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Joseph Alan Zahn

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April 14, 2010

Senior Honors Recital

by

Joseph A. Zahn

Adviser

Richard Prior

Department of

Music

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Richard Prior  
Adviser

---

Shawn Pagliarini  
Committee Member

---

Kristin Wendland  
Committee Member

---

Darrell Stokes  
Committee Member

---

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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

2010

Abstract

Senior Honors Recital

By Joseph A. Zahn

On April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010, Joseph Zahn performed the following works at the Emerson Concert Hall of the Schwartz Center: Sonata II in A Minor, BWV 1003 by Johann Sebastian Bach, Sonata in F Major, op. 24 by Ludwig van Beethoven, *Havanaise*, op. 83 by Camille Saint-Saëns, and *Sonatensatz* by Johannes Brahms.

Senior Honors Recital

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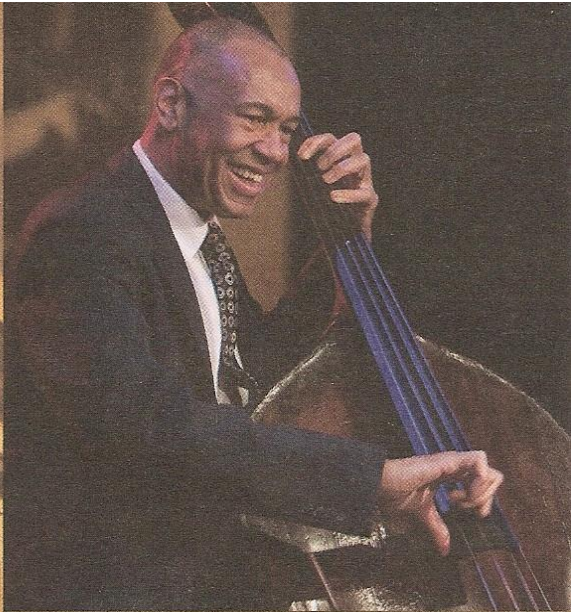
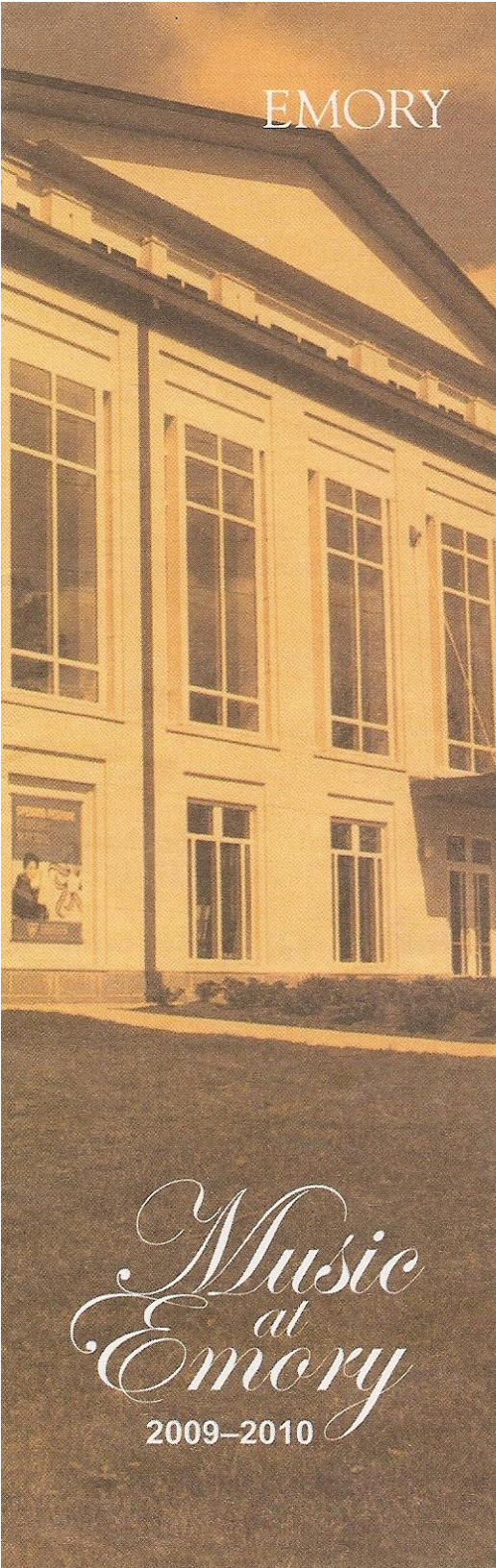
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Joseph Zahn, violin  
Senior Honors Recital

Laura Gordy, piano

EMERSON CONCERT HALL  
SCHWARTZ CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS  
SATURDAY, APRIL 10, 2010, 2:00 P.M.

