

SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE, AND DANCE

SERIES CONCERT
Virtuoso

**THE LIN AND CHANG
PIANO DUO**

HSIN-HSUAN LIN AND JOOYEON CHANG

NOV. 27, 2023 | 7:30 P.M.
ORGAN RECITAL HALL



COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

Virtuoso Series Concert: The Lin and Chang Piano Duo
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HSIN-HSUAN LIN AND JOOYEON CHANG

Felix Bartholdy Mendelssohn (1809–1847)
***Andante con Variazioni* in B-flat Major, op. 83a**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)
Sonata in C Major, K. 521

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante
- III. Allegretto

Georges Bizet (1838–1875)
***Jeux d'enfants*, op. 22**

- I. L'Éscarpolette
- II. La Toupie
- III. La Poupée
- IV. Les Chevaux de bois
- V. Le Volant
- VI. Trompette et Tambour
- VII. Les Bulles de Savon
- VIII. Les quatre coins
- IX. Colin-Maillard
- X. Saute-Mouton
- XI. Petit mari, petite femme!...

PROGRAM NOTES

Andante con Variazioni in B-flat Major, op. 83a

Felix Bartholdy Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

Musical prodigies Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn came from a brilliant family of philosophers and musicians. From an early age, Felix was well known as an amazing pianist, organist, conductor, and composer. His compositional style was deeply influenced by Bach, because he had a deep passion for the Baroque composer's music. As a conductor he worked hard to help revive Bach's music, as well as that of Beethoven, who had a profound impact on Classical and Romantic music at the beginning of Mendelssohn's lifetime. Mendelssohn's composition and performance style was highly regarded by others, although it was much more conservative than many of his contemporaries. Liszt, with whom Mendelssohn had a cordial, but often uneasy, relationship once said: "I am not in favor of extreme tempi, as often heard done by virtuosos of today. It is justifiable only in a few exceptions—perhaps with Mendelssohn." Hans von Bülow, another contemporary and a highly regarded pianist, once commented: "The *ritardandos* which are added to Mendelssohn have given him an undeserved reputation for lemonade-like sentimentality. It is, however, noble wine, not lemonade."

Mendelssohn's ***Andante con Variazioni in B-flat Major***, op. 83a, for piano-four hands is certainly no exception to von Bülow's evocative description and praise of the Mendelssohnian style. This set of variations was written for two pianists in 1844, and is based on a previous work, *Variations in B-flat, op. 83*, which Mendelssohn had composed three years prior. *Andante con Variazioni* was first performed in London in 1844, but neither of these works was published during Mendelssohn's lifetime; they were printed posthumously in 1850, three years after the composer's tragic death in 1847 at the age of 38.

Andante con Variazioni begins with a simple chorale-like melody, in a very classical style that shows the deep influence previous composers such as Beethoven and Bach had on the composer. The opening melody is passed between the two performers, a technique that continues throughout each variation as the players trade melody and accompaniment. The variations flow from the theme and from one another without much pause, but with vivid changes in tempo and style. The first variation is quick and playful, and the opening theme is easily recognized. This variation feels almost interrupted by the flashy and quick second variation. The next few variations continue with lively tempos and flashy movement by both players, which is very characteristic of Mendelssohn's style. Variation six takes on a completely different tone, sounding almost akin to a funeral march in a Mahler symphony, or of a piano work by Chopin. It leans heavily on more somber progressions and maintains a

slow and tragic tread. This melancholy interlude is halted by the arpeggiations of the entering seventh variation, which returns to the more playful tone of what came before. In variation eight, listeners may feel transported to a deeply passionate piano sonata of Beethoven or Brahms. Variations six and eight give ample proof of von Bülow's praise, this "noble wine," adding wonderful depth to the overall tone of the work. This dramatic, classical sonata style dies away and gives way to a recap of the theme in its original chorale setting, its simplicity providing still more proof of Mendelssohn's depth of compositional skill. Mendelssohn could not, however, resist one final, energetic setting of his theme, carrying listeners to a triumphant ending with an arpeggiated flourish from both pianists.

— notes by Stuart Hoskins

Sonata in C Major, K. 521

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Duet playing is essential for every pianist. Playing in pairs compensates for an inability to put forth as wide a range of voices when playing alone and is both technically demanding and fun. This form of playing brings more possibilities for piano composition and performance, and adds a certain charm. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was a pianist himself, as was his sister, so it is surprising that there are only five surviving compositions for two pianists. Still, his piano duets laid a foundation and provided inspiration for later composers such as Johannes Brahms, Robert Schumann, and many others.

Sonata in C Major, K. 521 in C Major is the last complete piano sonata Mozart composed for piano-four hands and one of his most famous and brilliant. The major tonal colors are clear, and the harmonic progression is smooth. This piece demonstrates Mozart's deep understanding of musical expression and dialogue. Because of this, the composition is very popular and often performed and recorded. The sonata has three movements. The first movement, "Allegro," is in sonata form. The first half of the first theme is a powerful four-handed unison, which is then contrasted by a shift to individual playing in the second half. This movement is light and lively with an elegant and delicate dialog in piano duet form. The second movement, "Andante," is melodic and serene, in triple meter. The third movement "Allegretto," begins with the first player playing the rondo theme and is melodically rich, humorous, and energetic. The piece is challenging to play for several reasons. The first is coordination: the two piano players need to work well together and understand each other. The second is fully capturing the expression of the music, for Mozart's music is delicate and players need to bring out the emotional level and musicality of the piece.

