

Ga-Young Park
collaborative piano

Recital in partial fulfillment of the
Doctor of Musical Arts, 2025
Student of Cameron Stowe and Jonathan Feldman

with
Yechan Min, flute
Cara Bender, soprano

Friday, April 12, 2024
8:30 p.m.
Brown Hall

PROGRAM

Gabriel Fauré
(1845–1924)

Sonata No. 1 in A Major for Violin and Piano,
op. 13

Allegro molto

Andante

Scherzo: Allegro vivo

Finale: Allegro quasi presto

Yechan Min, flute

Henri Duparc
(1848–1933)

Phidylé

Testament

Extase

Lamento

Sérénade Florentine

Élégie

Soupir

La vie antérieure

Cara Bender, soprano

Thank you for coming to my recital!

*I am grateful to my amazing partners, Cara Bender and Yechan Min,
for the enjoyable collaboration.*

*Special thanks to my teacher, Cameron Stowe,
for his unwavering support both musically and academically.
It's an honor to share my musical journey with you.*

*I also extend my gratitude to my family, friends, and academic teachers
for their constant support.*

*A heartfelt thank you to Jonathan Feldman,
my teacher for five years at NEC.
The memories and lessons learned under your guidance have been invaluable,
fostering both my personal and musical growth.*

Today's recital spotlights French composers Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) and Henri Duparc (1848-1933) through their works from 1874 to 1884. Their relationship, rooted in mutual respect and admiration, thrived within the Société Nationale de Musique, founded post-Franco-Prussian War (1870) to nurture young French talent and foster a distinct French National Musical Identity. Both Fauré and Duparc are pivotal figures, whose contributions have significantly shaped the landscape of French music.

Gabriel Fauré, one of the most distinguished French composers of his generation, crafted a diverse oeuvre that spans over one hundred French mélodies, chamber music, and more, showcasing a remarkable evolution in style throughout his life. Educated by Camille Saint-Saëns, who became a lifelong friend and mentor, Fauré developed a personal style marked by innovative harmony and melodic richness, setting him apart in the transition from Romanticism to modernist musical expressions.

Violin Sonata No. 1 in A Major, op.13

The appearance of Mr. Fauré's sonata proclaims for us a new defender, perhaps the most worthy of all, for he combines a profound musical technique with a great abundance of melody and an almost unconscious naïveté to an irresistible effect. Everything in this sonata seduces: the novelty of its forms, its tonal explorations and original sonorities, its use of completely unsuspected rhythm. And the entire work, capable of persuading a crowd of the most ordinary listeners that even its most striking audacities are completely natural....With this work Monsieur Fauré claims for himself a place among the masters.

– Saint-Saëns, 'Une Sonate,' *Journal de musique* 1, no. 45 (7 April 1877)

Composed between 1875 and 1876, when Fauré was thirty years old, this period marked a vibrant phase in his career, with his compositional voice emerging with clarity and distinction. The sonata, dedicated to his close friend and French composer Paul Viardot, reveals a deep connection between Fauré and the rich cultural milieu of Paris. The premiere of the sonata was held in the home of Camille Clercs, a prominent industrialist and one of Fauré's most ardent supporters, featuring Viardot on the violin and Fauré himself on the piano. This event showcased the collaborative spirit and personal relationships underpinning Fauré's musical endeavors. Following this intimate debut, a public performance at the Société Nationale de Musique in the Salle Pleyel, with young violinist Marie Tayau joining Fauré, received widespread acclaim and exceeded Fauré's expectations.

The Violin Sonata No. 1 in A Major, Op. 13, praised in its time, stands as one of Fauré's early masterpieces, renowned for its technical brilliance and emotional richness, and continues to be a staple in the violin repertoire.

The first movement, *Allegro molto*, unveils Fauré's innovative approach to form and expression within the traditional sonata framework. The movement opens with a lengthy piano prelude, immediately posing a tantalizing question to the listener: Is this a prelude or the movement's first theme? This ambiguity sets the stage for a

richly explorative narrative, further intensified when the violin joins, weaving its voice into the evolving musical dialogue. The development section begins in F Major, a departure from the expected A Major, marking a boldly unanticipated shift. This key change initiates a series of modulations, showcasing Fauré's masterful handling of harmony and structure. As the music navigates through these varied landscapes, the recapitulation brings a dramatic return to the initial theme, with both instruments proclaiming the theme in *forte*.

