

23 April | Friday

Semen Zhernovykh

Violin Senior Recital

Semen Zhernovykh, *violin*

Cherie Khor, *piano*

PROGRAMME

FRANZ SCHUBERT

Violin Sonata No. 1 in D major, Op. 137

I. Allegro molto

II. Andante

III. Allegro vivace

ROBERT SCHUMANN

Violin Sonata No. 1 in A minor, Op. 105

I. Introduzione – Allegro vivace

II. Allegretto

III. Lebhaft

– Intermission (10 mins) –

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Violin Sonata in G major, Op. 78

I. Vivace ma non troppo

II. Adagio

III. Allegro molto moderato

About The Performer

Sem was born in 1997 in a small-town Nikopol, in Ukraine. When he turned 7 years old, he started to pick up violin. In 2007 Sem was accepted to Kyiv Specialized Middle Music School named after M. Lysenko to continue pursuing his musical skills. In 2009 Sem took 3rd Prize in “Erdenko” International Violin Competition which was held in Belgorod, Russia. Later on, he participated in International Violin Competition named after L. Kogan, where he took 3rd Prize. In 2017 Sem got accepted to Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, which is a part of National University of Singapore. Sem participated in several master classes with Viktor Tretyakov, Shlomo Mintz, Valery Sokolov, Silvia Marcovici.

Programme Notes

FRANZ SCHUBERT

Violin Sonata No. 1 in D major, Op. 137

- I. **Allegro molto**
- II. **Andante**
- III. **Allegro vivace**

The composer's chamber-instrumental heritage includes four works for a duet for violin and piano: three sonatas (sonatinas) in D major, A minor, and G minor, created in 1816, and a sonata (duet) in A major, 1817. These early compositions contain youthful freshness feelings, spontaneity and ease of home music making, so widespread in Austria at that time, are combined with moments of truly Schubert depth, subtlety and poetry. The sonata in D major is a classic 3-movement cycle. However, while remaining faithful to the traditions of his great predecessors, Schubert creates his D major sonata as a romantic statement in spirit. Here is you can see that soulfulness and artistic uniqueness that marked his later chamber-instrumental works. New expressive techniques also appear, in particular, wonderful modulation transitions that create the richest emotional effects.

ROBERT SCHUMANN

Violin Sonata No. 1 in A minor, Op. 105

- I. **Introduzione – Allegro vivace**
- II. **Allegretto**
- III. **Lebhaft**

Many of Schumann's later works are distinguished by their emotional compression and their tendency to focus on single themes or motives, a practice dubbed monothematicism. That's particularly true of the A minor Sonata in its outer movements, which display a finely sustained and powerful affect throughout via sharply limited thematic contrast. The first movement, marked in vintage Schumann style to be played “with passionate expression,”

surges along in fine darkness, its low violin tessitura invoking the sound of the viola while the piano thrums along in a similar register. To be sure, that creates balance problems between the two instruments, but in the service of an extraordinarily cohesive overall sonority.

The second-place Allegretto harkens back in some ways to Schumann's earlier piano music in its short phrases, frequent tempo changes, metric ambiguity, and its subtle aura of emotional in quietude made all the more vivid by an animated gypsy-like episode that comes and goes, almost as a furtive smile through tears.

The finale begins as a perpetual motion affair that bears a distant resemblance to Schumann's virtuoso early Toccata for Piano. Here the two instruments lob ideas back and forth amid a shower of rapid notes but broken by an amorously lyrical passage in major mode that provides a glimpse of light amid the prevailing minor-key darkness. A momentary reference to the opening movement—really just a faint whiff of a recollection—leads to the impassioned, driving final statements.

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Violin Sonata in G major, Op. 78

- I. Vivace ma non troppo**
- II. Adagio**
- III. Allegro molto moderato**

Sonata for violin and piano No. 1 in G major (Op. 78) by Johannes Brahms was created under the impression of the news of the death of Felix Schumann, the son of the composer Robert Schumann, with whose family Brahms had a long-standing friendship. The autobiographical orientation of the sonata is revealed by the inclusion of themes from Brahms' songs, created to the words of Felix Schumann and Klaus Groth, a poet whose verses most closely corresponded to the composer's worldview. The concept of the work is based on the clash of young life and death. The content of the songs determines the "program" of the composition: Brahms quotes motives from the cycle "Songs of Youth"; the theme of "Song of the Rain", associated with the memories of forever lost childhood, caused by raindrops knocking on the window - in the song "Echo" these drops are compared with tears ... enlightened peace in the second. The theme of the second movement also appears at the conclusion of a mournful ending, which is unusual for a major sonata, bringing with it to peace.

Programme notes by Semen Zhernovkh.