

Frühlingsnacht ("Spring Night")

Above the gardens and across the sky
I heard migrating birds passing;
that meant that spring was in the air;
below, things are already beginning to bloom.

I could rejoice, I could weep -
I feel as though it cannot be!
Old wonders appear again
with the moonlight.

And the moon and stars say it,
and in a dream the grove murmurs it,
and the nightingales sing it:
she is yours! She is yours!

Sergei Rachmaninoff - The set of thirteen preludes in Op. 32 was written in 1910 in slightly more than two weeks. Many have speculated that Rachmaninoff was inspired in these works by scenes of Russian life and the influence of certain Symbolist paintings. The Prelude in G Major, transparent and lyrical, sets long lines over a fluid, arpeggiated accompaniment. The haunting opening of the Prelude in B Minor is characterized by a dotted figure and descending melodic lines, while the middle *pesante* section is built around surging repeated chords that swell to a powerful culmination before the recapitulation of the opening theme. The set of *Etudes-tableaux* op. 39 were completed during the dark days of WWI when Rachmaninoff was giving benefit concerts for wounded Russian soldiers. The Communist revolution came later that year, and in December 1917 he would leave Russia and never return. The Etude in D Major is the final etude in this collection, Rachmaninoff's last before leaving his beloved homeland.

Maurice Ravel composed his Introduction and Allegro for Flute, Harp, Clarinet and String Quartet in 1905 on commission from the Érard Company to demonstrate the expressive range of the firm's double-action pedal harp. The entire piece revels in rhapsodic and evocative song-like passagework suggestive of dream states and romance. Ravel was intrigued by the pianistic potential of the work, and he wrote a version for two pianos the following year.

One of **Witold Lutoslawski's** most frequently performed works, his Variations on a Theme by Paganini is a modernist transcription of Paganini's Caprice No. 24 in A Minor for solo violin, which has been transcribed and expanded by numerous other composers, including Brahms, Liszt, and Rachmaninoff. The work was composed in 1941 and premiered by the composer and Andrzej Panufnik in a café in Nazi-occupied Warsaw. The variations, which closely follow the structure of the original work, imaginatively restate the original material with continual exchanges between the two pianists and inflect the diatonic foundation with chromaticism, polytonality, and a wide range of virtuosic keyboard devices.

THE WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

College of Fine Arts & Communication

School of Music

presents

Faculty Recital

Jeffrey Brown, piano

with

Minjung Seo, piano



COFAC Recital Hall

Thursday, October 16, 2014

7:30 PM

College of Fine Arts and
Communication Recital Hall



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Program

Rondo in A Minor, K. 511	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
Klavierstücke, Op. 119 Intermezzo in B Minor Intermezzo in E Minor Intermezzo in C Major Rhapsody in E-flat Major	Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)
Geheimes Flüstern hier und dort	Clara Schumann (1819-1896) arr. Franz Liszt (1811-1886)
Mondnacht	Robert Schumann (1810-1856) arr. Clara Schumann
Frühlingsnacht	Robert Schumann arr. Franz Liszt

Intermission

Prelude in G Major, Op. 32, No. 5 Prelude in B Minor, Op. 32, No. 10 Etude-tableau in D Major, Op. 39, No. 9	Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)
Introduction and Allegro for Two Pianos	Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)
Variations on a Theme by Paganini for Two Pianos	Witold Lutoslawski (1913-1994)

Program Notes

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart composed the Rondo in A Minor in the spring of 1787 between visits to Prague for productions of *Le nozze di Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*. It has been suggested that he composed this rondo in response to the death of one of his dearest friends, Count August von Hatzfeld. The work is introspective and poetic. Pianist and composer James Friskin writes, “Among Mozart’s pianoforte compositions there is nothing more beautiful than the Rondo in A Minor, nor any more finished example of his art.”

Johannes Brahms composed the *Klavierstücke* Op. 119 during his summer holiday in the spa town of Bad Ischl, Austria, in 1893. Upon completing the first intermezzo, Brahms wrote in a letter to Clara Schumann, “The little piece is exceptionally melancholic and ‘to be played very slowly’ is not an understatement. Every bar and every note must sound like a ritardando, as if one wanted to suck melancholy out of each and every one, lustily and with pleasure out of these very dissonances!” Clara Schumann was enthusiastic and asked him to send the remaining pieces of his new work. In the second intermezzo, Brahms transforms an agitated E-minor theme into a lyrical E-major waltz in the middle section. The third intermezzo, a cheerful scherzo in C major, is a study in cross-rhythms with the theme in the middle voice. The concluding Rhapsody is powerful and noble, beginning with a heroic theme in E-flat major, followed by a tender, lyrical section in the key of A-flat Major before returning to the main theme and ultimately concluding with a dark coda in E-flat minor. This is the last collection of pieces for solo piano by Brahms.

Geheimes Flüstern hier und dort
 (“Secret whispers here and there”)
 Secret whispers here and there,
 and springs with hidden murmurs,
 o wood, o wood, o sacred spot,
 o let me hear life's purest word
 in every twig and leaflet!

And striding out into the wood,
 I'm greeted by the saplings,
 the dear and open house of God,
 Embracing me with roaring storm
 In your refreshing spaces!

What ever soars and sings 'round me,
 I will preserve it truly,
 what ever pierces deep my heart,
 I will, by Love's own spirit borne,
 by singing songs reveal it.

Mondnacht (“Moonlit Night”)
 It was as if the sky
 Had quietly kissed the earth,
 So that in a shower of blossoms
 She must only dream of him.

The breeze wafted through the fields,
 The ears of corn waved gently,
 The forests rustled faintly,
 So sparkling clear was the night.

And my soul stretched
 its wings out far,
 Flew through the still lands,
 as if it were flying home.

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