

Forestine Wise Monsen Memorial Scholarship Recital
Ella Kalinichenko, *piano*

Saturday, November 19, 2022, at 7:30pm
Lagerquist Concert Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

Pacific Lutheran University
College of Professional Studies / Department of Music presents

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Welcome to Lagerquist Concert Hall.

Please disable the audible signal on all watches and cellular phones for the duration of the concert.

Use of cameras, recording equipment and all digital devices is not permitted in the concert hall.

PROGRAM

- Partita No. 2, BWV 826** **J. S. Bach (1685-1750)**
Sinfonia
Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Rondeau
Capriccio
- Seven Preludes, op. 17**..... **Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915)**
Allegretto
Presto
Andante
Lento
Prestissimo
Andante doloroso
Allegro assai
- Gaspard de la Nuit** **Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)**
Ondine
Le Gibet
Scarbo

Program Notes

The dance suite was a genre to which **Johann Sebastian Bach** contributed greatly, and it stands among the prominent genres of the Baroque period. Bach wrote three distinct sets of dance suites for the keyboard, each consisting of six individual suites: the French Suites, the English Suites, and the Partitas. Composed between 1725 and 1730, the partitas as a whole are conveyed on the grandest scale of the three sets, and portray Bach's systematic exploration of stylized dance music and music based on dance rhythms.

Bach's *Partita No. 2 in C Minor* is composed of six separate dances. It opens with a grand movement titled "Sinfonia", bearing resemblance to the style of the French Overture. After an austere noble, dotted-note introduction it leads into a flowing interlude which evolves into a fugue. The partita then continues with a more traditional order of the ensuing three movements: an "Allemande", a "Courante", and a "Sarabande". Next is the Rondeau, which is the shortest of the six movements. It is characterized by its rigorous and forward rhythm. To end the suite, Bach wrote a bold "Capriccio" to serve in place of the traditional gigue. With its forward energy it brings the partita to a close.

Alexander Scriabin was first and foremost a very gifted pianist. From a young age he showed brilliant talent. Although he may have been an odd man with some bizarre ideas, he was welcomed again and again in many musical centers around Europe as a pianist of consummate gifts. Scriabin's compositional style inhabits a distinctive, personal sound world which is hard to define. With that, his musical career can be divided into three periods, the earlier music being largely mainstream Romantic, and the latter being an exploration of atonality and strange and unconventional harmonies.

The *Preludes* offer perhaps the best overview of Scriabin's compositional development, with clear signposts to where he was heading musically. Scriabin wrote some 85 preludes throughout the span of his lifetime, and with each opus the music evolved more and more into the exalted realms of Scriabin's sound world. The *Opus 17 Preludes* fall into the early period in which Scriabin's music was heavily influenced by Frédéric Chopin. This set of preludes consists of seven pieces all in true prelude fashion. They are short works in which Scriabin explores a particular rhythmic or melodic motif that recurs throughout the piece. A degree of musical sophistication is needed to fully comprehend what Scriabin intended with each prelude. Some preludes are texturally almost unapproachable, often requiring careful control of challenging cross rhythms and ferocious octaves.

Maurice Ravel was a composer who defined the epitome of technique and storytelling at the keyboard. Throughout his lifetime Ravel was regarded as France's greatest living composer, and to this day he remains to be one of the most influential composers of the 20th century. He had acute compositional precision and a style of great clarity. He would incorporate elements of Baroque, neoclassicism and, in his later works, jazz. That being said, Ravel had a sensational ability to create color like no other. Particularly at the piano, he expanded pianistic horizons with iridescent textures, broad and compact sound spaces, novel accompaniment figures, and ornamentation that became itself the musical material. His writing is not only beautiful to the ear but even the notation of a musical score could become a work of art in its own right.

Gaspard de la Nuit is a three movement work set to three different poems written by Aloysius Bertrand. This created a highly programmatic piano suite in which Ravel set emblematic impressions of the poems to music. It opens with the seducing call of a water spirit named Ondine, hence the name of the first movement became titled after her.

"Listen! — Listen! — It's me, it's Ondine who brushes these drops of water on the resonant panes of your window, illuminated by the mournful rays of the moon; and look, in a robe of watered silk, the lady of the chateau who contemplates, from her balcony, the beautiful starry night and the beautiful sleeping lake."

As the ghostly cry gets wrapped up in a whirling world of arpeggios and technically challenging runs, the music creates a very picturesque scene that is both enticing and mesmerizing.

In the second movement, *Le Gibet*, time seems to stand still as a reddish, setting sun descends on the horizon and the tolling bells of a distant walled city can be heard in the haunting persistence of a B-flat ostinato. Here the difficulty lies in the sparse textures accompanied by eerie and dissonant harmonies. Out of the depths of *Le Gibet* rises the last movement, *Scarbo*, possessed with a sort of demonic virtuosity that pushes the piano to its technical limits. It depicts a menacing gremlin who is persistent with its violent pestering in the dead of night. To create this image of a relentless goblin, Ravel filled the score with myriad repeating notes, jagged and abrupt rhythms, and dramatic dynamics, ranging from *ppp* to *fff*.

The suite in its entirety presents an immense amount of pianistic challenges. So much so that it has become universally acknowledged to be one of the most challenging works in the standard piano repertory.

About the Performer

Ella Kalinichenko comes from Renton, Washington, and is a senior piano major at PLU, where she studies with Dr. Oksana Ejokina. Before attending PLU, Ella participated in several competitions, receiving second place at the 2018 Spokane Piano Competition and alternate winner at the 2018 Play-offs Competition (Tacoma division). Ella has had multiple opportunities to perform as a soloist with orchestra as well as participate in masterclasses throughout Washington and Oregon. She is an active member of the music department at her church where she accompanies choirs and soloists. Additionally, she has a piano studio where she shares her passion for the piano with younger musicians. Some of her other professional engagements include performing in Benaroya Hall in Seattle and accompanying choirs at festivals and conferences.

Forestine Wise Monsen (1944-1981) was the inspiration for this memorial scholarship. A lifelong music student and teacher, she studied with Calvin Knapp and graduated from PLU with degrees in education and sacred music. This piano music scholarship has helped many accomplished students since it began in 1982. Your donations to further the scholarship are greatly appreciated.