

SPRING CONCERTS 224

Daniel Lozakovich, violin Behzod Abduraimov, piano Sunday, April 21 2024

From the Artistic Director

Dear Friends:

We are delighted to welcome 23-year-old violinist Daniel Lozakovich to the VRS for his Canadian debut, along with a favourite VRS pianist, Behzod Abduraimov. The two have played together in festivals in Europe, and three days ago Daniel made his Carnegie Hall debut with Behzod in the same program we are hearing here today.

For a debut performance, it's a big program. Beethoven's "Kreutzer" Sonata, the opening piece, is known for its technical difficulty, unusual length, and emotional scope. This will be followed by the Franck Sonata and Schumann's first violin and piano sonata. All these pieces have big parts for both players, who we know are well up to the test. Hold on to your seats!



Because of Daniel's young age and debut, this concert is one of our "Next Generation" performances, and these are supported by the Edwina and Paul Heller Fund at the Vancouver Foundation, and the RBC Emerging Artists Fund.

We are also delighted to acknowledge the support of our Season Sponsor, the Peak Group of Companies, and Joyce and Tony for being the concert sponsors today.

Thank you to the City of Vancouver and the Province of British Columbia for their support.

And finally, thank all of you for coming today to share this wonderful musical experience.

Sincerely,

Leila Getz



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The use of cellphones and recording devices is prohibited in the concert hall. Please take this opportunity to turn off all electronic devices.

音乐厅内禁止使用手机,禁止拍照,录音,录像。请观众关闭所有 电子器材,谢谢您的合作。

Program

Daniel Lozakovich, violin Behzod Abduraimov, piano

Sunday, April 21, 2024 3:00 pm Vancouver Playhouse

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

Violin Sonata No. 9 in A major Op. 47 (Kreutzer) Adagio sostenuto – Presto Andante con variazioni Finale. Presto (approx. 35 minutes)

INTERMISSION

CÉSAR FRANCK (1822-1890) **Sonata in A major for Violin and Piano** Allegretto ben moderato Allegro Recitativo-Fantasia Allegretto poco mosso (approx. 30 minutes)

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

Violin Sonata No. 1 in A minor Op. 105 Mit leidenschaftlichem Ausdruck Allegretto Lebhaft (approx. 18 minutes)

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Early Life & Education: Born in Stockholm in 2001, Daniel began playing the violin at the age of seven. He made his solo debut two years later with Moscow Virtuosi and Vladimir Spivakov. From 2015 onward, he was mentored by Eduard Wulfson in Geneva. Daniel studied at the Hochschule für Musik Karlsruhe with Professor Josef Rissin from 2012 onward and graduated with his master's degree in 2021.

This Season: In the 2023-24 season, Daniel performs his recital debut at Carnegie Hall and the Grand Hall of the Concertgebouw. He also embarks on a tour with Oslo Philharmonic and Klaus Mäkelä which will lead him to Oslo Konserthuset, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Paris Philharmonie and Vienna Konzerthaus. The season also sees him appear with the Budapest Festival Orchestra at the Edinburgh Festival under Iván Fischer and with the Netherlands Philharmonic and Marc Albrecht at the Concertgebouw, as well as with Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della



Photo credit: Lyodoh Kaneko

Rai and Kazuki Yamada, Orquesta Sinfónica de Galicia and Fabien Gabel, the San Diego Symphony and Rafael Payare, and the Royal Danish Orchestra under Osmo Vänskä.

Recordings: At the age of 15, Daniel signed an exclusive recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon, and in 2018 he released his debut album of Bach's two violin concertos, recorded in collaboration with Kammerorchester des Symphonieorchesters des Bayerischen Rundfunks, together with the solo Partita No. 2. The album reached number one in the all-music category of the French Amazon charts and the classical album charts in Germany. *None but the Lonely Heart*, Daniel's second album, was released in 2019.

His third album, released in 2020, centres on the Beethoven Violin Concerto, recorded live with Münchner Philharmoniker under Valery Gergiev and released as an audio album and video in Beethoven's 250th anniversary year.

Awards & Prizes: Daniel has been awarded many prizes including first prize at the 2016 Vladimir Spivakov International Violin Competition and the Young Artist of the Year 2017 award at the Festival of Nations, the Premio Batuta Award in Mexico and the Excelentia Prize under the honorary presidency of Queen Sofia of Spain.

Daniel Lozakovich plays the "ex-Sancy" 1713 Stradivari violin generously loaned by LVMH / Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton.

Daniel Lozakovich is represented by Harrison Parrott, London, UK.

Early Life & Education: Born in Tashkent, Uzbekistan in 1990, Behzod began to play the piano at the age of five as a pupil of Tamara Popovich at Uspensky State Central Lyceum. He is an alumnus of Park University's International Center for Music where he studied with Stanislav Ioudenitch and now serves as the ICM's artistin-residence.

