

PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

a life more beautiful

PREVIEW
NOTES

Geneva Lewis, violin

Evren Ozel, piano

Thursday, May 4 – 7:30 PM

Benjamin Franklin Hall, American Philosophical Society

PROGRAM

Violin Sonata, Op. 7

Fazıl Say

Born: 1970 in Ankara, Türkiye

Composed: 1997

Duration: 14 minutes

In his colorful violin sonata, Fazıl Say takes the listener on a trip through Anatolia. After a dreamy opening, multiple scenes are evoked with folk songs and traditional dances such as the *horon*. In this, both violin and piano will at times imitate and evoke Turkish traditional instruments. Especially for the piano, at times this calls for some unusual playing techniques.

Violin Sonata in G Major, Op. 96

Ludwig van Beethoven

Born: December 16, 1770, Bonn, Germany

Died: March 26, 1827, Vienna, Austria

Composed: 1812

Duration: 30 minutes

This, the last of Beethoven's ten violin sonatas, was also the last work of his Middle Period, following closely after the composition of the Seventh and Eighth Symphonies. The very first phrase of the Sonata, four simple notes with a characteristic trill, is passed from violin to piano and back before anything like a phrase or a theme develops. Very rarely does one instrument offer a new idea without the other dutifully responding a few bars later. The slow movement opens with a solemn hymn in the piano, but instead of repeating the melody, the violin offers a serene, and more secular, melody of its own. In the reprise the instruments exchange melodies. A brisk and jerky scherzo follows directly with a smoother trio, and the work closes with a set of theme and variation.

Sonata

Douglas Lilburn

Born: November 2, 1915, Wellington, New Zealand

Died: June 6, 2001, Wellington, New Zealand

Composed: 1950

Duration: 15 minutes

The *Sonata for Violin and Piano* is in one movement of five contrasting sections. It dates from 1950 and was composed for two well-known musicians: the violinist Ruth Pearl, who was for some time the leader of the Lindsay String Orchestra, and pianist Frederick Page. These artists performed the work throughout New Zealand, and it remains the one sonata for violin and piano by a New Zealand composer that is heard with any frequency.

Violin Sonata No. 1

Béla Bartók

Born: March 25, 1881, Nagyszentmiklós, Hungary

Died: September 26, 1945, New York, New York

Composed: 1913-14; rev. 1921

Duration: 33 minutes

Bartók's Violin Sonata No. 1 is traditional in both structure and temperament; its three clearly delineated movements are marked by a character that is alternately rhapsodic and violent, but always virtuosic. Despite any appearance of conventionality, however, the sonata represents one of Bartók's most radical statements in its expressionistic rhetoric and its near-atonal harmonic and melodic language (notwithstanding the nominal indication that it is in the key of C sharp minor). The arresting opening bars are underpinned by fast, dissonant arpeggios from the piano that evoke the sounds of the cimbalom, a dulcimer-like instrument from Bartók's native Hungary. The violinist's first statement is broad and chromatic, a passionate declamation in a setting of nocturnal fantasy.