

The Ph.D./D.M.A. Programs in Music

December 13, 2022 12:00 p.m.

Baisley Powell Elebash Recital Hall



Seohee Min, violin
Steve Beck, piano

Phantasy for Violin with Piano Accompaniment, Op. 47 (1949) Arnold Schönberg
(1874–1951)

Suite in Vivid Color for Violin and Piano (2022)

Prelude

Air

Dance

Glass Chaconne

Postlude

Theo Chandler
(b. 1992)

INTERMISSION

Fantasy in C Major for Violin and Piano, D. 934, Op. 159 (1827) Franz Schubert
Andante molto — Allegro Vivace (1797–1828)

Andantino

Allegro Presto

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the D.M.A. degree.
Please switch off your cell phones and refrain from taking flash pictures.

Notes on the Program

ARNOLD SCHÖNBERG: Phantasy for Violin with Piano Accompaniment, Op. 47 (1949)

(In)famous for his invention of twelve-tone system, composer **Arnold Schönberg** first wrote a complete violin part and added a piano part later on in March 1949. He dedicated the piece to the violinist Adolf Koldofsky, whom the composer trusted especially with interpreting his music. Koldofsky premiered the piece on Schönberg's 75th birthday on 13th September 1949. Schönberg died two years after, in 1951.

Schönberg's *Phantasy for Violin with Piano Accompaniment* is his last instrumental work. As the title suggests, the piece highlights the solo violin while the piano mainly supports and echoes the underlying colors throughout. The violinist is asked to play extreme intervals and double stops with challenging harmonics, which require agility from the player. The piece is also mentally demanding, as the transitions occur quickly from a very intense fast section to a slow, calm section and vice versa. The composition is compact and intense, and challenges the musical ideal of "beauty" evidenced by extreme intervals and jarring dissonance especially in the main theme in the beginning and the end. Yet some traditional ideal of "beauty" makes an appearance in the middle "trio" section with its waltzing rhythm and shimmering textures.

THEO CHANDLER: Suite in Vivid Color for Violin and Piano (2022)

Theo Chandler is an American composer based in Houston, Texas, whom I encountered at the Juilliard School during our master's studies. Theo and I have worked together numerous times in school and also at the Aspen Music Festival in the summers of 2015-2018. I believe I asked him to write a piece for me as early as 2016 — at the time, this yet-to-exist violin piece almost became a running joke between us over the years, as Theo continued to write pieces for every other instrument except for violin, until the summer of 2022. I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the beautiful piece and the friendship to the composer. The following is a note from the composer himself:

I imagined the harmonies in *Suite In Vivid Color* as thick streaks of oil paint. The movement titles recall Baroque forms — prelude, air chaconne — and these antique musical expressions are coated in layers of bright, saturated chords. To offset the sweetness of the sonorities, I added textural blemishes in the form of atonal gestures and noisy extended techniques. The result is a piece in opposition with itself, containing music that is simultaneously old and new, gentle and aggressive, comforting and unsettling.

FRANZ SCHUBERT: Fantasy in C Major, D. 934 for Violin and Piano, Op. 159

Franz Schubert, shortly after composing his famous song cycle *Winterreise*, wrote his *Fantasy in C Major, D. 934, Op. 159* for violin and piano in December 1827. The piece was written late in his life, just one year before his death. This piece was not well received at the time of its premiere, which took place in Vienna in January 1828; a music critique at the time reported that its audience members were leaving the hall gradually during the performance. Perhaps at the time the piece was simply too long and hard to follow, as the structure was not traditionally clear, but more loosely connected. The piece opens with a slow introduction with long lines held by both instruments — with soft glimmering tremolos in the piano and a soaring melodic line in the violin. This introduction poses

a great challenge on the performers, both physically and mentally, to keep the line sustained and alive, yet still give it an overarching shape. The effect is almost as if one is going through his or her most endearing memory in a slow motion. This unique introduction is followed by a lively, Hungarian-inspired “march,” full of joyous and virtuosic interplay between the violin and piano. Schubert then proceeds to the next section, which consists of variations on a theme borrowed from his own song, *Sei mir gegrüsst*, which is translated to “I greet you.” The variation sections especially feature one of Schubert’s best ability — to use a single material and reiterate it many times in the most elegant and nuanced way. After the “theme and variation” section, the opening slow section returns for a brief moment and is interrupted by the victorious finale.

About the Artists

Violinist **Seohee Min** enjoys performing a wide selection of repertoire, from early music to classical to contemporary. She made her Carnegie Hall debut in Pierre Boulez’s Mémoriale under the baton of Daniel Barenboim. She has participated in festivals such as IMS Prussia Cove, Britten-Pears, Aspen, Bowdoin, Music Academy of the West among others. In June 2021, she performed the *Ligeti Violin Concerto* with Sinfonieorchester Basel as a soloist. Seohee also has been invited to play as concertmaster in Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra and Luxembourg Philharmonic Orchestra in the fall of 2022. She received her soloist diploma from Musik-Akademie Basel, MM from The Juilliard School, and BM/BA in Violin Performance and Business from University of Rochester/Eastman School of Music. Seohee has been playing in the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra as the 2nd Concertmaster since 2019.

A recent New York concert by pianist **Steven Beck** was described as “exemplary” and “deeply satisfying” by Anthony Tommasini in the New York Times. He is a graduate of the Juilliard School, where his teachers were Seymour Lipkin, Peter Serkin and Bruce Brubaker. Mr. Beck made his concerto debut with the National Symphony Orchestra, and has toured Japan as soloist with the New York Symphonic Ensemble. His annual Christmas Eve performance of Bach’s Goldberg Variations at Bargemusic has become a New York institution. He has also performed as soloist and chamber musician at Alice Tully Hall, the Kennedy Center, the Library of Congress, Weill Recital Hall, Merkin Hall, and Miller Theater, as well as on WNYC; summer appearances have been at the Aspen Music Festival and Lincoln Center Out of Doors. He has performed as a musician with the New York City Ballet and the Mark Morris Dance Group, and as an orchestral musician he has appeared with the New York Philharmonic, the New York City Ballet Orchestra, and Orpheus. Mr. Beck is an experienced performer of new music, having worked with Elliott Carter, Pierre Boulez, Henri Dutilleux, Charles Wuorinen, George Crumb, George Perle, and Fred Lerdahl. He is a member of the Knights, the Talea Ensemble, Quattro Mani, and the Da Capo Chamber Players. His discography includes George Walker’s piano sonatas, for Bridge Records, and Elliott Carter’s “Double Concerto” on Albany Records. Beck is a Steinway Artist, and is on the faculty of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.