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Ensemble ARI

JEAN AHN, conductor

JULIE KIM, violin

JIWON EVELYN KWARK, violin

SARAH HONG, cello

SHARON LEE KIM, piano

2:30 PM, Sunday, September 22, 2019

Faye Spanos Concert Hall

University of the Pacific

J. S. BACH VIOLIN PARTITA NO. 2 IN D MINOR, BWV 1004 (c. 1717-20)
(1685–1750) Gigue *Jiwon Evelyn Kwark, violin*

BACH SONATA NO. 4 IN C MINOR, BWV 1017 (c. 1717-23)
Siciliano—Largo
Allegro
Adagio
Allegro *Julie Kim, violin; Sharon Lee Kim, piano*

MICHAEL LEE GHOST BREAK DANCE (2019, world premier)
(b. 1987) I. Satire and Mockery: Ghost Meets His Magician
II. Humor and Joy
III. Envy and Desire
IV. Fire and Fury *Jiwon Evelyn Kwark, violin; Sarah Hong, cello*

JOSEPH HAYDN PIANO TRIO NO. 27 IN A-FLAT MAJOR, HOB. XV/14 (1790)
(1732–1809) Allegro moderato
Adagio
Rondo—Vivace *Jiwon Evelyn Kwark, violin; Sarah Hong, cello; Sharon Lee Kim, piano*

— INTERMISSION —

JEAN AHN A FLASHBACK OF RAVEL FOR PIANO TRIO (2011)
(b. 1976) *Jiwon Evelyn Kwark, violin; Sarah Hong, cello; Sharon Lee Kim, piano*

IGOR STRAVINSKY PETRUSHKA (1910-11, REV. 1946) *arr. Ahn for two violins, cello & piano*
(1882–1971) First Tableau: The Shrovetide Fair
Second Tableau: Petrushka's Room
Third Tableau: The Moor's Room
Fourth Tableau: The Shrovetide Fair (Evening)

For information please contact Dr. Jean Ahn at www.jeanahn.com ■ 510-292-7124
www.michaelliecomposer.com

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ARTIST PROFILE



"Ari" is a Korean word with multiple meanings: big river, wisdom and beauty.

Ensemble Ari is a group of Korean American musicians in the SF Bay Area who share this quality with the community. Their mission is to bridge Korea and other communities through western instruments while honoring Korean history and culture.

Jean Ahn's compositions have been featured at Aspen New Music Festival, American Composers Orchestra's Ear Shot, Festival of Contemporary Music, IAWM and Pacific Korean Music Festival. Jean's music brings Asian traditional elements into western music. Dr. Ahn holds a Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley and a M.A. and B.A. from Seoul National University.

Julie Kim won the Wardwell Fellowship to study with the Tokyo String Quartet and won first prize at the Banff International String Quartet Competition. Ms. Kim has studied with the Juilliard, Cleveland, Emerson, and Vermeer String Quartets. She has performed with Isaac Stern and Yo-Yo Ma at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. She received her BM degree from the SF Conservatory of Music.

Jiwon Evelyn Kwark is a dynamic soloist, chamber and orchestra musician. She holds a bachelor's degree from The Juilliard School and a master's degree from Yale School of Music. Ms. Kwark performs regularly as the Associate Principal Second Violinist of the Marin Symphony and Berkeley Symphony.

Sarah Hong began studying cello at the age of six and was selected as most promising young cellist in the nation at 16. She made her New York debut at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall as a winner of Artists International. Ms. Hong received BM and MM degrees from the Juilliard School. She finished her artist certificate in chamber music at the SF Conservatory of Music.

Sharon Lee Kim is an active chamber musician, director, vocal coach, and instructor. Ms. Kim joined the Saint Mary's College Music Faculty in the fall of 2008. She is the Assistant Director and Accompanist of the internationally award-winning Saint Mary's College Choirs, and the Assistant Director of the Faculty Chamber Sundays Series. She holds degrees from UC Berkeley (BA) and New England Conservatory (MM and GD).

Bach: Partita No. 2 in d

Johann Sebastian Bach's second Violin Partita in D minor is the longest and most famous of his six works for unaccompanied violin, a part of his compositional cycle called *Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin*. The partita contains five movements of dance types of the time, and they are frequently listed by their French names: Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Gigue, and Chaconne. The piece has garnered much attention and admiration ever since the Bach revival of the 19th century. Johannes Brahms wrote that, "On one stave, for a small instrument, the man writes a whole world of the deepest thoughts and most powerful feelings. If I imagined that I could have created, even conceived the piece, I am quite certain that the excess of excitement and earth-shattering experience would have driven me out of my mind." Today we hear only the Gigue as a nibble of this music's delectability.

Bach: Sonata No. 4 in c

C.P.E. Bach stated the six sonatas for violin and harpsichord (BWV 1014-19) "among the best works of my dear father...even though they are over fifty years old." J.S. began work on these pieces in 1717 while at the courts of Weimar and Köthen during tenure as Capellmeister to prince Leopold of Anhalt-Köthen but fussed over them from time to time for several decades, revising and polishing until his death.

