

TERRACE THEATER
Saturday Evening, October 15, 2011, at 7:30PM

korean concert society 

Presents

Ji-Yoon Park, Violin
Francois Dumont, Piano

Program

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Sonata for Piano and Violin in B flat major, KV454

Largo-Allegro

Andate

Allegretto

Johannes Brahms

Sonata for Piano and Violin in D minor op.108

Allegro

Adagio

Un poco presto e con sentimento

Presto agitato

Intermission

Ernest Chausson

Poeme op.25

Maurice Ravel

Violin sonata no.2 in G major

Allegretto

Blues: Moderato

Perpetuum mobile: Allegro

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

By Bob Massey

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Sonata for Piano and Violin in B flat major, KV454

In addition to his musical genius, Mozart is famous for healthy self-confidence—not to say chutzpah. The Sonata, KV454, was written in a flurry of composition over two months of 1784 when Mozart was playing concerts almost every day. True, he needed the money the works would bring in. But he said of his Concertos in B-flat, written in the same period, that he regarded them as works “bound to make the performers perspire.” In the case of the Sonata, however, the performers were the violin virtuoso Regina Strinasacchi and himself on piano. He was writing at such a breakneck pace that his piano part was barely a skeleton—and some say the score before him was blank. Yet, being Mozart, he improvised harmonies and embellished the bare melody onstage. All in the presence of the Emperor Josef II, who would later appoint Mozart as court composer.

The Sonata’s uncommonly slow opening is notable for its careful balance of the two instruments, which, once established, is maintained throughout the composition. The secondary theme is explored over several new keys and rhythms, with a final recapitulation. The E flat major second movement, originally marked adagio but revised by Mozart to andante, opens up an expressive violin melody which is then carried onwards by the piano. A brief darker section gives way to the return of the opening theme imbued with a new rhythmic identity. The violin leads into the final allegretto movement, which conveys Mozart’s sense of fun and joy using a Rondo form spiced with sudden dynamic accents and accidentals, and concludes with magnificent sophistication.

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Sonata for Piano and Violin in D minor op.108

By the time Brahms wrote his Sonatas, his devotion to the classic works of Bach, Mozart and Beethoven had earned him a reputation as a reactionary. It was a time when the sprawling operas of Wagner and symphonic poems of Richard Strauss were seen as the “music of the future.” Brahms couldn’t care less. His quest was a mastery of the established forms, not a revolutionary reinvention of them. And his four symphonies established his reputation beyond a doubt. The D minor Sonata was written during lakeside vacations in a period when Brahms was contemplating his retirement from composing. It has been called athletic and dramatic, and its longevity gives the lie to the composer’s detractors who, at the time, claimed his work would have no lasting importance.

Unlike his first two sonatas for violin and piano, written in three movements, this work is in four movements. It opens with a lyrical violin theme over syncopated broken octaves from the piano. From these ideas almost all we hear in the first movement will be drawn. The adagio second section is romantic, nostalgic, and waltz-like. Then the violin melody goes through several modulations, becoming lively, and takes wing on arpeggiations through D major, ending with an understated recapitulation of the main theme. For the third movement, the piano takes the lead, with the violin adding brief melodic fragments. Then the violin takes the spotlight with an outburst of arpeggios, resolving in a quiet, almost whispered resolution. The fourth movement is

a display of virtuosity, with an almost symphonic character, building to a wrenching climax in the home key of D minor.

ERNEST CHAUSSON

Poeme op.25

Written for the violinist Eugène Ysaÿe, French composer Ernest Chausson took inspiration for his “Poème” from a story by the Russian novelist Turgenev. The story itself is about a violinist who can communicate his thwarted love for a woman only through the passion of his playing, without words. Chausson himself wrote of the piece, “There is no description, no story, nothing but sensation.” The music, like the story, is a fantasy. There’s no attempt to capture the narrative; rather, the composer blends a wide range of colors over several episodes.

The opening, marked “slow and mysterious,” sets the mood. Then the violin enters with a mournful melody, which is responded to in almost the manner of a chorus, before the violin again embellishes the theme. There are passages of both lyrical and virtuosic power, each inspiring a passionate response before coming to an ecstatic close on a sequence of trills.

