



VALPARAISO  
UNIVERSITY

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THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC PRESENTS

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FACULTY ARTIST  
**RECITAL**

Katharina Uhde

violin

with

Joseph Bognar

piano

Nicole Lee

piano

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TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2019, 7:30 P.M.  
DUESENBERG RECITAL HALL

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## PROGRAM

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Joseph Joachim (1831-1907)

Fantasy on Irish Themes (1850-52)

Romance Op. 2 No. 1

Notturmo Op. 12

Fantasy on Hungarian Themes (1846-50)

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## PROGRAM NOTES

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### Fantasy on Irish Themes

There is a special history to both the *Irish-* and the *Hungarian Fantasy*. During World War II, valuable scores and books from various Berlin libraries were evacuated to Eastern Europe, including Joachim's Irish and Hungarian Fantasies, bound in the same autograph manuscript. Both fantasies came to light in 1989, when they were discovered in Lodz, Poland, as part of the Spitta collection. The Bach scholar who unearthed the Spitta estate, Christoph Wolff, showed little interest in Joachim's youth compositions so that they remained unnoticed until August 2016, when I found them as I was working on my monograph dedicated to Joachim's music (*The Music of Joseph Joachim*, Boydell & Brewer, 2018).

The *Irish Fantasy* had its first performance at the London Philharmonic Society on 31 May 1852, after which it was performed two more times, on the 2nd and 11th of June, also in London. A reviewer of the first performance compared the piece with Joachim's *Hungarian Fantasy*, but also in effect retitled it: "The fantasia on the Hungarian airs, though shorter and less elaborate than that on Scotch airs [was more effect-full]. Was there a separate fantasia on "Scottish airs"? That the reviewed fantasy on "Scottish airs" was indeed synonymous with the *Fantasy on Irish Themes* is affirmed by a review of the premiere in the *London Times*, which lists the titles of two Scottish tunes that are indeed the main themes of the *Irish Fantasy*: "The fantasia of Herr Joachim, [is] built upon the Scottish melodies, 'John Anderson My Joe,' and 'The Blue Bells of Scotland.'" How the misnaming of the "Irish" fantasia could occur, if Joachim himself, as a program of the 31 May performance reveals, titled the piece "Fantasia for Violin, 'Scottish Airs'", remains unclear.

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## PROGRAM NOTES

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In addition to the Scottish themes, the *Irish Fantasy* portrays a tune resembling an aria from Donizetti's opera *Lucrezia Borgia* (1833), which was recommended to Joachim by his uncle in 1847. The Donizetti aria is titled "Nella fatal di Rimini" and served as an inspiration for the middle movement (in B minor) of the *Irish Fantasy*.

Joachim's *Irish Fantasy* also contains several references to Mendelssohn. In a letter of 19 November 1847, written shortly after Mendelssohn's death, Joachim wrote: "In terms of music, everything is desolate and empty here since the high spirit [Mendelssohn] has parted from us. His compositions, which I am eagerly studying, are my only consolation." *The Irish Fantasy*, which opens in the gravest of all keys, D minor, makes a reference early on to the opening of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. In measure 10, the soloist's first entrance, the viola and bassoon articulate a turning figure in thirds (f-a, e-g, g-b-flat), in quarter notes, which strongly resembles the first bar of Mendelssohn's oratorio. By taking not only Scottish tunes but Mendelssohnian memories and an aria by Donizetti, Joachim achieved several things at once: responding to his uncle, processing his loss of Mendelssohn, and overcoming his difficulty with composing (and finishing) larger works: he brought the *Irish* [Scottish] *Fantasy* to completion.

### **Romance Op. 1 No. 2**

Joachim was a connoisseur and aficionado of the Romance genre. He turned to it several times throughout his life: in 1849 he composed his Romance Op. 2 No. 1 in B-flat major, dedicated to Moritz Hauptmann; shortly thereafter he wrote the Romance in C major, which is often evoked in the literature because it is the only composition of his own of which a recording survives. Still little known is Joachim's Romance in G major composed in 1857-59, the second movement of his Hungarian Concerto, dedicated to Johannes Brahms. Whereas the early romances acknowledge Robert Schumann's influence by adhering to similar forms (ABA' ternary design with a small ternary in each section) and textures, the later Romance complicates the narrative by bringing together the *style hongrois* with a more complex and nuanced form: an ABA' form whose A section has two harmonic areas that are in the end recapitulated in the tonic key, thereby resembling a sonata rondo form.

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Among the most noteworthy performances of Op. 2 No. 1 are two in January 1853, on the 20th and the 28th, which evoked Robert Schumann's diary entries "merkwürdig" and "sehr merkwürdig," respectively ("peculiar" and "very peculiar"). The meaning of "merkwürdig" has changed over the years and probably just meant "noteworthy" or "worth remembering." Indeed, the piece is worth remembering in how unbalanced its ABA' ternary form is laid out: the long A section with both lyrical (B-flat major) and dramatic (g minor) material contrasts with a rather short B section in an optimistic, gentle D major. The A' section does not recast the agitation in g minor of the opening A section but remains anchored in a dolce sphere.

