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## Maria Liliestedt, Piano

Cedarville University

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THE CEDARVILLE UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC AND WORSHIP

PRESENTS

MAIRA LILIESTEDT, PIANO

THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 2018, 7:30 P.M.

PROGRAM

*Partita No. 1 in B-flat Major, BWV 825* ..... Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

- I. Prelude
- II. Allemande
- IV. Sarabande
- VII. Gigue

*Suite No. 2 in D Major, Op. 10* ..... George Enescu (1881–1955)

- III. Pavane

INTERMISSION

*Sonata in b minor, S. 178* ..... Franz Liszt (1811–1886)



### About the pianist

Currently a professor of music at the University of Mount Union, Maira Liliestedt received a Bachelor of Music in piano performance from Bowling Green State University and Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music where she studied with Eugene and Elizabeth Pridonoff. In addition to numerous academic awards, Liliestedt has twice been the recipient of the prestigious Presser Music Award. Active as a performer, pedagogue, and adjudicator, Liliestedt maintains a regular schedule of solo, chamber, and concerto performances. Her performances of the Liszt First Piano Concerto were received enthusiastically; in conductor Eric Benjamin's words: "hearing Maira Liliestedt play [this concerto] is like watching an Indy race driver take the car out for a spin." Recently, Liliestedt presented solo and violin/piano recitals at many universities in the Midwest and abroad, as well

as duo and solo concerto performances. Her 2017-18 engagements include solo recitals featuring Bach's B-flat Major Partita and the Liszt B Minor Sonata as well as orchestral collaboration on Saint-Saëns's Second Piano Concerto.

Since 1996, she has been a member of the Appassionata Piano Duo, a successful musical partnership with pianist Janelle Phinney. The ensemble has garnered praise for its "wonderful ensemble, balance, and unity of purpose," and its "terrific collaboration full of grace and passion." The duo's playing has been described as "a warm and deft joining of palpable grace with flawless, often fiery technique," displaying a "riveting, lucid finesse alternately muscular and delicate."

### Program Notes

Johann Sebastian Bach's *Partita No. 1 in B-flat Major* is a work of luminous peacefulness. Including the typical dance movements of a Baroque dance suite-*Allemande*, *Courante*, *Sarabande*, *Gigue*-started off by a bubbling, smiling *Prelude*, this piece represents a moment of spiritual rest achieved by a composer deeply rooted in his Lutheran faith. The four movements included in tonight's program are the sunny *Prelude*, the contentedly flowing *Allemande*, the exquisitely flowing *Sarabande*, and the effervescent *Gigue*.

George Enescu is my native Romania's most internationally-recognized art music composer. Having lived a significant number of years in Paris, he absorbed the influences of Neo-Classical, Impressionist, and modern giants like Claude Debussy and Igor Stravinsky. This movement from his *Second Suite* is an achingly beautiful marriage between the traditional Romanian "doina"-a melodic expression of grief, regret, and emotional strife-and the Impressionist coloristic textures of Debussy.

Franz Liszt's *B-Minor Sonata* is unquestionably one of the giants of the piano repertoire. Analysts disagree whether this imposing, continuous half-hour structure is set in four movements or one large movement. The form certainly combines elements of a large sonata-form structure with traces of a four-movement design. Perhaps more important than an exact structural label is Liszt's genius for thematic transformation: it is this musical device that binds the piece together as a whole. The three main themes of the work are introduced one after another at the very beginning. First, a harmonically-ambiguous descending theme in the lower register of the piano signals much impending uncertainty. Second, a leaping *Allegro* theme in octaves propels us forward with charismatic impetuosity. Third, a menacing theme in repeated notes disguises an opposition of darkness and light in Liszt's compositional conception. All of these themes recur at important points, and are varied greatly depending on the musical framework in which they are used. It is worthwhile to listen for these themes' recurrences, and the way Liszt transforms them in different contexts, as they point to the psychological changes during the course of the sonata.