GENEVA LEWIS, violin
Winner, 2020 Concert Artists Guild Competition

2021-2022 Programs

Homage to the Blues

David N. Baker — Blues (Deliver My Soul) [5’]

William Grant Still — Lenox Avenue: The Blues [4’]

Claude Debussy — Violin Sonata [14’]
   I. Allegro vivo
   II. Intermède: fantasque et léger
   III. Finale: trè animé

~Intermission~

George Gershwin (arr. Jascha Heifetz) — Porgy and Bess Suite [18’]
   I. Summertime - A Woman is a Sometime Thing
   II. My Man’s Gone Now
   III. It Ain’t Necessarily So
   IV. Bess You is My Woman Now
   V. Tempo di Blues

Maurice Ravel — Violin Sonata in G Major, M 77 [16’]
   I. Allegretto
   II. Blues (Moderato)
   III. Perpetuum mobile (Allegro)

This program celebrates the Blues through the lenses of very differing composers, all of whom have a unique way to express themselves through the shared genre. The music shared here is incredibly rich and inventive, with exciting uses of rhythm and harmony that are outside of what is usually heard in a traditional violin recital. The pieces explore a wide range of emotions, characteristics, and styles, and come together to create a whole that is soulful, energetic, and fun.
Unforeseen Evolutions

Leoš Janáček — Violin Sonata [18’]
   I. Con moto
   II. Ballada
   III. Allegretto
   IV. Adagio

Jessie Montgomery — Peace [4’]

Gareth Farr — Unforeseen Evolutions [10’]

Lera Auerbach — 24 Preludes for Violin and Piano [3’]
   14. Presto
   15. Adagio sognando

~Intermission~

Olivier Messiaen — Thème et variations [10’]

Gabriel Fauré — Après un Rêve [3’]

Claude Debussy — Sonate pour violon et piano en sol mineur, L. 140 [15’]
   I. Allegro vivo
   II. Intermède. Fantasque et léger
   III. Finale. Très animé

   Jessie Montgomery said about “Peace”: I was going to call this ‘Melancholy’ instead of ‘Peace’, but I didn’t want to be a downer for the people. I’m struggling during quarantine to define what actually brings me joy. And I’m at a stage of making peace with sadness as it comes and goes like any other emotion. I’m learning to observe sadness for the first time not as a negative emotion, but as a necessary dynamic to the human experience.

   This incredibly beautiful idea inspired me to put together this group of pieces, all of which contain a sizable amount of sadness and despair. In addition to this acceptance of sadness, and the recognition of its value in and of itself, I wanted to embrace the way that light shines all the more within the darkness, no matter how much there is.

Joachim & Friends
   I. Mit leidenschaftlichem Ausdruck
   II. Allegretto
   III. Lebhaft

Clara Schumann — Three Romances, Op. 22 [10’]
   I. Andante molto
   II. Allegretto
   III. Leidenschaftlich schnell

Johann Sebastian Bach — Partita No. 2 in d minor, BWV 1004 [15’]
   V. Ciaccona

~Intermission~

Joseph Joachim — Romance in B-flat Major, Op. 2 [5’]

Johannes Brahms — Sonata No. 3 in d minor, Op. 108 [23’]
   I. Allegro
   II. Adagio
   III. Un poco presto e con sentimento
   IV. Presto agitato

As a current Artist Diploma student at the New England Conservatory, I have been fortunate enough to be loaned the use of the “Joachim-Ma” Stradivarius for a one-year period. Along with the endless inspiration I have drawn from the instrument itself, I’ve found myself profoundly impacted by the history of the instrument itself. It’s genuinely unbelievable to imagine that I’m playing on the violin that the Brahms Violin Concerto was premiered on, among many other jewels of the violin repertoire.

To this end, I was inspired to play a program of pieces that are intimately tied to Joseph Joachim and his Stradivarius. Each piece was either written for him, by him, or by a close friend of his. The exception is the Bach Ciaccona, which I’ve chosen to include as it was a concert favorite of his — in fact, violinists everywhere have Joachim to thank for bringing his treasured Sonatas and Partitas back into popularity.

It’s almost certain that each piece was played at some point on this violin, and shared with each legendary composer. To me, it brings the past much closer, and makes these great artists feel like real people, rather than mythologized icons.