

## **Distribution Agreement**

In presenting this thesis as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for a degree from Emory University, I hereby grant to Emory University and its agents the non-exclusive license to archive, make accessible, and display my thesis in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter now, including display on the World Wide Web. I understand that I may select some access restrictions as part of the online submission of this thesis. I retain all ownership rights to the copyright of the thesis. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of this thesis.

Amanda Melton

April 9, 2018

Program for Harp Honors Recital

by

Amanda Melton

Richard Prior, AMusD

Adviser

Department of Music

Richard Prior, AMusD

Adviser

Paul Bhasin, DMA

Committee Member

Noelle Giguere, Ph.D.

Committee Member

Elisabeth Remy Johnson

Committee Member

2018

Program for Senior Honors Harp Recital

By

Amanda Melton

Richard Prior, AMusD

Adviser

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 Arts with Honors

Department of Music

2018

## Abstract

### Program for Senior Honors Harp Recital

By Amanda Melton

This is a comprehensive program of repertoire that strives to capture both the essence of the harp and performer, while fulfilling the requirements for the honors program. Each piece plays a specific and vital role in a program, designed to show the harp's large range of capabilities. J.S. Bach's partitas are challenging and require incredible facility from the performer, while also capturing the qualities of Baroque music on a modern instrument. *Fantaisie for Harp* is Marcel Grandjany's virtuosic rendition on a theme of Joseph Haydn, a prominent composer of the Classical period. The composition brilliantly blends both classical and romantic elements into one beautiful piece. Pierné's *Impromptu-Caprice* includes sheer technicality combined with flashy elements, making it a favorite among harpists for over a century. Maurice Ravel's *Introduction and Allegro* is also frequently performed by harpists, and is widely considered to be a staple in every accomplished harpist's repertoire. Ravel was able to take full advantage of all the harmonic abilities of the new double action pedal harp to create a breathtaking work that helped bring the harp into prominence at the beginning of the twentieth century. Grandjany's took Manuel de Falla's sophisticated orchestration from his opera *La Vida Breve*, and created a dazzling work for solo harp. Carlos Salzedo is perhaps the most influential and revered harpist of all time. Alongside Grandjany, he helped to redefine what was expected from harpists. One of his major works, *Scintillation*, includes an extensive glissando section, a technique the harp is known for, as well as other moments containing the scintillating flashes of light the title promises. All of these pieces together create a journey through advanced harp literature, showcasing the capabilities of both the instrument and the performer.

Program for Senior Honors Harp Recital

By

Amanda Melton

Richard Prior, AMusD

Adviser

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 Arts with Honors

Department of Music

2018

## Table of Contents

Front Cover.....	pg.1
Program.....	pg.2
Program Notes.....	pg.3
Performer Biography.....	pg.5

**AMANDA MELTON, HARP  
SENIOR HONORS RECITAL**

SUNDAY, APRIL 8, 2018, 5:00 P.M

EMERSON CONCERT HALL  
SCHWARTZ CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS

## PROGRAM

*Partita No. 3 in A minor, BWV 827*

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

transc. by Maria Luisa Rayan-Forero

I. Fantasia

II. Allemande

VI. Scherzo

VII. Gigue

*Fantaisie for Harp on a Theme of Haydn*

Marcel Grandjany (1891-1975)

*Impromptu-Caprice, Op. 9*

Gabriel Pierné (1863-1937)

### Intermission

*Introduction & Allegro*

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Patricia Dinkins-Matthews, piano

*Spanish Dance No. 1*

Manuel de Falla (1876-1946)

transc. by Marcel Grandjany

*Scintillation*

Carlos Salzedo (1885-1961)



## **PROGRAM NOTES**

### ***Partita No. 3 in A minor***

J.S. Bach is regarded as the most prominent figure of the Baroque era, as well as one of the most prolific composers of all time. His partitas, originally written for keyboard, are truly a demonstration of his musical mastery. They were transcribed for harp by internationally renowned harpist Maria Luisa Rayan-Forero. Having performed most of the available harp literature, Ms. Rayan-Forero developed a keen interest in expanding the repertoire for the harp. This led her to research and transcribe music, including Bach's Partitas.

The partitas are the most technically demanding of Bach's works. Partitas are a collection of contrasting movements in a dance character. The partitas have a tone-setting opening movement, followed by a variety of dance numbers, and usually end with a gigue. J.N. Forkel, a German musicologist and Bach enthusiast stated that the partitas "caused quite a sensation among his contemporaries in the world of music; such splendid keyboard compositions had never previously been seen or heard. Whoever learned to perform any of these pieces to a high standard could make his fortune in the world." Bach's partitas are challenging and require incredible facility from the performer, thus showing off Bach's capabilities both with the quill, and at the keyboard.

### ***Fantaisie for Harp on a Theme of Haydn***

Marcel Grandjany is remembered today as one of the world's most impactful harpists and composers. Grandjany was an important musical figure not only as a composer, but also as a

teacher and a performer. He was a child prodigy who, at the young age of thirteen, won the Premier Prix, a highly sought after musical diploma awarded by European music conservatories. Grandjany worked extensively in both France and America, although today he is considered a French harpist.

