



FACULTY OF  
**FINE ARTS**

**Presents**

**Alayna McNeil, violin**

**In a**

**Graduation Recital**

**Assisted by**

**John-Paul Ksiazek, piano**

**Dr. Deanna Oye, piano**

**Anna Jeong, piano**

**Brenna Le May, cello**

**From the Studio of**

**Peter Visentin**

**4:00pm**

**March 24, 2024**

**Recital Hall**

~~ PROGRAM ~~

Partita I in b minor, BWV 1002

Johann Sebastian Bach  
(1685-1750)

- i. Allemanda*
- ii. Double*
- v. Sarabande*
- vi. Double*
- vii. Tempo di Borea*
- viii. Double*

*Alayna McNeil, violin*

Concerto for violin in e minor, Op. 64

Felix Mendelssohn  
(1809-1847)

- i. Allegro molto appassionato*
- ii. Andante*

*Alayna McNeil, violin*  
*John-Paul Ksiazek, piano*

*Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, Op. 28

Camille Saint-Saëns  
(1835-1921)

*Alayna McNeil, violin*  
*Dr. Deanna Oye, piano*

~~ INTERMISSION ~~

Sonata in g minor for violin and piano, L. 140

Claude Debussy  
(1862-1918)

- Allegro vivo*
- Intermède: Fantasque et léger*
- Finale: Très animé*

*Alayna McNeil, violin*  
*Dr. Deanna Oye, piano*

*Five Pieces for Two Violins and Piano*  
(arranged for violin, cello, and piano)

Dmitri Shostakovich  
(1906-1975)

- ii. Gavotte*
- iv. Waltz*
- v. Polka*

*Alayna McNeil, violin*  
*Anna Jeong, piano*  
*Brenna Le May, cello*

## ~~ PROGRAM NOTES ~~

**Partita I in b minor, BWV 1002**

**Johann Sebastian Bach  
(1685-1750)**

J.S. Bach composed his six Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin between about 1703 and 1720 during his time as Kapellmeister at the court in Cöthen, Germany. The three sonatas follow a slow-fast-slow-fast form, each with a fugue as the second movement. Bach's Partitas feature more variable structures than those of his Sonatas. The Partitas draw inspiration from the conventional Baroque dance format of Allemande, Courante, Sarabande and Gigue, and Partita I follows this format with a Bourrée as the final movement instead of a Gigue. Partita I is the only partita in which Bach includes doubles after each movement that serve as variations on the preceding movement. Doubles employ the same harmonic structure of the previous dance movement but commonly use quicker note values that are consistent throughout.

The Allemande is a moderate, stately dance in 4/4 time in which couples form lines and dance the length of the ballroom and back. The Sarabande originated in the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Spain as a lively dance before it eventually travelled to the French court in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and developed into a slow dance in triple time. The slower version of the Sarabande is flowing and elegant, and it features an emphasis on the second beat of each bar. The Bourrée is a quick French dance in duple time that generally begins with a quarter-bar pickup. Dancers of the Bourrée sometimes wear wooden clogs to accentuate the sounds of their dance steps.

## **Concerto for violin in e minor, Op. 64**

**Felix Mendelssohn  
(1809-1847)**

Mendelssohn composed his Violin Concerto in e minor between 1838 and 1844 in a collaboration with his good friend, the violinist Ferdinand David (1810-1873). The work was extremely well-received after its premier in 1845, and it became a staple of violin repertoire, a position it has maintained into the present day. Mendelssohn's goal with the concerto was not to create a piece with empty showmanship, but to create a piece with powerful depth of both musicality and virtuosity, and he succeeded in stellar fashion. The work is expressive, elegant, serious and captivating, and it radiates with beautiful poise. The violin soloist and the orchestra collaborate closely throughout, making the work highly interesting and musical.