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Program

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Sonata II in A Minor, BWV 1003	Johann Sebastian Bach
<i>Grave</i>	(1685–1750)
<i>Fuga</i>	
<i>Andante</i>	
<i>Allegro</i>	

—Intermission—

Sonata in F Major, op. 24	Ludwig van Beethoven
<i>Allegro</i>	(1770–1827)
<i>Adagio Molto Espressivo</i>	
<i>Scherzo</i>	
<i>Rondo-Allegro ma non troppo</i>	

<i>Havanaise</i> , op. 83	Camille Saint-Saëns
	(1835–1921)

<i>Sonatensatz</i>	Johannes Brahms
(Sonata Scherzo in C Minor, of the “F–A–E” Sonata)	(1833–1897)

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## Joseph Zahn, violin

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**J**oseph Zahn has been playing the violin since the age of three. The winner of the William E. Schmidt Youth Award and the Evansville Philharmonic Young Artists Competition, Zahn has soloed with the Evansville Philharmonic Orchestra. He has studied under Kathryn Savia, and currently studies with Shawn Pagliarini. Zahn is the Edward Goodwin Scruggs chair of the Emory University Symphony Orchestra. He will graduate this spring with a double major in music and applied mathematics, and he will attend medical school in the fall.



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THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC gratefully acknowledges the generous gift of musical instruments provided by the Dr. B. Woodfin Cobbs Jr. Music Endowment.

THE COUGH DROPS IN the lobby are courtesy of Margery and Robert McKay.

IN CONSIDERATION FOR OTHER members of the audience, please turn off all pagers and phones. Photographs and recordings may not be made during a performance without advance permission.

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I	E	I	A
	F		B
	G		C
	H		D

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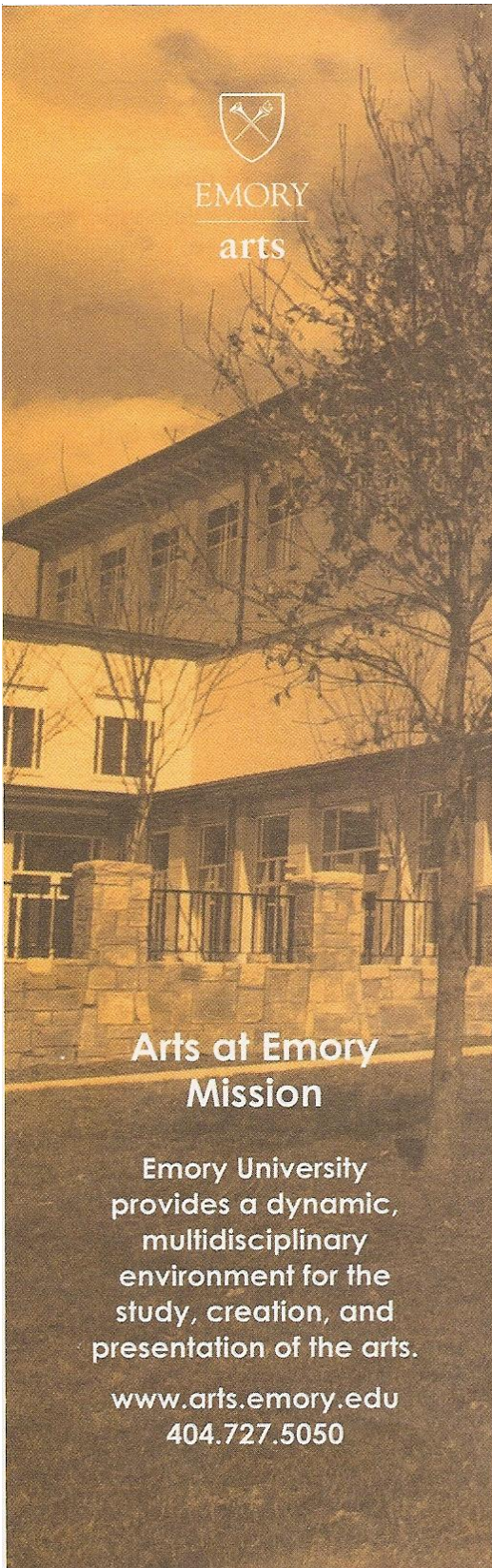
COVER PHOTO CREDITS: (A) John Clayton, bass, photo ©2008 John Clayton; (B) Emory Concert Choir; (C) Vega String Quartet, photo by Fernando Decillis; (D) Emory University Symphony Orchestra, photo by Nill Toulme; (E) Tamara and Timothy Albrecht; (F) Emory Wind Ensemble, photo by Richards Studio; (G) Christopher O'Riley, *From the Top* host and concert pianist and ten-year-old violinist Alice Ivy-Pemberton, photo by David Balsom/*From the Top*; (H) choral students in choreographed finale of *Barenaked Voices: Sixth Annual Emory Student A Cappella Concert*, photo by Maurice Duharte; (I) Schwartz Center, Emory University

