

**Dissertation Summary of Three Recitals, with Works Derived from
Folk Influences, Living American Composers and Works Containing a
Theme and Variations.**

by

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**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts
(Music: Performance)
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DEDICATION

To God
For His endless love

To my dearest teacher, David Halen
For inviting me to the beautiful music world with full of inspiration

To my parents and sister, Chang-Sub Uhm, Sunghee Chun, and Jungwon Uhm
For trusting my musical journey

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION	ii
LIST OF EXAMPLES	iv
ABSTRACT	v
RECITAL 1	1
Recital 1 Program	1
Recital 1 Program Notes	2
RECITAL 2	9
Recital 2 Program	9
Recital 2 Program Notes	10
RECITAL 3	18
Recital 3 Program	18
Recital 3 Program Notes	19
BIBLIOGRAPHY	25

LIST OF EXAMPLES

EXAMPLE

Ex-1 Semachi Rhythm	15
Ex-2 Gutgeori Rhythm	15
Ex-3 <i>Honzanori-1</i> , the transformed version of Semachi and Gutgeori rhythm	15

ABSTRACT

In lieu of a written dissertation, three violin recitals were presented.

Recital 1: Theme and Variations

Monday, November 5, 2018, 8:00 PM, Stamps Auditorium, Walgreen Drama Center, University of Michigan. Assisted by Joonghun Cho, piano; Hsiu-Jung Hou, piano; Narae Joo, piano. Program: Olivier Messiaen, *Thème et Variations*; Johann Sebastian Bach, *Ciaconna from Partita No. 2, BWV 1004*; Franz Schubert, *Rondo in B minor for Violin and Piano, D 895, Op. 70*; Henryk Wieniawski, *Thème original varié, Op.15*.

Recital 2: Music with Folk Influences

Monday, January 28, 2019, 8:00 PM, Stamps Auditorium, Walgreen Drama Center, University of Michigan. Assisted by Hsiu-Jung Hou, piano; Jie Ren, piano; Xiaoya Liu, piano; Mary Fortino, clarinet; Florence Woo, dance. Program: Karol Szymanowski, *Nocturne and Tarantella, Op. 28*; Edvard Grieg, *Violin Sonata No. 3 for Violin and Piano in C minor, Op. 45*; Young Jo Lee, *Honzanori-1 for Solo Violin*; Paul Schoenfeld, *Trio for Clarinet, Violin, and Piano*.

Recital 3: Living American Composers

Monday, February 18, 2019, 8:00 PM, Stamps Auditorium, Walgreen Drama Center, University of Michigan. Assisted by Xiaoya Liu, piano; Hyejin Cho, piano. Program: Philip Glass, *Sonata for Violin and Piano*; Paul Schoenfeld, *Sonata for Violin and Piano*; John Corigliano, *Sonata for Violin and Piano*.

RECITAL 1 PROGRAM

Heewon Uhm, Violin

Joonghun Cho, Hsiu-Jung Hou & Nare Joo, Piano

Monday, November 5, 2018
Walgreen Drama Center, Stamps Auditorium
8:00 PM

THEME AND VARIATIONS

Thème et Variations (1932)

Olivier Messiaen
(1908-1992)

Joonghun Cho, piano

“Ciaccona” from *Partita no. 2, BWV 1004* (1720)

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Intermission

Rondo in B minor for Violin and Piano D 895, Op. 70 (1826)

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Hsiu-Jung Hou, piano

Thème original varié, Op. 15 (1854)

Henryk Wieniawski
(1835-1880)

Narae Joo, piano

RECITAL 1 PROGRAM NOTES

“Variations produce contrast in middle sections, and variety in repetitions. In classical music, every variation shows a unity which surpasses that of the theme. It results from the systematic application of a motive of variation,” by Arnold Schoenberg.¹

Music starts from small motives or ideas. Composers manipulate these motives or ideas in different ways in order to create a substantial work. Thus, one can find modified versions of motives or ideas everywhere in the music, and the term ‘variations,’ stands for broader applications of this concept. The small motives or ideas, which can be the theme of the piece, change through variation of melody, harmony, rhythm, counterpoint, character, and texture. Theme and variations refer to the musical form that has a theme at the beginning and variations based on the thematic materials.

