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Graduate Student Recital in Viola: Jiang

Jinshan Jiang
viola

Stacy Rodgers
piano

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UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
PRESENTS



JINSHAN JIANG, VIOLA

STACY RODGERS, PIANO

03 DECEMBER 2018 • 7:30 PM • NUTT AUDITORIUM

Tonight's Program

Unaccompanied Cello Suite No.1
in G major, BWV 1007

- I. Prélude
- II. Allemande
- III. Courante
- IV. Sarabande
- V. Menuet I, Menuet II
- VI. Gigue

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Concerto for Viola and Orchestra
I. Andante comodo

William Turner Walton
(1902-1983)

Intermission

Clarinet (or Viola) Sonatas
in E flat major, Op. 120, No. 2

- I. Allegro amabile
- II. Allegro appassionato
- III. Andante con moto-Allegro

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

Program Notes

Johann Sebastian Bach

Unaccompanied Cello Suite No. 1 in G major, BWV 1007

Bach composed six unaccompanied cello suites during the period 1717-23, when he served as *Kapellmeister* in Köthen, Germany. Bach wrote the title of his suite, *Suites à Violoncello Solo senza Basso* (Suites for cello solo without bass), on the cover of the manuscript and gave it to his second wife Anna Magdalena Bach. Today they are the most famous unaccompanied cello works and are frequently performed by both cellists and violists.

A Baroque suite is a collection of dance movements. The *Suite No. 1 in G Major* includes six movements in the following order:

Prélude, Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Menuets I & II, and Gigue. The *Prélude* is in quadruple meter. Its dominant feature is arpeggiation and scales. The *Allemande* is in quadruple meter and, like all the dances, is in binary form. The tempo is *moderato*. The *Courante* is a triple meter fast movement. Compared to the *Courante*, the *Sarabande* is much slower and has the emphasis on the second beat. The two *Menuets* are in different keys. The first one is in G major, and it is bright and bouncy. The second one is in G minor and is darker and gentler. The *Gigue* is in compound duple meter and is an energetic dance, which creates an amazingly exciting character.

William Turner Walton

Concerto for Viola and Orchestra

Walton was born in Oldham, England. His *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra* is one of the most important compositions in the solo viola repertoire during the twentieth century. His father was a choirmaster and voice teacher, and Walton received training on both the violin and piano. When he was 12 years old, he began to compose choral and vocal music. In 1918, at the age of sixteen, he passed his Bachelor of Music entrance exam and became the youngest undergraduate student to attend Oxford University. He did not complete his degree at Oxford because he failed his comprehensive exams three times. He did, however, have a great relationship with the poet Siegfried Sassoon, who eventually introduced Walton to Sacheverell Sitwell and the Sitwell family, which played a very important role in his musical life. They supported Walton for more than fifteen years and created opportunities for him to meet many composers, including Stravinsky and Gershwin. Walton had many inspiring experiences with them, after which he composed his *String Quartet No. 1* (1923), *Portsmouth Point* (1926) and *Sinfonia Concertante for Orchestra with Piano Obbligato* (1928), before he started work on his viola concerto.

Thomas Beecham, the conductor of the British Broadcasting Company Orchestra, commissioned Walton to write the viola concerto for the great Lionel Tertis (1867–1975), who was an English violist and one of the most famous violists in the world at that time. Walton began work on the concerto in November 1928, during a trip to Italy. He used Paul Hindemith's viola concerto, *Kammermusik No. 5*, and Prokofiev's *Violin Concerto No. 1 in D Major* as models. He completed his concerto in the spring of 1929, in London. He sent it to Lionel Tertis, but Tertis returned the manuscript because he felt that the concerto was too hard to perform. There were few virtuoso violists who could play it, and Walton was very disappointed. After Tertis declined to premiere the concerto, Edward Clark, the director of BBC Symphony Orchestra, set it to Hindemith. Performed by Hindemith and conducted by Walton, the concerto premiered at London's Henry Wood Promenade Concert on October 3, 1929, in Queen's Hall. Although Walton admired Hindemith's technique, he felt that "his playing was brusque; he was a rough, no-nonsense player. He just stood up and played." Despite it all, the performance went well, and *Concerto for Viola* was well received by audiences.

