



**KRANNERT CENTER DEBUT ARTIST
ESTHER LEE, PIANO**

Sunday, April 23, 2023, at 3:00pm
Foellinger Great Hall

PROGRAM

KRANNERT CENTER DEBUT ARTIST

ESTHER LEE, PIANO

Robert Muczynski
(1929–2010)

Desperate Measures (Paganini Variations), Op. 48 (1994)

J. S. Bach
(1685–1750)

Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 903

Carl Vine
(b. 1954)

Piano Sonata No. 1 (1990)

I. Half note = 48

II. *Leggerio e legato*

Intermission

J. Brahms
(1833–1897)

Piano Sonata No. 3 in F Minor, Op. 5

I. *Allegro maestoso*

II. *Andante espressivo*

III. *Scherzo*

IV. *Intermezzo*

V. *Finale*

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PROGRAM NOTES

ROBERT MUCZYNSKI (1929–2010)

Desperate Measures (Paganini Variations), Op. 48

Date of composition: 1994

Approximate duration: 8 minutes

Born in Chicago, Muczynski attended DePaul University, where he studied composition with Alexander Tcherepnin. He made his Carnegie Hall debut at the age of 29 performing a program of his own piano compositions. In the 1960s, he joined the faculty of the University of Arizona as composer-in-residence and chairman of the composition department, positions he held until his retirement in 1988. Muczynski's many works include chamber works, solo instrumental works, concertos, orchestral music, choral music, and film scores. He also wrote 17 works for solo piano, including the *Desperate Measures (Paganini Variations), Op. 48*, composed in 1994.

Muczynski's bow to Rachmaninoff in his *Desperate Measures (Paganini Variations)* is intentional but not imitative. What Muczynski takes on is the challenge of composing in variation form which always demands both continuity and variation. This work achieves that difficult combination in its contrasting slow and fast moments that give us both lightness and darkness in the work's some eight minutes. Whichever tempo is used in the work, the music is always breathtaking in its effect.

Congratulations to Esther Lee for undertaking such a challenging work!

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685–1750)

Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 903

Date of composition: c. 1723

Approximate duration: 12 minutes

Musical terms in its title tell us much about Bach's *Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue*. Chromaticism, the upward or downward harmonic movement in half tones, informs the entire piece in a way that is startling even to the modern mind familiar with Wagner and the 20th century minimalists. No more effective use of chromaticism and its dramatic impact on the ear and heart can be found than Bach's.

So, too, does Bach define *fantasia* in the opening section of this work with its great freedom of form. The *Oxford Dictionary of Music* defines *fantasia* as "generally a composition in which form is of secondary importance." Grove's calls it "a term adopted in the Renaissance for an instrumental composition whose form and invention spring solely 'from the fantasy and skill of the author who created it' (Luis de Milan, 1535)." Bach's exploration of the form in the *Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue* suggests that there is an inner quality to a *fantasia*, which defies style itself, and that the *fantasia* is a struggle between form and freedom with invention being its key ingredient. Schumann, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert would follow him with glorious contributions to the form, but Bach's remains singular, as illustrated in the *Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 903*.

Recitativ is the one term omitted in the title that plays an important role in the work, turning it into a three-part piece rather the two suggested by its name. We associate *recitativ* with opera when the drama is interrupted and the action advances by a single voice without melodic flourish. Bach's use of the *recitativ* following the opening *fantasia* gives us a moment of relief before we are thrust into the complexity of his *fugue*, one of his most extraordinary exercises in counterpoint. This

mighty fugue begins simply enough with one voice, but as the others enter the texture of the work grows incredibly dense, demanding the utmost from the player.

The work ends with another mighty flourish suggestive of its opening, and we have clearly revealed, in this dark whirl of notes, all the wonders of Bach.

CARL VINE (B. 1954)

Piano Sonata No. 1

Half note = 48

Leggerio e legato

Date of composition: 1990

Approximate duration: 16 minutes

One of Australia's best-known composers, Carl Vine's piano music is performed worldwide and is recorded on some sixty CDs. He also has an extensive range of chamber music as well as various works for film, television, dance, and theatre. Among many distinguished academic pursuits, he has been Senior Lecturer in composition at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music since 2014.

