



**KRANNERT CENTER DEBUT ARTIST:
PEIYAO CHENG, FLUTE**

Sunday, April 24, 2022, at 7:30pm
Foellinger Great Hall, salon-style

PROGRAM

KRANNERT CENTER DEBUT ARTIST:

PEIYAO CHENG, FLUTE

leng leng lam, piano

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)

Sonata for Flute and Piano
I. Allegretto malinconico
II. Cantilena
III. Presto giocoso

Astor Pantaleon Piazzolla
(1921-1992)

Histoire du Tango
I. Bordello 1900
II. Café 1930
III. Nightclub 1960
IV. Concert d'Aujourd'hui

20-minute intermission

Valerie Coleman
(1970-)

Danza de la Mariposa

Charles-Marie Widor
(1844-1937)

Suite for Flute and Piano, Op. 34
I. Moderato
II. Scherzo
III. Romance
IV. Final

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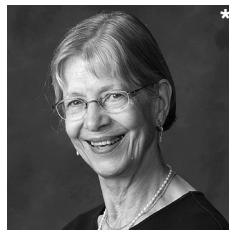
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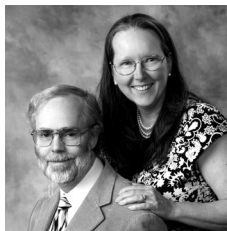
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PROGRAM NOTES

In this innovative program, Peiyao Cheng explores works for the flute from the 19th century through current time. The program contains many moving and exciting moments for the listener.

FRANCIS POULENC

Born January 7, 1899, in the 8th arrondissement of Paris, Paris, France

Died January 30, 1963, in Paris, France

Sonata for Flute and Piano

Although Poulenc was a member of the famous group of French composers known as Les Six (Poulenc, Auric, Durey, Honegger, Milhaud, and Tailleferre), he transcended any collective musical thought and left his singular imprint. He is sometimes underestimated by those who hear only the charm of his music and not its originality and excellence. He was profoundly influenced by Mozart, Ravel, Saint-Saëns, and Eric Satie, but on any ideas from those composers he left his own stamp. Scholarship often suggests that the sharp contrasts in his music—from the profane to the deeply spiritual—can be explained by the upbringing of his free-thinking, artistic mother and conservative, Catholic father, but there are many other factors in his life that shed light on his conflicts. Simply Paris in the 20s, 30s, and 40s says much about Poulenc.

Critic Claude Rostand's tagging of Poulenc as "half bad boy, half monk" is a telling comment on both Poulenc's life and his music. A Parisian by birth and instinct, he and his fellow members of Les Six collectively and separately pushed the edges of French music in the first half of the 20th century. Yet, as Poulenc broke rules, he could also honor Classical form in a remarkable way. He was openly gay and a devout Catholic at the same time and suffered from inner struggles about

the two. "You know that I am as sincere in my faith, without messianic screamings, as I am in my Parisian sexuality," he was quoted as saying.

Poulenc's love of the flute is clear in his *Sonata for Flute and Piano* composed in 1956. The melancholy noted in the first movement's marking, *Allegro malinconico*, is obvious in the lovely opening melody, but the movement grows in strength and goes beyond simple melancholy for both flute and piano. "Sweetly sad" has also been appropriately offered as a description, and thus, it is to the last extended note. The flowing second movement *Cantilena* also grows in power and elaboration, particularly in the strong piano chords. The gay third movement continues with virtuosic demands for both instruments. A slow moment adds to the drama before a highly animated conclusion.

ÁSTOR PIAZZOLLA

Born March 11, 1921, in Mar del Plata, Argentina

Died July 4, 1992, in Buenos Aires, Argentina

Histoire du Tango

Piazzolla's studies with Alberto Ginastera led him to studies in Paris with the legendary Nadia Boulanger. Piazzolla gives a wonderful account of his reluctance to admit to her that he played the bandoneon rather than the piano. He presented to her what he called his "kilos of symphonies and sonatas." She responded that they were "well written," but that she could not find Piazzolla in them. Finally, he played his tangos for her to which she responded, "You idiot, that's Piazzolla!" He commented, "And I took all the music I composed, 10 years of my life, and sent it to hell in two seconds."

