



PROGRAM IN PERFORMANCE SENIOR RECITAL SERIES 2024

Sunday, April 14, 2024, 3 PM

Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

Souvenirs

a senior viola recital by

Albert Zhou '24

featuring:

Yevgeny Morozov, piano

Cherry Ge '24, piano

Haram Kim '24, violin

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PROGRAM

MAX REGER **Suite for Solo Viola in G minor, op. 131d no. 1** (1915)

(1873–1916)

- I. Molto sostenuto
- II. Vivace — Andantino
- III. Andante sostenuto
- IV. Molto vivace

Albert Zhou '24 viola

Duration: 4 – 3 – 3 – 1 minutes

ROBERT **Märchenbilder, op. 113** (1851)

SCHUMANN

(1810–1856)

- I. Nicht schnell
- II. Lebhaft
- III. Rasch
- IV. Langsam, mit melancholischem Ausdruck

Albert Zhou '24 viola

Yevgeny Morozov piano

Duration: 3 – 4 – 2 – 5 minutes

Intermission

PROGRAM

ARVO PÄRT
(b. 1935)

Fratres (1977, arr. 2003)

Albert Zhou '24 viola
Yevgeny Morozov piano

Duration: 10 minutes

**JOHANNES
BRAHMS**
(1833–1897)

Sonata for Viola and Piano in F minor, op. 120 no. 1
(1894, transcr. 1895)

I. Allegro appassionato
II. Andante un poco adagio
III. Allegretto grazioso
IV. Vivace

Albert Zhou '24 viola
Yevgeny Morozov piano

Duration: 8 – 6 – 5 – 5 minutes

**DMITRI
SHOSTAKOVICH**
(1906–1975)

Five Pieces for Two Violins and Piano (1970)

I. Prelude
II. Gavotte
III. Elegy
IV. Waltz
V. Polka

arr. **LEVON
ATOVMYAN**
(1901–1973)

Haram Kim '24 violin
Albert Zhou '24 viola
Cherry Ge '24 piano

Duration: 3 – 2 – 3 – 2 – 1 minutes

PROGRAM NOTES

The works on this recital are a selection of my favorite pieces, representing ‘souvenirs’ from throughout my journey as a violist. Of course, this is by no means a comprehensive list of the pieces that continue to draw me in year after year, as time constraints have forced me to make some difficult decisions to preserve some semblance of stylistic balance. I hope these program notes provide some context on the pieces themselves, and that I can impress even a small bit of their significance to me during today’s performance.

Max Reger: Suite for Solo Viola in G minor, op. 131d no. 1 (1915)

The German composer Max Reger is noted for his interest in the music of J.S. Bach. His three suites for solo viola are born out of a desire to compose sonatas and suites for unaccompanied string instruments in Bach’s style. The viola suites, composed in the year preceding his death, are part of a larger group of works for unaccompanied strings — collectively catalogued as opus 131 — which also includes the Six Preludes and Fugues for solo violin (op. 131a), Three Duos in Ancient Style for two violins (op. 131b), and Three Suites for solo cello (op. 131c). While the viola suites may have served to round out this collection of unaccompanied pieces, they have become oft performed and studied parts of the viola repertoire.

The first suite, dedicated to Reger’s friend, Dr. Heinrich Walther, is the only one for which a copy in Reger’s hand survives. Reger’s student Hermann Grabner noted the existence of a now-lost autograph manuscript which had expanded versions of the first, second, and fourth movements of the suite that Reger later compressed. Opening the G minor suite is a slow, expansive movement in a modified sonata form in which Reger chooses to introduce new material in the development rather than iterating on earlier themes. Especially apparent in the first movement is the idea that Reger’s dynamics also hold meaning for tempo — as the music crescendos, it also wants to move forward, and diminuendos accompany places where the music relaxes. The languid first movement is followed by the dance-like second movement which begins with a spritely figure employing the recurring rhythmic motif of two eighth notes followed by quarter notes. This motif often appears in groups of four, with a loud antecedent pair followed by a softer consequent pair. Midway through the movement, Reger moves to a contrasting B section which takes on a longing, lilting quality before returning to the material that opened the movement. The slow third movement evokes the mellowness of a lullaby with rich harmonies throughout which are achieved through almost constant double-stops. This leads into the furious final movement which draws upon the idea of a loud-soft call and response from the second movement as it weaves through various harmonies before landing firmly back in G minor to conclude the piece.