Recently: In 2023–24 Behzod appears twice at Carnegie Hall – returning to the Stern Auditorium for a solo recital, followed by a duo recital with Daniel Lozakovich at the Weill Recital Hall. The duo will also present recitals elsewhere in North America, including Bing Hall, Stanford and the Vancouver Recital Society. Behzod will also perform in recital at the Seoul Arts Centre, Shanghai Concert Hall, Amare Hall in The Hague and the Tuesday Evening Concert Series in Charlottesville.

This Season: Behzod's 2023-24 performances include the Chicago Symphony, Mozarteumorchester Salzburg, Houston Symphony and Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestras, Oslo Philharmonic, Stavanger Symphony



Photo credit: Evgeny Eutykhov

Orchestra (including a tour of Spain) and the Belgian National Orchestra, performing at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. Behzod will also appear with Adelaide Symphony Orchestra and Sydney Symphony Orchestra. Conductor collaborations include Osmo Vänskä, Juraj Valčuha, Constantinos Carydis, Robin Ticciati, Manfred Honeck, Yoel Levi, Han-Na Chang, Hannu Lintu and Andris Poga.

Recordings: Behzod's second recording for Alpha Classics, featuring works by Ravel, Prokofiev and Uzbek composer Dilorom Saidaminova, was released on January 12, 2024. The album won the Gramophone Editor's Choice award and was named one of Apple Music's "10 Classical Albums You Must Hear This Month" in February 2024. The year 2021 saw the release of his recital album for Alpha Classics based on a programme of miniatures including Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*. In 2020, Behzod's recordings included Rachmaninov's Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini with the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra under James Gaffigan, recorded on Rachmaninov's own piano from Villa Senar for Sony Classical, and Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 3 with Concertgebouworkest under Valery Gergiev for the RCO Live label. Both recordings were nominated for the 2020 Opus Klassik awards in multiple categories.

Behzod Abduraimov is represented by Harrison Parrott, London, UK.

Ludwig van Beethoven Violin Sonata No. 9 in A major Op. 47 (Kreutzer)

Beethoven's "Kreutzer" Sonata is a monument in the violin repertoire, remarkable for its unusual length and for the technical demands it places on both violinist and pianist. The wilful juxtaposition of its three oddly disparate movements may perhaps have been motivated by the equally odd circumstances of its rushed composition.

In 1803, the violinist George Bridgetower (1778–1860), a musical prodigy of mixed Polish and West Indian parentage, had arrived in Vienna and been introduced to Beethoven by his patron Prince Lichnowsky (1761–1814). A concert date was set for them to appear together, for which Beethoven hurriedly wrote two sonata movements to precede a finale in A major that he had originally intended for his Op. 30, No. 1 violin sonata.

Relations between the two musicians were exceptionally cordial, by all accounts, to the point that Beethoven even allowed himself to tease his bi-racial violinist colleague with a jocular inscription atop his manuscript of the sonata – one that would likely get him sent off for cultural sensitivity training today:

Mulatto sonata, composed for the mulatto Brischdauer [i.e., Bridgetower], a great madman and a mulatto composer.

But relations later soured between the two, for reasons unknown, and Beethoven changed the dedication of the sonata, devoting it instead to the celebrated French violinist Rodolphe Kreutzer (1766-1831), who apparently found the work unintelligible and was not known to have ever performed it in public.

When the sonata was published in 1805, its title page bore an inscription referencing its unusual characteristics that read: "written in a very concertante style, almost like a concerto." The grand style in this "concerto-like" work is evident in the sonata's epic proportions and especially in its display-oriented virtuoso figurations, in the first two movements especially.

* * *

The first movement is a rumbly, grumbly affair with a flair for dramatic pauses and a motivic obsession with semitones. It opens with an Adagio sostenu*to* slow introduction in the manner of a Haydn symphony.

The opening bars, however, are played by the violin alone, in multiple stops, as if to proclaim and display the skill of the violinist right from the outset. The piano then re-states violin's A-major musings but in A minor, establishing a dark, suspenseful tone for what is to follow.



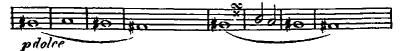
But suspense is not the only thing happening here. The motive of a rising semitone gets repeated over and over again in two-note groups, in what will become a kind of motto opening for each of the movement's three themes.

So when the pace quickens to Presto with the introduction of the first theme, it begins with this rising semitone and follows on with a series of strutting quarter notes in A minor.



Well, so much for this being a sonata in A major !

The movement's second theme could not be more contrasting. Gone are the jumpy staccato quarter notes in the minor mode, replaced by a smooth, stepwise major-mode melody that ranges over the modest space of a 4th. And of course, its violin melody begins with...a rising semitone,



while the first phrase of the piano's "gypsy-inflected" closing theme in E minor is virtually nothing *but* a series of rising semitones.



