

Program Notes

Halsey Stevens

Sonata for Trumpet and Piano

Halsey Stevens began writing this Sonata for Trumpet and Piano piece in May of 1953, but he didn't complete it until 1956. This piece was premiered at the Hartt School in Hartford, Connecticut, performed by Theodore Gresh on trumpet and Geraldine Douglass on piano on November 12, 1957. Stevens is often regarded as a master of contrapuntal writing, and each movement of the sonata features a distinct tonal center, with the second movement containing two.

This work shows clear influences from both Béla Bartók and Aaron Copland. The first and third movements make use of asymmetrical rhythms and mixed meters, creating a lively, dance-like character typical of Bartók's style. At the same time, the lyrical lines and smooth leaps across wide intervals reflect the influence of Copland's melodic writing.

Théo Charlier

Solo de Concours

Belgian composer and trumpet teacher Théo Charlier is remembered as one of the most influential trumpet pedagogues of the early 20th century. During his long tenure at the Liège Conservatory, he trained many outstanding students—forty-seven of whom went on to win national solo competitions across France.

Solo de Concours remains one of Charlier's most celebrated works and continues to be widely performed by trumpet students at the Liège Conservatory. Its popularity led to its inclusion at the Paris Conservatory as a

contest piece, a reflection of Charlier's stature both as a composer and as an educator.

The piece is through-composed and divided into three contrasting sections—Allegro, Lento, and Allegro, which showcase the trumpet's full expressive and technical range. From its bold opening statement to its lyrical middle section and virtuosic finale, Solo de Concours exemplifies Charlier's balance of musicality and technical challenge, making it a cornerstone of the modern trumpet repertoire.

Oskar Böhme

Liebeslied Op.22 No.2

This piece was composed by Russian-German composer Oskar Böhme, a significant figure in late Romantic trumpet literature. Like his contemporaries Willy Brandt and Wilhelm Wurm, Böhme was among the German musicians who brought their musical heritage to Russia, helping to establish the foundation of the Russian trumpet school. Their influence shaped a distinctive style of trumpet playing that continues to resonate more than a century later.

Liebeslied (meaning "Love Song") is a quintessential Romantic work that reflects the expressive lyricism of the German art song tradition. The trumpet takes on a singing, vocal quality, supported by a rich and flowing piano accompaniment. Originally written for B-flat trumpet and piano, the piece showcases Böhme's gift for combining warmth, lyricism, and elegance in a compact yet deeply expressive form.

Program Notes by Yeh, Tsung-Ruei