As a high school junior and senior, I learned the first movement and began chipping away at the last movement before this piece was pushed aside to focus on audition repertoire. Because of how much I like the first movement, I came back to this piece about a year ago to learn the remaining movements. This makes this piece unique among the other works on today’s program and in my repertoire since I have learned parts of it in high school and parts of it at Princeton.

Robert Schumann: Märchenbilder, op. 113 (1851)

Märchenbilder, or ‘Fairy Tale Pictures’, was composed in March 1851, following the successful premiere of Schumann’s third symphony. Scored for viola and piano (as preferred by the composer) or violin and piano, it takes the form of a set of character pieces, much like those Schumann had previously composed for the piano. Like his similar 1852 composition *Märchenerzählungen*, op. 132, for clarinet, viola, and piano (‘Fairy Tale Narrations’), Schumann does not leave clues as to the fairy tales that may have served as inspiration for each movement.

PROGRAM NOTES (continued)

The first 'fairy tale' serves as a prelude of sorts with a nostalgic, plaintive feeling. In typical Schumann fashion, this is briefly punctuated by declarative outbursts that soon fade back into muted wistfulness. The second is a joyous, double-stopped rondo that is twice interrupted by contrasting material, first with a quietly turbulent figure, and later with upright, martial outbursts. Closing this picture is a soft, drum-like motif, out of which the turbulent, explosive third piece emerges, representative perhaps of the insidious forces also present in fairy tales. The unusual finale takes the form of a tranquil, melancholy lullaby that takes full advantage of the warm, rich tone of the viola.

Märchenbilder is a more recent addition to my repertoire from the spring semester of my sophomore year. It makes it onto today's program due to the beauty and emotional poignance of its first and last movements and my desire to revisit something newer.

Arvo Pärt: Fratres (1977, arr. 2003)

Estonian composer Arvo Pärt is well known for his minimalist compositions in which he works within his 'tintinnabuli' technique. Tintinnabuli, which was first introduced in Pärt's *Für Alina* (1976), involves two voices: the tintinnabular voice which outlines the tonic triad, and the second voice which moves diatonically and mostly in stepwise motion. It has also been used in *Spiegel im Spiegel* (1978), another one of Pärt's oft performed compositions.

Fratres ('brothers' in Latin) ranks among *Für Alina* and *Spiegel im Spiegel* as one of Pärt's most performed compositions. It is written without a specific instrumentation in mind and employs the tintinnabula technique. Pärt writes with three voices. The middle voice is the tintinnabular voice and is restricted to the three notes of the A minor triad (A, C, and E). The upper and lower voices carry the melodic line in D melodic minor, with the lower voice sitting a tenth below the upper voice. *Fratres* can be seen as a set of variations on a six-bar theme — itself split into two three-bar pieces — based on the D melodic minor scale. Each bar begins with an E for two beats and ends with an E for three beats. The intervening beats are filled in by progressively adding quarter notes from the D melodic minor scale from the 'outside in'. For the first half of the theme, these notes come from a descending scale. Thus, the first three bars are: (E, D, F, E), (E, D, C-sharp, G, F, E), and (E, D, C-sharp, B-flat, A, G, F, E). Halfway through the bar, an octave transposition takes place to ensure that each bar begins and ends on the same note. For the second half of the theme, the notes instead come from an ascending scale: (E, F, D, E), (E, F, G, C-sharp, D, E), (E, F, G, A, B-flat, C-sharp, D, E). Using this algorithm throughout the piece — though sometimes beginning on a different pitch — Pärt creates something complex and beautiful out of something incredibly simple.

