



HOPKINS CENTER
FOR THE ARTS

presents

SARAH CHANG *violin*
JULIO ELIZALDE *piano*

Post-Performance Discussion

You are invited to remain in the theater immediately following the performance for an informal discussion with the artists.

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Wednesday, February 3, 2016 • 7 pm

Spaulding Auditorium • Dartmouth College

PROGRAM

Romanian Folk Dances for Violin and Piano, Sz. 56

Béla Bartók (1881-1945)
Arranged by Zoltán Székely

Sonata No. 3 for Violin and Piano in D minor, Op. 108

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Allegro

Adagio

Un poco presto e con sentimento

Presto agitato

• INTERMISSION •

Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major, FWV 8

César Franck (1822-1890)

Allegretto ben moderato

Allegro

Recitativo-Fantasia: Ben moderato

Allegretto poco mosso

Tzigane, Rapsodie de Concert for Violin and Piano

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

PROGRAM NOTES

Romanian Folk Dances, Sz. 56

Béla Bartók (1881-1945)

Composed in 1915.

Around 1905, during the difficult, poverty-ridden years after he completed his studies at the Liszt Conservatory in Budapest, Bartók was invited by a friend to spend a few days in the country. On the trip, he chanced to overhear one of the servant girls singing a strange and intriguing song while going about her chores. He asked her about the melody and was told that the girl's mother had taught it to her, as her grandmother had passed it on a generation before, and that there were many more such songs. Bartók encouraged her to sing the others that she knew, and he soon realized that this sturdy folk music was little related to the slick Gypsy airs and dances of the city cafés that had long passed for indigenous Hungarian music. He determined that he would discover all he could about the peasant music of his own and neighboring lands, and many

of the years of the rest of his life were given over to collecting, cataloging and evaluating this vast heritage. American musicologist Milton Cross characterized the music that Bartók discovered: "The melody was severe, patterned after the rise and ebb, the inflection, of Hungarian speech; the rhythms were irregular; the tonality reached back to the modes of the church. It was savage music: intense, passionate, strong and uninhibited. Nothing quite like it could be found anywhere else."

The style of this folk music immediately affected Bartók's mode of composition. While his larger concert works display the essence of folk songs rather than quoting them directly, some of the smaller ones are based faithfully on the models. Such is the case with this invigorating little set of *Romanian Folk Dances*. They were first arranged for solo piano in 1915 and orchestrated three years later. The arrangement for violin and piano

PROGRAM NOTES CONTINUED

is by Zoltán Székely, who concertized frequently with Bartók in the 1920s and 1930s, and whose Hungarian Quartet championed and recorded the composer's chamber works. Bartók collected the melodies for the six brief movements between 1909 and 1914, and set them in an almost unaltered fashion, adding mainly the enriched but characteristic harmonic background. The tunes for the first and fourth sections he heard played by a Gypsy violinist; for movements five and six, by a Romanian peasant fiddler; and for two and three, by a peasant on a rustic flute. The dances are mostly fast in tempo and fiery in nature, though the two at the center of the set are slow and sinuous. The composer voiced his opinion of the exceptional quality of this village music with the words, "Folk melodies are a real model of the highest artistic perfection. To my mind, on a small scale, they are masterpieces, just as much as, in the world of larger forms, a fugue by Bach or a Mozart sonata."

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Sonata No. 3 in D minor, Op. 108

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Composed in 1886-1888. Premiered on December 22, 1888, in Cologne, with Jenő Hubay as violinist and the composer as pianist.

For many years, Brahms followed the sensible practice of the Viennese gentry by abandoning the city when the weather got hot. He spent many happy summers in the hills and lakes of the Salzkammergut, east of Salzburg, but in 1886 his friend Joseph Widmann, a poet and librettist of considerable distinction, convinced Brahms to join him in the ancient Swiss town of Thun, 25 kilometers south of Bern in the foothills of the Bernese Alps. Brahms rented a flower-laden villa on the shore of Lake Thun in the nearby hamlet of Hofstetten and settled in for a long, comfortable summer. The periods away from Vienna were not just times of relaxation for Brahms, however, but were working holidays, and the three summers he spent at Thun (1886-1888) were especially

productive: the *Violin Sonatas* Nos. 2 and 3, *C minor Piano Trio*, *Second Cello Sonata*, *Gypsy Songs*, *Choral Songs* (Op. 104), *Lieder* of Op. 105-107 and *Double Concerto* were all written there. Brahms began the *Third Violin Sonata*, Op. 108, at Hofstetten during the summer of 1886, but composed most of the score during his sojourn two years later. The Sonata's premiere was given on December 22, 1888 in Cologne by the composer and the celebrated Hungarian violinist, composer and pedagogue Jenő Hubay.

