

25 November 2021 | THURSDAY

Zhong Yifan

Violin Recital

Cherie Khor, *piano*

Programme

KORNGOLD

Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 35

I. Moderato nobile

II. Romanze

III. Allegro assai vivace

Programme Notes

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My name is Yifan Zhong, I will play Korngold Violin Concerto, Op.35 for my Junior Recital. So, I will introduce about this piece and explain how it's related to me.

Erich Wolfgang Korngold, He is an Austrian-born composer and conductor. He is one of the most important and influential composers in Hollywood history. He is a famous pianist and composer of classical music and Hollywood movie music, and the first internationally renowned composer to write Hollywood scores.

This "Violin Concerto in D Major", Op. 35, was composed in 1945 and dedicated to Mahler's wife, Alma Maria Mahler-Werfel (Alma Maria Mahler-Werfel). From 1938 to the end of World War II, most of Cohen Gold's creations focused on Hollywood soundtracks. This song was suggested by his friend, Jewish violinist Bronislaw Huberman (Bronislaw Huberman), and it can be regarded as his continued playing in the realm of serious music.

Heifetz is the most "hardcore" promoter of this work. On February 15, 1947, Heifetz served as a soloist and completed the premiere with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. Occasionally, this piece has the same tonality as Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, and even the composition number is exactly the same. Even after the debut, the feedback from critics is surprisingly similar. It was ridiculed by the music critics at the time. Compared with the prevalence of atonal music after World War II, the works of "Misunderstanding Times" are somewhat "outdated" because of their strong post-romantic style. But Heifetz is very aware of the value of this work, relying on his own influence to continue to play and record it into a record for release. In the end, with his unrelenting efforts, this violin concerto became Korngold's most famous work. This work is a typical art music inspired by film music, so the themes of each movement also use materials from Korngold's early film soundtracks. Moreover, the sense of picture and atmosphere is full, and more importantly, the "singing" that runs through it.

At the beginning of the first movement, the violinist played a soulful, nostalgic singing theme. In fact, this melody appeared in the 1937 movie "Another Dawn." The second theme shows another kind of tenderness under the intensive kneading. This theme is the melody of the 1939 movie "Juarez".

The second movement is undoubtedly the core of the emotional expression of the whole work, and it is an extremely beautiful slow movement. This movement also uses the music from the 1936 movie "Anthony Adverse". It starts at about 3 minutes and 40 seconds, and there is a very free, flexible, yet rhythmic splendor, especially for very weakly played ones. The treble, together with the increasingly excited string kneading, sings an aria like a soprano, and leads the audience into a new world. This movement has a hazy atmosphere under the moonlight as a whole, which is an extremely beautiful slow movement. At the same time, this movement is also a test of the conductor's precision in the coordination of the orchestra and the violin.

The last movement appeared in the 1937 film "Prince and Pauper", with Paganini-like flamboyant skills, which is a kind of emotional catharsis of mixed sadness and joy.

For this piece, I myself think it is really worth to perform and study it. This piece contains difficult skills and emotional singing, which strongly improved my understanding for such 'Modern' pieces. Unlike other 20 century's pieces, I could find melodies and phrases, which is very useful. And also, Heifetz is my idol, he participated in arranging this piece, and also the first violinist performing it, so I wish I could play just like him.

Programme notes by Zhong Yifan.