantella, and Finale were originally by Domenico Gallo, and the Gavotta and its two variations were composed by Carlo Monza. Nevertheless, inspired by the fragments, he composed the music to Pulcinella. The ballet proved to be a huge success and a few years later, Stravinsky extracted several sections and recycled them to create a concert suite for chamber orchestra (1922) and the "Suite for Violin and Piano after Themes, Fragments, and Pieces by Pergolesi" (1925). The latter was reworked into *Suite Italienne* for cello and piano (1932), with the help of cellist Piatigorsky and as well as a version for violin and piano a year later, aided by violinist Dushkin, for whom Stravinsky had written his Violin Concerto in 1931.

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Violin Sonata in A Major, D574

Schubert's first instrument was the violin and along with the string quartet that was made up by his family, he was exposed to chamber music from a young age. He composed most of his thirteen string quartets in 1810-1815, but in 1817, Rossini fever seemed to take over Vienna. Rossini's influence is evident in Schubert's Two Overtures in the Italian Style (D 592, 597) as well as Symphony No. 6 in C Major (D 589). The Violin Sonata in A Major is one of the four Schubert composed, which was first published posthumously as Sonatinas (in a set of three, including this one) in 1851 by Diabelli, to appeal to amateurs. A more substantial work than its three predecessors, a Beethoven-inspired scherzo replaces Schubert's originally preferred Minuet, with gruff accents, abrupt changes in dynamics, vertical leaps in the violin, and irregular phrases. The drama and urging flow from Rossini's opera scenes are apparent in the Andantino, but the sonata is filled with pleasing, melodious tunes and joyous enthusiasm stemming from Schubert himself.

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

Violin Sonata No. 2 in D Major, Op. 94a

During the Second World War in 1941, while Stalin and the Soviet Union focused their attention to the Nazi threat, they had no choice but to relax restrictions previously placed on artists, and Prokofiev was able to break free from this artistic suppression. A year later, he was working with Sergei Eisenstein on the film Ivan the Terrible when he began to sketch out a sonata for flute and piano, inspired by French flutist Georges Barrere. He finished the sonata while in Moscow and unfortunately, the piece was unpopular and few people seemed interested. Violinist and friend David Oistrakh stepped in and suggested Prokofiev arrange the sonata for violin and piano to which the composer eagerly agreed. The piece was premiered on June 17th, 1944, performed by Oistrakh and Lev Oborin, but deeply unsatisfied with the performance, a greatly troubled Prokofiev invited the two for a coaching session and revised the score by adding more accents and dynamic markings. Sadly, a few years later in 1953, Prokofiev died of a brain hemorrhage, on the same day and likely for the same reason as Stalin's death, and Oistrakh performed the first and third movements of this sonata at his funeral.