

UNIVERSITY of VIRGINIA
MCINTIRE DEPARTMENT of **music**



presents

A Distinguished Major Recital

Eugene Choo

violin

Saturday, March 18, 2023

3:30 pm

Old Cabell Hall

University of Virginia

***This recital is supported by the
Charles S. Roberts Scholarship Fund.***

Established in 2004 by the generosity of Mr. Alan Y. Roberts ('64) and Mrs. Sally G. Roberts, the Charles S. Roberts Scholarship Fund underwrites the private lessons and recital costs for undergraduate music majors giving a recital in their fourth year as part of a Distinguished Major Program in music.

Recital Program

Eugene Choo, *violin*

Violin Sonata No. 2 in A minor, BWV 1003

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

- I. Grave
- III. Andante
- IV. Allegro

Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 28

Camille Saint-Saëns
(1835-1921)

Shelby Sender, piano

~ Intermission ~

Violin Sonata in A Major

César Franck
(1822 - 1890)

- I. Allegretto ben moderato
- II. Allegro
- III. Ben moderato: Recitativo-Fantasia
- IV. Allegretto poco mosso

Shelby Sender, piano

About the Performers



Eugene Choo has appeared with the Baltimore Philharmonia Orchestra, Manassas Symphony Orchestra, Battlefield Philharmonia Orchestra, and the Piedmont Symphony Orchestra as a soloist. His music education includes having studied both violin and piano at the Peabody Preparatory School, violin with Mr. Ricardo Cyncynates (National Symphony Orchestra), piano with Dr. Artur Aksenov (Levine School of Music), violin with Prof. David Salness (UMD), violin with Dr. John Irrera (VT), and currently studying violin with Dr. Daniel Sender (UVA).

Eugene won prizes from the American Protégé International Concerto Competition (violin & piano), the Annual Joseph and Goldie Feder Memorial String Competition and received the Goldie B. Feder Award (for overall achievement and outstanding musicianship), Asian American Music Society International Competition (violin & piano), Cogen Concerto Competition (piano), The Korea Times Newspaper Music Competition (violin & piano), YMIC International Competition (violin), MTNA Virginia Young Artist Strings Competition, and the AFAF Golden Era of Romantic Music International Competition (violin). He had the opportunity to perform

with the Piano Guys and has performed at internationally acclaimed concert venues such as The Kennedy Center, National Theatre, National Gallery of Art, Shakespeare Theatre, Hylton Performing Arts Center, Moss Arts Center, Carnegie Hall, and Strathmore.

Eugene was the concertmaster of the Youth Symphony Orchestra of Prince William, Battlefield Philharmonia Orchestra, New River Valley Symphony Orchestra, principal of the Summit Music Festival Orchestra, guest principal of the Charlottesville Symphony, co-concertmaster of the American Youth Philharmonic Orchestra, and currently the conductor of the Cavalier Symphony Orchestra.

A 4th year undergraduate at the University of Virginia, currently double majoring in Biology and Music with a minor in Foreign Affairs, Eugene is the Chair of the Rules and Ethics Board of the UVA Student Council, Chief Financial Officer of The Virginia Medical Review, Program Director/Tax Preparer of Madison House's CASH program, a Finance Staffer of the Cavalier Daily, Peer Financial Counselor of UVA's Student Financial Services, an intern with UVA's Student Legal Services, an undergraduate researcher in the Pharmacology Department (within the UVA School of Medicine), substitute DJ of the WXTJ 100.1 FM student radio station, and a volunteer with the local Fire Department.



Shelby Sender received her Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Piano Performance at the University of Maryland in 2013. She is active as both a solo and collaborative pianist. She has performed at both the Hungarian Embassy in Washington, D.C., and the Hungarian Ambassador's Residence. A faculty member of Crescendo, a classical music festival located in Tokaj, Hungary each summer, she is also a co-founder and the accompanist for Mosaic Children's Choir in Charlottesville. In March 2012, she performed in Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall

as a part of the Adamant School of Music's 70th Anniversary Concert. Shelby was featured in a 2011 festival at Ithaca College commemorating the 200th anniversary of Franz Liszt's birth, and she recently gave world premieres of works by Walter Giesecking at the American Musicological Society's 2009 annual conference. She frequently works with the Charlottesville Opera as well as Victory Hall Opera and has appeared on multiple occasions with the Annapolis Chamber Players. She can be heard on a Centaur recording of unpublished works by Walter Giesecking, playing both solo and chamber music.