The D minor Violin Sonata was dedicated to Hans von Bülow, a musician of gargantuan talent celebrated as both pianist and conductor, who played Brahms' compositions widely and made them a mainstay in the repertory of the superb court orchestra at Meiningen during his tenure there as music director from 1880 to 1885. The dedication to the pianist-conductor is especially appropriate for this Sonata, since the piano is more thoroughly integrated with the violin than in Brahms' two earlier sonatas, in which the keyboard serves largely as accompanist to the string instrument's wordless songs. Violin and piano share equally the thematic material of the opening movement: the violin presents the principal subject, a lyrical inspiration marked by long notes that give way to quick neighboring tones; the piano's arching second theme is superbly constructed from a two-measure motive of step-wise motion followed by a hesitant dotted-rhythm gesture. The development section is largely occupied with a discussion of the main theme. A full recapitulation and an ethereal coda grown from the main theme close the movement.

The *Adagio* is one of Brahms' most endearing creations, an instrumental hymn of delicately dappled emotions, touching melody and suave harmonies that caused Peter Latham to note in his biography of the composer, "Brahms wrote nothing more gracious than these Sonatas, in which he never seeks grandeur and woos rather

PROGRAM NOTES CONTINUED

than compels." The third movement (which the score instructs should be played "*consentimento*") replaces the traditional *scherzo* with an *intermezzo* of precisely controlled intensity and masterful motivic development. The sonata-form finale resumes the darkly expressive eloquence of the opening movement with its impetuous main theme. A chordal subject initiated by the piano provides contrast, but the unsettled mood of the first theme remains dominant through the remainder of the movement. "Perfect as each movement of the three Violin Sonatas is," wrote Karl Geiringer, "they seem, in this last movement, to have reached their culminating point."

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***Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major, FWV 8* César Franck (1822-1890)**

Composed in 1886. Premiered on December 16, 1886 in Brussels by violinist Eugene Ysaÿe and pianist Léontine Bordes-Pène.

Franck first considered writing a violin sonata in 1859, when he offered to compose such a piece for Cosima von Bülow (*née* Liszt, later Wagner) in appreciation for some kind things she had said about his vocal music. He was, however, just then thoroughly absorbed with his new position as organist at Ste.-Clotilde and unable to compose anything that year except a short organ piece and a hymn. (His application to his duties had its reward—he occupied the prestigious post at Ste.-Clotilde until his death 31 years later.) No evidence of any work on the proposed sonata for Cosima has ever come to light, and it was not until twenty years later that he first entered the realm of chamber music with his Piano Quintet of 1879. Franck's next foray into the chamber genres came seven years after the Quintet with his *Sonata for Violin and Piano*, which was composed as a wedding gift for his friend and Belgian compatriot, the dazzling virtuoso Eugene Ysaÿe, who had been living in Paris since 1883 and befriending most of the leading French musicians;

Ysaÿe first played the piece privately at the wedding ceremony on September 28, 1886. (Chausson and Debussy also composed pieces for Ysaÿe.) In tailoring the Sonata to the warm lyricism for which Ysaÿe's violin playing was known, Franck created a work that won immediate and enduring approval, and which was instrumental in spreading the appreciation for his music beyond his formerly limited coterie of students and local devotees. The formal premiere, given by Ysaÿe and pianist Léontine Bordes-Pène at the Musée moderne de peinture in Brussels on December 16, 1886, was an extraordinary event, of which Franck's pupil Vincent d'Indy left the following account: "It was already growing dark as the Sonata began. After the first *Allegretto*, the players could hardly read their music. Unfortunately, museum regulations forbade any artificial light whatever in rooms containing paintings; the mere striking of a match would have been an offense. The audience was about to be asked to leave but, brimful of enthusiasm, they refused to budge. At this point, Ysaÿe struck his music stand with his bow, demanding, 'Let's go on!' Then, wonder of wonders, amid darkness that now rendered them virtually invisible, the two artists played the last three movements from memory with a fire and passion the more astonishing in that there was a total lack of the usual visible externals that enhance a concert performance. Music, wondrous and alone, held sovereign sway in the blackness of night. The miracle will never be forgotten by those present."

