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Wei Wang

April 17th, 2012

Senior Honors Recital

by

Wei Wang

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An abstract of
a thesis submitted to the Faculty of Emory College of Arts and Sciences
of Emory University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of the degree of
Bachelor of Sciences with Honors

Department of Music

2012

Abstract

Senior Honors Recital

By Wei Wang

On Sunday, April 1st, 2012, Wei Wang performed the following works for flute at Emerson Concert Hall of Schwartz Center for Performing Arts: Sonata for Flute and Piano in D Major, op.92 by Sergei Prokofiev, Sonata for Flute and Piano by Francis Poulenc, Canonic Sonatina for Two Flutes, op.31 by Paul Hindemith, and Sonata for Flute and Piano by Lowell Liebermann. Dr. Elena Cholakova of the Music Department played the piano accompaniment for the works by Prokofiev and Liebermann, Dr. Guy Benian of the Pathology Department played the piano accompaniment for the work by Poulenc, and the Paul Hindemith piece was played by Wei Wang and Emory Artist Affiliate Carl Hall.

Senior honors Recital

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Thank you, mom, for your support and patience during my younger years as a musician. Thank you for driving me to my numerous rehearsals, lessons, camps, and competitions. Thank you to my siblings, Ashley and Arthur, for putting up with my obnoxious flute practicing over the past decade.

Thank you Elena, for your excellent work on the piano and making our rehearsals some of the most memorable musical experiences I've ever had. Our weekly rehearsals for the past two years will be amongst some of my most missed college memories.

Thank you Guy, for your hard work and diligence in perfecting the Poulenc Sonata. Thank you Dr. Thoreson, for your time, patience, and musical advice.

Thank you Dr. Stewart and Dr. Karnes, for your guidance throughout my musical career at Emory. My honors recital would not be possible without your support.

Thank you Akwasi, for your willingness to serve on my committee and your enthusiastic support of my musical career. I have enjoyed working in the lab with you for the past three years and wish you a successful journey ahead.

Thank you Carl Hall, for being the best teacher and a wonderful friend. I remember all the times I've laughed, cried, and complained during our lessons over the past four years, and I

forever thank you for your endless patience and understanding. Thank you for believing my in my abilities and potential, more than I do so myself.

Last of all, thank you to my wonderful friends, for always reminding me to live life to the fullest. I would not have survived my four years in college without you. Thank you to my boyfriend Chuan, my roommates Angela and Sarah, my classmates, Dan and my coworkers at the lab, and my ensemble colleagues, for your continual support for what I do.

Table of Contents

Program.....1

Program Notes

Sergei Prokofiev.....5

Francis Poulenc.....7

Paul Hindemith.....9

Lowell Liebermann.....11

MUSIC *at* EMORY

2011
2012



Wei Wang, flute
Senior Honors Recital

Elena Cholakova, piano; Guy Benian, piano; Carl Hall, flute

EMERSON CONCERT HALL
SCHWARTZ CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS
SUNDAY, APRIL 1, 2012, 2:00 P.M.

Program

Sonata for Flute and Piano in D Major	Sergei Prokofiev
I. <i>Moderato</i>	(1891–1953)
II. <i>Scherzo presto</i>	
III. <i>Andante</i>	
IV. <i>Allegro con brio</i>	
Elena Cholakova, piano	

—Intermission—

Sonata for Flute and Piano	Francis Poulenc
I. <i>Allegretto malinconico</i>	(1899–1963)
II. <i>Cantilena: Assez lent</i>	
III. <i>Presto giocoso</i>	
Guy Benian, piano	

Canonic Sonatina for Two Flutes	Paul Hindemith
I. <i>Munter</i>	(1895–1963)
II. <i>Capriccio</i>	
III. <i>Presto</i>	
Carl Hall, flute	

Sonata for Flute and Piano	Lowell Liebermann
I. <i>Lento</i>	(b. 1961)
II. <i>Presto</i>	
Elena Cholakova, piano	

