

PROGRAM IN PERFORMANCE SENIOR RECITALS 2023

Sunday, May 7, 2023 | 12:30 PM

Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

Rachel Hsu '23

Violin

Epilogue

When I first came to college, I wasn't even certain if I wanted to continue playing violin. I thought high school was going to be the final chapter of my violin career, but it ended up being a huge and crucial part of my Princeton experience, and I have only come to fall in love with music even more during my time here. I'm not sure whether I will continue playing after I graduate, but this concert is entitled "Epilogue" because I see this as the conclusion of this era of my life, when music was the core of my identity.

Featuring:

Justine Langman, piano

The JARJAR Sextet

Rachel Hsu '23, violin

Abby Nishiwaki '23, violin

Jack Shigeta '23, viola

Alex Hong '23, viola

Robin Park '23, cello

Jeremy Cha '23, cello

The use of photographic, video, or audio equipment is strictly prohibited. Please turn off or mute electronic devices for the duration of the performance.

For more information about the Department of Music and other upcoming events, and to sign-up for our mailing list, please visit music.princeton.edu.

PROGRAM

EUGÈNE YSAÏE

Sonata No. 6 in E major, Op. 27
Duration: 7 minutes

ALEXANDER GLAZUNOV

Violin Concerto in A minor, Op. 82
I. Moderato
II. Andante
III. Allegro
Justine Langman, piano
Duration: 4 - 10 - 6 minutes

HEINRICH WILHELM ERNST

6 Polyphonic Études: No. 6, Concert Variations
on the Irish Air "The Last Rose of Summer"
Duration: 10 minutes

JOHANNES BRAHMS

String Sextet No. 1 in B-Flat Major, Op. 18:
I. Allegro ma non troppo
The JARJAR Sextet

Duration: 15 minutes

PROGRAM NOTES

Eugène Ysaÿe – Sonata No. 6 in E major, Op. 27

This sonata is part of a set of six sonatas, each of which reflects a different character, style, and personality associated with various famous contemporaries of Ysaÿe's time, and each take inspiration from Bach and Paganini to varying degrees. Fun fact: they were also all sketched out in a 24-hour period after watching a concert performed by Joseph Szigeti dedicated to his favorite composer, Bach. The sixth and final sonata was dedicated to Spanish violinist Manuel Quiroga; the middle section of the piece clearly incorporates the Spanish habanera. Quiroga's career was cut short after an unfortunate traffic accident leaving him without the use of his arms, so he was actually the only dedicatee who did not premiere his sonata, but I'm sure he would've sounded great.

Alexander Glazunov – Violin Concerto in A minor, Op. 82

While Glazunov's violin concerto has all the familiar movements of a standard concerto, unlike other concertos, it is quite challenging to pick them out. They are performed without a break, and people actually tend to divide them in a couple of different ways, with some dividing the piece into four separate movements. The "slow movement," which introduces brand-new material, really occurs in the middle of the first movement. The cadenza is written by Glazunov himself and integrated into the overall design of the piece, occurring before the transition into the last movement. Although this work is undeniably a major work in the violin repertoire, it is undeservedly underplayed compared to its fellow Romantic concerti. I love this piece for all the darkness and turbulence of the first two movements—the bittersweetness, the pensive and melancholy but also hopeful themes—which transform into the brilliance, joyfulness and sparkle of the finale.

Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst – "The Last Rose of Summer"

"The Last Rose of Summer" (written out on the last page) was originally a poem penned by Irish poet Thomas Moore in 1805 dwelling on the passing of the seasons and the sense of sadness and loneliness towards the end of life. The poem was then set to a traditional Irish folk tune called "The Young Man's Dream" and has appeared in many different types of compositions. Ernst himself was a violinist, one of the great virtuosos of his age. He wrote many compositions meant to showcase the pinnacle of violin technique, including the Six Polyphonic Études for unaccompanied violin. The final etude, which takes the theme from "The Last Rose of Summer" and transforms it through four variations and a coda, was dedicated to Italian violinist Antonia Bazzini. This fiendishly difficult piece features some of the most horrendous violin techniques but at the end of the day, I'm glad I put myself through learning it.

Johannes Brahms - String Sextet No. 1 in B-Flat major, Op. 18

I would count the first time I read this piece with this group of people as the first time I truly fell in love with chamber music, which has been a big part of my experience here, so it was only fitting for me to end my recital with this. This string sextet was the second ever chamber music work published by Brahms, and it seems he composed it because he struggled with composing string quartets in his youth, especially as he felt like he was in Beethoven's shadow. A sextet was thus his foray into writing chamber for strings as a warm-up I guess. For his first attempt, the piece is stunningly magnificent, with rich contrapuntal tapestries and beautiful, soaring melodies. The first movement is warm, vibrant, expansive, majestic, and hopeful. It has five separate themes that flow seamlessly together—the main harmonically contrasting themes are both introduced by the cello. This piece has the perfect balance of rich warmth, turbulence, and grace and will forever be one of my favorites.

The Last Rose of Summer

by Thomas Moore

'Tis the last rose of Summer,
Left blooming alone;
All her lovely companions
Are faded and gone;
No flower of her kindred,
No rose-bud is nigh,
To reflect back her blushes
Or give sigh for sigh!

I'll not leave thee, thou lone one,
To pine on the stem;
Since the lovely are sleeping,
Go sleep thou with them.
Thus kindly I scatter
Thy leaves o'er the bed
Where thy mates of the garden
Lie scentless and dead.

So soon may I follow,
When friendships decay,
And from Love's shining circle
The gems drop away!
When true hearts lie withered,
And fond ones are flown,
Oh! who would inhabit
This bleak world alone?