In 2018, Dr. Sender was sent by the Sister Cities Commission to Pleven Bulgaria to represent Charlottesville in concert. She studied during the 2010/2011 academic year under Kálmán Dráfi at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest. She gave performances in Bartók Hall at the Institute for Musicology and the Régi Zeneakadémia at the Franz Liszt Memorial House and Museum in Hungary, as well as the Haus der Kulturen der Welt and the Universität der Kunste in Berlin.

Shelby received her Master of Music degree from the University of Maryland and her Bachelor of Music degree from Ithaca College. She is the co-founder for Mosaic Children's Choir, a group that incorporates movement, drama, dance, and performs in non-traditional spaces. Until recently, she was the coordinator for the class piano program at the University of Maryland, where she also taught class piano and gave private lessons to piano minors. She currently maintains a private studio in Central Virginia and works as the choral and orchestral pianist at St. Anne's-Belfield in Charlottesville. Recent teachers include Bradford Gowen, Read Gainsford, and Jennifer Hayghe.

Program Notes



Violin Sonata No. 2 in A minor, BWV 1003 Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 - 1750)

Johann Sebastian Bach, a devout Christian born youngest of eight, was a German composer and multi-instrumentalist of the late baroque period. Bach's Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin is widely recognized as the "Bible" of the violin and is universally acknowledged as one of the standard repertoire for strings. Despite Bach's recognition and adoration now, at one point, his manuscripts were used as wrapping paper. (Unfortunately, we may never know how much of Bach's compositions were lost.) After Mendelssohn's performance of the "St Matthew Passion" (in the early 19th century), Bach's music started to gain more reputation, fame, and traction.

As Bach's works are predominantly empty of markings (common practice during his time), this gives the performers the freedom to choose and reinvent the music to one's stylistic choices. The scarcity of dynamic markings, articulations, and the use of specific harmonizations/motifs/counterpoint further adds to the endless possibilities of interpretation. This particular sonata effortlessly interconnects movements with one another, creating a seamless musical flow of ideas. Bach's compositions are harmonically easy to understand and due to the nature of his contrapuntal style, his music is often very transparent and open. Bach's work requires performers to have an intricate balance of technique, insight, cognizance, and execution.

The first movement (Grave) of the A minor sonata begins with a melancholic opening, which is densely ornamented, helps set the overall tone/ambience for the entire sonata, and brings fluidity within the melodic line. As anticipated, in the fugue (Fuga), multiple voices are interweaving in and out creating a wave of musical contour where each voice takes turns shepherding the melodic line. The fugue is filled with contrapuntal motions, leaps, chromaticism, and other extensive techniques that help develop the fugal and contrapuntal motion. The Andante's lyrical range brings a sense of temporary suspension from the intensity of the fugue. The consistent pulse felt through the movement gives a delicate, but airy feeling that bridges the gap between the densely packed fugue and the grandeur/brilliance of the allegro. The Allegro concludes the piece with vitality and radiance that persists throughout the virtuosic movement. Within those brilliant passages, Bach manages to further expand the range through the use of mirroring, echos, and (surprisingly) dynamics which help manipulate the flow.



Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 28 Camille Saint-Saëns (1835 - 1921)

Camille Saint-Saëns, a French composer and pianist/organist of the Romantic era, was a born prodigy raised by his widowed mother. Even before he turned 10, he wrote music, gave numerous public performances/recitals, and was fluent in multiple languages. In 1848, Saint-Saëns (age 13) was admitted to the Paris Conservatoire, the most prestigious music academy in France, and studied under François Benoist (his pupil includes César Franck). Saint-Saëns not only excelled in music, but was exceptional in other subject areas, including mathematics, literature, and foreign languages (such as Latin).

Fascinated by Spanish music, Saint-Saëns composed his *1st Violin Concerto*, *3rd Violin Concerto*, and *Introduction & Rondo Capriccioso* in dedication to Pablo de Sarasate, a Spanish violinist and composer whom he had a close relationship with. Sarasate performed *Introduction & Rondo Capriccioso* at the premiere in April of 1867, alongside Saint-Saëns as the conductor. Some of his most famous works include *Danse Macabre*, *the Organ Symphony*, and *Carnival of the Animals*, which was written as a joke initially. Worried that *Carnival of the Animals* would damage his reputation/stature as a composer, it was not published until 1922, a year after his death. However, this piece was a huge success, is one of his most celebrated works, and is considered a pinnacle of his humorous/satirical musical masterwork.