MAURICE RAVEL

Violin sonata no.2 in G major

Maurice Ravel suffered from insomnia. He spent the restless night hours in the cafes of Paris where he absorbed American jazz and its older cousin, the blues. Jazz was all the rage at the time, though what Ravel took from it for use in the second movement of his Violin Sonata would not likely have been recognizable to a jazz musician of the era. During a visit to the U.S. in 1928, Ravel said, “To my mind the ‘blues’ is one of your greatest musical assets, truly American despite earlier contributory influences from Africa and Spain. Musicians have asked me how I came to write a ‘blues’ as the second movement of my recently completed sonata for violin and piano... While I adopted this popular form of your music, I venture to say that nevertheless it is French music, Ravel’s music, that I have written... Think of the striking and essential differences to be noted in the ‘jazz’ and ‘rags’ of Milhaud, Stravinsky, Casella, Hindemith, and so on. They mould popular forms to meet the requirements of their own individual art... The styles become as numerous as the composers themselves.”

This appropriation of an apparently incompatible form is characteristic of Ravel. The first movement of the Sonata is built from two clearly distinct themes. Ravel hoped to explore what he considered the fundamental incompatibility of piano and violin. Thus the two instruments alternate in presenting the main ideas, sometimes in apparent conflict with the other. But there is method to Ravel’s madness. The second “blues” movement incorporates the technique of bitonality, which assigns different keys to different instruments to give each a specific character. Combined with the melodic figures taken from American jazz, the effect can evoke a slide saxophone or a smoky, jazzy, looser vocal style. In the third movement, there’s a return of musical ideas from the first, in a steady stream of pulses that create a feeling of propulsive, endless motion.

MEET THE ARTISTS



Born in Korea in 1985, Ji-Yoon Park won first prize at the Hankuk Ilbo Competition at the age of nine, and two years later took home first prize from the Chosun Ilbo Competition. In 2001, one year after moving to France, she was awarded first prize at the Concours des jeunes interprètes de Canet in Roussillon, and went on to win first prize at the Tibor Varga International Violin Competition in Switzerland at age 18. She is also an award winner at the the Long-Thibaud International Competition in France in 2005, as well as the Queen Elizabeth Competition in Belgium in 2009.

She has given recitals in Korea, France, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Germany and Switzerland and has played with such orchestras as the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orchestre Perpignan Languedoc-Roussillon, the New Symphony Orchestra of

Prague, Mexico National Orchestra, the Janacek Philharmonic Orchestra and the Orchestre national de France.

Park made her North America debut as soloist performing the Michael Haydn Concerto with the Czech Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra touring throughout 7 cities in Canada. She also toured Italy with the Korean Chamber Orchestra in 2009. Her recitals have been broadcast on French radio, and festival appearances include Vezere Chamber Music Festival, Touquet Festival, Seoul Spring Festival, and Festival Prades.

Park studied at the Conservatoire National de Paris with Roland Daugareil since 2000, and also at the Mozarteum in Salzburg with Igor Ozim, and studied chamber music with Jean-Jacques Kantorow and Itamar Golan. Park has been sponsored by Fondation Banque Populaire in France since 2009, and plays a violin by Pietro Guarnerius from 1717 with the support of the Kumho Asiana Cultural Foundation. She currently is Concertmaster at the Orchestre National des Pays de la Loire in France as well as a member of Kumho Asiana Soloists.



French pianist François Dumont's international career has been launched by his success as a Laureate of major international piano competitions including the prestigious Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels as well as the Chopin International Competition in Warsaw; he has been awarded First Prize in the Jean Françaix International Competition, the Steinway International Competition; he is a Laureate of the Clara Haskil Competition in Switzerland, the European piano Competition, the Hamamatsu International Piano Competition in Japan. He has obtained the "Declic" Prize from the French Government and is a laureate of the Banque Populaire Fondation as well as the Charles Oulmont Prize from the Fondation de France.

Born in Lyon, François Dumont was fourteen years old when he entered the Paris Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Bruno Rigutto's class, who transmitted tradition from both his teachers Samson François and Arturo Benedetto Michelangeli. He later studied with artists such as Murray Perahia, Leon Fleisher, Dmitri

Bashkirov, Menahem Pressler, William Grant Naboré, Vladimir Mischuk, Andreas Staier and Fou Ts'ong, during masterclasses at the prestigious International Piano Academy Lake Como in Italy.

His recording of the Complete Mozart Sonatas (for Anima Records) has received the "Maestro" Award from the "Pianiste" Magazine. It has been praised for its "eloquent inventivity, its free imagination, architectural science and a *perlé* touch that confirms a rare maturity".

François Dumont is a member of the Trio Elégiaque, with whom he has recorded a CD of works by Messiaen and Dusapin (World Première) that has received many awards by the critics, including the Diapason d'Or. The Trio Elégiaque has successfully performed the World Première of Nicolas Bacri's Fourth Trio, "Sonata seria" (which is dedicated to them), in the Grand Salon des Invalides, Paris. Their next recording of Trios by Rachmaninov, Arensky and Rimsky-Korsakov will be released soon.