Joachim performed this piece throughout his life. Known performances include: 23 November (Hamburg), 14 November 1888 (Stettin), 15 March 1889 (Cambridge), 25 November 1890 (Freiburg), 11 April 1891 (Berlin), 29 May 1892 (Berlin), 10 November 1892 (Berlin), 26 February 1896 (Eastbourne), and 29 May 1897 (location unknown).

### *Notturmo* Op. 12

Joachim's *Notturmo* Op. 12 (1858) was published in 1874 and premiered on January 1, 1875. Although Joachim programmed it on several concerts -- as documented in 1875, 1876, and 1881 -- he occasionally hindered its dissemination, such as when he characterized it as an "etwas monotones Adagio von gegen 10 minuten Dauer," which "würde das Publikum kaum interessieren." The composition has led an existence largely hidden from posterity. The dark timbre, the *Notturmo*'s fingerprint, immediately strikes the listener in the brief opening introduction. Scored for solo violin and winds in pairs, horn, timpani, and violas, cellos, and contrabasses, the omission of the tutti violins presents a singular case in Joachim's output. An intriguing double bar -- a common notational symbol in Joachim's manuscripts, which, as in the *Notturmo*, is often omitted for publication -- separates the introduction from the solo entrance. When the solo violin appears, it too recreates the dark timbre with a soaring Irish inflected G-string melody of 8 bars, which explores the tonic and submediant and ends on the dominant.

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Brahms's second *Serenade* in A Major may have influenced Joachim's *Notturmo*, sharing the same key and orchestration, unless the influence worked the other way. As we read in November 1858 in a letter from J. O. Grimm to Joachim, Brahms's *Serenade* in A major was then in the making: "[A] neue Serenade [by Brahms], d.h. ein erster Satz in A dur, [is] wunderschön sanft leyernd ohne Geigen." However, due to the blurry chronology of the *Notturmo* the influence is not entirely clear. The official dedication to Gabriele von Wendheim, a student of Joachim's in Hannover, who studied with him from 1858 onward, does little to lift the chronological fog. The dedication could have occurred in 1858. But given the publication year of 1874 the *Notturmo* could be a similar case as the *Gozzi* Overture (1854, published 1902), dedicated at the point of publication. Given the use of familiar ciphers in this piece, namely, on F#AE ("free but alone" or "frei aber einsam") and G#EA, it is likely that the work was dedicated originally to Gisela von Arnim, whose cipher, G#EA (read: Gis-E-[L]A) Joachim had used in many previous compositions. Joachim and von Arnim were a romantic couple for several years during the 1850s, but in 1859 von Arnim married Herman Grimm, son of Wilhelm Grimm and nephew of Jacob Grimm ("Brothers Grimm").

### Fantasy on Hungarian Themes

Joachim's *Hungarian Fantasy* has an abundance of Hungarian tunes that have much in common with the verbunkos repertory that circulated in the 1830s and 40s. From syncopations to augmented seconds, from two-bar cadential patterns to *una-corda* passages on the D- and G-string, Joachim's fantasy squarely fits in with the *style hongrois* dialect, as practiced by Romantic composers composing outside Hungary.

After the first performance in Budapest in 1846, an important performance took place in Weimar on 19 October 1850 under Franz Liszt. Joachim programmed the piece a few more times, in London (25 June 1852), Hamburg (9 April 1853), and Hanover (14 April 1853), before putting the piece to rest.

There is a sense of urgency to Joachim's application of the *style hongrois* that possibly relates to the context in which he composed the piece. Though not premiered until 1850, the handwriting in Joachim's *Hungarian Fantasy* looks more youthful than that in the *Irish Fantasy*. Joachim spent the summer of 1848 in Pest, witnessing the violent conflict first hand. The somber opening march of the fantasy, in A minor, stands in contrast to the noisy A-major finale with its glimpse of "utopia," in which Joachim possibly imagines an independent Hungary. In one letter written in October 1848 Joachim gave voice to his patriotic sentiments:

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## PROGRAM NOTES

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The government has played a false game with the Hungarians, which must revenge itself decisively, otherwise it [the government] will not cease to pursue its game until it has robbed the Hungarians of their young, blood-bought [blut-erkauft] freedom, and has established a Croatian-Bohemian rule. But what did you say about the Hungarians, did they not prove their courage? I believe that a beautiful future will come for our Fatherland. [...].

The *Hungarian Fantasy* falls into eight sections of contrasting tempos typical for the fantasy or Concertstück genre. The virtuosity, likewise, conforms to the generic standard of the virtuosic fantasy. One glance at the principal violin part establishes that here Joachim's acrobatic writing for the violin, rather than betraying his later mature style, shows direct ties to another fantasy composed a few years earlier: Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst's *Otello Fantasy* (1837).