Through theme and variations, composers aim to seek the true beauty of repetition. Repetition of the same material may not help in maintaining the attention of the audience for the duration of the piece, however as Schoenberg says, theme and variations show the most sophisticated applications of a composer’s small ideas throughout the piece. It is one way to understand a composer’s own musical language. In other words, repetition is not only repeating the same motives or ideas but also exploring a composer’s diverse approaches to motives or ideas.

This recital focuses on two questions. How do composers make their music more interesting through continuous repetition with a theme and variations? How do composers reveal the beauty of repetition?

¹ Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, 15.

Olivier Messiaen

(Born 1908 in Avignon and died 1992 in Paris)

Thème et Variations (1932)

“A musician- that is my profession. A rhythmologist- that is my speciality. An ornithologist- That is my passion,” by Olivier Messiaen²

In addition to being a composer, Olivier Messiaen was a renowned organist and a devout Catholic. Messiaen often connected his theological ideas with harmonies and incorporated intense stress on rhythm.

Thème et Variations was a wedding gift for his first wife, Claire Delbos. He also dedicated *Fantasy for violin and piano* (1933), and *Poèmes pour Mi* (1936-37) to his wife. Composed of a theme and five variations, the piece has a simple structure. An interest in Tāla³, which is from Indian music, Messiaen developed his idea of additive rhythm in his later works such as *Quatuor pour la fin du temps*. Although the rhythmic ideas are not as complicated as his later works, Messiaen still focuses on the rhythm in *Thème et Variations*. All the variations have an emphasis on the idea of tempo and rhythm.

After the 28 measures of a simple theme, the first variation remains modéré, which is the same indication as of the theme, but it is slightly faster. In the theme, Messiaen mostly uses quarter notes. However, now the first variation mostly contains eighth notes, a smaller rhythmic unit than the quarter notes of the theme. In the other variations, Messiaen continually divides the thematic idea into the smaller rhythmic groups; triplets in the second variation and sixteenth notes in the

² Messiaen and Gavoty. “Who Are You?,” 33-36.

³ Tāla means ‘clap’ in Sanskrit. It was the one way in Indian classical music of marking the musical meter by hands gestures, clapping.

third variation. Thus, the division of the basic rhythm on each variation naturally develops active movement through variations. However, in the fourth variation, Messiaen presents polyrhythms for the first time. The piano plays triplets and eighth notes at the same time with different hands, while the violin has a simple rhythm as the theme. By setting a different tempo and developing rhythmic ideas, the music reaches a highpoint of complexity when the variation moves. In the last variation, Messiaen revisits the theme. It has the same melody as the theme, but in a different register on the violin. Also, the piano has more notes, creating a thicker texture compared to the theme. By the end of the piece, Messiaen presents the same thematic idea from the theme with a different character.

Johann Sebastian Bach

(Born 1685 in Eisenach and died 1750 in Leipzig)

“Ciaccona” from *Partita No. 2, BWV 1004* (1720)

“On one stave, for a small instrument, the man writes a whole world of the deepest thoughts and most powerful feelings. If I imagined that I could have created, even conceived the piece, I am quite certain that the excess of excitement and earth-shattering experience would have driven me out of my mind,” by Johannes Brahms⁴

⁴ Brahms and Schumann. *Letters of Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms*, 16.

Among violin repertoires, especially in solo pieces, it is inevitable that *Ciaconna* crowns the genuine beauty of music. *Ciaconna* delivers deep emotions with only one instrument, the violin. Bach presents his brilliant artistry through *Ciaconna*.

In 1720, Bach was in Cöthen serving as the Kapellmeister. A Kapellmeister was a person who was in charge of music-making in the chapel. Around this period, Bach's major works included the *Brandenburg Concertos*, *Six Suites* for solo cello, and *Six Sonatas and Partitas* for solo violin. As each piece shows, Bach mostly composed solo instrumental pieces during his time in Cöthen. Because his focus shifted from performing to directing music, he had more time for composing and exploring other musical forms such as instrumental music.

Ciaconna, the fifth movement of *Partita No. 2*, starts in D minor. D minor was the key composers usually used in order to express the sentiments of deepest sorrow. Mozart's D minor *Requiem* and Beethoven's 9th *Symphony* in D minor are important examples of this technique. Before Bach, the Greeks believed certain scales (mode) affected human behaviors. They related emotion and behaviors with music. After the Greeks and Bach, classical music composers often connect the key, harmony, and the scale with the specific feeling, atmosphere or character.

