

3-26-2021

Abigail Kenyon, Abigail Lilite, and Paul Scanlon, Freshman Piano Recital

Abigail Kenyon

Abigail Lilite

Paul Scanlon

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.cedarville.edu/student_recitals



Part of the [Music Performance Commons](#)

This Program is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@Cedarville, a service of the Centennial Library. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Recitals by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Cedarville. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@cedarville.edu.

THE CEDARVILLE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF
MUSIC AND WORSHIP

PRESENTS THE

FRESHMAN PIANO RECITAL

OF

ABIGAIL KENYON,
ABIGAIL LILITE,
AND
PAUL SCANLON

FRIDAY, MARCH 26, 2021
7 P.M.

RECITAL HALL
BOLTHOUSE CENTER FOR MUSIC
DIXON MINISTRY CENTER

PROGRAM

Abigail Kenyon

- Tocatta in D Major*, BWV 912 Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)
- The Seasons*, Op. 37b..... Pyotr Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)
VI. June, “Barcarolle”
- 13 Preludes*, Op. 32 Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943)
X. B minor. Lento

Paul Scanlon

- 6 Klavierstücke*, Op. 118 Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)
I. Intermezzo in a minor: Allegro non assai, ma molto appassionato
II. Intermezzo in A Major: Andante teneramente
- Années de pèlerinage, première année: Suisse*, S. 160
..... Franz Liszt (1811–1886)
II. Au lac de Wallenstadt
VIII. Le mal du pays
VII. Eglogue

Abigail Lilite

- 6 Moments Musicaux*, Op. 16 Sergei Rachmaninoff
IV. E minor. Presto
V. D-Flat Major. Adagio sostenuto
- Partita for Violin Solo No. 2 in d minor*, BWV 1004..... J. S. Bach
V. Chaconne tr. Ferruccio Busoni (1866–1924)

Abigail, Abigail, and Paul are students of John Mortensen.

Program Notes

Toccata in D Major

Bach wrote the *Toccata in D Major* within a set of seven other toccatas as part of his earlier, more experimental keyboard works (1705-1708). Originating in Italy, toccatas are named for their virtuosic components meant to display the performer's "touch"; as the musical form continued to develop, it became associated with the stylus phantasticus or "fantastic style", a free and inventive mode characterized by train-of-thought passages. This particular composition is divided into several sections beginning with an enthusiastic, tone-establishing introduction which proceeds to a jaunty Allegro.

Following the Allegro into the Adagio is a dramatic aside of tentative questions and suspenseful answers which leads to an imitative section, the melody being sung in one voice and then sung in another. Another soliloquy-like passage precedes and builds up to the final Fugue. With a relentless triplet rhythm and immediately introduced subject and countersubject, the Fugue carries the audience to a triumphant and virtuosic conclusion.

The Seasons

June was originally published within a set of salon pieces presented monthly in St. Petersburg's musical magazine the *Nouvelliste*. The set now known as *The Seasons* was requested by the magazine's editor Nikolay Pushkin as a collection of pieces representative of each month and corresponding to a short descriptive selection of Russian poetry. Written by Aleksey Pleshcheyev, the epigraph accompanying June reads:

Let us go to the shore;
There the waves will kiss our legs.
With mysterious sadness
The stars will shine down on us.

Referencing the poetic selection, Tchaikovsky composed June as a barcarolle, a musical form characterized by the rocking triplet and derived from gondoliers' boat songs from which it was later adopted into both vocal and instrumental performances.

13 Preludes

Reportedly Rachmaninoff's favorite of all his preludes, *Prelude in b minor* (1910) was inspired by Arnold Böcklin's *Die Heimkehr* (1887) translated "The Return" or "The Homecoming." Imbued with a falling autumnal dusk, the painting depicts a military man with his back to the viewer sitting by the edge of a pool; he gestures vaguely to a cottage in the distance with a warm yellow window. While the cottage is presumably his destination, the man remains unmoved in a suspended, memory-laden moment. At the time of its composition, the prelude was meant to express Rachmaninoff's nostalgia for his childhood, but

after his exile from Russia (1917), the prelude grew to represent his longing for a return to pre-revolutionized Russia. Accomplishing the nostalgic effect, Rachmaninoff steeped the work in ringing bell-like chords reminiscent of St. Sophia Cathedral's bells in Novgorod, his childhood city. Moreover, he emphasizes the sonority of F#, the b minor's fifth scale step, and the ninth interval, both creating an unresolved, eternal atmosphere.

6 Klavierstücke

6 *Klavierstücke* ("piano pieces") of Op. 118 were published in 1893 and are Brahms' penultimate piano work. Well received in his time, this collection was praised for its intense expression and density of composition. Clara Schumann valued them as "treasures" that could revitalize the musical soul. Four out of the six pieces are intermezzi, intermediate pieces meant to fill space between larger works. Despite the insinuation that they are "lesser" pieces, these intermezzi have become some of the most famous of Brahms piano works and have been well established in Western canon.

No. 1 in a minor is one of the most dense of the set, quickly stacking the sweeping melody into overlapping phrases. The opening three-note phrase is manipulated over a chaotic middle section, lush with chromatic harmonies and polyphonic textures. The final, triumphant chord in A Major signals the transition to the second intermezzo.

