

Syu Cheng-Yi's Violin Junior Recital

Johannes Brahms

Sonata for Piano and Violin No. 2 in A Major, Op. 100
("Thun" Sonata)

Background & Context

Composed in the summer of 1886 during Brahms's stay in Thun, Switzerland, the A-major Sonata reflects a period of artistic relaxation and lyrical inspiration. That summer was exceptionally productive for Brahms, yielding not only this work but also the Cello Sonata in F major and Violin Sonata No. 3.

The Second Violin Sonata is widely regarded as Brahms's most intimate and songful violin sonata. Unlike the more dramatic First and Third Sonatas, Op. 100 glows with warmth, clarity, and chamber-like dialogue. The original German title—*Sonate für Klavier und Violine*—places the piano first, emphasizing that both instruments share equal expressive weight.

Brahms's friendships with violinist Joseph Joachim and mezzo-soprano Hermine Spies influenced the melodic writing: several themes echo Brahms's own lieder, lending the sonata a distinctly vocal quality. The result is a gentle yet deeply expressive work filled with tenderness, poetic nuance, and radiant lyricism.

Eugène Ysaÿe

Sonata for Solo Violin in E Major, Op. 27 No. 6
(Dedicated to Manuel Quiroga)

Background & Context

Ysaÿe composed his Six Solo Violin Sonatas in 1923 after hearing Joseph Szigeti perform Bach's solo works—an experience that compelled him to write a modern set of pieces inspired by Bach's spirit but shaped by the violinistic styles of the early 20th century. Each of the six sonatas is dedicated to a prominent violinist of Ysaÿe's circle.

Op. 27 No. 6 is dedicated to the Spanish virtuoso Manuel Quiroga and is the most brilliant and light-spirited of the cycle. The sonata incorporates Spanish dance influences, rhythmic flair, and playful virtuosity in homage to Quiroga's artistry and heritage.

Filled with rapid passagework, intricate bowing techniques, and occasional left-hand pizzicato, the piece exemplifies Ysaÿe's ability to showcase both the violin's expressive capabilities and the performer's technical mastery. Sparkling, colorful, and exciting, it stands as a joyful conclusion to the Op. 27 set and a vibrant tribute to one of the great violinists of the age.