This is the newest piece on today's program, both in terms of date of composition and the time I have spent with it. I discovered *Fratres* while searching for more contemporary compositions to explore and was immediately drawn to it, essentially deciding to place it on this program before I had learned a single note. As I've played and listened to it more and read about its compositional framework, my appreciation has only grown. I hope that even with this one listen, some of *Fratres*'s otherworldly beauty strikes you too.

Johannes Brahms: Sonata for Viola and Piano in F minor, op. 120 no. 1 (1894, transcr. 1895)

By 1890, Brahms had decided to retire from composing, but this retirement proved to be short-lived after he heard the clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld perform in Meiningen. Inspired by Mühlfeld's performances, Brahms composed a series of chamber music works with clarinet, including two sonatas. These two clarinet sonatas, which were Brahms's last chamber works before his death, were transcribed by the composer for viola.

PROGRAM NOTES (continued)

The F minor sonata follows the traditional, four-movement form of a sonata. The opening octave figure in the piano turns out to be important, as the subsequent ideas in the sonata can be analyzed as its derivatives. Beginning with sweeping, stormy lines, the first movement shifts into more tranquil material punctuated by insistent, almost desperate figures before ending with a coda that restates the opening viola line and brings the movement into F major. The middle movements form a pair in A-flat major, the relative major key. The second movement is an idyllic nocturne, primarily in the viola, but also heard in an embellished form in the piano. Its pair takes the form of a dance which begins with an A section that has a gentle lilt which gains more vigor. This moves into a B section characterized by light descending figures in the piano as the viola adds bell-like statements that give way to something more angst-filled. The movement concludes with a return to the material of the A section. Closing the sonata is a jubilant rondo in F major with bell-like motifs that announce the movement's main theme, which in its final form ends the piece with a triumphant flair.

This piece was one of the first major pieces — and the third piece overall — that I learned on viola. For this reason, as well as its captivating themes, harmonies, and textures, the F minor sonata remains one of my absolute favorite pieces for viola.

Dmitri Shostakovich: Five Pieces for Two Violin and Piano (1970)

Shostakovich's music, as demonstrated in many of his symphonies and string quartets, often dwells in the opposing soundscapes of celebratory cheer or oppressive terror. These five pieces depart from that pattern and are more entertaining than they are anything else. This set of pieces was not assembled by the composer himself but are instead the work of a friend of Shostakovich, the Turkish composer and arranger Levon Atovmyan, who also worked closely with Shostakovich to assemble various suites of the composer's works for ballet and film. Today, this piece will be performed with the second violin substituted with a viola.

The Prelude derives its material from Shostakovich's material for the film *The Gadfly*. Throughout the piece, the two string parts parallel each other almost exactly in rhythm, which gives a feeling of pleasant simplicity. Bookending an upbeat, waltz-like central passage are two almost-identical sections that adopt a melancholier feel. The next two pieces, the Gavotte and Elegy, come from music Shostakovich wrote for the play *The Human Comedy*, which is itself based on a novel by Honoré de Balzac. The Gavotte offers an upbeat, whimsical contrast to the outer sections of the preceding Prelude and gives way to the Elegy with its peaceful melodies that are reminiscent of lullabies. Next is the Waltz, with a mournful, heartfelt melody in minor. This piece is the only one of the five for which the source material is unclear, and there is some speculation that the Waltz may have been Atovmyan's own composition. Concluding the five pieces is the raucous Polka, which is taken from *The Limpid Stream*, where it appears as the "Dance of the Milkmaid and the Tractor Driver." With its relentless optimism and celebratory nature, the Polka brings the collection of pieces to a satisfying close.

My first experience with this collection of pieces was as a violinist — probably almost ten years ago at this point — playing the Prelude as part of Suzuki group class. I've always wanted to learn the rest of this decidedly unserious and fun set of pieces, and this recital presented a great opportunity to do that with two excellent friends and collaborators.