Composed in 1990, Vine's *Piano Sonata No. 1* is a thoroughly incredible work. If you have not heard it before, you will be greatly surprised and perhaps even somewhat shocked by its intensity and its virtuosic demands. The first movement, Half note, has a dramatically moving opening before it brightens. The movement then continues between darkness and light. With the second movement, marked Leggerio e legato (lightly and gracefully), we receive a new sense of drama, this time with an increasingly thrilling sense of darkness and modernity. Above all are the work's continuing virtuosic demands, including its dark pounding moments and its sweeping moves across the entire keyboard. Bravo to those who dare to play it!

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897)

Sonata No. 3 in F Minor, Op. 5

Allegro maestoso

Andante espressivo

Scherzo: Allegro energico

Intermezzo: Andante molto

Finale: Allegro moderato

Date of composition: 1852–53

Approximate duration: 38 minutes

No other composer better represents a melding of Romantic style and Classical form than Brahms. Furthermore, within his lifetime he experienced both the waning of Romanticism and the birth of the controversial Second Viennese School led by Arnold Schoenberg. Nor was Brahms free from a part in this latter musical evolution, as clearly evidenced by some of his late works but also suggested in his earlier works such as the Op. 10 Ballades. The famous late 19th century controversy that pitted Brahms against Wagner and separated the musical world would seem of lesser significance if it had not inspired the French to take a new path with Impressionism. Within all these developments, however, Brahms maintained his individual stamp of elegant form, adventuresome harmony, gorgeous melody, and grand sweep of emotion. That he was admired by both Schoenberg and Edward Elgar says much about his music.

That Brahms' F Minor Sonata is considered the most popular of his three is easily understandable since it is an unforgettable work in terms of Romantic expression, excellence of form, virtuosic challenges, and general effectiveness. In it he takes the piano sonata form that Beethoven brought to such splendid heights and gives it new direction. The five movements were written in two different time periods between 1852 and 1853, with the second and fourth movements preceding the first and fifth. Perhaps it is this sequence that gives the work its sense of culmination in terms of

Brahms' piano compositions. Although he wrote numerous other piano works, he would not return to the piano sonata.

The first movement, *Allegro maestoso*, offers a powerful and, as the marking indicates, majestic opening to the work. A dotted rhythmic motif leads to a highly lyrical development. He then varies between the two moods but always with increasing tension and drama that underscores the *maestoso* marking.

Over the score of the second movement, *Andante espressivo*, Brahms inscribed a brief poem by German poet Otto Inckermann (1823–1862) that speaks much for the mood of the movement:

*The evening is falling
The moonbeams rise
And light two lovers
Who mingle their sighs
And commune in happiness together*

Of course, the poem is also a reminder of Brahms' strong feelings for Clara Schumann, although there is no solid proof that the relationship went beyond a lasting friendship. Nevertheless, the composition of the F Minor Sonata was in close proximity to Robert Schumann's confinement in a mental institution after his suicide attempt, a situation that caused Brahms to lend protective support for Clara. All the feelings that may have arisen from this are expressed in this second movement, but perhaps we should stay with its purely musical implications. A beautiful opening melody sings in the right hand while the left offers a warm accompaniment. Subtle Schubert-like shifts to the minor also are heard. A development section brings Brahms' opposing rhythms in the left and right hands, a challenge for any pianist. Brahms returns to the opening theme with increasing lyricism before a strong coda brings the beautiful movement to a quiet closing with a final bow to lyricism.

The third movement, *Scherzo*, opens with Brahms at his happiest, but a sadder trio section soon intervenes, reminding us of the Brahms we know so well. Honoring *scherzo* form, he does return, however, to the robust mood of the opening.

Brahms' favoring of the somewhat elusive *intermezzo* form brings the musical freedom of the fourth movement, *Intermezzo* marked *Andante molto*. Listening to this movement makes one wonder if it is not a play on the famous four-note opening motto of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. If that is so, it is an imitation sparked with Brahms' many original ideas.

In the *Finale*, Brahms employs great freedom of Romantic style with both serious and playful moments. Dotted rhythmic phrases contrast with chorale-like moments. In essence, the movement seems to take on the entire pianistic world with a myriad of expressions: the playful, the lyrical, the powerful, and the dynamic. Brahms brings the F Minor Sonata to the grandest of conclusions.