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The Society was founded as a non-profit cultural organization in 1979 by several Korean-American families to help budding careers of young musical talents of Korean heritage. The Society presented its first debut recitals in 1980 and 1981 at the Rockville Jewish Community Center. In 1982, the Society moved the concert venue to the recently opened Terrace Theater at the Kennedy Center and has been continuously discovering and presenting at least one young musical talent at that venue every year since. Now the number of Society's discoveries is over 37, and all are engaged in successful careers in the US, Europe and Korea.

Currently, the Society defines a person of Korean heritage as a person with at least one Korean great grandparent. It is also open to direct descendants of the Korean War veterans from the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, and Turkey. The Society's reach is expected to widen with time.

The Society has operated solely from tax-deductible donations from individuals living in Washington-Baltimore metropolitan area. It is a grassroots organization in the true sense of the word. Over the recent history of Korea, Western music played an important role in connecting Koreans to other peoples throughout the world. Since the Korean War, the classical music world has been surprised by incredible musical talents from the formerly war-torn and poor country, like Kyung-wha Chung, Sarah Chang, and Han-Na Chang. People recognized Korea and Koreans through those extraordinarily talented musicians. During the past four decades, Korea has produced more highly talented musicians per capita than any other country in the world at the same time it engineered a miracle of economic growth. Those Korean musical talents are conducting diplomacy at different and more intimate levels than any official diplomats, and receiving respect and admiration from the Western hemisphere.

The Society is proud of its continuous contribution to both Korean and American music community. For more information about the Korean Concert Society please visit www.KoreanConcertSociety.org.

Nearly all the musicians presented by KCS were unknown at the time of their debut recital, but many have gone on to build distinguished careers. Chee-Yun (1988) is a top-rated solo violinist in the US, Europe, Japan and Korea. David Kim (1982) became the concertmaster of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Catherine Cho (1991) is on the violin faculty at the Juilliard School, and is one of the top chamber music performers in the United States. Yong Hi Moon (1981) is one of the top piano teachers in the world today and is a professor at the Peabody Conservatory. Her husband, Dae Wook Lee (1981), is one of the most respected piano teachers and performers in Korea. Sungwon Yang (1993) is one of the most popular cello teachers and performers in Korea. Young Ho Kim (1983) is a veteran piano teacher in Korea today, and he also performs widely in Korea, Japan, and Southeast Asia. In 1996, Soovin Kim (1995) was the first American to win the Paganini Competition in 24 years and the youngest winner ever. Daniel Lee (1997) was recently named principal cellist of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. Violinist Ju-Young Baek (2000) was recently appointed as at Seoul National University as the youngest professor ever in the university's history. Lucille Chung (1994) and her husband, Alessio Bax, both pianists, are performing widely all over the world and recognized for their unique styles and interpretations. New York based International Sejong Soloists (1998) is considered the top string orchestra without a conductor in the world today, with number of CD and tours around the world. The Society is proud of all of its alumni and their achievements.

Past Performers

Violin:

Hanwon Choi (1980), David Kim (1982), Jin Kyung Lee (1983), Sarah Kwak (1984), Sung-Won Yun (1987), Chee-Yun Kim (1988), Catherine Cho (1991), Mia Sohn (1991), Soovin Kim (1995), Ann Kim (1996), Ju-Young Baek (2000), Hyuk-Joo Kwun (2004), Stephanie Jeong (2008), Ji-Yoon Park (2011)

Viola:

Richard "Yongjae" O'Neill (2009)

Cello:

David Oh (1983), Ho Ahn (1983), Helen Kim (1986), Wha-Jin Hong (1987), Sang Min Park (1990), Sungwon Yang (1993), Daniel Lee (1997), Patrick Jee (2002), Hee-Young Lim (2007), Jonah Kim (2010)

Piano:

Dae Wook Lee (1981), Yong Hi Moon (1981), Young Ho Kim (1983), Henry Choi (1983), Sumi Kay (1983), Jin Yeo Choi

(1983), Hae Kyung Lee (1985), Yun-Jung Chang (1987), Wonmi Kim (1989), Lucille Chung (1994), Yung Wook Yoo (2002), Soyeon Lee (2006), Elizabeth Joy Roe (2009)

Wind:

Won-Jin Jo, Clarinet (2003)

Voice:

Jung Ae Lee (1982), Byung-Soon Lee (1999)

Ensemble:

Euterpe Piano Trio (1992)
Kyung-Ah Kim (Violin)
Yun Jung Huh (Cello)
Kyung Un Rhee (Piano)

International Sejong Soloists (1998)
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The Korean Concert Society would also like to express its sincere gratitude to contributors who wish to remain anonymous.