

CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING AND CINEMATIC ARTS
Boyer College of Music and Dance

Senior Recital
Morgan Moss, piano

April 8, 2022
Rock Hall Auditorium

Friday
7:30 pm

Program

Toccatà in G minor BWV 915

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Four Impromptus, D. 899, Op. 90

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

No. 1 in C minor

No. 3 in G-flat major

| Intermission |

Dreams of Holy Places (I. II. III)

Morgan Kelly Moss (b. 2000)

Gaspard de la nuit

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

I. Ondine

Program Notes

Toccatà in G minor BWV 915 ~ Adagio, Fugato, Adagio, Fugue (Bach): In the G-minor Toccata, there is, for a start, a four-measure send-off in the virtuoso style of the day, followed immediately by a short Adagio of deep and moving beauty. In sharp contrast comes a delightful movement in B flat, built on a quaint theme that might have been used for a military march of the time. As a bridge between this and the final fugue, there is a second adagio, quite as fine in emotional content as the first, and voicing a mood that already presages the ripe master. The fugue [with a rhythmically “skipping” theme throughout] is proof again that Bach can become utterly irresponsible when writing in a gigue tempo, for before it reaches the end, it actually runs riot, retiring for a final flourish to the brilliant passage that ushered in the Toccata (Edwin Hughes).

Impromptus, Op. 90 ~ No. 1 & 3 (Schubert): Impromptu No. 1 in C minor is a set of two variations on two themes, one more militant, and one more romantic in character. The music traces the struggle between the two, moving quickly between the two styles, finally coming to a resolution at the end. Impromptu No. 3 in G-flat major is one of the crown jewels of piano repertoire, and truly shows Schubert’s mastery of the “song.” The soaring upper line, the harp-like inner moving notes, and the sustained bass create a texture alike to a soprano aria. If Schubert’s intention was to create meaning in a song without words, here, the music alone speaks clearly and eloquently.

Morgan Moss is a student of Sara Davis Buechner.
Two hundred ninety-seventh performance of the 2021-2022 season.



Dreams of Holy Places I. II. III. (Moss): *Dreams of Holy Places* is a multi-movement work for solo piano. The first movement is based on a recurring location in my dreams. I am fortunate that I frequently have dreams, and I almost always remember them. In the dream, I was a child, and I would climb up onto a white stone bench and look out at a scene that was not always exactly the same... sometimes it was the ocean, sometimes it was a garden, sometimes it was rolling hills of wildflowers, but the scene always seemed to be sparkling in silver and gold. Most importantly, there was a presence next to me that was much older and wiser than I was (hence the title of this work) and the presence calmed me completely. It is not often that I hear anything specific in my dreams, but in this dream I always heard distant church bells. I felt I needed to do something with these dreams, and decided to write a piece about them. In the music, I wanted to capture the shimmering scene with the dissonances, the majesty of the presence next to me with the large moving gestures, and the chordal motif to signify the bells in the distance. The second movement creates the character of another recurring dream where I floated underwater and butterflies carried me, flitting around my head. The music creates this playful scene and ends with a small splash as I exit the dream. The third and final movement asks a question; what would God look like? Would he be gentle? Would he be larger than we can imagine? Would he come down from the heavens with majesty and terror? The music ends on this question, as we will never truly know.

Gaspard de la Nuit ~ Ondine (Ravel): Ravel was introduced to the poems of Aloysius Bertrand and was immediately attracted by the polish, virtuosity and romantic visions of the poet. Ravel selected three diverse poems, the first of which was “Ondine” from the third section of *Les Fantaisies de Gaspard de la Nuit*. Ravel told his colleagues that he wanted to write a work for piano, of transcendental virtuosity, that would be more difficult than Balakirev’s *Islamey*. In these pieces he made some of the greatest contributions to piano technique by using all the resources of the piano to express the mood and imagery of the poems (Nancy Bricard). Ravel truly masters the use of the instrument’s manifold colors to recreate the tone and narrative of the poem it is based upon.

Listen! Listen! It is I, it is Ondine who brushes drops of water on the resonant panes of your windows lit by the gloomy rays of the moon; and here in gown of watered silk, the mistress of the chateau gazes from her balcony on the beautiful starry night in the beautiful sleeping lake.

Each wave is a water sprite who swims in the stream, each stream is a foot path that winds towards my palace, and my palace is a fluid structure, at the bottom of the lake, in a triangle of fire, of earth and air.

Listen! Listen! My father whips the croaking water with a branch of a green alder tree, and my sisters caress with their arms of foam the cool islands of herbs, of water lilies, and of corn flowers, or laugh at the decrepit and bearded willow who fishes at the line.

Her song murmured, she beseeches me to accept her ring on my finger, and be the husband of an Ondine, and to visit her with her palace and be king of the lakes.

And as I was replying to her that I loved a mortal, sullen and spiteful, she wept some tears, uttered a burst of laughter, and vanished in a shower that streamed weight down the length of my stained glass windows.

~ Aloysius Bertrand