Ciaconna was a popular musical form in the 18th century. In the *Ciaconna*, a short harmonic progression from the beginning of the piece is used as the harmonic framework for the entire piece. With a brief harmonic progression, Bach creates 15 minutes of a large piece for solo violin and develops dramatic emotional intensity.

Four measures of the bass harmony serve as the theme. Variations appear after the first four measures of the piece while repeating the harmonic progression from the beginning. Bach changes melody, phrases, and articulations through variations, creating complicated texture later in the piece. Also, the key shifts from D minor to D major in the middle section. It leads the

audience to an emotionally different moment. However, Bach follows the same harmonic progression as D minor, connecting the harmonic idea of the first section. After D Major of the middle section, he ends the piece in D minor.

As Brahms said, Bach knew how to convince the audience with his magnificent contrapuntal writing with only one solo instrument. Moreover, *Ciaconna* demonstrates his ability to integrate his knowledge about counterpoint, harmonics, motive organization, texture, and character from his earlier pieces. Bach was not as great of a string player as he was an organist, but he created extraordinary works for string instruments.

Franz Schubert

(Born 1797 in Vienna and died 1828 Vienna)

Rondo in B minor for violin and piano, D 895, Op. 70 (1826)

Schubert was an Austrian composer, more specifically he was native Viennese. Having the direct benefits of Vienna, which was the center of classical music in the 18th century, he absorbed musical education and trends from other Vienna-centered composers such as Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. He developed his own musical character and language which can be characterized as having a melody that is subtle and intimate.

He left significant works for classical music, especially in the genre of chamber music. *Rondo in B minor D 895* is definitely one of the most notable. Composed during his late period, it was premiered by virtuoso violinist Josef Slavík, to whom Schubert dedicated his Fantasy for Violin and Piano. Unlike his other pieces for violin and piano, *Rondo* requires more virtuosity for

violin and piano. For example, the many octaves, a broad register, and sudden color changes with continuous eighth notes demand great technique.

Although *Rondo* is not exactly a theme and variations work, in terms of the repetition, it is fair to connect *Rondo* with theme and variations. When the refrain comes back after episodes, Schubert changes something, such as the rhythm, harmony, or the key, while continuing the same thematic idea. *Rondo in B minor* perfectly introduces the loveliness of the repetition from a theme and variations.

The real *rondo*⁵ starts after the long introduction, under the tempo marking *Allegro*. As a sonata-rondo form, the entire rondo section can be divided into three sections. Through three sections, when the same ideas or melody reappears, Schubert always changes something. Sometimes he explores different keys or harmonies and changes the order of motives or phrases. By paraphrasing the same materials differently every time, Schubert's mastery of creating chamber music builds intimate and beautiful sonority.

Henryk Wieniawski

(Born 1835 in Lublin and died 1880 in Moscow)

Thème original varié, Op. 15 (Variations on an Original Theme) (1854)

Regarded as one of the great virtuoso violinists after Paganini, Wieniawski had a successful life as a musician. He started giving solo recitals when he was only seven, and later as a soloist, an orchestra leader, and a teacher, his influence on the next generation was powerful.

⁵ Rondo is the form which alternates the main section or refrain with subsidiary sections (couplets or episodes). Usually, the main section is in the home key and the subsidiary sections presents different keys.

Thème original varié was written 1854 in Leipzig for his friend Raymund Dreyschock who was the concertmaster in Leipzig. By 1853, he mostly spent time in Russia for concerts, and many of his works with the opus numbers were published around this time. The major works include *Polonaise no. 1* and his first *violin concerto in F sharp minor*.

The piece starts with a slow introduction where Wieniawski builds up the beautiful melody in A minor. This introduction makes the piece special because it adds lyricism. The lyricism helps Wieniawski to construct the operatic character before the actual theme and variations emerge. Before Wieniawski, there was Paganini who used a theme and variations as a compositional medium. Paganini mainly composed the variations by using different violin techniques; harmonics, arpeggios, double stops, and left-hand pizzicato. Although the same approaches can be found in *Thème original varié*, Wieniawski differentiates previous pieces of theme and variations by showing lyricism through a slow introduction.

