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**Georg Philipp Telemann (b Magdeburg, March 14, 1681; d Hamburg, June 25, 1767)**  
**Fantaisie no 6 en mi mineur, TWV 40:19 / Fantasia No. 6 in E minor, TWV 40:19**

**I. Grave**

**II. Presto**

**III. Siciliana**

**IV. Allegro**

Less frequently played than J.S. Bach's Sonatas and Partitas, Telemann's 12 Violin Fantasies are enchanting staples of the Baroque solo violin repertoire. They are one of six sets of 12 fantasies written for harpsichord (three sets), transverse flute, viola da gamba, and violin. The violin set may be grouped into two sections. I through VI have alternating slow and fast movements and all contain fugues. Telemann termed VII through XII "gallantries," and they each have three movements, consecutively increasing in tempo.

Fantasia No. 6 in E Minor is the final work of this first section. The free, improvisatory character implied by the term *fantasia* is present throughout. The opening Grave, with its thin texture and harmonic ambiguity resulting from the presence of often only one voice, is mysterious and allows for much spontaneity. The Grave acts as a prelude to the Presto fugue, which occurs as expected in these first six fantasies. The brisk fugue's simple theme of four whole notes (E-F#-G-F#) leaves room for chromatic development in the other voices, which may be heard as a secondary theme throughout the movement.

The third movement, Siciliana, nods towards the last six fantasies written more in the *galant* style. The rolled chords are reminiscent of a serenade played by a lute or guitar; simple harmonization on the bottom and a singing melody in the top. The final movement, Allegro, picks up the tempo and is based on the Rondeau dance in ABA form. The cheerful B section, notably in E major, offers spirited contrast from the serious E minor that dominates the rest of the piece.

**Franz Schubert (b Vienna, Jan 31, 1797; d Vienna, Nov 19, 1828)**

**Sonatine no 2 en la mœur, op. posth. 137, no. 2, D 385 / Sonatina No. 2 in A minor, op. posth. 137, no. 2, D 385**

**I. Allegro moderato**

**II. Andante**

**III. Menuetto e Trio: Allegro**

**IV. Allegro**

Schubert's set of three sonatas for piano and violin were posthumously published under the title "Sonatinas" to appeal to the growing amateur-music market. The title gives a completely inaccurate depiction of these works. Despite being composed at the young age of 19, they are remarkable examples of Schubert's refined sense of melody and sophisticated use of harmony.

While the "Sonatina" in A minor showcases Schubert's unique musical sensibilities, it also pays musical tribute to Mozart and Beethoven. The unusual piano opening of the first movement, a far-reaching melody of ascending fourths with incessant off-beat eighth notes in the left hand, is unmistakably reminiscent of Beethoven's E-major Piano Sonata, Op. 14 No. 1. Another Beethovenian quality in the Schubert first movement are the extreme leaps in the violin's entrance, two ascending 13<sup>ths</sup> followed by a punctuated tritone. Yet, the second theme is reminiscent of a Mozart aria (or perhaps more aptly, a Schubert song). The short development showcases Schubert's treatment of harmony, seemingly floating in uncertain harmonic space with very little thematic development. The recapitulation is in D minor, but otherwise unmodified. It makes its way back to A minor for a soft, delicate end.

The Andante is the true gem of this sonata and brings to mind the lyricism and harmonic painting of Schubert's vocal works. The contemplative theme is first presented in F major, followed by an anxious, harmonically tumultuous B section, eventually returning to the theme in a much warmer A-flat major. The B section returns yet again, the flurry of sixteenth notes circling back around to the last, simple iteration of the theme in the home key of F major.

The ensuing D-minor Menuetto comes as a stormy surprise after the peaceful close of the previous movement. The short movement has a tendency towards the declamatory and exuberant, yet full of surprise and humor. The sandwiched Trio, in B-flat major, is optimistic and conversational between the two instruments.

The final rondo movement in A minor, marked Allegro, may at first seem like a simply beautiful, stepwise Schubertian melody. However, it quickly spins out of control into stormy triplets tossed between the violin and piano. The music hardly fits Schubert's own description of the piece as a "sonata(s) for piano with violin accompaniment," as both instruments are equally effortful in pushing the musical drama forward. The movement comes to a dramatic end with the last two chords, which bear the only *fortissimo* of the entire sonata.

**Yoshihisa Taïra (b Tokyo, March 3, 1937; d Paris, March 13, 2005)**  
**Convergence No. 3 pour violon seul**

Yoshihisa Taïra was born in Tokyo in 1937. He grew up in a multifaceted musical family; his sister was a classical pianist, and he was exposed to jazz through his father. After hearing *La cathédrale engloutie* by Debussy, Taïra developed an interest in French music and culture. After studying at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music in 1965 with Tomojirō Ikenouchi, he went on to study at the Paris Conservatory, working with André Jolivet, Henri Dutilleux, and Olivier Messiaen. Taïra stayed in France for the rest of his life. He taught in Paris at the École Normale de Musique from 1984 until his death.

