

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Sonata No.1 for Violin and Piano in G major, Op.78

- I. Vivace, ma non troppo
- II. Adagio
- III. Allegro molto moderato

Brahms' Sonata No.1 for Violin and Piano is a work filled with graceful tenderness, nobility, immense passion and even sacred repose, as the music weaves through an intricate interplay between the violin and piano. The three movements are intimately interrelated with motivic material, most memorably, the repeated three 'D's in a dotted rhythm. This is first introduced at the beginning of the sonata in the violin and heard sporadically in the lyrical first movement. The second movement is a solemn and introspective Adagio, with the three dotted notes hidden in the funeral march in the middle section, before reappearing in the lively finale movement. The melody at the start of the 3rd movement is a direct quote of Brahms' own art song "Regenlied" ("Rain Song") with the exact melody and accompaniment of the lied, now played by the violin and piano. Throughout the piece, Brahms weaves together themes of love, longing, and nostalgia, offering a profound exploration of musical expression for both the performers and audience.

Eugène Ysaÿe (1858 - 1931)

Sonata No.4 for Solo Violin in E minor Op.27

- I. Allemande
- II. Sarabande
- III. Finale

After attending a concert by the violinist Josef Szigeti in 1923, Ysaÿe was inspired to write his famous 6 Sonatas for Solo Violin, with each sonata in the series honoring the style of a contemporary violinist whom he knew. The Sonata No.4 in E minor is dedicated to his good friend Fritz Kreisler, who was also one of the great violinists of his time.

According to Ysaÿe, Kreisler's warm and glowing sound, and his unique playing style with delicate rubato and finesse, was a major influence in composing this Sonata. It is structured in three movements Allemande, Sarabande and Finale, its titles hinting at Ysaÿe's unconventional approaches to classical forms while drawing influences in his music from the Baroque style. The Allemande is filled with broken chords that resemble Bach's D minor Chaconne for Violin while the Sarabande is a triple meter Baroque dance which begins with a pizzicato passage. In the Finale, Ysaÿe made certain references to Kreisler's compositions, one of which was his Praeludium and Allegro, with the double stop passages alike to Kreisler's in regards to harmony, contour, and articulation. This finale also echoes Kreisler's 'Pugnani' in its relentless semiquavers.

Fritz Kreisler (1875-1962)
Viennese Rhapsodic Fantasetta

Kreisler's Viennese Rhapsodic Fantasetta brims with charm and elegance characteristic of Viennese music as Kreisler pays tribute to the musical traditions of his native country Vienna. Composed in 1932, this Fantasetta transports listeners to the grandeur of Viennese salons with its nostalgic melodies and sparkling virtuosity. Drawing on elements of Viennese folk music, Kreisler weaves a tapestry of musical enchantment, inviting audiences on a journey through the streets and ballrooms of Vienna.

Pytor Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840 - 1893)
Valse Scherzo in C major Op.34

Composed in 1877, this charming work combines elements of both the waltz and the scherzo, culminating in a elegant and playful showpiece that is sure to charm listeners. From the lyrical beauty of the main theme to the playful exuberance of the scherzo sections, Valse Scherzo is a showcase for the violinist's expressive range and technical skill. Tchaikovsky's gift for melody is also evident throughout the piece as he weaves together a series of captivating themes and variations while demonstrating his mastery in the miniature form.