Walton revised his viola concerto in 1961, reducing the woodwind section of the orchestra from three players to two, and deleting one trumpet and the tuba. This version was premiered on January 18, 1962, featuring John Coulling as viola soloist with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Malcolm Sargent. The revised edition has become the standard version.

The first movement of the concerto is in sonata form and is marked *Andante comodo*. After a brief introduction, the viola presents the primary theme. Soon the primary theme is transferred to the orchestra to support the soloist. Shortly after the orchestra takes up the opening A-minor melody, there is a conflict between C-natural in the melody and C-sharp in the accompaniment. This happens several times throughout the work. The second theme, in D minor, is in a faster tempo and is very emphatic. Walton changes the meter from 9/8 to 3/2 at the beginning of the secondary theme.

The eighth notes become equal to the new quarter notes, but the tempo remains the same. Walton uses $3/4$, $7/4$, and $2/4$ meters throughout the secondary theme. The closing theme uses sequential repetition, and the tempo changes after every phrase. Walton utilizes stringendo to push the tempo and lead into the development section. The development is the longest section in the first movement. Fragments of the primary theme are presented by the orchestra and solo viola, and a variation of the secondary theme is played by the viola. It is an octave higher and has alternating major and minor sixth double stops. There is another sequential repetition in the development, but the tempo in this section is held back constantly by rubato markings. After the rather dramatic development section, the recapitulation returns to a slow tempo with more lyrical lines. Later on there is a brief two-part statement by the viola, then the orchestra takes up the melody with a running accompaniment by the viola. The viola completes the movement with a final statement of the opening melody.

Johannes Brahms

Clarinet (or Viola) Sonatas in E flat major, Op. 120, No. 2.

In 1894 in Ischl, Austria, Brahms composed *Clarinet (or Viola) Sonatas in F minor and E flat major op. 120*, which are his last chamber music and multi-movement instrumental works. During his later years, many of his family members, friends and teachers passed away. He lamented the loss of many of his personal relationships and he decided to retire. When he visited the ducal Court in March 1891, however, he was deeply impressed by the wonderful playing of Richard Mühlfeld (1859–1907), the principal clarinetist of the Meiningen Orchestra, so Brahms gave up his retirement plans to compose the clarinet sonatas for Mühlfeld.

On January 7th of 1895, the premiere of both the sonatas were performed by Mühlfeld with Brahms playing the piano. There were two more concerts: on January 8th, at Rose Quartet concerts, in Vienna, they played the *Sonata op. 120, No. 2*, and on January 11th, at another Rose Quartet concert, they played the *Sonata Op. 120, No. 1*.

Program Notes, continued

Brahms himself transcribed the sonatas in F minor and E-flat major for the viola. Brahms's principal change in the viola part, as compared to the clarinet version, was to lower the register by one octave to avoid strain. The result was greatly admired and the pieces still serve an important role in the viola repertoire.

The sonatas were first published in June 1895 by Alfred Simrock, a leading German publisher, under the title of *The Two Sonatas for Clarinet (or Viola) and Piano Op. 120 by Johannes Brahms, No.1 F minor, No.2 E flat major*. Those two sonatas now belong to the standard viola repertoire in the world.

The *Clarinet (or Viola) Sonata Op. 120, No. 2* has three movements. The first movement is titled *Allegro amabile* and is in sonata-allegro form. The second movement is titled *Allegro appassionato* and the form is ternary, scherzo with trio. The third movement is titled *Andante con moto-Allegro* and is a theme and variations with coda.

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Masters in Music degree.



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