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Concert and Recital Programs

3-19-2023

Elise Taylor, Junior Piano Recital

Elise Taylor

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**THE CEDARVILLE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF
MUSIC AND WORSHIP**

PRESENTS THE

JUNIOR PIANO RECITAL

OF

ELISE TAYLOR

SUNDAY, MARCH 19, 2023

3 P.M.

**RECITAL HALL
BOLTHOUSE CENTER FOR MUSIC
DIXON MINISTRY CENTER**

PROGRAM

6 Romances sans paroles, Op. 76 Cécile Chaminade (1857–1944)

I. Souvenance

Piano Concerto No. 20 in d minor, K. 466

..... Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Piano Reduction by Jeanpierre Faber (1909–1981)

Cadenza by Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

I. Allegro

Assisted by Abigail Lilite, piano

Piano Trio in d minor, Op. 11

..... Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel (1805–1847)

II. Andante espressivo

Assisted by Mary Jo Johnson, violin,
and Christopher Stauffer, cello

Variations on Balkan Themes, Op. 60

VIII. Marcia funérale

Trois morceaux caractéristiques, Op. 28 Amy Beach (1867–1944)

I. Barcarolle

Elise is a student of John Mortensen.

Program Notes

6 Romances sans paroles

Cécile Chaminade was a French pianist in the Romantic period who spent a large amount of her time composing and touring around Europe. Published in 1893, *Romances sans paroles*, or romances without words, was greatly influenced by Felix Mendelssohn's famous "songs without words" which was published about fifty years earlier. This first romance in her set is titled "Souvenance," which translates to "recollection." I think this piece reflects a nostalgic and homesick feeling. One of the first things that caught my attention when I first heard this piece was how full and warm the melodies were. Upon looking at the music for the first time, I was surprised to see how thin the texture was. This piece has pushed me as a musician to get a rich and operatic sound with a more simple texture.

Piano Concerto No. 20 in d minor

Initially, I intended my junior recital to consist of repertoire written solely by female composers. However, I struggled finding baroque and classical style concertos written by women. I knew I wanted to play a concerto in a minor key and was not finding much. Eventually, I found this concerto, and decided that I would have to make an exception for Mozart! He composed this work in 1785 at the height of his popularity and fame in Vienna, and it is only one of Mozart's two concertos written in a minor key. The cadenza, a soloistic passage at the end of the concerto, was most likely improvised by Mozart and therefore was not recorded and lost. The cadenza I am presenting was written by Beethoven in 1809. It blurs the line between the Classical and Romantic era, as Beethoven takes Mozart's classical ideas and puts them into a more romantic context.

Piano Trio No. in d minor

Fanny Mendelssohn, the older sister to Felix Mendelssohn, had access to the same musical education that her brother did, including studying with Ignaz Moscheles. Both Fanny and Felix showed prodigious musical abilities as pianists and composers as they grew up. Unfortunately, her opportunities were very limited at the time, and she was told not to follow in her brother's footsteps of publishing and performing. In 1829, she married painter Wilhelm Hensel who encouraged her to compose and publish. Some of her works began to receive attention and resulted in public performances. This piano trio was composed in 1846 shortly before her death in 1847. I knew I wanted to play one movement from this trio, but it was not easy picking which movement! All four are so beautiful and each has such a distinct sound. However, the second movement's delicate and heartbreaking sound sold me! This second movement is very romantic in style, it reminds us of Fanny's talent for song as the melodic line is very lyrical and flowing. The opening piano solo is soon mimicked by the strings. If you listen closely, you can hear the piano and strings taking turns playing the famous motive from Felix Mendelssohn's *Songs without Words*, Op. 67, No. 2 in f# minor. Throughout this trio, the piano, violin, and cello all take turns for center stage with the main melody. Eventually, the piece builds to its peak as the main theme returns in its home key of A major. I have truly enjoyed playing this with Mary Jo and Christopher, it has been such a fun learning experience to collaborate with them!

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Variation on Balkan Themes, Marcia funerale

Amy Beach was an American composer and pianist. Primarily being self taught in composition, she was among one of the first successful female composers of large works and inspired many other women in music to pursue their interests in composition and publishing! This funeral march is a part of Amy Beach's *Variations on Balkan Themes*. These variations were collected by missionaries who recorded folk songs on their visit to the Balkan regions. This funeral march begins with a rumbling bass that serves to mimic a drumroll. After the introductory drumroll, the melody enters in the bass and continues to rise throughout the piece. The piece often breaks into major tonality reflecting a reminiscence on a past life, almost sounding hopeful, but it's continually ripped away as the dark and creeping melody and rumbling bass return. When I decided to put this piece in my program, Dr. Mortensen said, "If you're going to play about death, you must also play about life." Which is fair, because a funeral march is not the most comforting and relaxing piece to play on a Sunday afternoon. Because of this, I chose to follow this piece with another work by Amy Beach that has a more lyrical, romantic sound. The funeral march ends with the rumbling bass and a short ending note. This is followed by a series of chords that go directly into the barcarolle.

Trois morceaux caractéristiques, Barcarolle

This selection from a set of three pieces was written at the end of Amy Beach's ten-year effort to master crafts of musical composition through self study. The first piece of the set is a barcarolle: a traditional folk song sung by Venetian gondoliers. These songs usually feature sounds that portray the movement of a boat. The rhythmic "rocking" of the boat takes turns keeping the pulse in each hand throughout the piece. The dark chromatic boat song is interrupted by a romantic, almost Chopin-like trio. I think this section gives the piece a break in the clouds and provides a lighter feel to the piece.