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

Albert Zhou is a senior from South Pasadena, California, concentrating in molecular biology with a certificate in viola performance. He began studies on violin at the age of five, first picking up viola at a chamber music intensive during the summer before starting high school. Albert played in the World Youth Symphony Orchestra at Interlochen Arts Camp and alongside musicians from major L.A. area orchestras in the Eastern Sierra Symphony, where he received formative training in orchestral playing. As an avid chamber musician, Albert was a member of the Meridiem Quartet, which won the bronze medal at the 2019 Pasadena Conservatory of Music National Chamber Music Competition. At Princeton, Albert is president of Opus — Princeton's chamber music collective — and a member of the Princeton University Orchestra. He also serves as a violin teacher and viola section coach for the Trenton Youth Orchestra. Albert studies with Jessica Thompson at Princeton and spent a semester abroad in London at the Royal College of Music where he studied with Nathan Braude. Past teachers include Andrew Picken and Aimée Kreston. Albert plays on a viola on generous loan from Ann Horton.

A native of Ukraine, **Yevgeny Morozov** is a versatile pianist who has appeared in solo and chamber music recitals in the US, UK, Austria, Slovakia, Sweden, Netherlands, Ireland, Iceland, and Ukraine, performing in venues including Weill Hall, National Concert Hall in Dublin, Slovak Philharmonic Hall in Bratislava, and the National Opera of Ukraine in Kiev. He has appeared as soloist with the Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, and Royal Scottish Academy Symphony Orchestra, among others. Mr. Morozov is a laureate of numerous international piano competitions, including the Prokofiev International Music Festival (Moscow), Kil's International Piano Competition (Sweden), and J. N. Hummel International Piano Competition (Slovakia). His awards also include the Dorothy Mackenzie Artists Recognition Award (NYC), Semifinals (third round) Prize of the Dublin International Piano Competition, and the Yamaha Music Foundation of Europe Scholarship Award (London)

Yevgeny Morozov regularly collaborates in chamber music performances, drawing on extensive experience with flute, violin and brass repertoire. He has served as a collaborative pianist for Conductors Retreat at Medomak with Kenneth Kiesler, piano accompanist for Yamaha Masterclass with Karl-Heinz Kammerling, and for masterclasses of the principal flutist of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Stefán Höskuldsson (NYC), and for internationally renowned flutist Paul Edmund-Davies (Philadelphia). His experience as an accompanist also includes various national level events: the National Flute Association (NFA), NJMTA, MTNA competitions and events, as well as Philadelphia Orchestra Greenfield competition, Cooper International Violin competition, and lessons and recitals at the Juilliard Pre-College and Rutgers University.

Cherry Ge is a senior in the anthropology department. Next year, she will be working towards a Master's in piano performance at the Royal Academy of Music, London.

Haram Kim is a senior in the molecular biology department and is a passionate violinist, volleyball enthusiast, and devout food eater. He spends his time playing the violin with his friends in Opus or in PUO, or discovering new restaurants around Princeton and New York.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I want to thank my parents for their tireless support and dedication. No part of today would be possible without the countless hours you spent with me in Young Musicians classes and the early violin days, as well as the endless trips you made to and from PCM, Colburn, and so many other places all over the L.A. area. Thank you for investing so much money in music lessons for all these years, and all the countless other personal sacrifices you have made for my benefit. I am forever grateful.

To Jessi: Thank you for your suggestions, insights, and patience over the past four years. The portions of today's program that have come together during my time at Princeton have been shaped from the beginning by your guidance. The remainder of the program, too, has unquestionably benefitted greatly from your careful ear and nuanced advice.

My gratitude also goes to Maestro Pratt for making it possible for music performance to thrive at such a high level at Princeton, as well as Liz Gavis and the Gavis lab for being wonderful mentors and colleagues in what is — for today — the *other* part of my life here. I'll get back to work on my thesis after this!

Thank you, Opus, for being my musical home on campus. It has been a privilege to know such amazing people, friends, and musicians. I hope that over the course of this year, I've been able to pay forward even a fraction of what Opus has given me.

A special shout out as well to the handful of people who have really made my time at Princeton and in London memorable. I hope you know who you are and that I deeply appreciate you.

And lastly, thank you for being here today. Your support means so, so much.