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PROFILE

Huijae (Esther) Lee is a South Korean pianist from Cheongju who has won numerous competitions in Korea, including the Young Soloists Competition and the Min Classical Music Competition in 2018. In 2021, she won second prize at the 22nd Korean Chamber Orchestra Competition, and she received an honorable mention in the Krannert Debut Artist Competition in 2022. In addition, Lee was named the Illinois State MTNA Young Artist Piano Performance Competition winner and also selected as an alternate for the MTNA East Central Division Competition. Most recently, she has been named the Krannert Debut Artist for 2023 and also received an honorable mention in the University of Illinois Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition.

She is actively performing as a soloist and an accompanist in various solo recitals, chamber recitals, and private concerts in the US and South Korea. Her outstanding academic achievements include graduating as valedictorian and winning the Academic Award from Chungbuk Arts High School, graduating cum laude from Hanyang University in Seoul, and receiving the Graduate Tuition Award from Indiana University in Bloomington, where she did her MM.

Ms. Lee is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree with Dr. Rochelle Sennet at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, where she has been a recipient of the Ross Fellowship and State Fellowship since Fall 2021 and holds a piano lesson instructor position for the Illinois Community Music Academy. She has taken regular masterclasses from Dr. Ian Hobson since 2021 and studied piano pedagogy as her cognate under Dr. Christos Tsitsaros. She has also played in masterclasses with numerous musicians such

as Artina McCain, Awadagin Pratt, Chong-Pil Im, and Jae-hyuck Cho, among many others. Her previous teachers include Dr. Dai Uk Lee, Prof. Edward Auer, Dr. Saekyung Park, Prof. Sunghwe Huh, and Prof. Yonsoo Rhee.

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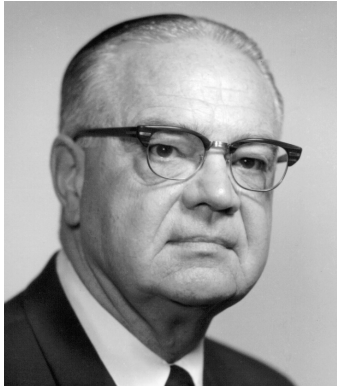
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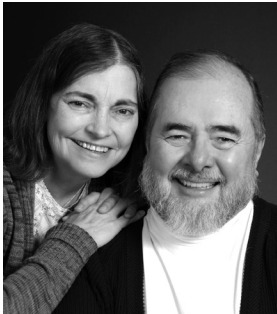
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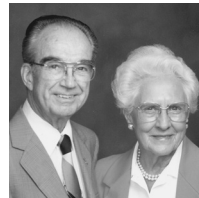
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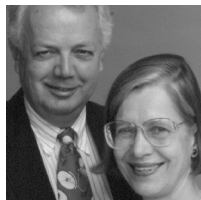
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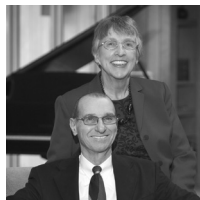
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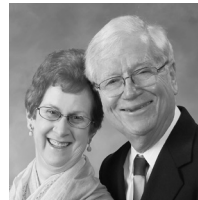
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Maureen V. Reagan, Associate Director
for Marketing

Communications

Linea Johnson, Communications Director
Sean Kutzko, Assistant Communications
Director
Nicholas Mulvaney, Senior Designer
Jodee Stanley, Program and Web Editor

Public Services

Lisa Lillig, Client Relations & Food Services
Director
Elizabeth Henke, Stage 5 Bar Manager
Michael Bunting, Intermezzo Supervisor
Amy Thomas, Director of Food Production
Abraham Castro, Assistant Director of
Food Preparation
Zia Moon, Krannert Center Showcase
Director, Office and Communications
Support Specialist
Whitney Havice, Interim Ticketing and
Patron Services Director
Ty Mingo, Assistant Ticket Services
Director
Jon Proctor, Nick Wurl, Ticket Sales
Supervisors
Ann-Marie Dittmann, Patron Services
Assistant Director
Adrian Rochelle, Front of House
Performance Supervisor