The Sonata excited the enthusiasm not only of musicians, but also inspired other artists to capture its essence in their particular media. Under the work's influence, the sculptor Victor Rousseau created a statue titled *Ecstasy*, in which two figures reach upwards in thankfulness for the divine music issuing from the heavens. Camille Mauclair's novel *The City of Light* contains a vivid description of Ysaÿe and Chausson performing

PROGRAM NOTES CONTINUED

the Sonata in Rodin's studio. The most famous literary passage prompted by Franck's Sonata, however, appears in the first volume of Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*. Of the interplay of the instruments at the work's beginning, Proust wrote, "At first, the piano complained alone, like a bird deserted by its mate; the violin heard and answered it, as from a neighboring tree. It was as at the first beginning of the world, as if there were not yet but these twain upon the earth, or rather in this world closed against all the rest, so fashioned by the logic of its creator that in it there should never be any but themselves, the world of this Sonata."

The quality of verdant lyricism that dominates Franck's Sonata is broken only by the anticipatory music of the second movement and the heroic passion that erupts near the end of the finale. The work opens in a mood of twilight tenderness with a main theme built largely from rising and falling thirds, an intervallic germ from which later thematic material is derived to help unify the overall structure of the Sonata. The piano alone plays the second theme, a broad melody given above an arpeggiated accompaniment never shared with the violin. The movement's short central section, hardly a true development at all, consists only of a modified version of the main theme played in dialogue between violin and piano. The recapitulation of the principal and secondary subjects (*dolcissima...semper dolcissima...molto dolcissima*—"sweetly...always sweetly...very sweetly," cautions the score repeatedly) rounds out the form of the lovely opening movement. The quick-tempo second movement fulfills the function of a scherzo in the Sonata, though its music is more in the nature of an impetuous intermezzo. Two strains alternate to produce the movement's form. One ("scherzo") is anxious and unsettled, though it is more troubled than tragic; the other ("trio") is subdued and rhapsodic. They are disposed in

a pattern that yields a fine balance of styles and emotions: scherzo—trio—scherzo—trio—scherzo. The third movement (*Recitativo—Fantasia*) begins with a cyclical reference to the third-based germ motive that opened the Sonata. The violin's long winding line in the *Recitativo* section is succeeded by the Grecian purity of the following *Fantasia*, one of the most chaste and moving passages in the entire instrumental duet literature. The main theme of the finale is so richly lyrical that its rigorous treatment as a precise canon at the octave is charming rather than pedantic. When the piano and violin do eventually take off on their own paths, it is so that the keyboard may recall the chaste melody of the preceding *Fantasia*. Other reminiscences are woven into the movement—a hint of the third-based germ motive in one episode, another phrase from the *Fantasia*—which unfolds as a free rondo around the reiterations of its main theme in a variety of keys. The Sonata is brought to a stirring climax by a grand motive that strides across the closing measures in heroic step-wise motion.

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***Tzigane, Rapsodie de Concert for Violin and Piano* Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)**

Composed in 1924. Premiered on April 26, 1924 in London by Jelly d'Aranyi.

While in England in July 1922, Ravel was a guest at a *soirée* at which the Hungarian violinist Jelly d'Aranyi participated in a performance of his *Sonata for Violin and Cello*. When the formal part of the evening's entertainment had been accomplished, Ravel asked Mlle. d'Aranyi to play some Gypsy melodies from her native land, and she filled the night until dawn with music that enthralled the composer. Ravel, though captivated by the passionate Hungarian music and determined to compose a new work of Gypsy cast for Mlle. d'Aranyi, had been mired in a fallow period since the end of the War, and

PROGRAM NOTES CONTINUED

it was almost two years before he was able to compose *Tzigane*.

Tzigane, which follows in the tradition of the Gypsy-inspired compositions of Liszt and Enesco, comprises several structural sections played without pause following an extended introduction for unaccompanied violin. Each section is a virtual miniature dance movement that reaches its own climax before making way for the next dance-section. The tempo of the last section goes from faster to fastest, and *Tzigane*

ends in the bedazzling whirl of the soloist's *moto perpetuo* pyrotechnics. The work is filled with more than enough virtuosity to gratify the violinist and to electrify any audience: harmonics, multiple stops, *pizzicati*, trills and *appoggiaturas* abound. Ravel, with his perfect craftsmanship, set this dizzying display against a subtle orchestral background to produce a composition rich in atmosphere and filled with fiery, Gypsy enthusiasm.

