

(Program Notes, continued from p. 2)

French composer **Francis Poulenc**'s sonata for violin and piano was composed during 1942-1943 while his country was at war. He dedicated it to the Spanish poet Federico Garcia Lorca, killed during the Spanish Civil War. The somber circumstances are displayed immediately in the first movement with a dark, jagged opening theme on the violin and percussive support on the piano. This theme dominates the movement. Tentative, repeated chords in the piano open the second movement and the violin first enters with a pizzicato accompaniment reminiscent of guitar-plucking. The movement's rapturous melodic interlude brings Spanish song to mind. The third movement brings back the fire of the first, but soon yields to happier melodies. Eventually, though, the mood becomes funereal, and the piece ends with one last angry outburst. [Source: Andrew Lindemann Malone, allmusic.com]

The Visual Artists for October

Carolyn Berry, gourds
Cynthia Young, oil and mixed media
Dennis Chamberlain, photography
John DeSpain, pastel
Denise Elvrum, fused glass

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*The
Placitas
Artists
Series*

October 17, 2021

3 p.m.

Las Placitas Presbyterian Church

Eunice Kim & Xiaohui Yang
“Sonatas for Violin and Piano”

Eunice Kim Violin
Xiaohui Yang, Piano

Concert Generously Sponsored by
Rondi and Duane Thornton

“This project is supported in part by New Mexico Arts, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, and by the National Endowment for the Arts.”

Program Notes

Ludwig van Beethoven wrote ten sonatas for violin and piano. The first three were published as a set in 1798 and dedicated to Antonio Salieri, with whom Beethoven began studying about that time. Though the three sonatas are generally blithe in spirit and crystalline in texture, they are also full of the idiosyncratic hallmarks of the revolutionary composer.

The first movement of **Sonata No. 1**, for example, has the offbeat accents that can stagger metrical balance and the harmonic shifts that dislocate one's tonal center. The middle movement is a theme in A Major with four variations. The finale is a vigorous Rondo, shot through with explosive accents and disrupted cadences. Beethoven echoes the harmonic developments of the first movement and then provides not one, but two fake endings.

Sonata No. 3 is a serious work with a sober slow movement that includes a particularly muscular opening section. That first movement keeps both instruments moving incessantly; the piano generally has the greater technical challenge and almost seems to be pulling the violin along behind it. The second movement is a single melody that evolves slowly over a double-dotted rhythm. The atmosphere is consistently serene, with the violin singing its long lines over a murmuring accompaniment, then trading roles with the piano. In the more cheerful third movement, the primary theme is launched by a repeated-note figure, a musical chuckle that underlies most of what is to follow. The middle section falls into the minor mode, soon swept away by another surprise, a fugal treatment of the main theme that leads straight into a brief, high-spirited coda.

[Sources: John Henken, hollywoodbowl.com and James Reel, allmusic.com]

Clara Schumann produced several works, including these three romances, in 1853. She dedicated them to the legendary violinist Joseph Joachim and performed them with him on tour, even playing them before an enthusiastic King George V of Hanover. A critic for the *Neue Berliner Musikzeitung* praised them, declaring: "All three pieces display an individual character conceived in a truly sincere manner and written in a delicate and fragrant hand." The *Andante molto* has hints of gypsy pathos amid lyrically supple sentiments, and the merry spirits of the *Allegretto* likewise have a darker center. The final romance, marked *Leidenschaftlich schnell* (passionately quick), features a long-limbed melody over rippling pianism, developed with assurance. These romances were among the last pieces that Clara Schumann wrote, as her husband Robert died the following year and she dedicated herself to keeping his music alive through her touring and editing.

[Sources: laphil.com and Wikipedia]

(Program Notes continued on back cover)

Musical Program

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Sonata for Piano and Violin No. 1 in D Major, Op.12, No.1

Allegro con brio

Tema con variazioni: Andante con moto

Rondo: Allegro

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Violin Sonata, FP 119

Allegro con fuoco

Intermezzo

Presto tragico

******Intermission******

Clara Schumann (1819-1896)

Three Romances for Violin and Piano, Op. 22

Andante molto

Allegretto

Leidenschaftlich schnell

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Sonata for Violin and Piano in E-flat Major, Op.12, No.3

Allegro con spirito

Adagio con molta espressione

Rondo: Allegro molto