The second movement, *Andante*, is marked by a distinct interplay between harmonic tension and resolution, facilitated through the dynamic interaction of the violin and piano. This movement stands out for its use of rhythmic variation to create a narrative of tension and release. It starts with an intriguing rhythmic pattern of short-long note values (eighth-quarter note) within a 9/8 time signature, reminiscent of a barcarolle, with an undulating, boat-like rhythm. This motif transitions into sequences where each beat is articulated as three eighth notes, increasing the movement's momentum. The development continues as the piece incorporates fluid sixteenth notes, driving the movement towards its climax. This progression demonstrates Fauré's innovative approach to rhythm and structure, effectively building intensity and complexity.

The third movement, *Allegro vivo*, is a captivating scherzo that showcases the composer's ingenuity in rhythm, articulation, and texture. Characterized by its vivacity, this piece stands out for its rhythmic complexities. Unlike the traditional scherzo, which typically employs a 3/4 time signature, Fauré opts for a 2/8 meter but uses diverse groupings, including consecutive irregular and unexpected groupings such as 3/4, with sudden upbeats and unexpected accents. Fauré crafts an intriguing and delightfully unpredictable musical landscape, creating a playful yet sophisticated interplay of rhythms that challenge and enchant both performers and listeners alike. After the scherzo section, in the trio section, it returns to 3/4 with expressive legato lines, contrasting with the humorous scherzo part. Premiered as an encore at the Société Nationale de Musique, this movement exemplifies Fauré's contribution to the development of a distinctively French scherzo style. With bursts of pizzicato and a freshness imbued with tonal liberties, the piece radiates whimsical charm. It not only influenced the conception of the 'French scherzo' but also left a mark on the works of subsequent composers such as Debussy and Ravel.

The final movement, *Allegro quasi presto*, marks a return to lyrical expansiveness, highlighting the composer's mastery of melody and expression. It begins with the piano setting an anticipatory tone through an upbeat A Major harmony, punctuated by numerous rests that suggest an impending enchantment. This sense of anticipation is further heightened when the violin enters with a long, *dolcissimo* lyrical line, adding depth and emotion to the unfolding narrative. Throughout the movement, there is a profound interaction between the two instruments, with the piano often presenting melodic material for the violin to respond to. This dialogue not only showcases the technical prowess of the performers but also the intricate weaving of musical ideas between the two instruments.

Henri Duparc an important figure in French music, made a profound impact with his art songs. Despite producing just seventeen songs between 1868 and 1885, Duparc's work remains integral to the French art song repertoire. His artistic evolution was significantly shaped by Richard Wagner and more so by César Franck, who considered Duparc his most talented pupil. Duparc distinguished himself musically with an experimental edge—his songs are marked by bold modulations and an orchestral approach to piano part, featuring unconventional elements like parallel fifths and recitative. In choosing texts for his songs, Duparc favored the Parnassian poets, who prized impersonality and revered ancient Greece, a stance that contrasted sharply with the prevailing Romantic aesthetics of the time. This innovative blend of musical and textual selection has cemented Duparc's legacy in the French art song genre, despite his limited catalog.

Phidylé

Phidylé, composed in 1882 and dedicated to Ernest Chausson, sets to music a poem by the Parnassian poet Leconte de Lisle, celebrated for his admiration of Greek antiquity. The piece captures a serene moment under the Mediterranean sun where Phidylé lies next to the speaker. Starting with a slow tempo, the music mirrors the tranquil and warm midday scene, setting the stage for Phidylé's awakening. The gradual increase in tempo and the incorporation of whispering tremolos towards the climax suggest the speaker's anticipation, specifically waiting for a kiss from Phidylé.