The group was conceived as a set of six sonatas in six keys, three each in major and minor. They are fugued throughout and contain distinctive natural canons in dialogue between the two instruments. Unquestionably progressive (not least for their inclusion of fully realized keyboard parts as opposed to continuo parts with figured bass left to the discretion of the performer), they represent the real beginnings of the duo sonata as we know the term today. And it may well be that BWV 1017 is stylistically speaking the most unusual and forward-looking of the six. While its four movements are plainly of the long-established church sonata pedigree, two of them especially are unusual enough to have widened early 18th century eyes.

Launching a four-movement sonata with a *Siciliano*, as Bach does here, is certainly unusual, if not necessarily trailblazing. The exquisitely swaying binary dance-form rhythm in the violin is accompanied by keyboard arpeggios in the right hand and, in the minor key, is associated with a mood of despondency or even pathos.

The content of the *Adagio* third movement, however, is so unusual for its time that we marvel at its maker's inventiveness. It is no ordinary Baroque chamber *Adagio* of a solo instrument melody with a constant triplet-arpeggio accompaniment in the keyboard right hand and a simple, streamlined bass line in the left as was typical of organ trio sonatas of the time. In fact, the style of the accompaniment is more like something a composer half a century or more later might have created. Although apparently simple in design and texture, this movement, in a serene 9/8 meter juxtaposing the keyboard's elegant triplet figuration against the violin's simple melody, is unequalled in Bach's sonatas: an oasis of tranquility and portending the classic duo sonata where violin and keyboard meet on equal terms.

The two quick movements—second and fourth—are more standard Bach fare, though scarcely less striking. The serious second movement (*Allegro*, an extended, complicated fugue in common time) is the weightiest of all six of the violin/harpsichord sonata quick movements, while the finale (also *Allegro* in 2/4) is the kind of dense, energetic quasi-fugal binary movement we might expect, with the violin and keyboard engaged in vigorous dialogue.

Bach used the harpsichord as an equal duo partner in three sonatas with viola da gamba, at least two with flute, and the six with violin. These works, though never published in Bach's lifetime, were admired by Bach's followers, and copies circulated throughout Europe. Almost 300 years later, we still find this work among his best.

Lee: Ghost Break Dance

Michael Lee has provided the following program notes:

Knowing that Petrushka would be on the program when performed in September of 2019 by Ensemble ARI, I wanted the story and rhythmic elements of Stravinsky's Petrushka to have some influence on the motives, human themes, and dance elements in Ghost Break Dance.

The rhythm, (at times) satirically composed themes in Stravinsky's Petrushka

(and others), and more so, the very much "human" themes that "this not so happy ending version of a Russian Pinocchio" is what energized the subtitles and dance elements in Ghost Break Dance.

However, the story, although many times satirical, joyful, and humorous, touches upon some real human emotions: envy, lust, and rage, among others. Petrushka is the story of the "Pinocchio" that "doesn't become a boy": the puppet, while competing with the others, dies, and his Ghost comes back to torment his maker, the Magician, ironically, for giving him life.

The four movements in my duo for violin & cello are arguably independent of each other, individually touching about the human emotions satirically presented in Stravinsky's masterpiece. On a tangent, Ghost Break Dance is an adieu, not to the puppet, but to the spirit, the "Ghost" of Petrushka that comes back to face his maker, and that still lives with us today in concert music.

The final movement, Fire and Fury, is the most complex and structurally dissonant, and at times, atonal segment. The music develops to less dissonance, and finally ends on a powerful C major chord, questionably to give the listener a sense of hope and optimism.

Haydn: Piano Trio No. 14 in Ab

Prompted by a London publisher, Haydn began the composition of piano trios on a grand scale in 1784.

As mentioned above, string chamber music involving the keyboard in the mid-to-late 18th century was composed and judged in a different light from that for strings alone. String quartets, for example, were for (ahem) "connoisseurs," while sonatas and trios with keyboard were intended for the (merely) "cultivated amateurs." Part of this concept arose from imbalances between the physicality of the instruments as well as the written parts resulting in the piano being clearly and consistently the dominant force. Even Haydn's English publishers reinforced this by designating his piano trios as "sonatas for the pianoforte, with an accompaniment of a violin & violoncello." But the cello has two ways to distinguish itself: in register and in rhythmic figuration, and the violin is often given liberty to soar. Listen as Haydn uses these devices for dramatic effect.

By 1790 Haydn had published a dozen such trios, mostly in groups of three. But this piano Trio appeared as a single work, its inventiveness besting its predecessors.

This piece is in the key of A-flat major, a key that Haydn avoided in almost all his work. For example, of the 104 symphonies and the 45 piano trios, this is the only one in the key of A-flat major. There are daring harmonic evolutions in the allegro moderato. In the outer section of the Adagio the grave, dignified melody of the violin rules. The finale, though called 'Rondo', is a monothematic sonata movement enhanced by qualities of the rondo.