After the introduction, the theme appears in A major. With the graceful melody on violin, the piano stays in the simple texture, accompanying the violin throughout the piece. Compared to the introduction, the mood of the theme and three variations are different. Since the key has changed to major from minor, it has a bright and playful character. Three variations feature different violin techniques; left-hand pizzicatos, harmonics, and string crossing. After the third variation, the slow introduction reappears in F sharp minor. It leads the piece to an interesting moment because it not only connects the previous introduction but also alternates different characters that come from a different key. Ultimately, Wieniawski creates an emotionally powerful moment by revisiting the introduction. *Thème original varié* ends with finale after the second introduction, showing the combination of various violin techniques that he displayed in the previous variations.

RECITAL 2 PROGRAM

Heewon Uhm, Violin

Jie Ren, Hsiu-Jung Hou & Xiaoya Liu, Piano

Florence Woo, Dancer

Mary Fortino, Clarinet

Monday, January 28, 2019

Walgreen Drama Center, Stamps Auditorium

8:00 PM

Nocturne and Tarantella (1915)

Karol Szymanowski

(1882-1937)

Jie Ren, piano

Sonata No. 3 for Violin and Piano, Op. 45 (1887)

Edvard Grieg

(1843-1907)

Allegro molto ed appassionata

Allegretto espressivo alla Romanza

Allegro animato

Hsiu-Jung Hou, piano

Intermission

Honzanori-1 for Solo Violin (1995)

Young Jo Lee

(b. 1943)

Florence Woo, dancer

Trio for Clarinet, Violin, and Piano (1990)

Paul Schoenfeld

(b. 1947)

Freylakh

March

Nigun

Kozatske

Mary Fortino, clarinet

Xiaoya Liu, piano

RECITAL 2 PROGRAM NOTES

Among various music genres, folk elements have been explored by various composers. Folk elements have been used as the medium for composers to create a certain atmosphere or enhance a specific character in the piece. Since folk elements reflect a particular culture, people can easily recognize and understand the music when they hear it with folk elements. Thus, folk elements have been used as a method to connect a specific cultural character with the experimental ideas of composers.

The recital starts from one idea. As a Korean violinist who plays Western classical music, I always think about how I can combine and represent these two cultures through classical music. This idea leads to these questions: What folk elements appear in violin pieces, and how do composers deal with folk elements and combine them with their musical ideas?

Karol Szymanowski

(Born 1882 in Tymoshivka, Ukraine and died 1937 in Lausanne, Switzerland)

Nocturne and Tarantella, Op. 28 (1915)

Polish composer Szymanowski's musical language changed and developed during his entire life. In his early pieces, he mostly used the tonal system of the Romantic period. However, a trip to Sicily and North Africa in 1914 led him to an interest in Mediterranean and Arab cultures. These experiences got Szymanowski interested in advanced harmony while demonstrating influences from Impressionism from Debussy and Ravel.

Written for August Iwański, who was Szymanowski's close friend, the first performance took place on Jan 24, 1920, in Warsaw. *Nocturne and Tarantella* were composed individually, but

they were combined intentionally later by Szymanowski and published one year after the premiere. Full of Spanish folk elements, *Nocturne and Tarantella* reflects the influences of Chopin and Debussy.

Nocturne is a musical genre that reminds of Frédéric Chopin. Although it was not Chopin but John Field⁶ who first applied *Nocturne*, Chopin composed 21 nocturnes with a song-like melody in right hand. Szymanowski's *Nocturne* shares the style of Chopin's *Nocturne*. Szymanowski follows a ternary form and delicate melody, which Chopin did in his *Nocturne*. Szymanowski's *Nocturne* begins in B minor, with the violin on mute. He creates an exotic and ethereal atmosphere by alternating double-stop fourths and fifths in violin in Phrygian, Mixolydian, and Aeolian modes, which Debussy frequently used. In the next section, *Allegro Scherzando*, Szymanowski uses many triplets, and it sounds similar to *Tarantella*'s rhythm, which will be played after *Nocturne*. In the piano part, Szymanowski indicates *quasi mandolina* to mimic choral guitar sound in Spain.

In *Tarantella*, Szymanowski keeps alternating double-stop fourths and fifths to create a Spanish sound. *Tarantella* is a folk dance of Southern Italy, playing in 6/8 time while interchanging major and minor mode between sections. In Szymanowski's *Tarantella*, instead of changing keys, he differentiates sections by setting the lyrical moment. Wieniawski, who was also a Polish composer, composed a lyrical part in the middle of his piece, *Scherzo-Tarantelle*. The interesting point in Szymanowski's *Tarantella* is the melody in the lyrical section; Szymanowski quotes the Austrian anthem at that time (now it is the German anthem) composed by Joseph Haydn. The quotation emerges as the transformed version with different mode and intervals.

