

Augustin Hadelich, VIOLIN



DISCOVERY SERIES

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11 · 3:00 PM
THE NEUROSCIENCES INSTITUTE

The Discovery Series is underwritten by Medallion Society Topaz Level member Jeanette Stevens

Prelude 2:30 pm

Performance by San Diego Youth Symphony and Conservatory student flutist Anatolia Evarkiou-Kaku

IAN PARKER, *piano*

STRAVINSKY
(1882-1971)

Suite Italienne (arr. Pulcinella)

Introduzione
Serenata
Tarantella
Gavotte
Scherzino
Minuet; Finale

TELEMANN
(1681-1767)

Fantasia No. 11 in F Major for Solo Violin

Un poco vivace; Allegro

PLEASE HOLD APPLAUSE UNTIL AFTER THE YSAÏE SONATA

YSAÏE
(1858-1931)

Sonata No. 3 in D Minor for Unaccompanied Violin, Opus 27, "Sonata-Ballada"

INTERMISSION

BRAHMS
(1833-1897)

Sonata No. 3 in D Minor, Opus 108

Allegro
Adagio
Un poco presto e con sentimento
Presto agitato

SARASATE
(1844-1908)

Carmen Fantasy, Opus 25

Introduction: Allegro Moderato
Moderato
Lento assai
Allegro moderato
Moderato

Program notes by Eric Bromberger

Suite Italienne

IGOR STRAVINSKY

Born June 17, 1882, Oranienbaum
Died April 6, 1971, New York City

In the years after World War I, Stravinsky found himself at an impasse as a composer, unwilling to return to the grand manner of the "Russian" ballets that had made him famous, but unsure how to proceed. Serge Diaghilev, impresario of the Ballet Russe, suggested a ballet based on themes by the Italian composer Giovanni Pergolesi (1710-1736) and showed him some of Pergolesi's music. Stravinsky was entranced. Over the next year he composed a ballet with song in eighteen parts, based on themes from Pergolesi's operas and instrumental music (though subsequent research has shown that not all these themes were written by Pergolesi). Stravinsky kept Pergolesi's melodic and bass lines, but supplied his own harmony and brought to this music his incredible rhythmic vitality. First produced in Paris on May 15, 1920, with sets by Picasso and choreography by Massine, *Pulcinella* was a great success.

Ever the pragmatist, Stravinsky had become interested at this time in ballets for smaller ensembles, for he realized that they could save expense and make possible productions in places that lacked a large symphony orchestra. *Pulcinella* was a step in this direction—it is scored for an orchestra of 37 players—but Stravinsky was interested in ensembles of just a few players, and his arrangements of excerpts from *Pulcinella* may be regarded as explorations of those possibilities.

Stravinsky made several arrangements for instrumental duos of excerpts from *Pulcinella*. First was a *Suite for Violin and Piano* based on themes from the ballet, made in 1925. Next came an arrangement of different excerpts for cello and piano, made in 1932 by the composer and Gregor Piatigorsky; this version was the first to be called *Suite Italienne*. The following year, Stravinsky and violinist Samuel Dushkin made an arrangement of excerpts for violin and piano and called it *Suite Italienne* as well. (Somewhat later, Jascha Heifetz and Piatigorsky made an arrangement for violin and cello, which they also called *Suite Italienne*.)

The violin and piano version of *Suite Italienne* is in six movements. It opens with a jaunty

Introduzione (the ballet's *Overture*), followed by a lyric *Serenata*, based on an aria from Pergolesi's opera *Il Flaminio*. A blistering *Tarantella* (with its surprising and sudden ending) leads to a stately *Gavotte*, which is followed by two ornate variations. The *Scherzino* flies along on an almost non-stop pulse of eighth-notes; Stravinsky specifies that he wants it played *sempre staccato*. The concluding section is in two parts: a slow *Minuet* full of complex double-stops leads without pause to the exciting *Finale*.

Fantasia No. 11 in F Major for Solo Violin

GEORG PHILIPP TELEMANN
Born March 14, 1681, Magdeburg
Died June 25, 1767, Hamburg

Telemann has been called The Complete Musician, and for good reason. Not only did he teach himself to compose, he also taught himself to play the violin, doublebass, flute, oboe, clavier, organ, and numerous other instruments. Over his 86 years, he composed 6000 works, including 1700 cantatas, 600 overtures, 45 passions, and hundreds of concertos and sonatas. One of Telemann's friends observed that he could write an eight-part motet as easily as another man might write a letter. Telemann appears also to have been The Complete Human Being. Trained as a lawyer, he helped write Germany's first copyright laws, composed many of the texts he set to music, etched the plates himself for much of his published music, was an ardent amateur botanist, fathered ten children, and (not surprisingly) wrote three separate autobiographies.

