



VALPARAISO
UNIVERSITY

THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC PRESENTS

FACULTY ARTIST RECITAL

Diego Piedra, *violin*
Nicole Lee, *piano*

Friday, November 12, 2021, 7:30 P.M.
Duesenberg Recital Hall

PROGRAM

Sonata Op. 82 Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)
I. Allegro
II. Romance: Andante
III. Allegro, non troppo

Scène de Ballet Op. 100 Charles-Auguste de Bériott
(1802-1870)

Intermission

Sonata in A Major César Franck
(1822-1890)
I. Allegretto ben moderato
II. Allegro
III. Recitativo - Fantasia
IV. Allegretto poco mosso

PROGRAM NOTES

Sonata Op. 82

Dedicated to his friend Marie Joshua, who unfortunately died unexpectedly shortly after receiving a letter from Elgar saying that he was composing the sonata, the piece was completed within a month. The letter read "I fear it does not carry us any further but it is full of golden sounds and I like it, but you must not expect anything violently chromatic or cubist."

The sonata is divided into three movements. Each one is very different from one another, and clearly portrays very contrasting moods and feelings. The first movement is full of energy, angst, and perhaps even anger. The second movement is much more relaxed and flirtatious between the violin and the piano. It includes a beautiful moment in the middle which comes back near the end of the last movement, and this time it is more impassioned, since Elgar's friend Marie died. The third movement is more pastoral in nature and hopeful for the future.

This sonata came into existence after WWI and it changed Elgar. It never enjoyed the same popularity as some of his other works.

Scène de Ballet

A virtuoso violinist himself, Bériot was a rival of Paganini. His music is engaging and romantic. He was influenced by Paganini's techniques involving harmonics, double stops and ricochet bowing among others.

Scène de Ballet is a short piece that displays some of the virtuosic capabilities of the violin. As you listen to the music you can hear how de Bériot makes the violin dance as if it was a ballerina displaying very fancy footwork. The piece is very passionate, full of exciting articulations and virtuosic passages for the violin.

Sonata in A Major

The Violin Sonata in A Major was written when Franck was 63 years old, as a wedding present to the Belgian virtuoso violinist and composer Eugène Ysaÿe, who saw the work for the first time during the morning of his wedding day. He gave the first performance of it later that year at the Brussels Museum of Modern Painting.

The sonata is infused with passion, virtuosity for both the violin and the piano, and with influence of Wagner's chromaticism. The construction of the piece is cyclic, which means that certain musical themes contained in a given movement come back in another movement, thereby giving the sensation of a return to familiar music under a different setting.

The first movement could tell a story beginning with the well known phrase "once upon a time." The mood is gentle, calm, but also with a hint of longing.

The second movement has the makings of a typical first movement of a multi-movement work: it is fast paced, energetic, full of emotions, and very virtuosic.

The third movement is very original as a fantasia. It suggests freedom but it also includes an opening that clearly reminds us of the first movement as well as a theme that will come back in the last movement.

The fourth movement is written mostly in canonical style, which means that there is a musical theme played first by one instrument and imitated shortly after by the other. As Ysaÿe himself noted, this suggested a hint of wedding bells, as at first this imitation was a little more separated than at the end of the piece where it becomes closer.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Diego Piedra is the Director of Orchestras at Valparaiso University. A strongly driven performer and educator, Dr. Piedra feels at home working on the podium with student and professional orchestras. Recent professional conducting engagements have included the Music Directorship and Conducting of Spectrum Orchestra, visiting orchestral positions at Luther College and the University of Toledo, and guest conducting appearances with the Oakland Symphony Orchestra in Michigan, the National Symphony Orchestra of Costa Rica, and the Municipal Orchestra of

Cartago. In Costa Rica Dr. Piedra was in high demand as the orchestral conducting professor at the University of Costa Rica as well as a guest violin teacher and performer in Venezuela, Honduras and Guatemala. He founded the national youth orchestra called Manuel María Gutiérrez at SINEM (the Costa Rican version of Venezuela's El Sistema), and was its Music Director and Conductor from 2009-2011. Since 2014, Dr. Piedra has been Music Director at the Dubuque Symphony Orchestra's Summer String Camp, working as a conductor, violinist and composer. As a professional violinist he has been a member of the prestigious New World Symphony in Miami, South Bend Symphony Orchestra, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, Oakland Symphony Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra of Costa Rica and Concertmaster of the Orquesta de Cámara de Costa Rica. Dr. Piedra participated as violinist and assistant conductor in the tour and recording of the University Symphony Orchestra of the University of Michigan (winner of four Grammy awards in 2006), which culminated at Carnegie Hall, New York.

Nicole Lee, a native of Vancouver, Canada, is a pianist acclaimed as both a soloist and a collaborative artist. As an active chamber musician, Lee continues to perform collaborative recitals with instrumentalists and especially enjoys presenting 4-hand piano repertoire with colleague Joseph Bognar. Lee holds B.M. and M.M. degrees in piano performance from the University of Southern California. She was selected as the outstanding graduate of the Keyboard Studies Department in both her graduate and undergraduate programs. She also holds performance and teacher's diplomas from the Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto and Licentiate and Fellowship diplomas from the Trinity College of London.

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