⁶ John Field was an Irish composer and pianist.

Edvard Grieg

(Born 1843 in Bergen, Norway and died 1907 in Bergen, Norway)

Violin Sonata No. 3 in C minor, Op. 45 (1886-87)

Edvard Grieg was a Norwegian composer, pianist, and conductor. Thanks to his mother, Gesine Judith Grieg, who was a pianist as well, he started piano at the age of six. Later, Grieg went to Leipzig to study, and he experienced music by Schumann, Strauss, and Wagner. After his time at Leipzig, he moved to Copenhagen where he developed a keen interest in Norwegian culture and folklore, which became part of his music.

Over the span of his entire life, Grieg composed only twelve chamber pieces. Three violin sonatas are included in this category, and among them, the last sonata is the one that immediately received popularity after the first concert. His first two violin sonatas were composed every two years, but the last sonata took twenty years to complete after the second sonata. Dedicated to the painter Franz von Lehnbach⁷, it was Grieg who played the first performance with violinist Adolf Brodsky, who had given a premiere of Tchaikovsky's violin concerto.

All three of his violin sonatas follow the form of a typical standard romantic sonata. There is another similarity in the three violin sonatas: musical nationalism. Grieg presents folk elements emphasizing Norwegian culture, through his three violin sonatas, blended with Romantic-era music.

The first movement starts in C minor with a heroic and powerful violin melody. While C minor reminds us of Beethoven, (Beethoven uses C minor to express a powerful and stormy

⁷ Franz von Lehnbach was a German painter. His major works includes his portraits of prominent personalities from the nobility, the arts, and industry. He drew the portrait of the composer, Edvard Grieg's wife, which Grieg loved it and decided to dedicate his last violin sonata to Lehnbach.

character in his significant works), Grieg also constructs an emotionally powerful and intense subject in the key of C minor in this sonata. In the second movement, the piano begins with a long and beautiful melody in E major. After the lyrical melody in the first section, Grieg features Norwegian folk dance, the halling⁸ in the middle section. It starts in E minor with 2/4 time, and the violin and piano alternate the melody as depicting two persons interchanging the dance. For the halling, it is usually notated in duple meter and played faster than gangar⁹, which Grieg follows in the second movement. After the second movement, the structure of the last movement, which starts with C minor, is unique. Without having a development section as a typical sonata form, Grieg uses a two-part form with coda, AB-AB'-CODA. Composers usually create different characters in development, but for Grieg, he did it in the exposition, AB. Therefore, since he already created the same effect as development in the exposition (AB), he did not implement of the development. Grieg continues the intense, powerful, bold melody up until the end of the sonata.

Young Jo Lee

(Born 1943 in Seoul, South Korea)

***Honzanori-1* for Solo Violin (1995)**

Born to a musical family, Young Jo Lee started his musical education with his father, Heung-Ryul Lee, who was a composer, pianist, and conductor. His father was regarded as one of the most important musicians in Korea because he was the first generation who studied abroad and introduced Western classical music to Korea. When musicians came back to Korea after studying

⁸ Halling is a Norwegian folkdance. The name of the halling was from the Hallingdal between Oslo and Bergen. The music was played on either the Hardanger fiddle or the violin. It is mainly performed by a solo man, but two or more men can join as the competition. The dance includes acrobatic movements.

⁹ Gangar is a Norwegian folkdance, which is similar to the halling. However, it is danced in couples.

classical music, they combined Korean traditional culture with Western music. Because of his father's influence, in Lee's pieces, the combination of Korean traditional folk elements and Western classical music can be found. For example, he composed a piece based on a Korean legend for his operas, *Tcheo Yong* and *Hwang Jin Yi*. In Lee's compositions, he often mimics the sound of Korean traditional instruments, such as Jang-gu¹⁰, Gayaguem¹¹, and Haeguem¹², and uses the scale and rhythm from Korean classical music.

