

Jared Maucotel

Solo Violin Recital

November 1, 2024, 5:00 PM

George Philip Telemann.....Fantasia in B-flat major

-Largo

-Allegro

-Grave

-Si replica l'allegro

Johann Sebastian Bach.....Sonata for Solo violin in G minor

BWV 1001

-Adagio

-Fuga

Jacques Pierre Joseph Rode.....24 Caprices for Violin

-Caprice No. 9 in E major

Niccolò Paganini.....24 Caprices for Violin Solo

Op. 1

-Caprice No. 13

Eugène Ysaÿe.....Sonata for Solo Violin, Op. 27, No. 2

"Jacques Thibaud"

-I. Obsession – Prelude: Poco vivace

-II. Malinconia – Poco lento

-III. Danse des ombres – Sarabande (Lento)

Astor Piazzolla.....Tango Etudes for Violin Solo

-No. 3– Molto marcato e energico

-No. 4– Lento - Meditativo

Polina Nazaykinskaya.....Caprice No. 1 & 2

Program Notes

George Philip Telemann (1681-1767) was one of most prolific composers of the Baroque era. A multi instrumentalist and one of the leading German composers of the time, he was an innovator by incorporating Italian, French, and even Polish influences into his compositions. He is now considered as one of the defining composers of the time period, his music being held as idiomatic examples of 17th and early 18th century music.

Written at the height of his career, his 12 fantasias for solo violin and similar works for flute, harpsichord and viol de gamba were almost lost to time. As with much of the music in the Baroque era, Telemann's music fell out of style during the late 18th century and saw no public performance until the Baroque revivalist movement in the 19th century with such figures as Felix Mendelssohn working to rediscover, preserve and perform these old masterpieces. Interestingly, Telemann's solo fantasias is consistently overshadowed by the likes of J.S. Bach's Sonatas and Partitas, although they were good friends, and Telemann was even the godfather and namesake of Bach's son, Carl Philip Emanuel Bach. The melodies are no less rich and robust, although the length of these pieces can be considerably shorter than Bach's vast Sonatas.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) is considered one of the most prominent classical composers ever. Most everything within the western classical music style can be traced back to Bach, and his innovation and codification of counterpoint, harmony and melody.

Bach's Solo Partitas and Sonatas have solidified themselves as a standard work within the Violin Repertory, used both as a tool to educate younger musicians, and as a device for seasoned musicians to showcase their mastery of the Art. Ironically, these pieces were not always so venerated. Almost lost to time, they were not publicly published until more than 50 years after Bach's death. Only when early 20th century performers like Joseph Joachim started to perform them regularly were they revitalized, brought back into the public eye.

This first Sonata imitates a liturgical form. Bach was the head musician of the church in Köthen, Germany at the time, though it is unlikely that these pieces were ever used as a part of church service.

Jacques Pierre Joseph Rode (1774-1830) was a well respected French violinist and composer. He served as the violin soloist for Napoleon for a time, touring and concertizing with orchestras across Europe. His 24 caprices were written as a type of study, cycling through all 24 Major and Minor keys. Now, they are commonly used as exercises and etudes for young professionals, developing technical mastery alongside harmony skills.

Niccolò Paganini (1782-1840) is one of the most interesting, and at times controversial character in the turn of the 19th century. An innovator and master of the violin, his abilities were credited to the supernatural. Naturally, this drew even greater audiences to see the “devil’s violinist”. And Paganini played the role well, being a womanizer, a gambler, and even dressing in all black for concerts, akin to the modern day rockstar. However, his abilities were no victim to his theatrics. His 24 caprices are some of the most technically complex pieces within the violin repertory, and are often used as a touchstone of one’s mastery of the instrument.

His caprice no. 13 continues to lean into his showmanship, being given the nickname “the Devil’s Laugh”, so named for it’s successive falling chromatic chords in it’s opening phrase.

Eugène Ysaÿe (1858-1931) was a Belgian composer, violinist, and teacher. Known as one of the great violinists of his time, he was well connected to many of his fellow composers, leading to dedications from Debussy, Saint-Saëns and many others. His 6 Caprices were deeply inspired by the works of J. S. Bach, and each were dedicated to good friends of his. His 2nd sonata in particular is a playful jab at Jacques Thibaud, who had a particular affinity for the solo Bach sonatas and partitas. Ysaÿe includes references to Gregorian chant, Bach partitas and even baroque forms of the times, all to create a humorous image of an artist struggling within the practice room.

Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992) was the father of “Tango Nuevo”, the revitalization movement of tango within Argentina, and by extension, the globe. Tango had been dying out as new popular forms like Rock and Roll had captured the Argentine attention. An immigrant from Buenos Aires, Piazzolla’s exposure to the art came at a very early age, performing alongside tango bands in his New York city home. Simultaneously taking classical music lessons and composition, he had aspirations to become a respected composer in the western classical style. A lesson with the famed composer Nadia Boulanger led to an interaction in which she suggested that Piazzolla further develop his tone in the tango style. He soon moved back to Buenos Aires, started several ensembles and produced hundreds of songs and arrangements. Blending traditional tango with modern tonality, jazz and even Jewish Klezmer music, Piazzolla’s Tango Nuevo was met with resistance at first. But after years of continuing to produce, perform and collaborate with musicians and artists around the world, his new style was accepted into the Argentinian music scene.

These tango etudes are again inspired by Bach and are not very well known or accepted in the Tango community. But in interviews, Piazzolla admitted that these Etudes were more or less meant to be as a sort of dictionary, a resource for musicians wanting to better understand the “tango nuevo” style. He also deeply relied on individual interpretation, staying with the improvisatory nature of tango music.

Polina Nazaykinskaya is an award winning composer and violinist whose works were introduced to me at an unusual time. During the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, I was fortunate enough to attend a presentation of hers as a part of one of my university classes. While we talked, she mentioned some new pieces that she had just composed, specifically designed for the isolation brought on by the pandemic. They were designed for a single violinist, relatively short, but showcased the expressive range and technical mastery of the instrument. Immediately intrigued, I asked and promptly received the music. I am currently completing a project to record all 5 of the previously composed caprices and to premiere a newly composed 6th caprice that she kindly offered in a recent exchange.