PRODUCTION

Terri Anne Ciofalo, Director
of Production
Maria Miguens, Interim Production
Manager

Audio Department

Rick Scholwin, Audio Director
Alec LaBau, Associate Audio Director/
Video Director

Costume Shop

Andrea Bouck, Costume Director
Richard Gregg, Costume Rentals Director/
Wardrobe Adviser/Associate Costume
Director
Paige Stewart-Rankins, Hair & Makeup
Supervisor
April McKinnis, EB McTigue,
Cutters/Drapers
Julianna Steitz, Kari Little-McKinney,
Theatrical Stitchers

Lighting Department

Lisa Kidd, Lighting Director
David Krupla, Associate Lighting Director
Nick Jukes, Lighting and Media
Technician

Properties Department

Adriane Binky Donley, Properties Director
Kira Lyon, Assistant Properties Director

Scene Shop

Ryan Schultz, Technical Director
Tatsuya Ito, Associate Technical Director
Bill Kephart, Scene Shop Chief Clerk
Bobby Reynolds, Theatrical Scene Shop
Coordinator
Liam Romano, Theatrical Scene Shop
Assistant

WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE AT THE CENTER

We work to create the best possible setting for the experiences you seek and find here.

NECESSARIES

Restrooms are located in the foyers of Foellinger Great Hall, Tryon Festival Theatre, and Colwell Playhouse; the east entrances on the Lobby level; and in each elevator lobby on Level 1 and Level 3. Lobby restrooms and one restroom in each elevator lobby are fully accessible and contain baby-changing stations.

Ushers will be happy to provide you cough drops courtesy of St. Joseph Apothecary, or disposable foam earplugs if the place starts rockin'.

If you or a companion needs medical assistance, contact an usher or other staff member.

Please take a moment before the performance to note the theatre exits nearest to you. If it becomes necessary to evacuate the theatre, please remain calm, follow the instructions of the house staff, and exit in an orderly fashion to the appropriate safe meeting location, which will be announced to you.

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

The use of cell phones, cameras, and recording devices during performances is prohibited unless otherwise announced from the stage.

LATE ARRIVALS

As a courtesy to performers and audience members, latecomers will be seated only at times selected in advance by the artist. Should you find that you've arrived late to a performance, our Patron Services staff will keep you informed about the earliest seating opportunity.

LOST ITEMS

If you are in need of Lost and Found, please visit the Patron Services counter. We will do our best to reunite object and owner!

TICKET RETURNS

If you find you can't attend a performance, please contact the Ticket Office in advance, preferably by 6pm the day before the performance (kran-tix@illinois.edu or 217.333.6280). We never charge a handling fee on ticket transactions.

SERVICES

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts is committed to making experiences accessible for all patrons, and we are delighted to provide a number of services to assist you. Krannert Center is equipped with an assisted listening system, wheelchair-accessible and no-step/few-step seating, and large-print programs, Braille programs, and American Sign Language interpreters are available with three weeks' advance notice.

For assistance regarding your visit, please email: Para ayuda en relación con su visita, favor de enviar un email a:

Pour vous aider dans votre visite, prière de nous envoyer un courriel à:

欢迎! 如若您对您的造访需要帮助, 请发送电子邮件至:

स्वागत है! अगर आपको अपने रहने के लिए मदद चाहिए, ईमेल कीजिए:

환영합니다! 방문에 관해 도움이 필요하실 때에는...

에게 이메일로 문의하시기 바랍니다:

PATRONSERVICES@KRANNERTCENTER.ILLINOIS.EDU
217.333.9716



300+

performances and
events annually

100+

commissioned pieces,
creative residencies, and
world premieres since 1969

3

resident academic
departments: Music,
Theatre, and Dance

10,000+

performances by local,
national, and international
artists presented since 1969

600

students take classes,
rehearse, work, and study
in the building each day

350,000+

Youth Series attendees
since its founding in 1982

300,000
visitors annually

300,000
square-foot facility

29
classrooms/laboratories/
theatres within the complex
that host over 150 distinct
classes annually

80
professional
staff members

6
production shops

5
indoor stages





EST.

19

69