Wei Wang

Wei Wang is a music and chemistry double major at Emory University. She began playing flute at age eleven and was chosen as a member of the Seminole County All-County Band and Florida All-State Bands as well as the Florida All-State Orchestra from 2002 to 2008, placing first chair in All-State Band for two years and first chair in All-County Band for five consecutive years. Wang was also one of two flutists in Florida selected to perform with the London Symphony Orchestra as part of youth outreach program during the 2007 Daytona Music Festival. During her seventh year of studying the flute, Wang became a finalist in the Florida Flute Fair Young Artists Competition in 2008. She is now a member of the Emory Wind Ensemble and the Emory University Symphony Orchestra. She is currently on a pre-medical education track, and upon completion of her undergraduate studies at Emory, she will attend medical school in Florida. An active member of the Emory community, Wang is an organic chemistry tutor for EPASS (Emory Pathways to Academic Success for Students), a research assistant at the Department of Pathology of the Whitehead Biomedical Research facility, a volunteer at Winship Cancer Institute, and a PACE adviser, and she serves as the co-philanthropy chair of Mu Phi Epsilon and as a member of Omicron Delta Kappa leadership and honors society.



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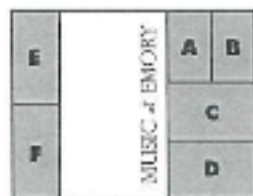
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Program Notes

Sergei Prokofiev (1881-1953) **Sonata for Flute and Piano in D Major, Op.94 (1944)**

Prokofiev was born in Sontsovka in 1881, a rural estate of the Russian Empire. Prokofiev's music career began at a young age, composing his first piano composition at the age of five. At the age of fourteen, he entered the Saint Petersburg Conservatory. Prokofiev's early compositions made extensive use of polytonality and are mostly highly chromatic and dissonant. He drew more upon classical as well as modern musical elements in his later compositions. After moving to the United States for a brief period of time during World War I, Prokofiev returned to the Soviet Union in 1936 only to face more chaos and unrest. A large number of artists were evacuated during the war because of the German invasion, including him. In addition, the government kept a constant censure of his works, resulting in many revisions.

In 1943, Prokofiev was optimistic about victories at the Russian front and left Moscow for an extended stay in the Ural Mountains. In this period of momentary peace, he composed his Sonata for Flute and Piano, Op.94. The Sonata bears little trace of the political conflict or personal disruptions in Prokofiev's life. Prokofiev describes the sonata's composition as: "Perhaps this was inappropriate at the moment, but pleasant. I had long wanted to write a work for the neglected flute, and I wanted this sonata to have a delicate, fluid classical style."

I was first exposed to this wonderful sonata in my senior year of high school. As a young and often impatient musician, I simply wanted to play everything as fast as possible, without stopping to reflect on the cleverness of Prokofiev's melodies and the richness of the supporting harmonies. The first movement develops two graceful melodic themes in a classical format

supported by harmonies filled with chromaticism. The second movement is a delightful and perpetual Scherzo, with a contrasting and contemplative melody in the middle. A short, but reflective Andante movement follows; this movement, along with the second movement of the Poulenc Sonata (which I will perform after intermission), is my favorite work to perform on the flute. As I play the simple melody at the beginning, I cannot help but feel an extreme sense of peace and nostalgia at the same time. The final movement is an exuberant march, perhaps as a tribute to the victories of the Soviet Union during the war.

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)
Sonata for Flute and Piano (1956)

Francis Poulenc's musical development started at the age of five, when his mother taught him how to play the piano and exposed him to popular operas of the time, such as ones written by Stravinsky. Poulenc did not attend a conservatory because of his father's insistence that he does not devote himself exclusively to music. However, Poulenc was introduced soon to his first piano teacher Ricardo Vines, who exposed him to the music of Debussy and Ravel- major composers who had an immense influence on Poulenc's later compositions.