*Fantaisie for Harp* is a virtuosic rendition on a theme of Joseph Haydn, a prominent composer of the Classical period. A great deal of the work during the Classical era did not have all the specific markings the modern day performer might expect. Composers such as Haydn and Mozart wrote in more specific dynamic and articulation markings than most others of their era. However, there is still a great deal that is left up to the interpretation of the performer and it is sometimes difficult for modern musicians to authentically capture the 18<sup>th</sup> century vision. This arrangement by Grandjany starts with a dazzling introduction, followed by a simple, yet elegant statement of Haydn's theme. The piece then moves into Grandjany's romantic interpretation of the classical refrain, brilliantly blending the two styles together.

### ***Impromptu-Caprice, Op. 9***

Gabriel Pierné was a French composer, organist, and world-renowned conductor. He won the Prix de Rome, a prestigious music scholarship, in 1882. Pierné was an important figure in the French musical world during the Romantic period, and his contributions had a lasting effect on subsequent composers. There is even a Gabriel Pierné Square in Paris, in his honor.

*Impromptu-Caprice* is his only work for solo harp. The piece was commissioned for the yearly public exam at the Paris Conservatory in 1900, but Pierné had started the composition years earlier. An impromptu is usually a work for a solo instrument, and is designed to give the

impression that the performer is improvising on the spot. This is done through the avoidance of any particular style or form, thus giving freedom to both the composer and the performer. A caprice is a light and lively musical style, often associated with fantasias. Together, these terms depict a piece that is free, fun, and whimsical. The sheer technicality combined with flashy elements have made *Impromptu-Caprice* a favorite among harpists for over a century.

### ***Introduction & Allegro***

Maurice Ravel was deeply musical from a young age, and began his studies at the Paris Conservatoire at age fourteen. He studied under Gabriel Fauré, another prominent French composer. Ravel's work was mature and advanced even in his early years. However, accomplished as he was, he was never able to win the highly esteemed Prix de Rome, though many of his contemporaries did achieve this. His submitted compositions were considered too advanced by some of the judges. After three failed tries, Ravel was popular enough that his loss caused protests. This led to the resignation of the director of the Conservatoire, who was replaced by Fauré.

Ravel's *Introduction and Allegro* is frequently performed by harpists, and is widely considered to be a staple in every accomplished harpist's repertoire. The piece was commissioned shortly after Debussy's harp concerto *Danse sacrée et danse profane* premiered, and was designed to show off the capabilities of the new double action pedal harp. Ravel was able to take full advantage of all the harmonic abilities of the new instrument to create a breathtaking work that helped bring the harp into prominence at the beginning of the twentieth century.

### ***Spanish Dance No. 1***

Manuel de Falla was one of Spain's most influential composers. His works have many nationalist elements and are regarded as a strong representation of Spanish culture. His early influences were Spanish church music, folk music and native opera. Falla was also influenced by Impressionism when he travelled to Paris, particularly by the orchestration of Maurice Ravel. In 1905, Falla won the Real Academia de Bellas Artes' Composition Competition with his opera *La Vida Breve*, though it did not officially premiere until 1913.

Grandjany's transcription of *Spanish Dance* is from *La Vida Breve*. Many of Falla's largely instrumental operas contain sophisticated orchestrations that have since been transcribed for various solo instruments. In fact, these individual works from within the opera are performed more regularly than the full opera. *Spanish Dance* is about the tragic love story of a young woman who is abandoned by her love for someone wealthier. The dance motif at the beginning reappears throughout the piece, but is always adorned differently, avoiding a direct repeat. The melody alludes to the frustrations and sorrow of the young lady, before the dramatic, presto finale, that seems to emulate the heartbreaking passion of this young woman.

### ***Scintillation***

Carlos Salzedo is perhaps the most influential and revered harpist of all time. Alongside Grandjany, he helped to redefine what was expected from harpists. Though born in France, Salzedo moved to New York at age twenty-five and created his legacy in the States. While other harpists had previously explored the harp's capabilities, no one went into as much depth and detail as Salzedo. His compositions and two method books were some of the first to

demonstrate a thorough and detailed exploration of the modern harp. Salzedo penned countless works that have since become essential pieces in the harp world.

*Scintillation* is one such work. It was heavily inspired by Salzedo's trip to Central and South America in 1936. The style and rhythms exhibit this Latin flavor. There are many different dance styles present throughout the piece such as the sarabande, rumba, and tango. There is an extensive glissando section, a technique the harp is known for, as well as other moments containing the scintillating flashes of light the title promises. Not unlike Bach, Salzedo wrote *Scintillation* as a virtuosic testimony to his own talent as a composer and performer, and it continues to be a challenging masterpiece for the modern harpist.

## Performer Biography

Amanda Melton is a senior at Emory University, pursuing a degree in music performance for the harp. She was the runner up in Emory's Annual Concerto and Aria Competition last fall, performing Ravel's *Introduction and Allegro*. She was also the winner of the concerto competition at Kennesaw State University in 2014, playing Handel's *Harp Concerto in B flat*.

This past summer, Amanda was a counselor at the Young Artist's Harp Seminar, where she worked with harpists from across the country. In previous years, Amanda was a student at the Seminar, and won first place in both the Concerto and Orchestra Competitions.

Amanda began harp lessons at age seven under the direction of Susan Bennett Brady. Throughout high school, she also worked extensively with Linda Wood Rollo in Saratoga, California. Amanda currently studies with Elisabeth Remy Johnson.

In addition to the harp, Amanda also performs regularly on the piano and violin. A fourth generation piano teacher, she maintains her own private music studio on all three instruments.

Amanda is a member of the Emory University Symphony Orchestra and the Emory Wind Ensemble. Upon completion of her senior honor's project, Amanda plans to travel the world and continue her musical endeavors.