This is a smart experimentation by Haydn. The first and second themes are identical, differentiated only by their dissimilar harmonic degrees. The secondary theme of the rondo is the refrain of the rondo. The mastery of Haydn conceals all these formal experimentations under a melodic musicality that clears everything before it.

Ahn: A Flashback of Ravel

Ravel had been planning to write a trio for at least six years before starting work in earnest in March 1914. At the outset, Ravel remarked to his pupil Maurice Delage, "I've written my trio. Now all I need are the themes." While initial progress on the Trio was slow, the outbreak of World War I spurred Ravel to finish the work by September, writing to Igor Stravinsky, "The idea that I should be leaving at once made me get through five months' work in five weeks! My Trio is finished." Inspiration for the musical content of the Trio came from a wide variety of sources. According to Ravel, the first movement, *Modéré*, draws on the *zortziko*, a Basque dance. His mother was Basque, and he felt a deep identification with his Basque heritage. During the Trio's composition, Ravel was also working on a piano concerto based on Basque themes entitled *Zazpiak Bat* (Basque for "The Seven are One"). Although eventually abandoned, this project left its mark on the Trio, particularly in the opening movement, which Ravel later noted was "Basque in colouring."

Jean Ahn has provided the following program notes:

Suppose a composer had a glimpse of the first movement of Ravel's trio in a fast forward flash. Then she is left with images. I was trying to organize my impression on Ravel's trio. The piece uses a loose Sonata form. The first theme and the second theme are somewhat related to Ravel's, although it is not a direct quotation. The Development is focusing on not only the two themes, but the ornaments from the exposition. The Recapitulation starts in a conventional manner but quickly moves on to an improvisatory coda which is a dream-like summarization of all the impressions. The fade out ending suggests that the composer's thought is ongoing.

Stravinsky: Petrushka

The premiere and stunning success of *The Firebird* in 1910 made the upstart Igor Stravinsky an instant household name. Serge Diaghilev, the impresario of the Ballets Russes, lost no time commissioning a second ballet from Stravinsky, who was writing a piano concerto at the time. But when Diaghilev heard the concerto, he immediately realized its potential as a theatrical piece and encouraged Stravinsky to rework it into the ballet *Petrushka*.

The character of Petrushka (also known as Punch, Pulcinella or Polichinelle) is a figure of bleakness, despair and pity, the eternal outcast whose hopeless efforts to garner acceptance arouse both scorn and sympathy. The primeval uneasiness of Stravinsky's music seizes the fundamental spirit of the story and its characters, who represent human emotions in their rawest variety. Listen for these depictions in each of the four Tableaux.

The first of Petrushka's four scenes opens with the frenzied commotion of the Shrovetide Fair, a pre-Lenten (think Bacchanalian) carnival in 1830s St. Petersburg. People assemble in a flamboyant street festivity. A Magician enters and announces the three characters of his puppet theatre: Petrushka (the pathetic clown), the Ballerina (an inaccessible icon of beauty and allure), and the Moor (the ill-mannered epitome of all the dishonorable, uncouth and uncivilized aspects of human essence). The Magician, who has imbued these three with quasi-human emotions, makes them perform a lively Russian dance.

In the second scene, the Magician discards Petrushka into a cramped cell after

the show. Petrushka moans and seethes. The Ballerina enters; Petrushka expresses his love for her, but she is repulsed by his piteousness and departs. Livid, Petrushka kicks a hole in the wall. Listen here for the first appearance of the famous raucous, unmelodic blaring "Petrushka chord."

In the third scene we find the impressive but insensitive Moor in his own cell. The Ballerina is attracted by the Moor's animalistic coarseness, and the two dance a strange, irregular waltz. A remonstrating Petrushka appears and all three puppets quarrel. In the ensuing commotion, the Ballerina faints and the Moor ejects Petrushka.

The final scene returns to the tumult of the fair at evening. There is cheerful singing, a dancing bear, much cavorting and drunkenness, foot-stomping dances, and mummers in animal masks weaving in and out of the crowd. Suddenly Petrushka cries out, butchered by the Moor's scimitar. A policeman responds to the "murder" and summons the Magician, who reveals that Petrushka was merely a sawdust stuffed puppet. The crowd disperses, but Petrushka's ghost appears, thumbing his nose at the terrified Magician, who flees in panic.

Jean Ahn has provided the following notes regarding her arrangement:

Petrushka was originally written for piano and the composer expanded it into an orchestra score. Piano plays a very important role even in the orchestra score and many pianists play the piano version of Petrushka. Since it is one of my favorite pieces, I have always wanted to arrange it for Ensemble ARI. Although the orchestra score is brilliant, I knew there would be some intimate delicacy I can bring out through this arrangement. There are many arrangements of this piece, but I haven't found a rendition for piano quartet and I was also hoping to add an important piece into the New Piano Quartet Library, a project that Ensemble ARI is working on. The arrangement includes all the tableau, but some are shortened because I thought the new instrumentation would not work effectively at certain parts. This will be the world premiere performance of this arrangement.

—notes © Dr. Michael Spencer

64TH SEASON

2019-2020

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2:30 PM Sunday, September 22, 2019
Faye Spanos Concert Hall
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