Debussy's late instrumental sonatas had inspired Poulenc to write his own. Poulenc's Sonata for Flute and Piano is the first of three sonatas he wrote for piano and a wind instrument, each one dedicated to a friend. The flute sonata is dedicated to Elisabeth Sprague Coolidge, a great patroness of chamber music. The renowned flutist Jean-Pierre Rampal gave the premier performance of the Sonata during the Strasbourg Festival in 1956. This brief piece of work was described by composer as "simple but subtle", and contains all the hallmarks of Poulenc's style. All three movements of this piece contain abrupt shifts of mood from malicious to melancholy, incisive rhythms, and rich harmonies.

The first movement of this piece starts with an upbeat figure in the flute that precedes the main theme, and recurs in the last movement. My personal favorite is the second movement of the Sonata. The clarity, simplicity, and grace of the melody never fail to send chills down my spine. The third movement draws upon compositional techniques from Haydn to Stravinsky, with staccato rhythms permeating throughout the movement. A melancholy section reminiscent

of the first movement occurs in the middle, and provides contrast with the fast paced melodic drive towards the finish.

Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)
Canonic Sonatina for Two Flutes, Op.31 (1923)

Paul Hindemith was taught the violin as a child and studied violin, composition, conducting at a conservatory in Frankfurt. In 1922, some of his compositions caught much international attention at the International Society for Contemporary Music in Salzburg. This is around the time when he shifted from his late romantic style to a more contrapuntally complex style. Drawing upon elements of the contrapuntal language of Bach, Hindemith was a main contributor to the neoclassical style in the 1920's. Most of Hindemith's music is tonal but not diatonic, using the 12 notes of the chromatic scale freely rather than relying on a set number of notes from a diatonic scale.

Hindemith's Canonic Sonatina for Two Flutes is an excellent example of the above mentioned style of Hindemith. The first movement is in a moderate 12/8 time signature and starts with the predominant theme in the second flute, imitated a measure and a half later by the same repetition of the melody an interval of a major third above by the first flute. The second movement is a Capriccio that presents its main melody in the first flute, imitated by an interval of a major second below in the second flute. The exciting Presto movement is a canon at the major 5th. After a dynamically contrasting quiet section in the middle, the beginning melody returns in the first flute, imitated by a dissonant interval of a major 7th in the second flute. This Sonatina finally ends on rhythmic unison in both flutes, separated by an octave.

At first, I was confused as to how to approach this unique duet. For me, the melodic lines became very hard to distinguish as each movement progresses. Throughout the semester, I have

discovered that the main focus of this piece of work is the characterization of each movement, rather than the melodic focus. The first movement is titled “Munter (Merry)”, and indeed, its rhythmic meter and tempo do give it a characterization of a dance. The lively and imaginative personality of the second movement is conveyed through its staccato style markings and perpetually moving melodic lines in both flute parts. The final presto movement is a race to the finish, finally uniting the two combatting parts of the canon.

Lowell Liebermann (b.1961)
Sonata for Flute and Piano (1987)

Lowell Liebermann is an American composer, pianist and conductor. Liebermann performed in Carnegie Hall at the age of 16, and proceeded to gain his bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees from the Julliard School of Music. Liebermann is both a traditionalist and innovator; his compositions combine aspects of traditional tonality with adventurous harmonies, and usually require much technical command but gaining equal audience appeal. One of America's most frequently performed and recorded live composers, Liebermann also maintains an active schedule as a performing pianist.

Lieberman's Sonata for Flute and Piano was premiered by the renowned flutist Paula Robison at the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, South Carolina. Since then, this piece has gained much appeal to flutists worldwide due to its captivating character and virtuosic demands. This two-movement work is a true duet for the flute and piano, neither player was meant to dominate the other. The first movement begins with a transparent and steady melody that suddenly erupts in a figure of fervent energy, before settling down to the original theme at the end. The virtuosic character of the second movement is apparent throughout the piece; its perpetual motion pushes to the ending climax.

This sonata is the epitome of modern flute literature and constantly reminds me of my love for 20th century flute music. Having worked on this sonata for two semesters with my dedicated accompanist Elena Cholakova, the last movement of this sonata still remains as the bane of our existence. Never have I tackled anything so physically and emotionally demanding

as the last movement of this sonata, which is precisely why we have chosen this to be the final piece of my senior recital.