So it is that *Histoire du Tango* is one of Piazzolla's best-known works and supported his life work of bringing the tango into concert halls of Europe and America. It was originally composed in 1985 for flute and guitar but now is often played in different combinations in which the violin is substituted for the flute. The work seeks and succeeds in conveying the history and evolution of the tango in its four movements.

The high-spirited tango of the *Bordello* portrays the chatter of the French, Italian, and Spanish women who inhabited the bordellos and teased the many men who came to visit. *Café 1930* reveals the new age of the tango when people preferred listening rather than dancing to it, thereby aligning it with serious classical music. *Night Club 1960*, however, reverts to the popularization of the tango in night clubs where audiences rushed to hear it in its new form. *Concert d'Aujourd'hui* (Modern-Day Concert) suggests the tango as it sought relativity to the works of such contemporary composers as Bartók and Stravinsky and became the tango much as we know it today.

VALERIE COLEMAN

Born in 1970 in Louisville, Kentucky
Danza de la Mariposa

Composer and flutist Valerie Coleman has gained wide recognition for music that incorporates African-American styles and classical music. While *Danza de la Mariposa* includes that combination, it also rings most clearly as a piece of serious classical music. Its title *Danza de la Mariposa* (Dance of the Butterfly) is reflected in the dance-like rhythmic qualities that permeate

the some seven-minute work. It begins with a declamatory flourish but later explores all ranges of the instrument. Rich melodies mark the piece throughout including some sad moments in what is called the style of Yarvi, a Peruvian lament song. Not absent from the virtuosic work is a sense of the serious form of the tango that Piazzolla brought to concert halls.

CHARLES-MARIE WIDOR

Born February 21, 1844, in Lyon, France
Died March 12, 1937, in Paris, France
Suite for Flute and Piano, Op. 34

If by any chance you are not familiar with the music of Charles-Marie Widor, you are in for a fine surprise with his *Suite for Flute and Piano, Op. 34* composed in 1877. One of the reasons you may not know the work is because Widor is most famous for his organ music. He was organist of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame of Paris and was a professor of composition at the Paris Conservatory. He did, however, compose for other than the organ as evidenced in this wonderful work for flute and piano.

The some 17-minute piece has an engaging opening in the first movement Moderato with its lyricism and expressiveness. The playful second movement Scherzo is quite in contrast with its sense of humor. The third movement Romance fulfills its marking but inventively so with the flute and piano beautifully matched in the virtuosic demands for both instruments. The exciting Final, marked *Vivace*, thrills us with its power and many musical surprises.

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PROFILES

An active solo flutist, **PEIYAO CHENG** has recently won second place in the United States' most prestigious flute competition—the National Flute Association Young Artist Competition—where she was also awarded the 2021 Best Performance of Newly Commissioned Piece. Among other recent honors, Cheng has been awarded first place in the 2021 Flute Society of Washington's Mid-Atlantic Young Artist Competition and second place in the 2021 Mid-South Flute Society's Young Artist Competition.

Cheng is currently a candidate for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in flute performance at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign where she studies with Jonathan Keeble. She holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing where her teacher was Guoliang Han. In recognition of her academic and performance accomplishments, Cheng was awarded a scholarship by China Scholarship Council to support her further education in the United States in 2016. She then finished her master of music degree from Indiana University in 2018.

Cheng is originally from Zhengzhou, China.

Macau pianist **LENG LENG LAM** has made frequent solo appearances with orchestras in Macau and Europe since her debut at age 14. Her acclaimed performance of Franck's *Variations Symphoniques* in 2010 at the Berlin Konzerthaus was described as "absolutely wonderful" by the *Berliner Morgenpost*.

Lam is also in high demand as a collaborative artist, most notably with the flute and saxophone studios at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Before being appointed as the faculty collaborative pianist at the U of I, Lam has served as faculty at Eastern Illinois University.

A DMA graduate of the University of Illinois, Lam studied with esteemed teachers in Asia and North America including Gabriel Kwok at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts and William Heiles at the University of Illinois.