The beginning of the piece starts off with slow, pensive, and somber (broken) chords played by the piano, while the violin opens with the melody in a wistful tone. Gradually, as the harmonic motion increases, the music becomes more animated and theatrical. After a short cadenza, the Rondo section ensues after a series of electrifying trills. The syncopations, flourishes, and arpeggios in this section give a conspicuous Spanish aura that enraptures and contributes to a playful atmosphere. In the midst of the rondo, a nostalgic melody interrupts the grandiose, fast-paced arpeggiations with a gorgeous/lyrical tune, which gives both the performer and the audience space/time to recoup between the virtuosic sections. The rondo ends with a dramatic high "E" which is followed by a triple-stop cadenza passage filled with suspense and satisfaction. The coda then begins with a dazzling flourish of scales and arpeggios that creates an invigorating closure to this showpiece!



**Violin Sonata in A Major
César Franck (1822 - 1890)**

César Franck, also known as César-Auguste Jean-Guillaume Hubert Franck, was a French romantic composer and pianist/organist born in (modern-day) Belgium. He spent most of his life in Paris as an organist at the Basilica of St. Clotilde for over 30 years and as a professor at the prestigious Paris Conservatoire.

Although most of his works have been overlooked and forgotten, his *Violin Sonata in A Major* continues to remain prominent and beloved by all. Written in 1886 as a wedding present for Eugène Ysaÿe and Louise Bourdeau, on the day of the wedding, Ysaÿe and Marie-Léontine Bordes-Pène hastily rehearsed the piece and performed the sonata to the guests at the wedding. Several months later, a public performance took place at the Musée Moderne de Peinture in Brussels with Ysaÿe and Bordes-Pène as the performers once again.

In the first movement, originally intended to be played slowly, Ysaÿe persuaded Franck to reconsider and had him mark it "Allegretto ben moderato." The thematic material, unique rhythmic textures, and harmonic progression are introduced all under an intimate/infatuating timbre. As expected of "Allegro," the second movement opens with ardor, hast, and spirit supported by a tempestuous piano toccata which further adds to the dramatization. The third movement has some rhapsodical musical aspects concentrated on rumination and introspection that contrasts remarkably with the previous movement. The free-flowing canon between the violin and piano in the last movement starts with refined elegance and fervor. As the tune presses on, an effervescent and irrepressible tune shimmers in the midst of all the drama alluding back to prior movements ending with a flurry of trills and a low "A."

This sonata, suffused with elegance, drama, anguish, and a concoction of other characters, brings life to a narrative that adds to the ebb and flow of the music. Alternating between slow and fast movements, Franck manages to retain the intensity of the motif with a skillful application of modulations, ceaseless thematic lines, and a beautiful execution of cyclic form fit for a wedding present for Eugène Ysaÿe.

Acknowledgements

It has been incredibly difficult for me to find the right words to express my feelings of appreciation and thankfulness in writing to those who have been with me along my musical journey.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Daniel Sender for helping me go above and beyond the written score and as a musician. Thank you so much for your mentorship, patience, honesty, and unwavering support you have given to me during my time at UVA. I am profoundly grateful to have you as my violin professor and will never forget all the things you have taught me!

Professor Rous, thank you so much for serving as my DMP advisor this academic year and for making time to help me despite your busy schedule! Your endless knowledge, leadership, and passion for music shown throughout orchestra rehearsals have influenced/motivated me to try conducting (still working on it) and strive to be a more informed performer.

Dr. Shelby Sender, thank you for making me sound so much better than I truly am! I sincerely appreciate you for making time to rehearse with me, and for showing your kindness, zeal, and guidance during rehearsals! I am incredibly thankful that I got to work with you and look forward to working with you again in the future!

Last but not least, thank you mom and dad for your endless love, compassion, wisdom, and for cheering me on through thick and thin. Thank you so much for giving me rides to and from concerts/lessons/rehearsals multiple times throughout the week, feeding me, putting your trust in me, supporting my musical career, and for enduring my practice sessions at home (sorry for the cacophonous noise I make during practice) when I was younger. I am forever grateful for all that you have done for me, without which I would not have been able to reach the heights of success and be where I am today!

Thank you so much for coming, and I hope you enjoy the performance! :)

Distinguished Major Program

The Distinguished Major Program allows outstanding music majors to work on large-scale projects during their last two semesters at the University. The project may consist of a thesis, a composition, or the performance of a full recital; a project that combines these components is also possible.

Majors normally apply to the program during their sixth semester. After a preliminary discussion with the Director of Undergraduate Programs (DUP), a student arranges supervision by a main advisor and two other committee members, and submits a proposal to the DUP and Department Chair. Each spring, the DUP announces detailed application procedures and a deadline. Work on the Distinguished Major project normally takes place through three credits of independent work in the last two semesters at the University.

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