Composed in 1995, *Honzanori-1* was performed by Korean violinist Sung Ju Lee, to whom the piece was dedicated. Meaning 'playing(nori) alone (Honza),' no specific form or structure can be found in the piece. However, the piece can be divided into five sections. Through five sections, Lee introduces Korean folk elements in the piece. For example, Lee presents Korean beliefs regarding five gods¹³ at the beginning of the piece. He changes the meter every measure; 1/4, 2/4, 3/4, 4/4 to 4/5. By changing meters, he indirectly displays the idea of five gods at the beginning of the piece. Later, the concept of reincarnation from Buddhism is presented in the middle section. Reincarnation, the belief that one is reborn after death, Lee draws the idea of death by using the down motion of the melody. After presenting the idea of death, he changes the tempo with sixteenth notes from slow to fast to show the process of one's rebirth. While showing these ideas of reincarnation, Lee incorporates the transformed versions of traditional Korean rhythms, Semachi, and Gutgeori (Ex-1, Ex-2, Ex-3), and the sound of the instrument, Jang-gu.

¹⁰ Jang-gu is a drum, which is one of percussion instruments in traditional Korean music.

¹¹ Gayaguem is a traditional string instrument which has twelve strings. The left hand presses the strings while the right hand mostly plucks or strums the strings.

¹² Haeguem is a Korean string instrument similar to a fiddle.

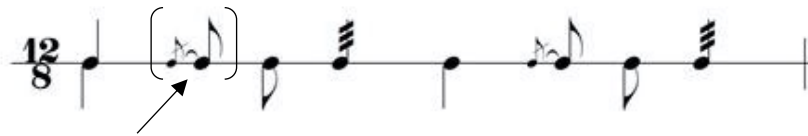
¹³ In Korean myth, ancient Koreans believed there are five gods who control East, West, South, North, and Central. It is hard to know when the origin of this folk belief started, but later it was combined with colors and animals.

세마치장단 (♩ = 72~108)



Ex-1: Semachi Rhythm

굿거리장단 (♩ = 72~108)



Ex-2: Gutgeori Rhythm



Ex-3: *Honzanori-1*, the transformed version of Semachi and Gutgeori rhythm. Lee follows the basic rhythmic idea of Semachi rhythm while changing the ornament rhythm in Gutgeori to sixteenth notes in *Honzanori-1*.

Honzanori-1 marks a vital position in the Korean music world because it not only contains Korean culture but it also combines other cultures from Western classical music, creating a new genre. With classical musical instruments and notation, it develops a new way for Korean

musicians and artists to combine different cultural styles. This piece proves that musicians and artists can keep their own cultures while expanding the realm of the artistic genre.

Paul Schoenfeld

(Born 1947 in Detroit)

Trio for Clarinet, Violin, and Piano (1990)

Paul Schoenfeld is an American composer and pianist whose music mostly shows the combination of folk elements, especially Jewish music, and classical music forms. He recorded the complete Bartok pieces for violin and piano as a pianist with violinist Sergiu Luca, and his interests in folk elements can be found in the recording.

Trio for Clarinet, Violin, and Piano was written upon request by a clarinetist, David Shifrin. He asked Schoenfeld to write chamber music with two or more instruments, and *the trio* was the outcome. *The trio*, which embodies Klezmer, a Yiddish term for Jewish music tradition in Eastern Europe, introduces detailed and natural Jewish culture through the Clarinet, Violin, and Piano.

The first movement begins with splendid music, *Freylakh*, the popular Klezmer dances. *Freylakh* means happy, festive, or cheerful in Yiddish. Phrases and sections are connected and played continuously without significant tempo changes, creating interest. The second movement follows a typical march at a Hasidic Court during a festive occasion. Under the title, 'Grotesquely,' the movement draws a dark atmosphere. Throughout the movement, the glissando in the piano part creates a grotesque march while the clarinet and violin play the subtle melody.

In the second movement, the clarinet perfectly presents Klezmer character with the melody. Glissandos, grace notes, and dotted rhythms in the clarinet mimic the human voice of wailing and crying sound.

The third movement starts with the clarinet's solo. With the slow gesture of Niggun, which is a form of Jewish religious song or tune, the third movement contains spiritual meaning while showing Hasidic melos. In the middle section of the third movement, Schoenfeld increases the intensity of emotion by creating rhythmic complexity. Before the middle section, the texture and the rhythm stay simple. However, when violin mostly plays sixteenth notes in 3/8 time while the piano has quintuplets in the middle section, it constructs a complicated texture and leads to the different emotional world from the first section.