Phidylé

*L'herbe est molle au sommeil sous les frais
peupliers,
Aux pentes des sources moussues,
Qui, dans les prés en fleur germant par mille
issues,
Se perdent sous les noirs halliers.
Repose, ô Phidylé! Midi sur les feuillages
Rayonne, et t'invite au sommeil.
Par le trèfle et le thym, seules, en plein soleil,

Chantent les abeilles volages.
Un chaud parfum circule au détour des sentiers,

La rouge fleur des blés s'incline,
Et les oiseaux, rasant de l'aile la colline,

Cherchent l'ombre des églantiers.
Mais, quand l'Astre, incliné sur sa courbe
éclatante,
Verra ses ardeurs s'apaiser,
Que ton plus beau sourire et ton meilleur baiser*

Phidylé

The grass is soft for sleep beneath the cool
poplars
On the banks of the mossy springs
That flow in flowering meadows from a
thousand sources,
And vanish beneath dark thickets.
Rest, O Phidylé! Noon on the leaves
Is gleaming, inviting you to sleep.
By the clover and thyme, alone, in the bright
sunlight,
The fickle bees are humming.
A warm fragrance floats about the winding
paths,
The red flowers of the cornfield droop;
And the birds, skimming the hillside with
their wings,
Seek the shade of the eglantine.
But when the sun, low on its dazzling curve,
Sees its brilliance wane,
Let your loveliest smile and finest kiss

Me récompense de l'attente!

Reward me for my waiting!

Charles-Marie-René Leconte de Lisle

Translation © Richard Stokes

Testament

Testament, composed in 1883 with poetry by Armand Silvestre, is less performed than his other songs. However, his close friend Pierre de Bréville mentioned that Testament is perhaps the most profound of all Duparc's songs. It conveys the intense despair of unrequited love through evocative imagery, set against a stormy piano backdrop that mirrors the emotional turmoil. The music's quasi-symphonic texture amplifies the themes of anger, pain, and resignation.

Testament

*Pour que le vent te les apporte
Sur l'aile noire d'un remords,
J'écrirai sur la feuille morte
Les tortures de mon cœur mort!*

*Toute ma sève s'est tarie
Aux clairs midis de ta beauté,
Et, comme à la feuille flétrie,
Rien de vivant ne m'est resté;*

*Tes yeux m'ont brûlé jusqu'à l'âme,
Comme des soleils sans merci!
Feuille que le gouffre réclame,
L'autan va m'emporter aussi ...*

*Mais avant, pour qu'il te les porte
Sur l'aile noire d'un remords,
J'écrirai sur la feuille morte
Les tortures de mon cœur mort!*

Armand Silvestre

Testament

That the wind might bear them to you
On the black wing of remorse,
I shall inscribe on the dead leaf
The torments of my dead heart!

All my strength has drained away
In the bright noon of your beauty,
And, like the withered leaf,
Nothing living is left for me.

Your eyes have scorched me to the soul
Like suns devoid of mercy!
The chasm will claim the leaf,
The south wind sweep me away...

But first, that it might bear them to you
On the black wing of remorse,
I shall inscribe on the dead leaf,
The torments of my dead heart!

Translation © Richard Stokes

Extase

Extase (1878) is Duparc's artistic response to Wagner's critics. According to Pierre de Bréville, a close friend of Duparc, Duparc intentionally used ideas from Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* in *Extase* as both an homage and a parody, targeting anti-Wagnerian sentiments in France. The motif and Wagnerian chromatic language are strategically used. Set to Jean Lahor's poem, *Extase* explores love and transcendence, echoing the *Liebestod* (Love Death) theme from *Tristan and Isolde*. The opening sequence subtly parodies the Tristan chord.

Extase

*Sur un lys pâle mon cœur dort
D'un sommeil doux comme la mort ...
Mort exquise, mort parfumée
Du souffle de la bien-aimée ...*

*Sur ton sein pâle mon cœur dort
D'un sommeil doux comme la mort ...*

Jean Lahor

Ecstasy

On a pale lily my heart is sleeping
A sleep as sweet as death:
Exquisite death, death perfumed
By the breath of the beloved:

On your pale breast my heart is sleeping
A sleep as sweet as death ...

Translation © Richard Stokes

Lamento

In 1883, Duparc composed *Lamento*, dedicating it to 'mon cher maître et ami Fauré' (my dear master and friend Fauré), as a graceful response to Fauré's earlier setting of *La chanson du Pêcheur*, another poem from Théophile Gautier's *La Comédie de la Mort*. Gautier's collection notably includes two poems titled *Lamento*. While Fauré had chosen *La chanson du Pêcheur* thirteen years earlier, Duparc selected the other *Lamento* poem for his composition. This choice not only highlights the connection between the two composers but also showcases Duparc's ability to echo Fauré's elegant and graceful choral processes in his own unique style.