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Sarah Chang violin, recognized as one of the foremost violinists of our time, has performed with the most esteemed orchestras, conductors, and accompanists in an international career spanning more than two decades. Since her debut with the New York Philharmonic at the age of eight, Chang has dazzled audiences with her technical virtuosity and emotional depth.

Highlights from Chang's recent and upcoming seasons, have included performances with such North American orchestras as the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, Houston Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Toronto Symphony, Vancouver Symphony, Cincinnati Symphony, San Diego Symphony, New West Symphony, Pacific Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, and the Ravinia and Aspen Music Festivals among others. With a career that has blossomed internationally, her European engagements have taken her to France, Italy, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Spain, Turkey, and Germany, and her engagements in Asia have brought her to audiences in China, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand. As an accomplished

recital and chamber musician, Chang regularly travels the world, performing with such artists as Pinchas Zukerman, Yefim Bronfman, Leif Ove Andsnes, Yo-Yo Ma, Isaac Stern, Wolfgang Sawallisch and members of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra.

Chang's most recent recording for EMI Classics—her 20th for the label—featured the Brahms and Bruch violin concertos with Kurt Masur and the Dresdner Philharmonie, and was received to excellent critical and popular acclaim. Her 2007 recording of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* attracted international commendation, with *BBC Music Magazine* stating: "She has never made a finer recording." She has also recorded Prokofiev's *Violin Concerto No. 1* and Shostakovich's *Violin Concerto No. 1* live with the Berliner Philharmoniker under the baton of Sir Simon Rattle; *Fire and Ice*, an album of popular shorter works for violin and orchestra with Plácido Domingo conducting the Berliner Philharmoniker; the Dvořák's *Violin Concerto* with the London Symphony Orchestra and Sir Colin Davis; as well as several chamber music and sonata discs with artists including pianists Leif Ove Andsnes and Lars Vogt.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS CONTINUED

Along with Pete Sampras, Wynton Marsalis and Tom Brady, Chang has been a featured artist in Movado's global advertising campaign The Art of Time. In 2006, she was honored as one of 20 Top Women in *Newsweek Magazine's* "Women and Leadership, 20 Powerful Women Take Charge" issue. In 2008, she was honored as a Young Global Leader for 2008 by the World Economic Forum (WEF) for her professional achievements, commitment to society and potential in shaping the future of the world.

In 2012, Chang received the Harvard University Leadership Award, and in 2005, Yale University dedicated a chair in Sprague Hall in her name. For the June 2004 Olympic games, she was given the honor of running with the Olympic Torch in New York, and that same month, became the youngest person ever to receive the Hollywood Bowl's Hall of Fame award. Also in 2004, Chang was awarded the Internazionale Accademia Musicale Chigiana Prize in Sienna, Italy. She is a past recipient of the Avery Fisher Career Grant, *Gramophone's* Young Artist of the Year award, Germany's Echo Schallplattenpreis, Newcomer of the Year honors at the International Classical Music Awards in London, and Korea's Nan Pa award. In 2011, Chang was named an official Artistic Ambassador by the United States Department of State. This is Sarah Chang's first engagement at the Hopkins Center.

Julio Elizalde *piano*, praised as a musician of "compelling artistry and power" by the *Seattle Times*, is one of the most sought-after and

multi-faceted artists of his generation. He has performed in many of the major music centers throughout the United States, Europe, Asia, and Latin America to popular and critical acclaim. Since 2014, he has served as the artistic director of the Olympic Music Festival near Seattle, Washington.

Elizalde is a passionately active educator, having recently served as a visiting professor of piano at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington. Since 2011, he has been a member of the faculty at the Manchester Music Festival in Vermont since 2011 and has given masterclasses at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Lawrence University, and the Music Institute of Chicago. He has also appeared at various summer music festivals including Yellow Barn, Taos, Caramoor, Bowdoin, Kneisel Hall, and the Music Academy of the West. Elizalde was a juror for the 2012 Fischoff National Chamber Music Competition held at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana.

Originally from the San Francisco Bay Area, Elizalde received a bachelor of music degree with honors from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he studied with Paul Hersh. He holds master's and doctor of musical arts degrees from the Juilliard School in New York City, where he studied with Jerome Lowenthal, Joseph Kalichstein, and Robert McDonald. This is Julio Elizalde's first engagement at the Hopkins Center.

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