The last movement starts without pause after the third movement. *Kozatzke*, a Russian dance often played in Jewish wedding ceremonies, ends *the trio*, which is full of Klezmer.

RECITAL 3 PROGRAM

Heewon Uhm, Violin

Hyejin Cho & Xiaoya Liu, Piano

Monday, February 18, 2019
Walgreen Drama Center, Stamps Auditorium
8:00 PM

LIVING AMERICAN COMPOSERS

Sonata for Violin and Piano (2008)

Philip Glass
(b. 1937)

Hyejin Cho, piano

Sonata for Violin and Piano (2009)

Paul Schoenfeld
(b. 1947)

Vanishing Point
Intermezzo
Romanza
Freilach

Hyejin Cho, piano

Intermission

Sonata for Violin and Piano (1963)

John Corigliano
(b. 1938)

Allegro
Andantino
Lento
Allegro

Xiaoya Liu, piano

RECITAL 3 PROGRAM NOTES

This recital will present three violin sonatas by three living American composers; Philip Glass, Paul Schoenfeld, and John Corigliano. Although they share the same nationality and similar education backgrounds, each sonata reflects significantly different approaches to form, style, harmonic language, and character. With creative, adventurous, and experimental methods to violin sonatas, three American composers combined the existing musical style from previous generations. It ultimately led to their unique style of music. In addition, they integrate their experience of American culture in 19th – 20th century into the music. In the three sonatas, cultural background, diverse music style from different periods, and their ideas are presented.

Philip Glass

(Born 1937 in Baltimore, Maryland)

Sonata for Violin and Piano (2008)

American composer, Philip Glass, is regarded as one of the composers who established minimalism¹⁴ in America with Steve Reich in the 1960s. During his early years, he was introduced to the twelve-tone method and Avant-Garde establishments. However, instead of following these directions, his pieces reflect additive processes and cyclic structures of Indian music. In general, his music shows repetitive figures with interesting harmonies.

¹⁴ In 1960-70s, minimalist music was closely associated with minimalist art, which is characterized by an intentionally simplified rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic vocabulary.

Glass started violin when he was six years old, and later he studied flute, piano, and composition. His early musical education led him to explore broad musical genres: incidental music, dramatic works with multimedia, orchestral works, instrumental, and chamber music. With these diverse genres, he composed six pieces for solo violin; *two violin concertos*, *Echorus for two violins and string orchestra*, *Strung Out for amplified violin*, *France from The Screens for violin and Sonata for Violin and Piano*.

Sonata for Violin and Piano was written for the retired architect and amateur violinist Martin Murray to commemorate the 70th birthday of his wife, Lucy Miller Murray. Through three movements, colorful harmonies appear through repetitive figures. Repetitive figures can be meaningful throughout *Sonata for Violin and Piano* because they occur through different articulations, tempos, and dynamics. In other words, simplicity, which comes from repetitive figures, helps the audience to easily experience and understand colorful harmony.

In the first movement, before all the repetitive sixteenth notes start, Glass presents harmonic progression in the violin that will be displayed throughout the piece. At the same time, the piano is giving a rhythmic idea with a simple texture. Thus, when the repetition starts, the audience can still hear clear harmony because it was already anticipated at the beginning of the piece.

Unlike the first and last movement, the second movement is in a slower tempo. He creates a certain atmosphere of loneliness and lyricism in E minor. The first eight measures in the piano's bass line serve as the theme of a chaconne, repeating the same harmony at the beginning of the piece. The repetitive figures also appear in this movement.

The last movement starts with a solo violin. Without the piano, it is only the violin that offers rhythmic idea, harmony, and the character. This movement summarizes the previous

movements by including the same harmony and rhythmic ideas. The only difference from the other movements is that the last movement changes the tempo when the next section appears. Therefore, when the tempo changes, the piece drives the audience's emotions to climax. However, at the end, Glass suddenly drops the dynamic down to *pp* and finishes the piece. Unexpected dynamic changes at the end create dramatic effect.

Paul Schoenfeld

(Born 1947 in Detroit)

Sonata for Violin and Piano (2008-2009)

Sonata for Violin and Piano (2008-2009) is about twenty minutes of work, consisting of four movements: *Vanishing Point*, *Intermezzo*, *Romanza*, and *Freilach*. *Sonata* presents various musical characters through four movements.

