

LEOŠ JANÁČEK

GEORGE ENESCU

EDVARD GRIEG

ballade

KERRY DUWORS VIOLIN | FUTABA NIEKAWA PIANO

duo526



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FINE MUSIC

Sonata for Violin and Piano **LEOŠ JANÁČEK (b.1854-d.1928)**

One of the most unique works in the violin and piano repertoire, Leoš Janáček began composing his iconic sonata immediately after the outbreak of World War I during 1914-15. After 7 years of revisions, the work was published and premièred in Prague in 1922. Typical of Janáček's oeuvres, this sonata is a Nationalist work highlighting Moravian folk elements, which Janáček collected and arranged throughout his life. The sonata combines sensibilities of form and structure with the rhythmic irregularities and melodic idiosyncrasies of the more language-based Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, and Romanian folk music. In contemporary fashion, the music operates not in traditional melody-harmony counterpoint, but in the exploitation of conflicting elements by juxtaposition, interruption, and repetition.

Comprised of four movements, the sonata is compact and dense yet epic in emotion and dramatic scale. The first movement opens with a striking violin cadenza that leads into the rhapsodic first theme over a hammer dulcimer-like effect in the piano. Short-lived yet lush, the second theme is quickly interrupted by striking fragments and abrupt silences. The second movement *Ballade* is poetic and poignant. Janáček again pushes the limits of the instruments dynamically. The movement builds to an intense violin cadenza *senza rigore* that reaches upwards towards a final unsettling c-sharp minor harmony. The third movement is in ABA form with the piano dominating the action with a Moravian folk melody punctuated by violin interjections. The piano opens the final movement with a melancholic motive that is interrupted by a muted ferocious violin. The tension and drama of the musical human speech build to a forceful climax that soon returns to the emotional depths as the music dies away. In Janáček's words "in the 1914 *Sonata for Violin and Piano* I could just about hear sound of the steel clashing in my troubled head."

Kerry DuWors

source: Grove Dictionary of Music

Sonata No. 2 in F minor, Opus 6 **GEORGE ENESCU (b.1881-d.1955)**

Through his writing of the second violin sonata opus 6, George Enescu reveals his genius as both violinist and pianist, and cements his place as a pioneer composer of Romania. Written at the age of 17 while still a student at the Paris Conservatoire in 1899, the work was dedicated to and premièred by violinist Jacques Thibaud with Enescu on piano. Enescu describes the sonata as the first work that he considered "a beginning of establishing his own voice." Like a treasure box, he employs a diverse style of influences into the three-movement sonata scheme. The sonata explores a full range of drama from Wagnerian romanticism, French impressionism, Romanian folk tunes, and gypsy rhythms in perpetual movement. Despite these varied juxtapositions, Enescu perfectly succeeds in holding the sonata to a coherent story.

Highly chromatic, the first movement opens with instruments in homophonic octaves, followed by a fantasy-like flowing arpeggio in the piano under the violin, which glides on top of the harmonic waves. At its climax, the waves multiply, creating a technically demanding web of contrapuntal layers between the piano and the violin. The second movement deftly expresses Enescu's interpretation of Romanian music's characteristic "sadness even within happiness." The violin's monologue weaves emotional depths of lament, melancholy, and loneliness, culminating with a wandering voice all within a simple yet chromatic structure. The last movement generates excitement through a rapid transformation of styles incorporating a scherzo-like whimsical theme, interruptive fanfares, gypsy improvisational song, and operatic triumph.

Futaba Niekawa

source: Grove Dictionary of Music

Sonata No. 3 in C minor, Opus 45 EDVARD GRIEG (b.1843-d.1907)

The foremost Norwegian composer, Grieg considered his three violin sonatas among his most successful compositions. After it was premièred by violinist Adolf Brodsky and Grieg at the piano in Leipzig, *Sonata No. 3* was considered an immediate favorite in the concert repertoire. The work fuses Norwegian folk melody and romantic tradition through thematic concentration and Grieg's stylistic development into its grand three-movement sonata scheme.

The heroic and dramatic C minor opening of the first movement announces Grieg's grand thematic and harmonic plan. A lyrical and folk-based melody, typical of Grieg's style, ushers in a contrasting second theme with a lightly syncopated accompaniment that keeps the music lilting in 6/8 meter. His use of folk-style and dance qualities are prominent throughout all three movements. Grieg's stunning lyrical and intimate writing for the piano shines in the opening of the second movement. This love song in E major is taken and developed by the violin, which leads to a dashing folk dance in the movement's middle section. The movement ends with a heavenly E major arpeggio rise and allows the music to rest before the exuberant finale. Effervescent harp-like arpeggios accompany a rustic violin theme to open the third movement. A majestic fanfare interrupts this vivid and brilliant first theme, which serves as an abrupt transition to a lush romantic melody. An impetuous coda closes the work in dramatic fashion.

