

PCD2017/02/22

FORBES CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY.

School of Music

presents

Faculty Recital

The French Connection

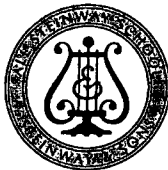
Carl Donakowski, *cello*

Gabriel Dobner, *piano*

Wednesday, February 22, 2017

8 pm

Recital Hall



There is no intermission.

Program

Sonata in E Major

Francois Francoeur
(1698-1787)

Adagio cantabile
Allegro vivo
Aria, Grazioso

Grave: Metamorphoses (1981)

Witold Lutosławski
(1913-94)

Suite for Solo Violoncello

Gaspar Cassadó
(1897-1966)

Preludio-Fantasia
Sardana (Danza)
Intermezzo e Danza Finale

Caprice No. 7

Alfredo Piatti
(1822-1901)

Sonata (1915)

Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

Prologue: Lent
Sérénade et Finale

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personal computers, and any other electronic devices.

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Program Notes

François FRANCOEUR was a violinist, a composer, the music director of the Paris Opera, and a member of the crack *24 Violons du Roy*, Louis XV's string orchestra at Versailles. Arnold Trowell transcribed this sonata for cello and piano. It was written originally as one of a set of 12 sonatas for violin and basso continuo (harpichord and cello) dedicated to "Her Serene Highness" Louise Anne de Bourbon, granddaughter of King Louis XIV.

Witold LUTOSŁAWSKI was one of the Poland's important and prolific 20th century composers. *Grave: Metamorphoses* is dedicated to the memory of his friend, musicologist Stefan Jarociński. The first four notes, played in the low register of the cello, are a musical quotation from Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*. The intervals between these notes, with a few additions, form a 24 note pattern which Lutoslawski "morphs" through various pitch levels. Rhythmic metamorphosis occurs as the longer values "dissolve" into shorter ones, creating a feeling of acceleration. There is another possible metamorphosis, an emotional one paralleling phases of mourning.

Gaspar CASSADÓ was a Catalanian cellist and composer, a cello student of fellow Catalan cellist Pablo Casals, and a composition student of Maurice Ravel at the Paris Conservatory. The first movement of the Suite is based on a quotation from Ravel's ballet *Daphnis and Chloé*.

Alfredo PIATTI was an 19th-century Italian cellist known for his brilliant and supple technique. He supported the cello solely with his legs, even after the widespread adoption of the end-pin. Besides his 12 Caprices, Piatti also wrote 2 cello concertos and a method book.

-Carl Donakowski

In the summer of 1915, besieged by a virulent cancer from within and the German war machine from without, Claude DEBUSSY optimistically planned a set of six neo-classical chamber sonatas. Only three were completed. Each attempts a kind of musical escapism, reverting to simple forms and a lean, sardonic style in open resistance to trends in contemporaneous non-French music. The first sonata, for violoncello and piano, required little more than a week to complete.

Debussy generally experiments more with tonality and texture than with form. For instance, an antique color emerges in the opening measure, with its prominent turn figure motive and modal harmonies; the careful listener may also note the lack of a C-sharp leading tone, suggesting less goal-directedness. Debussy seems intent on sampling music both from the distant past and his own compositional history. Consider the use of extreme high and low piano textures taken almost verbatim from his earlier impressionist prelude "La cathédrale engloutie" (*The Sunken Cathedral*). The second movement, labeled "Serenade," inhabits the slightly mischievous realm of *commedia-dell'arte*. Debussy had initially considered adding the title "Pierrot fâché avec la lune" (Pierrot argues with the moon). Pervasive pizzicato and staccato gestures compete with fleeting moments of lyricism, which sound all the more expressive by virtue of the striking contrast. Touches of Spanish guitar spill over without break into the lively, folk-inspired finale. Overall Debussy achieves a measured balance between stasis and agitation, between echoes of his own musical past and a much longer history of modal-tonal composition.

-Jason Stell

Biographies

Carl Donakowski holds a B.M. from Indiana University, a D.M.A. from the State University of New York at Stony Brook, and an Artist Diploma from the Musikhochschule Freiburg. His major teachers were Timothy Eddy, Janos Starker, Gary Hoffman and Christoph Henkel. He was a prize winner in the 1989 Mendelssohn Competition in Berlin. His recital performances have aired on WQRS Detroit, WQXR New York and Sudwestfunk Radio Baden-Baden. As a chamber musician, he has been a member of the North Shore Pro Musica, the Fontana Chamber Music Society and the Orpheus Piano Trio. As a member of the West End Chamber Ensemble, he participated in the National Endowment for the Arts/Chamber Music America Rural Residency Chamber Music Initiative. He previously served on the faculties of Central Michigan University School of Music and Alma College. During the summer, he teaches and performs at the Bay View Music Festival (Michigan) as a member of the Westbrook String Quartet.

Gabriel Dobner has recorded for the Ottavo and MDG labels. His recording of songs by Liszt, Dvorák and Mahler with Cornelia Kallisch, won high praise from BBC Magazine and the West German Radio in Cologne, referring to him as a "master among Lieder pianists". Radio recordings include the Bayrischer Rundfunk, Südwestfunk, Westdeutscher Rundfunk, Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk, Chubo-Nippon Broadcasting Company (Japan) and Saint Paul Sunday.

Upon receiving a German scholarship to study Lied accompanying in Munich with Helmut Deutsch, Gabriel Dobner moved to Augsburg. After winning the pianist's prize in the International Hans Pfitzner Lieder Competition in Munich, he established himself as a successful collaborative pianist and began appearing with such notable singers as René Kollo, Cornelia Kallisch and Kevin McMillan. He has since performed in many of Europe's most prestigious concert venues.

Previous teaching engagements include *Indiana University* and the *Nürnberg/Augsburg Hochschule für Musik*. A native of Chicago, Gabriel Dobner holds degrees from *Roosevelt University* and *Indiana University*. His teachers include Ludmila Lazar, James Tocco and Leonard Hokanson.