Paul Schoenfeld was born in Detroit, Michigan, and although his musical education background was in the United States, his deep attention on folk elements, especially Jewish music, appears in his pieces. In *Sonata for Violin and Piano*, all movements include the characteristics of Jewish music. However, at the same time, he develops and interweaves previous music styles from the Baroque, Classical, and Romantic period. Rather than sharing the same thematic idea throughout the entire piece, each movement displays a unique character.

The first movement, *Vanishing point*, exploits the same title of a novel by David Markson. In the book, short comments and particular assertions are stated which through various references integrate snippets into an anecdotal whole. *Vanishing point* exactly reflects the novel. Various

quotations by Beethoven, Strauss, Liszt, and Schubert appear in piano and violin, resulting in a creative first movement.

The Intermezzo carries a very dark atmosphere. Specific indications often emerge in this movement. For example, ‘Sighing’ or ‘An den Galgen; Gallows’ is not a musical term but help performers to construct the right mood of the piece. The most interesting indication by the composer in this movement is found in the piano part; ‘forget everything you’ve learned about projecting.’ Like a recitativo in opera, the violin leads the movement.

The third movement, *Romanza*, displays lyricism through piano and violin with a beautiful melody. It was composed when Schoenfeld was young, but he revised it and decided to include it in *Sonata for Violin and Piano*. With the simple rhythm and texture, he shows various modes and scales in this movement.

The last movement, *Freilach*, is a Yiddish word denoting a joyous song or dance. This movement is a rondo which combines gypsy violin writing, a Transylvanian wedding song, and well-known 18th-century contrapuntal devices.

John Corigliano

(Born 1938 in New York)

Sonata for Violin and Piano (1960)

Born to a music family, Corigliano is an American composer who composes a wide range of instrumental music and vocal music. *Sonata for Violin and Piano* was written for his father, who was the concertmaster of New York Philharmonic Orchestra. However, it was not his father who premiered the piece. After Roman Totenberg gave the first performance of the piece in the

United States, his father gave the New York premiere in 1966. The piece won the competition at the Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy.

Sonata for Violin and Piano was Corigliano's first major work. It was composed in 1960, when he graduated from Columbia University for undergraduate and started his graduate studies at Manhattan School of Music. *The Sonata* shows his attempt to accept various style and influences.

The first movement starts with 7th chords with the violin. 7th chords create a dense texture with full sonorities, revealing the character of big band music¹⁵. Big Band music usually incorporates rhythmic ideas and a thicker texture that comes from various players. In the first movement, Corigliano creates similar musical characteristics of big band music while showing a clear structure of the sonata form. In addition, he experiments with harmony and key. Rather than having a set key, the first movement uses various keys and different harmonies by the sections.

The beginning of the second movement is similar to Paul Hindemith's *Viola Sonata op. 11, No. 4*, reflecting the counterpoint of Hindemith. In Hindemith's works, he exploits the counterpoint based on consonance, but there are dissonances too. Dissonances are created because of non-traditional chords, an extended application of non-harmonic notes, specific melodic techniques, and polytonality. In the second movement, Corigliano builds intimate and lyrical melody while displaying similar style as Hindemith's counterpoint. However, at the same time, the harmony and melody of this movement also recall a typical Broadway musical. The resolution of harmonies is attached to the emotion, similar to the music from a Broadway musical.

Compared to the second movement, the third movement shows a cold and dark character. The movement ends with a diminished chord without resolution, maintaining intensity to the end.

¹⁵ Big Band is a type of musical group includes ten to fifteen players. It was popular in the 1930s and 1940s in the United States.

Composed of eight notes and sixteen notes, the last movement shows the influence from Leonard Bernstein, who was the conductor for New York Philharmonic Orchestra in 1960. At the same time, Corigliano blends previous movements in the last movement. In the second movement, Corigliano presents the lyrical melody, which reappears in the middle section of the last movement. After the middle section, there is a small cadenza in the piano and the violin. It is from the third movement. In the final coda, the 7th chord from the first movement appears again.

Meanwhile, Sonata for Violin and Piano demands great techniques for both instruments. Dissonances, compound meters, fast notes and sudden changes of character are all required for performers. All of the challenging techniques are combined with musical style, maximizing the excitement of the piece.

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