

Pacific Lutheran University  
School of Arts and Communication / Department of Music present

JUNIOR RECITAL

**Ella Kalinichenko, piano**

assisted by  
Oksana Ejokina, piano

Friday, May 7, 2021 at 5pm  
Jennie Lee Hansen Recital Hall, Mary Baker Russell Music Center

**Program**

**Chaconne in D Minor**.....**J. S. Bach (1685-1750)**  
trans. Johannes Brahms

**Concerto No. 1 in E Minor, op. 11**.....**Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)**  
*I. Allegro maestoso*

*Brief Pause*

**La Valse**.....**Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)**

**Program Notes**

**J. S. Bach's** *Chaconne* (final movement of the *Violin Sonata in D minor, BWV 964*) is one of the most significant and famous Baroque compositions for the violin. Chaconne is a musical form in which a thematic idea, conceived as a succession of chords, serves as the harmonic foundation for a series of variations. This creates an underlying challenge to the performer: to sustain interest in a large musical structure based on a repeating four-bar progression. Historians speculate that Bach composed it after returning from a trip and finding out that his wife had passed. The *Chaconne* has been arranged by composers for nearly every instrument. Each transcriber saw in Bach the figure that most appealed to their own individual outlook. When transcribing the *Chaconne* for piano, Brahms wanted to reproduce the sound of the violin as faithfully as possible. To preserve the integrity of the violin score and to challenge the performers, he arranged the *Chaconne* for left hand only. Brahms' admiration for the piece is best captured in his own words, "On one staff, for a small instrument, the man writes a whole world of the deepest thoughts and most powerful feelings."

**Frédéric Chopin** is one of the most celebrated composers who wrote predominantly for piano. A remarkable pianist, he made his first public appearance at the age of eight, and by fifteen he was already a published composer. What makes his music so special is his unique sense of lyricism and unparalleled melodic beauty. Chopin's *Concerto No. 1 in E Minor* was written in 1830 and premiered that same year with Chopin as the soloist. It was common for pianists of that time to write their own show pieces, and Chopin's two concertos were no exception. A breakthrough work, the Concerto was not the first concerto he wrote, but it was published first. In this piece, we witness Chopin take a more traditional approach to form and structure, starting with the full double exposition. The orchestration is very minimal, functioning in a supportive role in relation to the virtuosic piano part.

**Maurice Ravel's** *La Valse* – was it written as a symphonic poem or ballet? Virtuoso work for piano or orchestral showpiece? Sentimental reminiscence of Imperial Vienna? At one time or another, *La Valse* has represented all these things. When Ravel composed the piece, he wrote the following, "I conceived of this work as a sort of apotheosis of the Viennese waltz, mingled with, in my mind, the impression of a fantastic fatal whirling." Ravel was obviously intrigued with the waltz, a symbol of joyfulness and opulence of 19<sup>th</sup> century Austria. However, by 1919 Vienna was shattered by World War I and the waltz was left as a bitter reminder of a bygone era. Even though *La Valse* pays respects to the waltz at the start, by the end it disintegrates into jagged fragments, leading to a powerful and almost terrifying climax. *La Valse* was initially intended as a ballet for the popular Ballet Russes. However, when the impresario Serge Diaghilev refused the piece, Ravel premiered it as a symphonic poem. In addition to the orchestral version, Ravel also created a two-piano and solo piano arrangements. The piano version stays very true to the orchestral score, thus creating a sea of challenges for the performer. To go along with the composition, Ravel included the following descriptive note, "Through breaks in the swirling clouds, waltzing couples may be glimpsed. Little by little they disperse: one makes out an immense hall filled with a whirling crowd. The stage is illuminated gradually. The light of the chandeliers peak at the fortissimo. An imperial court, about 1855."

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*This recital is presented by Ms. Kalinichenko in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance. Ms. Kalinichenko is a student of Dr. Oksana Ejokina.*



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