— notes by Junhan Lei

***Jeux d'enfants*, op. 22**

Georges Bizet (1838–1875)

Composer Georges Bizet was born Alexandre César Léopold Bizet in Paris, France. He was the only child of Adolphe-Armand Bizet, a Parisian hairdresser and wigmaker-turned-moderately successful singing teacher, and Aimée Delsarte, whose brother François had a great influence on Bizet's early musical training. Bizet was close to his mother as he grew up, and she likely taught him to read music and gave him his first piano lessons. When he was about nine-years-old, Georges enrolled at the Conservatoire near his family home, and within six months he won first prize in a piano competition. Over the next few years, he continued his studies and won many prizes at his school for his skill at the piano and in solfège. Bizet's success as a pianist is ironic because, as a composer, almost none of his piano compositions became widely popular with performers or audiences. With the exception of ***Jeux d'enfants***, his other piano works were viewed as too challenging for the average player and struggled to gain recognition, especially in the shadow of his great opera *Carmen*, widely known as his best and most famous work. Because of his skill in setting story to music, it makes sense that the programmatic nature of *Jeux d'enfants* contributed to its ongoing legacy in the piano literature.

Jeux d'enfants (Child's Games) was originally written in 1871 as a ten-movement work for piano-four hands. The movements were originally set in a different order than the final score, and did not include numbers seven and eight, *Les Bulles de savon* and *Les Quatre Coins*. These were added at the end when Bizet settled on his final order for the movements. Each movement's name is a whimsical scene of a child at play and meant to evoke that scene through dialogue between the two pianists. The overall effect of each is delightfully capricious and filled with the joy of children at play. Listeners may find themselves floating, upheld by arpeggio and melody, as in *L'Escarpolette* (The Swing) or *Les Bulles de savon* (Soap Bubbles); contrastingly, they might be transported to a world of make-believe with simple yet fantastical melodies as in *La Poupée* (The Doll), *Trompette et tambour* (Trumpets and Drums), or *Petit mari, petite femme!* (Little Husband, Little Wife). *Les Quatre Coins* (The Four Corners), *Collin maillard* (Blind-Man's Bluff), and *Saute-mouton* (Leapfrog, literally "leapsheep") all depict different popular children's games of running, chasing, blindly searching for someone to tag, or leaping over playmates in sport. Many of these movements so clearly depict their story through the sound of the pianos that it is hard to tell the difference between the music and the real thing! This is heard best in *La Toupie* (The Top), *Les Chevaux de bois* (Wooden Horses), and especially *Le Volant* (The Shuttlecock). These many miniatures, serving as little pictures into the child's world, culminate in a delightful dance, *Le Bal* (The Ball), which invites listeners to dance along, reigniting joy through the eyes of the child at play.

BIOGRAPHIES



A native of Taiwan, **DR. HSIN-HSUAN LIN** is an all-round pianist of chamber music and large ensemble. She has a huge diversity of repertoires including winds, strings, operas, choirs, bands and symphonies.

Dr. Lin started her collaborative journey by working with the choir at Pace Institute in Taiwan when she was twelve. She later served as a pianist in Pace Institute Orchestra (where she also played the flute.)

That was the first time she felt the beauty of playing with other people than herself. During her undergraduate study, she performed with many of her colleagues at school. She also served as a choir pianist and rehearsal pianist of Verdi's opera 'Falstaff' with all the voice faculties at TungHai University.

She was invited to many music festivals and contests such as Castleman Quartet Program, Texas String Camp and Festival, Longhorn Music Camp, Austin University Interscholastic Leagues Contests, and many regional competitions.

Dr. Lin received her Bachelor's degree in piano performance from TungHai University in Taichung, Taiwan under Min-Hwa Chen. She was admitted to University of Texas at Austin, where she studied with Gregory Allen and received her first Master degree in Piano Performance in 2014. She continued her study in collaborative piano at UT Austin, and earned her second Master's and Doctoral of Musical Art in Collaborative Piano in 2018 and 2020 under Anne Epperson and Colette Valentine. She was a full scholarship recipient and appointed teaching assistant during her study of collaborative piano.



An active collaborative pianist, **DR. JOOYEON CHANG** has worked in Korea, France, the United Kingdom, Austria, Italy, Luxemburg, and the USA. The diversity in her collaborative experience has broadened her knowledge of musical repertoire and provided her with opportunities to learn, coach, and collaborate with a vast catalogue of solo, chamber, and ensemble repertoire.

She has performed with world-renowned brass musicians such tuba greats as Oystein Baadsvik, Roland Szentpali, Thomas Lulu, and as euphonium players including Steven Mead, Anthony Caillet, and Bastien Baumet. Dr. Chang has been invited to perform at universities throughout the United States, including University of Arkansas, University of Central Arkansas, Duquesne University, Sam Houston State University, Texas A&M International University, and others. She has been regularly performing with her duo partners Sarah Hetrick (Duo Oenomel) and Hsin-Hsuan Lin (The Piano Duo Lin and Chang) to meet wide range of audiences.

For many years, Dr. Chang serves as the official staff pianist for the Jeju International Wind Ensemble Festival, Chœur de l'Orchestre de Paris and a guest accompanist of Musique de Armée de l'Air de Paris. She also served the 2012 ITEC (International Tuba Euphonium Conference) in Linz, Austria and the Clarinet Fest 2023, Colorado, USA.

Her previous appointments include those at the SungShin Women's University, Chung-Ang University, and Seoul Jangsin University. She currently serves on faculty at Colorado State University where she teaches piano classes and performs with students, faculty, and guest artists.

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