The three movements of the concerto are continuous with no breaks, as Mendelssohn wished to avoid the audience clapping in between the movements. In his concerto, Mendelssohn uses traditional ideas of Classic period style and form as a basis, and he creates innovation by using Romantic period idioms to skillfully subvert certain Classic period conventions.

The first movement of the concerto follows the traditional sonata allegro form of the Classic period with an important difference. Rather than placing the cadenza near the end of the movement as would normally have been done, Mendelssohn places the cadenza in the middle of the piece at the end of the development. Mendelssohn also challenges Classic convention by sometimes altering phrasing styles and metric accentuation. The first theme of the movement is a soaring and haunting and contains a lot of movement. The second theme is a beautiful gentle and sweet melody.

The second movement features a flowing, warm and passionate melody played by the violin soloist. Contrast is provided in the middle of the movement with a stormy mood and conversational interaction between the soloist and orchestra before the material of the movement's beginning returns.

***Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 28***

**Camille Saint-Saëns  
(1835-1921)**

Saint-Saëns completed his *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* in 1863, and he dedicated the work to his friend, the violinist and composer Pablo de Sarasate (1844-1908). The work is one of Saint-Saëns's only true showpieces and contains Spanish influences. The *Introduction* of the work begins with a melancholy and elegant melody that gradually gathers momentum as the *Introduction* progresses, blossoming to become warm and graceful. After a brief cadenza for the violinist, the music is propelled forward into the lively *Rondo* section. The *Rondo* features dance rhythms modelled from Spanish folk music. Saint-Saëns creates compelling rhythmic features by including numerous syncopated rhythms and writing sections where the violinist feels the music in 2/4 time while the orchestra feels it in 6/8 time.

***Sonata in g minor for violin and piano, L. 140***

**Claude Debussy  
(1862-1918)**

Debussy's sonata for violin and piano, which he finished in 1917, was his last completed composition before he died of cancer in 1918. Debussy was severely weakened by an operation in 1915 and he found it difficult to compose in the following years. In addition to Debussy's weakened state, France had been greatly affected by the war. Food was scarce and the concert scene was dilapidated. Despite Debussy's disillusionment with his life at the time, his sonata is a deeply brilliant, unique and captivating exploration of colour and character, and the final movement reflects more light than darkness. The sonata includes some influences from the gypsy violinist Béla Radics (1867-1930), which can be heard in brief glissando figures throughout the work.

The first movement opens with a haunting, dreamlike mood, setting the stage for the intimate nature of the work. The music moves rapidly through vivid characters, including moods that are playful, sweet, singing, sorrowful and nostalgic, and at times dramatic outbursts occur.

The second movement has an improvisatory feel. Flashes of light and darkness are heard through flickers between the tenacious and playful mood of a Scherzo and the intimate, mournful and singing Andante sections.

Debussy described his sonata as being “filled with tumultuous joy”, and the third movement clearly exemplifies this concept. The movement is bursting with vibrant and lively joyousness ending in a conclusion full of optimism.

***Five Pieces for Two Violins and Piano***  
**(arranged for violin, cello and piano)**

**Dmitri Shostakovich**  
**(1906-1975)**

The movements of Shostakovich’s Five Pieces for Two Violins and Piano were taken from scores Shostakovich composed for various films, ballets and plays and arranged into a suite by the composer Levon Atovmyan (1901-1973). Each movement is highly unique and characterful.

The Gavotte follows the lively and pleasant style of the French Baroque dance Gavotte. The movement is from Shostakovich’s music for the play *The Human Comedy* (1934) and it features a light, playful mood with many joking moments.

The Waltz is flowing, elegant and slightly mysterious with a hint of longing. The flowing mood of the beginning dissolves into more lively skipping figures in the middle section before returning organically to the material of the beginning. The original source of the movement remains unknown.

The Polka is a cheerful and rowdy movement with numerous musical surprises and unique character changes. Shostakovich wrote the music for the comedic ballet *The Limpid Stream* (1935), in which the music is used for the number “Dance of the Milkmaid and the Tractor Driver.”