Futaba Niekawa & Kerry DuWors

source: Grove Dictionary of Music



Celebrated soloist and chamber musician, Canadian violinist **Kerry DuWors** has performed across Canada, the United States, Mexico, Europe, and New Zealand. Dedicated to collaboration, she has worked with James Ehnes, Marc-André Hamelin, Yo-Yo Ma, Isabel Bayrakdarian, the St. Lawrence and Lafayette String Quartets, and the Knights (NYC). Notable performances include Jordan Hall (Boston), Zankel Hall (Carnegie Hall), Beethovenfest (Bonn), RadialSystem V (Berlin), Semperoper (Dresden), Baryshnikov Arts Center (NY), Montreal Chamber Music Festival, Vancouver Recital Society, and Prairie Scene at the National Arts Centre.

During studies at the University of Victoria, University of Toronto, and Banff Centre, DuWors received many prestigious awards including grand prize at the 26th Eckhardt-Gramatté Competition, Eaton Graduate Scholarship, Felix Galimir Award for Chamber Music Excellence and two Canada Council Career Development Grants. Her mentors include Lorand Fenyves, Charles Castleman, and the Lafayette String Quartet. Currently Assistant Professor of Violin at Brandon University, DuWors is also pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree at the Eastman School of Music. She plays on the 1902 Enrico Rocca violin on loan from the Canada Council for the Arts and an anonymous donor.

www.kerryduwors.com

Japanese pianist, **Futaba Niekawa** is versatile as a soloist, collaborative artist, improviser, and harpsichordist. She has performed throughout the United States, Canada, England, Taiwan, and Japan. As a collaborator, Niekawa is currently involved in three ensembles. duo526 with violinist Kerry DuWors has twice been invited to the creative residency program at the Banff Centre for the Arts and has performed both in the United States and Canada. Duo Feathers, with pianist/composer Hwaen Chu'ucqi, released its first album in 2012, featuring the newly composed *Twenty-Five Preludes* by Hwaen. Duo Oto with violinist Yuka Sato has performed both in Japan and the United States since 2008 and has also commissioned and premiered a trio work by Sheridan Seyfried in 2012. Niekawa was twice appointed as a collaborative pianist for the summer master classes at Banff. She also frequently takes part in the free improvisation scene in the New England area. She completed her doctoral degree at the Eastman School of Music where she studied with Natalya Antonova and served as both her teaching and accompanying assistant.

www.futabaniekawa.com



duo526

was founded in 2011 by violinist **Kerry DuWors** and pianist **Futaba Niekawa** at the Eastman School of Music (Rochester NY) where they honed their passion for the art of duo playing under the mentorship of Jean Barr and Charles Castleman. As artists-in-residence at the Banff Centre in 2011 and 2012, duo526 worked with Henk Guittart, Roger Tapping, the Lafayette String Quartet, and Mark Steinberg on an intensive musical quest towards this recording of the Janáček, Enesco, and Grieg sonatas.

duo526 is dedicated to creative thought and the art of listening through the study and performance of a vast repertoire from standard classical works to those by contemporary composers across an array of styles. Their joy of collaboration results from the risk-taking, inspiration and spontaneous reactions met along the merging of two people's passions into one vision. Their debut recording exemplifies this spirit through three pillars in the repertoire that are rarely performed together.

www.duo526.com

All tracks recorded May 13-15 2013 at the
Shalin Liu Performance Center in Rockport MA

Session Producer **Andy Happel**
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Editing, Mixing, & Mastering **Andy Happel**
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Sonata for Violin and Piano **LEOŠ JANÁČEK**

- | | | |
|---|----------------------|------|
| 1 | I. Con moto..... | 5:03 |
| 2 | II. Ballade..... | 5:20 |
| 3 | III. Allegretto..... | 2:50 |
| 4 | IV. Adagio..... | 4:57 |

Sonata No. 2 in F minor, Opus 6 **GEORGE ENESCU**

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------|------|
| 5 | Assez mouvemente..... | 7:29 |
| 6 | Tranquillement..... | 7:21 |
| 7 | Vif..... | 7:58 |

Sonata No. 3 in C minor, Opus 45 **EDVARD GRIEG**

- | | | |
|----|---|------|
| 8 | Allegro molto ed appassionato..... | 9:13 |
| 9 | Allegretto espressivo alla Romanza..... | 6:37 |
| 10 | Allegro animato..... | 8:18 |

KERRY DUWORS VIOLIN
FUTABA NIEKAWA PIANO