Although Taïra's music is sometimes described as an osmosis or conflict of Eastern and Western cultural aesthetics, this view is not a comprehensive picture of his output. Works from the late 1960s and early 70s reveal a revived interest in Japanese music, but this period served as a way for the composer to explore this dichotomy and express it in a more natural, less-labored manner. Thus, the majority of his works from the 70s (such as *Convergence No. 3*) are beyond this phase of intentional cultural negotiation and, rather, explore abstract concepts such as silence and nature.

*Convergence No. 3* for violin (1976) is part of a three-piece series including *Convergence No. 1* for marimba and *Convergence No. 2* for double bass. While these instruments seem worlds apart from each other in terms of sound production, timbre, and instrumental techniques, the three pieces share certain idioms. *Convergence No. 1* (marimba) uniquely features shouting interspersed between instrumental material. While the other two pieces do not use extra-instrumental techniques, they have “vocal” moments that mimic a human cry. In *Convergence No. 3* (violin), there is a repeated sighing gesture expressed by an emotive *glissando* and softening of dynamic. An aspect all three pieces feature is “heavy” silence. Silence, which relates to the Japanese concept *ma*, was an important tool for Taïra. The silences in this music are expressive and seemingly sculpted by the musical material surrounding it. Such a concept is especially important in *Convergence No. 3*, which is unmetered and has, for the majority of the piece, only approximate note lengths.

*Convergence No. 3* reflects Taïra's experimental phase through his use of special instrumental techniques. The piece requires an alteration of the standard violin tuning E-A-D-G to F-A-D#-Gb. This unusual *scordatura* creates interesting sound qualities and timbres, as it alters the resonance of the instrument. For instance, the uneasy A-D# tritone is highlighted all over the instrument with more resonance on those notes due to the modified open strings. Combined with long passages of *sul ponticello* (playing on the bridge) and *sul tastò* (playing on the fingerboard), Taïra creates an expansive sonic world for the listener and freedom of imagination for the performer.

**Dmitri Shostakovich (b St Petersburg, 12/Sept 25, 1906; d Moscow, Aug 9, 1975)**  
**Sonate pour violon et piano, opus 134 / Sonata for Violin and Piano, Op. 134**

**I. Andante**

**II. Allegretto**

**III. Largo**

Shostakovich's second violin concerto was intended for the celebration of violinist David Oistrakh's sixtieth birthday, but the piece accidentally arrived a year early. Born out of a mistake and attempt to correct it, Shostakovich's Violin Sonata was offered as the real sixtieth birthday present. The sonata is the middle of three sonatas for stringed instruments, written, in order, for the cello, violin, and viola. The violin sonata's movements initially had the subtitles "Pastorale," "Allegro furioso," and "Theme with Variations." These titles were removed before publication.

The first movement, Andante, opens with a theme played by the piano in hollow octaves, built from a twelve-tone row (a method of pitch organization that requires all twelve pitches of the chromatic scale to be used before presenting another iteration of all twelve pitches). The violin joins, playing its own morose melody based on Shostakovich's signature, D-Eb-C-B (in the German system: D[E]SCH), but modified to contain a fifth note: D-Eb-*Db*-C-B. The gloomy atmosphere lends way to a bizarre, off-kilter "dance," eventually to return to the tone row. The remainder of the movement plays with these three primary themes, interspersed with two magical moments where the violin seemingly floats down from the highest register in suspended time. The movement disappears with icy *ponticello* in the violin, highlighting the sound of bells moving in eerie fourths in the piano.

While the second movement was published under the unassuming tempo marking Allegretto, the removed subtitle, "Allegro furioso," much better describes the music's character. The violin first states the declamatory theme, punctuated by chords in the piano. The instruments swap roles, the piano taking the theme and the violin as punctuation, and then the movement descends into a wild scherzo. After a whirlwind of meter changes and virtuosic passagework, the recapitulation is particularly relieving and impactful. The movement ends with a fragment of the theme pounded out in the violin's high register, working itself up until it can scream no more.

The last movement, the longest of the three, is a theme with variations. After an introduction (made from a tone row) reminiscent of trumpet calls, the violin states the theme in an unaccompanied pizzicato. The twelve-tone theme is crafted artfully so that the harmonic world to be created is left quite open. The piano joins for the first variation. Eventually a second theme (from yet another tone row!) is added in the ninth variation. The second theme contrasts the first with its faster moving notes and spinning quality. Three variations later, the piano explodes into a crazed, cadenza-like passage, passing it on the violin for its own cadenza. The two instruments join in a flurry of arpeggiated notes, eventually landing in another variation, the most triumphant of the movement. The variations melt into a nostalgic iteration of the magical, suspended passage from the first movement, and the work closes with references to the previous movements in an exhausted *morendo*.