Joachim first encountered Ernst in the fall of 1844. Ernst was rather impressed with the young Joachim; for Joachim, in turn, Ernst was "surely the greatest virtuoso." Most likely Ernst's combined career as a virtuoso and a composer – typical for Ernst's generation – inspired Joachim and provided him with a model to emulate. Ernst's *Otello Fantasy* belongs to the same genre of the virtuosic *airs variés*, cultivated by so many virtuosos in the 1840s, including Henri Vieuxtemps, Camillo Sivori, and Prosper Sainton, all of whom Joachim knew. Ernst, a Moravian Jew, played a special role for Joachim, though, because he studied with the same teacher, Joseph Böhm, and almost appears to have been a mentor for Joachim, who was 19 years his junior.

All of the mentioned virtuosos toured London periodically. And, as Joachim's correspondence of 1847 and onward with his family suggests, Joachim composed his fantasies for concerts in London, where he spent the summers of 1844, 47, 49, 52, 58, 59, and 62.

Both fantasies follow closely the demands of the *airs variés* genre. Composed in a single movement, the fantasies are laid out in sections of contrasting tempo and character. The variation principle – rhythmic diminution, increasingly dense surface rhythm, and a general increase in tempo and thickening of texture – contribute to rather lively, *perpetuum mobile* finales, which resemble virtuoso fireworks.

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## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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Katharina Uhde is an internationally acclaimed violinist and musicologist. She is the author of *The Music of Joseph Joachim* (Boydell & Brewer, 2018). She holds a DMA degree from the University of Michigan and a PhD in Musicology from Duke University. As a soloist, quartet and piano trio member she has won first prizes in international competitions in Czech Republic and Germany. She has also won the 2004 Concerto Competition of the University of Michigan, where she studied with support of a Fulbright grant. She has released a CD *Brasilianische Kammermusik* and several online videos with world-renowned pianist Bruno Canino, with whom she performed the Beethoven cycle in 2017. She has just released Bärenreiter edition with works by Joachim, which she has also performed with orchestra in Ann Arbor, Valparaiso, IN, and China (May 2019). The premiere of two newly rediscovered *Fantasies* on Hungarian and Irish Themes by Joachim took place on July 12, 2019 in Baden-Baden.

Joseph Bognar is Associate Professor of Music At Valparaiso University, where he teaches piano, harpsichord, and music theory. He completed undergraduate studies in piano and organ at Valparaiso University, where he graduated *summa cum laude*. He has served on the faculties of the Maud Powell Music Festival, Lutheran Summer Music, and the Stamford International Music Festival. As a member of the Castillon Piano Trio, he has performed in the United Kingdom, receiving acclaim for “his superb technique ... one could only marvel at this talented performer.” (Evening Telegraph, U.K.) His performances with the trio have aired on BBC radio. He toured China with Windiana, Northwest Indiana’s professional wind ensemble, where he appeared as piano soloist in works of Gershwin and Xian. His most recent campus performances have featured some of the most formidable 20th-century works, including Rzewski’s *The People United Will Never Be Defeated!* and Ives’s Sonata no. 2: Concord, Mass.

Nicole Lee is adjunct instructor of music at Valparaiso University. She holds B.M. and M.M. degrees in piano performance from the University of Southern California, where she studied with John Perry. A native of Vancouver, Canada, she is a pianist acclaimed as both a soloist and a collaborative artist; the *Bradenton Herald* lauds, “Lee is a consummate artist who exhibits a carefully honed touch with the beauty and refinement of fine porcelain.” She has performed at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Sarasota Opera House, the Orpheum in Vancouver, Canada, and for CBC Radio in Ottawa, Canada. She has performed as soloist with several symphony orchestras, including the Kalamazoo Philharmonic, Valparaiso University Symphony Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, the Florida West Coast Symphony, and the New Westminster Symphony. Lee is also active as a chamber musician. She was praised as “outstanding” by *The Strad* for her work with violinist Gregory Maytan in their first CD, *Scandinavia*.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

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Saturday, September 28, 2019

### **Homecoming**

#### **Chorale, Men's Ensemble, Women's Choir**

Chapel of the Resurrection, 4:00 p.m.

Ticketed Event: \$15 adult, \$10 senior/non-Valpo students, free to Valpo students, faculty, and staff

Saturday, September 28, 2019

### **Homecoming**

#### **VU Symphony Orchestra**

Chapel of the Resurrection, 8:00 p.m.

Ticketed Event: \$15 adult, \$10 senior/non-Valpo students, free to Valpo students, faculty, and staff

Thursday, October 3, 2019

### **Faculty Chamber Recital**

Brauer Art Museum, 7:00 p.m.

Free admission, open to the public

Programs available online one week prior to the scheduled performance at [valpo.edu/music/performances](http://valpo.edu/music/performances)

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