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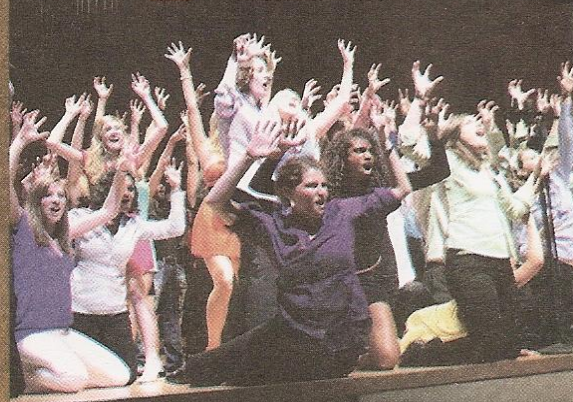
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### Program Notes

**Johann Sebastian Bach** was a master composer in the Baroque period. Known for his inventiveness, technical mastery, and intellectualism in music, Bach balanced these three creative aspects perfectly. His compositions were exceedingly varied in genre and style, perfecting Baroque contrapuntal techniques. His unique style and mastery continued to be appreciated in myriad ways throughout the generations, and his works are constantly interpreted and reinterpreted by individuals performing his pieces.

Bach's *Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin*, BWV 1001-1006 were completed in 1720 in the Cöthen court, where Bach was employed at the time. The Sonatas and Partitas, first published between 1817 and 1828, were composed during the same time period as the Brandenburg Concertos, violin and keyboard concertos, and the first part of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*. Bach often composed in cycles of six within a specific genre, including such works as his six Brandenburg Concertos, his six Trio Sonatas, and his six Suites for Solo Cello. His unaccompanied Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin are no exception. Bach chose to intersperse the three sonatas with three partitas in an alternating fashion. The Sonatas each consist of four movements, in a typical slow-fast-slow-fast pattern. The first two movements are a coupled prelude and fugue, the third movement is more lyrical, and the final movement is a binary structure. The only dance in his Sonatas, a *Siciliano*, is featured as the third movement of his first sonata in G minor. In contrast, the Partitas are less rigidly structured, but still use stylized dance movements typical of the baroque partita, including allemande, courante, sarabande, and gigue. Each of these partitas contain five to eight movements. Through these works, Bach demonstrates his understanding of violin technique, and his mastery of counterpoint within a single instrument.

The opening movement of the second Sonata in A minor, BWV 1003, is set in a *Grave* tempo. The nature of the slow tempo gives a drifting aspect to the melody, which contains highly contrasting rhythms and flourishes punctuating the minor mode. The *Grave* ends as the prelude to the next movement, the *Fugue*. As the largest and most complex of the movements, the Fugue weaves an intricate counterpoint as it pushes forward. The third movement, the *Andante*, changes to the key of C Major, and features more homophony than the previous movements. The work ends with a vivacious and light *Allegro*, which returns the piece to A minor.

**Ludwig van Beethoven** (1770-1827) is one of the “greats” of classical music. Many historians believe Beethoven created the bridge between the Classical and Romantic periods of music. Pieces such as his *Symphony No. 1 in C Major*, have a distinct classical style, while pieces such as his *Ninth Symphony in D Minor* are among the most emotionally intense pieces of all his works. Beethoven's genius for pushing the classical limits of form and harmony especially influenced such well-known composers in the romantic style as Tchaikovsky, Mendelssohn, Wagner, and Brahms. One of Beethoven's most well-known pieces is his *Violin Sonata No. 5 in F Major*, Opus 24, also known as the “Spring Sonata.” During the Classical Period, it was common to see a sonata titled “Piano Sonata with Violin as Accompaniment.” This trend was first broken by Mozart, when he began to give both the violin and piano equal importance, instead of a purely accompanimental violin part. Beethoven continued this trend into the Spring Sonata, where he treats the violin and piano as equals.

The first movement, *Allegro*, starts with the violin stating the main theme. The piano softly accompanies the violin, instantly creating the melody and characteristic calm which give rise to its nickname, "Spring Sonata." After the initial statement, the piano takes over the melody, while the violin plays the accompaniment. This exchange of melody and accompaniment between the instruments continues throughout the movement. The flowing melody and serenity of this movement are the characteristics which give the piece its nickname, "Spring Sonata." The second movement, *Adagio Molto Espressivo*, is reminiscent of a traditional lullaby with its slower pace and poised arpeggiation throughout. The third movement, the *Scherzo*, lasts little more than a minute and lives up to the joking nature of its title. The piano begins with the primary motive, which features a quick, short rhythm. The violin echoes it directly, giving the illusion that the violin is chasing the piano. The fourth and final movement, the *Rondo-Allegro ma non troppo*, features another lyrical, flowing melody.

