

Date du récital/Date of recital: *November 25th, 2023*

Nom/Name: *Clara Prinston*

Classe de/Class of: *André Roy*

These program notes are written by the student performing, and are presented by the student in partial fulfillment of the requirements of their course.

Ces notes de programme sont écrites par l'étudiant-interprète et sont présentées en tant que réalisation partielle des critères de leur cours.

Georg Philipp Telemann's *Fantasia No. 1 in B-flat major* begins this recital program with a modest grandeur expressed through the opening measures of the solo viola. Originally composed for violin, the piece belongs to a larger collection of 12 Fantasias for solo violin, and to Telemann's larger corpus of unaccompanied works for instruments including the flute, harpsichord, and viola da gamba. The complete violin fantasias were self-published by the composer in 1735 in Hamburg, Germany during a particularly substantive period for Telemann, as he had "brought out forty-two entirely new publications of his own works at Hamburg and Paris between 1725 and 1739."¹ Telemann had a profound influence on the classical canon as he is attributed for developing the 'mixed style' that German composers were applying as they were often "expected to master all the principal national idioms"² within their music, including the French, Italian, and Polish styles within their music. In this *Fantasia No. 1* alone, listeners can hear elements of French splendor in the first *Largo* movement, Italian joy in the *Allegro* and *Si replica l'allegro*, as well as the resolute nature of the Polish style in the third movement, the *Grave*. As viola players are in the habit of performing transcriptions of music written for other instruments, I wanted to open this recital with music not originally composed for the viola, as a testament to the instrument's unyielding pursuit of adaptability.

The music of Bohemian composer Hans Sitt continues this program. Unfortunately, Sitt is likely the least well-known amongst the three composers featured on this recital, despite the success he had as a violinist, violist, and pedagogue throughout his career. Having been born in Prague, Czechia in 1850, he straddled the two centuries by living until 1920. The piece featured is the *Albumblätter*, or *Album Leaves*, Op. 39, composed in 1891. *Albumblätter* is not the first to appear with such a title, as composers such as Schumann, Dvorak, Chopin, and many more have compositions in their repertoire with the same name. Although there is no true form for album leaves, the term is formally defined as a "composition originally written in the album of a friend

¹ Zohn, Steven, 'Prologue: *Styles and Sources*', *Music for a Mixed Taste: Style, Genre, and Meaning in Telemann's Instrumental Works* (New York, 2008; online edn, Oxford Academic, 1 Jan. 2010), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195169775.003.0001>.

² Zohn, 2008

or patron and usually dedicated to him or her.”³ Truthfully, I was first exposed to this piece while discovering the discography of violist Tabea Zimmerman; her recording of the Sitt instantly stirred something in me to learn the piece for myself. Romantic in style, these six movements might have listeners think back to the popular practice of salon music in Europe throughout the 19th century, where listeners would gather to hear short character pieces usually performed by solo piano. The first two movements in Sitt’s *Album Leaves* are sentimental and yearning in nature, followed by a nostalgic Allegro in the third movement. Yet another Allegro follows in the fourth movement, this time with more of a rhapsodic character than ever previously written. The fifth album leaf presents the first truly melancholic movement in F minor, only to be abruptly followed by an energetic Allegro and Molto Vivace to conclude Sitt’s *Albumblätter*.

The one-movement *Concert Piece* by Romanian composer George Enesco concludes the program with a robust finale appropriate for the occasion. Well-known for his Romanian Rhapsodies for orchestra, Enesco’s ability to write expansive and sweeping melodies is further displayed in this piece. Originally written as a competition piece in 1906, Enesco does not shy away from featuring the viola and the piano as both virtuosic and passionate instruments. Although this piece was the only composition that Enesco wrote for the viola-piano combination, it has undoubtedly left an indelible mark on the viola repertoire forever.

³ Brown, Maurice J.E., and Kenneth L. Hamilton. "Albumleaf." Grove Music Online. 2001. <https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000000483>.