Regarding the poem, the music captures the haunting atmosphere of a dove's mournful song beside a white tomb. The musical arrangement transitions from the serene contemplation present in the initial stanzas to a more animated tempo in the third, mirroring the speaker's determination to withdraw from the poignant interplay of beauty and sorrow.

Lamento

*Connaissez-vous la blanche tombe,
Où flotte avec un son plaintif
L'ombre d'un if?
Sur l'if une pâle colombe,
Triste et seule au soleil couchant,
Chante son chant.*

*On dirait que l'âme éveillée
Pleure sous terre à l'unisson
De la chanson,
Et du malheur d'être oubliée
Se plaint dans un roucoulement
Bien doucement.*

*Ah! jamais plus, près de la tombe,
Je n'irai, quand descend le soir*

Lament

Do you know the white tomb,
Where the shadow of a yew
Waves plaintively?
On that yew a pale dove,
Sad and solitary at sundown
Sings its song;

As if the awakened soul
Weeps from the grave, together
With the song,
And at the sorrow of being forgotten
Murmurs its complaint
Most meltingly.

Ah! nevermore shall I approach that tomb,
When evening descends

*Au manteau noir,
Écouter la pâle colombe
Chanter sur la branche de l'if
Son chant plaintif!*

Théophile Gautier

In its black cloak.
To listen to the pale dove
On the branch of the yew
Sings its plaintive song!

Translation © Richard Stokes

Sérénade Florentine

Sérénade Florentine, composed in 1880 with lyrics by Jean Lahor, intertwines simplicity, a lullaby, and a barcarolle rhythm to craft a serene atmosphere. In a letter to Ernest Chausson, Duparc revealed his personal affection for the little serenade, valuing it distinctly from his other compositions for its divergence from the customary sad or violent tones, highlighting a unique and cherished brightness within his repertoire (January 1883).

Sérénade Florentine

*Étoile, dont la clarté luit
Comme un diamant dans la nuit,
Regarde vers ma bien-aimée
Dont la paupière s'est fermée,
Et fais descendre sur ses yeux
La bénédiction des cieux.*

*Elle s'endort : par la fenêtre
En sa chambre heureuse pénètre ;
Sur sa blancheur, comme un baiser,
Viens jusqu'à l'aube te poser,
Et que sa pensée alors rêve
D'un astre d'amour qui se lève.*

Jean Lahor

Florentine serenade

Star whose beauty glistens
like a diamond in the night,
look towards my beloved
whose eyelid has closed.
And make the benediction of the heavens
descend upon her eyes.

She is falling asleep... Through the window,
into her happy room, enter;
come and settle like a kiss
upon her whiteness, until dawn
and let her thought, then, dream
of a rising star of love!

© translated by Christopher Goldsack 2020 from
The Mélodie Treasury

Élégie

Élégie (1874) is dedicated to Henri de Lassus, set to Thomas Moore's poem honoring Irish patriot Robert Emmet, Moore's friend and a symbol of Irish independence. This musical piece captures the transition from mourning to remembrance. It starts in F minor, mirroring the poem's initial sorrow. As the poem moves to a theme of enduring memory, the music accelerates and shifts to F Major, employing arpeggiation to suggest resolution and the transformative power of remembrance. This piece captures the emotional journey from mourning to an affirmation of legacy, highlighting the transformative power of memory.

Élégie

*Oh ! ne murmurez pas son nom ! Qu'il dorme dans
l'ombre,
Où froide et sans honneur repose sa dépouille.*

*Muettes, tristes, glacées, tombent nos larmes,
Comme la rosée de la nuit, qui sur sa tête humecte
la gazon;*

*Mais la rosée de la nuit, bien qu'elle pleure en
silence,
Fera briller la verdure sur sa couche*

Et nos larmes, en secret répandues,

*Conserveront sa mémoire fraîche et verte dans nos
cœurs.*

Thomas Moore, trans. Mme Duparc

Elegy

Oh! breathe not his name, let it sleep in the
shade.

Where cold and unhonoured his relics are
laid:

Silent, sad and frozen be the tears that we
shed,

As the night-dew that moistens the grass o'er
his head;

But the night-dew, though in silence it weeps,

Shall make the grass green on the grave
where he sleeps;

And the tear that we shed, though in secret it
rolls,

Shall long keep his memory green in our
souls.