No. 2 in A Major became my favorite piece from this semester the first day I started studying it. In fact, the middle, triplet-feel section has become my favorite passage I have played. Brahms moves from the wild, torrential a minor intermezzo to one of extreme sensitivity and subtle restlessness. This highly symmetric work ranges from calm and expansive, to overwhelmingly passionate, to serene and tranquil, and back through the same emotions again.

Années de pèlerinage

Années de pèlerinage ("Years of Pilgrimage") is a song cycle composed of works written over the span of three decades. Liszt closely linked this collection with literature; indeed, the title is drawn from the French version of Goethe's novel, *Wilhelm Meister's Journeyman Years*. Most of his selections come with captions of poetry, expressing characteristics of the Romantic movement, including sentimentality towards nature and history and brooding existentialism. Today's performance draws from *Première année: Suisse*, based on the sights and literature Liszt encountered while in Switzerland.

Continued on back

II. Au lac de Wallenstadt is based off a tranquil Alpine lake. Early editions of the score included a picture of this popular lake cradled between steep, mountain walls. The steady, undulating left hand with the sweeping, ethereal right hand gives a perfect illusion of a boat floating across the water with only the rhythm of the oars to disturb the calmness of the surroundings. Liszt included this caption from Lord Byron: "Thy contrasted lake / With the wild world I dwell in is a thing / Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake / Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring."

VII. Le mal du pays is translated "The pain of the country," or more idiomatically, "Homesickness." Liszt takes the listener through a variety of moods, from sulking to anger to sweet reminiscence and back to simple longing. No caption is attached to this piece, though Liszt's artistic mindset is easily understandable considering his itinerant vocation as a touring concert pianist.

VII. Eglogue is meant to conjure a pastoral scene, like the countryside Liszt would have seen from the train window as he traveled between cities. The simple joy found in nature overflows many times throughout this piece as Liszt returns to more traditional forms and harmonies, conveying a sense of order. The caption for this work also comes from Lord Byron: "The morn is up again, the dewy morn, / With breath all incense, and with cheek all bloom, / Laughing the clouds away with playful scorn, / And living as if earth contained no tomb!"

6 Moments Musicaux

Driven by a desperate financial situation exacerbated by a train robbery, 23-year-old Sergei Rachmaninoff threw himself into a new composition project that evolved into *6 Moments Musicaux*, Op. 16. Remarkably, he completed the six pieces between October and December 1896. However, even though it was a "hasty" composition, the set still reflects great virtuosic and lyrical demands on the soloist and marks a transition of maturity from his previous solo works. All of the pieces in *6 Moments Musicaux* are in the style of a specific type of music, i.e. an etude, nocturne, etc.

No. 4, Presto, is the shortest of the set and most likely a type of homage to Chopin's *Revolutionary Etude*, with similarities in the taxing LH figurations. While it is short in duration, it is a major exercise in endurance and accuracy, requiring quick and efficient wrist and arm movements to accurately give life to the bell-tones in the melody and sextuplet accompaniment. The rushing drama blows past with sound and fury.

No. 5, Adagio sostenuto, is similar to the form of a barcarolle. While the melody is relatively simple, musically, the mood must be sustained with the constant triplet accompaniment. Everything is a bit tricky to voice, as this piece is characteristic of Rachmaninoff's thick harmonic textures and long musical phrases. However, it all pays off, as this gorgeous piece is a perfect snapshot of Rachmaninoff's genius in composing.

Chaconne

The Bach Violin Chaconne is hailed to be one of the most monumental pieces of western music. Part of the *Violin Partita No. 2*, the Chaconne is almost the same length as the rest of its set to which it belongs! A chaconne is a musical form consisting of a thematic chord progression that serves as the basis of a theme and variations; in this case, it is composed of a series of four-measure phrases. Bach's Chaconne is in the style of a sarabande, with a significant emphasis on beat two (this particular piece begins on beat two!) Bach gave his piece a rough three-part structure, with a theme and 33 variations in d minor, 19 variations in the major mode, and finally 12 more returning to minor and closing with a grand restatement of the theme. The Busoni transcription of the Chaconne for piano creates a very romantic and grandiose interpretation of this baroque piece, as it emerged at the height of the romantic era (1802). Ferruccio Busoni loved transcribing Bach so much that it became a joke to introduce his wife as "Mrs. Bach-Busoni"! It came as no surprise that he undertook the task of transcribing the Chaconne for piano. Busoni was a phenomenal pianist, so it was natural for him to transcribe the Chaconne for his own instrument, but he actually originally envisioned the transcription for orchestra, ultimately giving the score a grand, orchestral sound.

Busoni added very little embellishment on Bach's original structure, with one exception where he repeats one of Bach's themes but inverts it. Instead, he translates the complex, beautiful violin score onto a keyboard, naturally letting it flourish pianistically. Many hours have been spent untangling and understanding this piece in the practice rooms, lessons, and studio, and I have truly fallen in love with the journey of playing the Chaconne! And as soon as you sigh
Something that startles me, I know not what
Fears, among your sighs, sighs gone astray

All translations taken from: Coffin, Berton, Werner Singer, and Pierre Delattre. Word by Word Translations of Songs and Arias. Part 1. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1994.