Telemann wrote hundreds of chamber works for a melodic instrument and basso continuo, but he also wrote a large number of pieces for a melodic instrument without keyboard or bass accompaniment. Among these are sets of works he called *Fantasies*: there are twelve for solo flute, twelve for solo violin, and twelve for bass viol. The *Twelve Fantasies for Solo Violin* were published in Hamburg in 1735, when Telemann was 54. Like Bach's sonatas and partitas for unaccompanied violin, these *Fantasies* are able to suggest a harmonic foundation even when one is not literally present, and Telemann fuses this with some really brilliant writing for violin, full of doublestopping, leaps across the four strings, and other technical demands—Telemann must have been more than just a capable violinist to be able to conceive music like this. His violin *Fantasies* alternate slow and fast movements; the present

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performance offers some of the very fast sections from the *Fantasia No. 11 in F Major*.

Sonata in D Minor for Solo Violin, Opus 27, No. 3, “Sonata-Ballada”

EUGENE YSAÏE

Born July 16, 1858, Liège
Died May 12, 1931, Brussels

Though the name Eugene Ysaÿe is generally unfamiliar to audiences today, he was one of the finest violinists of all time, famed for his profound (and original) musical intelligence, consummate technique, and rich sound. A student of Vieuxtemps and Wieniawski, Ysaÿe was a true champion of new music: he gave the premieres of the Franck and Debussy sonatas and the Chausson *Poème* (all of which were dedicated to him), and his string quartet gave the first performance of the Debussy *Quartet*. Ysaÿe was also a conductor (he led the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra from 1918 to 1922) and a composer who wrote six violin concertos, two operas, and many shorter works, though very little of this music is performed today. So greatly admired was Ysaÿe as man and artist that his funeral in 1931 became the occasion for national mourning in Belgium.

Ysaÿe’s set of six sonatas for unaccompanied violin dates from 1924. Ysaÿe had become interested in the styles of particular contemporary violinists, and he dedicated each sonata to a different violin virtuoso and tried to capture something of that performer’s style in “his” sonata; the list of dedicatees includes some very distinguished names—Szigeti, Kreisler, Enesco, and Thibaud—as well as two whose fame has not survived: Matthew Crickboom and Manuel Quiroga. So fascinated was Ysaÿe by the idea of adapting these pieces to individual performers that he composed this music almost overnight: he went up to his room with instructions that he was not to be disturbed (meals were sent up to him), and when he came down twenty-four hours later he had sketched all six sonatas.

Ysaÿe dedicated the *Third Sonata*—sometimes called the *Sonata-Ballada in D Minor*—to the Romanian violin virtuoso Georges Enesco (1881-1955), remembered today primarily as the composer of the *Romanian Rhapsodies*. The *Sonata-Ballada* is the shortest of the set—its two sections last a total of barely six minutes—but this searingly-difficult sonata has become the best-known. It opens very quietly with the

somber *Ballada*, marked *In modo di recitativo*, that rises from deep in the violin’s G-string almost to the top of its E-string, then gradually accelerates into the main section, marked *Allegro in tempo giusto e con bravura*. This emphatic, intensely dramatic music demands a performer of the greatest skill: it is a series of variations on the *Ballada* in which the violinist must play in complex doublestops, adjust intonation to quarter-tones and other intervals, master difficult string-crossings, and sometimes generate two melodic lines simultaneously. Particularly impressive is Ysaÿe’s ability to create episodes of sharply different character from the same thematic material, and it is the most sincere sort of tribute to Enesco that his playing should have inspired such difficult music. At the close, the music whips ahead on a coda marked *Tempo poco vivo e ben marcato*, itself a further variation. The very ending of this sonata, where the tension and difficulties pile up, is dazzling.