Beethoven's Spring Sonata ranks among his finest works. This charming piece brings out the best in both the violin and piano, and its adherence to a classical style phrase structure and proportions accentuates why Beethoven is one of the greatest composers of the Classical Period.

**Camille Saint-Saëns** was a French composer, pianist, organist and writer. Often compared to Mozart for his childhood virtuosity, he was a versatile performer and a brilliant and prolific composer who made vast contributions to all aspects and genres of French music. He is often credited with being a leader of the French musical renaissance of the 1870s.

The son of a ministerial clerk and a house-wife, Saint-Saëns was raised by his mother, Clemence. His father Jacques died three months after Saint-Saëns' birth. He was taught piano from a young age and entered the Paris Conservatoire in 1848, where he studied organ with Benoist. It was here that he began to compose. Saint-Saëns had a short-lived marriage in 1875 to the 19-year-old Mari-Laure Truffot. They had two sons together, but both died tragically six weeks apart in 1878. Saint-Saëns continued to perform, teach, and compose throughout France and later, as his influence as a composer in France waned, in England and the United States until his death in 1921.

Camille Saint-Saëns' *Havanaise in E Major* was composed in 1887. It represents the late 19th century's obsession with exoticism, specifically the French fascination with Spanish music. Saint-Saëns's *Havanaise* is based on the Spanish *habanera*. A slow Cuban song and dance of African origin, the *habanera* became exceedingly popular in Spain during this time period. A typical *habanera* is characterized by a simple duple meter and dotted rhythm. Other well-known adaptations of the rhythm include the *habanera* in Bizet's opera *Carmen* "L'Amour est un oiseau rebelle," and the *habanera* for two performers by Ravel, later written into his *Rapsodie Espagnole* for orchestra.



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Like Bizet's *habanera*, Saint-Saëns' *Havanaise* features a seductive melody and wide emotional range, as well as a touch of virtuosity. The *Havanaise*, while originally written for solo violin with piano accompaniment, became exceedingly popular, and it has been adapted for performance by flute as well.

In 1853, **Johannes Brahms** began a concert tour of Germany, when he met the great violinist Joseph Joachim. At first intimidated by Joachim's renown, Brahms warmed to Joachim when he began to play some of his recent compositions at the piano. Joachim, in turn, was astounded by Brahms. "Brahms has an altogether exceptional talent for composition, a gift which is further enhanced by the unaffected modesty of his character. His playing, too, gives every presage of a great artistic career, full of fire and energy.... In brief, he is the most considerable musician of his age that I have ever met (Erb 11)." The following summer, Brahms and Joachim met often in Göttingen to discuss music, play together, and study scores. During this time Joachim discovered Brahms' wish to tour the Rhine Valley. He gave Brahms letters of introduction, including one to Robert and Clara Schumann in Düsseldorf. Brahms spent time in Düsseldorf, where he came to know another composer, Albert Dietrich. Joachim was scheduled to visit Düsseldorf in October of that year to premiere Schumann's *Fantasy for Violin and Orchestra*, Opus 131, for the Music Festival of the Lower Rhine. In order to celebrate and surprise Joachim, Schumann, Dietrich, and Brahms collaborated on a sonata, called the "F.A.E." Sonata after a motto of Joachim's: *Frei aber einsam* (Free but alone). Dietrich composed the opening movement, Schumann composed the intermezzo and finale, and Brahms composed the scherzo. The composers of each movement were kept secret from Joachim as an added surprise. Joachim enjoyed the gift, and after playing the entire Sonata correctly named the composer of each movement. He kept the score his entire life and only allowed it to be published in 1906.

The Scherzo is Brahms' earliest extant work for violin and piano. It follows a traditional composite three-part form of Scherzo-Trio-Scherzo. It begins with a turbulent C minor motive that pervades both outer sections, with a contrasting lyrical middle section for the Trio. Characteristic of Brahms' style, the movement uses rich harmonic structures, lively rhythms, including his signature hemiola, and full instrumental textures. Schumann would later write of Brahms on October 23, 1853 in his article "New Paths" from *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* ("New Journal for Music"), "I thought that sooner or later someone would and must appear, destined to give ideal expression to the spirit of the times.... And he has come, a young blood at whose cradle Graces and Heroes kept watch. His name is Johannes Brahms."

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