Translation © Richard Stokes

Soupir

Soupir, composed in 1868 and set to a poem by Sully Prudhomme, is a dedication to Duparc's mother, Frédérique Amélie de Gaité. This piece not only encapsulates unrequited and enduring love but also served as a profound expression that led Duparc's mother to understand his deep affection for Ellie Mac Swiney, whom Duparc would later marry. The music, with its syncopated descending sigh motif, mirrors the agony of yearning for an unseen and unheard beloved, amplifying the sorrow of perpetual waiting and the eternal cherishment of an intensifying tender love.

Soupir

*Ne jamais la voir ni l'entendre,
Ne jamais tout haut la nommer,
Mais, fidèle, toujours l'attendre,
Toujours l'aimer.*

*Ouvrir les bras et, las d'attendre,
Sur le néant les refermer,
Mais encor, toujours les lui tendre,
Toujours l'aimer.*

*Ah! Ne pouvoir que les lui tendre,
Et dans les pleurs se consumer,*

Sigh

Never to see or hear her,
Never to utter her name aloud,
But faithful, always to wait for her,
Always to love her.

To open my arms and, weary of waiting,
To close them again on a void,
Yet always to hold them out again,
Always to love her.

Ah, able only to hold them out
And to waste away in tears,

*Mais ces pleurs toujours les répandre
Toujours l'aimer.*

*Ne jamais la voir ni l'entendre,
Ne jamais tout haut la nommer,
Mais d'un amour toujours plus tendre,
Toujours l'aimer!*

Sully Prudhomme.

Yet always to shed those tears,
Always to love her.

Never to see or hear her,
Never to utter her name aloud,
But with a love always more tender,
Always to love her.

Translation © Richard Stokes

La vie antérieure

La vie antérieure (1884) is his final composition. Although Duparc aspired to continue his song composition beyond this piece, his endeavors were halted by worsening mental health. It sets to music Charles Baudelaire's poem from *Les Fleurs du mal*, reflecting decadent and Parnassian influences. The composition skillfully echoes the poem's journey from majestic nature to the interplay of sea and sky, mirroring a soul's reflection on a past filled with both outward splendor and internal depth. The piece concludes with a contemplative piano postlude, encapsulating the serene beauty and the underlying melancholy of Baudelaire's vision, thus conveying the complex emotions of reminiscence and concealed sorrow.

La vie antérieure

*J'ai longtemps habité sous de vastes portiques
Que les soleils marins teignaient de mille feux,
Et que leurs grands piliers, droits et majestueux,
Rendaient pareils, le soir, aux grottes basaltiques.*

*Les houles, en roulant les images des cieux,
Mêlaient d'une façon solennelle et mystique
Les tout-puissants accords de leur riche musique
Aux couleurs du couchant reflété par mes yeux.*

*C'est là que j'ai vécu dans les voluptés calmes
Au milieu de l'azur, des vagues, des splendeurs,*

Et des esclaves nus, tout imprégnés d'odeurs,

*Qui me rafraîchissaient le front avec des palmes,
Et dont l'unique soin était d'approfondir
Le secret douloureux qui me faisait languir.*

Charles Baudelaire

A Previous Life

For long I lived beneath vast colonnades
Tinged with a thousand fires by ocean suns,
Whose giant pillars, straight and majestic,
Made them look, at evening, like basalt caves.

The sea-swells, mingling the mirrored skies,
Solemnly and mystically interwove
The mighty chords of their mellow music
With the colours of sunset reflected in my
eyes.

It is there that I have lived in sensuous repose,
With blue sky about me and brightness and
waves

And naked slaves all drenched in perfume.

Who fanned my brow with fronds of palm,
And whose only care was to fathom
The secret grief which made me languish.

*Translations © Richard Stokes, author of A
French Song Companion (Oxford University
Press), provided via Oxford International Song
Festival (www.oxfordsong.org).*

Food and drink are not allowed in the concert hall,
and photography and audio or video recording are prohibited.
Assistive listening devices are available for all Jordan Hall concerts;
contact the head usher or house manager on duty or inquire at the Coat Room.
Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of management.

Stay connected



necmusic.edu/tonight