Violin Sonata No. 3 in D Minor, Opus 108

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Born May 7, 1833, Hamburg
Died April 3, 1897, Vienna

Brahms spent the summer of 1886 at Lake Thun in Switzerland. He had just completed his *Fourth Symphony*, and now—in a house from which he had a view of the lake and a magnificent glacier—he turned to chamber music. That summer he completed three chamber works and began the *Violin Sonata in D Minor*, but he put the sonata aside while he wrote the *Zigeunerlieder* (“Gypsy Songs”) and *Double Concerto for Violin and Cello*, grumbling that writing for stringed instruments should be left to “someone who understands fiddles better than I do.” He returned to Lake Thun and completed his final violin sonata in the summer of 1888.

Despite Brahms’ customary self-deprecation, his writing for stringed instruments could be very convincing, and the *Third Violin Sonata* is brilliant music—not in the sense of being flashy but in the fusion of complex technique and passionate expression that marks Brahms’ finest music. The violin’s soaring, gypsy-like main theme at the opening of the *Allegro* is so haunting that it is easy to miss the remarkable piano accompaniment: far below, the piano’s quiet syncopated octaves move ominously forward, generating much of the music’s tension. Piano alone has the second theme,

with the violin quickly picking it up and soaring into its highest register. The development of these two ideas is disciplined and ingenious: in the piano’s lowest register Brahms sets a pedal A and lets it pound a steady quarter-note pulse for nearly 50 unbroken measures—beneath the powerful thematic development, the pedal notes hammer a tonal center (the dominant) insistently into the listener’s ear. Its energy finally spent, this movement gradually dissolves on fragments of the violin’s opening melody.

The heartfelt *Adagio* consists of a long-spanned melody (built on short metric units—the marking is 3/8) that develops by repetition; the music rises in intensity until the double-stopped violin soars high above the piano, then falls back to end peacefully. Brahms titled the third movement *Un poco presto e con sentimento*, though the particular sentiment he had in mind remains uncertain. In any case, this shadowy, quicksilver movement is based on echo effects as bits of theme are tossed between the two instruments. The movement comes to a shimmering close: piano arpeggios spill downward, and the music vanishes in two quick strokes.

By contrast, the *Presto agitato* finale hammers along a pounding 6/8 meter. The movement is aptly titled: this *is* agitated music, restless and driven. At moments it sounds frankly symphonic, as if the music demands the resources of a full symphony orchestra to project its furious character properly. Brahms marks the violin’s thematic entrance *passionato*, but he needn’t have bothered—that character is amply clear from the music itself. Even the noble second theme, first announced by the piano, does little to dispel the driven quality of this music. The complex development presents the performers with difficult problems of ensemble, and the very ending feels cataclysmic: the music slows, then suddenly rips forward to the cascading smashes of sound that bring this sonata to its powerful close.

Carmen Fantasy, Opus 25

PABLO DE SARASATE

Born March 10, 1844, Pamplona
Died September 20, 1908, Biarritz

Georges Bizet’s opera *Carmen* was one of those works that set other composers’ hearts and minds on fire. Frosty old Brahms, hater of all things French, loved it with a passion, and the opera has drawn hosts of composers to make new works by arranging its

thematic material for different instruments. The range of these works is impressive, from Rodion Shchedrin’s 1968 ballet score for an orchestra of strings and percussion to Busoni’s use of themes from *Carmen* for his *Sonatina No. 6* in 1920. The opera’s piquant and dramatic themes have captivated violinists in particular, and the arrangements of themes from *Carmen* for violin are too numerous to count, including versions by Jenő Hubay, Franz Waxman, and many others.

By far the most famous of these is Sarasate’s *Carmen Fantasy*, published in Paris in 1883, only eight years after the première of the opera. Sarasate was one of the great virtuosos of the nineteenth century, and a measure of his stature as an artist is the list of pieces composed for him, which include Bruch’s *Violin Concerto No. 2* and *Scottish Fantasy*, Lalo’s *Symphonie espagnole*, Saint-Saëns’ *Violin Concerto No. 3* and *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* (those interested today in Sarasate may actually hear him play: in 1904 he made some of the earliest recordings, and these are now available on compact disc). Among Sarasate’s own compositions is a group of paraphrases for violin on themes from such operas as Weber’s *Der Freischütz*, Gounod’s *Faust*, and Verdi’s *La forza del destino*. These are almost never heard today, but his *Carmen Fantasy* remains one of the favorite works of the violin repertory. This suite of five brief movements offers a sumptuous treatment of themes from *Carmen* and at the same time is a showpiece for a virtuoso violinist, featuring such razzle-dazzle as left-handed pizzicatos, entire passages playing in artificial harmonics, and enough fireworks to leave the audience (if not the violinist) breathless at the close.