Gluing the exposition together are innumerable sequences of tremolos and various types of muscular passagework thundering over wide swathes of the keyboard that seem aimed at filling the ear with as much piano sound as possible. One might well suspect that in writing this sonata for his duo partner Beethoven is slyly making sure the audience knows just who it is who is making the violinist sound so good.

The development section concentrates on the "gypsy" theme almost exclusively as it spirals through key after key until Beethoven prepares us for the arrival of the recapitulation in a series of dramatic pauses, each followed by coy hints – and many rising semitones – that the first theme is crouching in the wings ready to pounce, which of course it does. Then Beethoven adds a beefy coda that toys with bringing the movement to an end several times before it rushes clattering to a final emphatic cadence in A minor.

The second movement Andante presents a theme of an intimate character followed by four variations and a coda. Supported by the simplest of harmonies, the theme carries a gentle lilt from its off-beat syncopations in the melodic line, while numerous trills in both the violin and piano parts prepare us for the series of "frilly" variations that follow.



The first variation dances with a keyboard texture that sparkles with trills and mordents twinkling atop a pattern of triplet 16ths while the violin merely chirps away with an occasional "Oh yes, quite!" on one note. By way of compensation, the second variation gives pride of place to the violin in a constant stream of

repeated-note chatter over an oom-pah accompaniment in the piano. The obligatory *minore* variation comes next, slip-sliding through the notes of the minor scale in a turgid series of chordal harmonies that sometimes change on every 16th note. Variation IV returns to the major mode to create the most embellished thematic variant of all, featuring real and written-out trill figures in the upper register, such as these:



These "sound blurs" are often connected by thrilling chromatic runs. So in this variation we can hear already the composer's interest in creating walls of pure sound with trills, a fascination he will explore in later works such as the finales of the "Waldstein" Sonata, Op. 53 and the Piano Sonata in C minor, Op. 111.

The last movement – which Beethoven had already written when he assembled this sonata for his 1803 concert appearance with George Bridgetower – is a buoyant sonata-form finale with a much lighter, more transparent texture. The heavy, saturated sonorities of the two previous movements are nowhere to be found, replaced instead by the joyous interplay of individual melodic lines tossed merrily between the instruments in a relentless chatter of lively dialogue.

But this *Presto* finale presents Beethoven with the problem of how to get the listener's ear from the F-major tonality of the variation movement to the A-major tonality of the finale. The solution he arrives at couldn't be simpler: he just brings down a sonic sledgehammer in the form of a massive two-fisted A-major chord in the piano, extending sonorously over four octaves.



F major? What F major? We're in A major now, haven't you noticed?

The first theme is then introduced in a kind of fugato, infected with the toe-tapping rhythm of the tarantella, as is the skippy-dippy second theme later on.



And while Beethoven, with a pair of short *Adagio* sections in the coda, tries to convince you that things are moving too fast and need to slow down, in the end there is no denying the momentum that has built up, and the movement rushes to its concluding cadence with the hilarious inevitability of an inflated beach ball falling down a set of stairs.

César Franck Sonata in A major for Violin and Piano

It will be a while yet before the Huffington Post is read by musicologists as a scholarly journal, and yet Alan Elsner, the Huff-Po reporter hot on the trail of breaking news in 19th-century Belgian chamber music, is not wide of the mark in observing that:

There is a kind of breathless religious ecstasy to Franck's music – soaring themes; simple, pure harmonies; those ceaseless, swirling, gliding accompaniments. This, one feels, is truly the music of the angels.¹

The work inspiring such shortness of breath and heady spiritual delirium in the intrepid journalist is, of course, Franck's Sonata in A major for violin and piano, a wedding present by the composer to the Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe. The sonata was in fact performed at the wedding in 1886 by Ysaÿe himself and a wedding-guest pianist.

The *Allegro ben moderato* first movement floats in a world of harmonic uncertainty. It opens with a number of dreamy piano chords, each followed by a simple chordal interval, as if giving the pitches to the instrumentalist, who then obliges by using them to create a gently rocking, barcarolle-like melody, the outline of which will infuse much of the work as a whole.



This theme, played by the violin over a simple chordal accompaniment from the piano, builds in urgency until it can hold it no more, and a second theme takes centre stage in a lyrical outpouring of almost melodramatic intensity but ending in a dark turn to the minor.



The violin will have none of it, however, and dreams both sleepwalkers back to the major mode for an amicable review of the two themes, both in the home key. The serenity of this movement results from its rhythmic placidness, often featuring a sparse, simple chordal accompaniment in the piano, and very little rhythmic variation in the wandering pastoral "de-DUM-de-DUM" triplets of the violin.

Where drama breaks out for real is in the *Allegro* second movement, one of the most challenging in the chamber repertoire for the pianist. This sonata-form movement bolts from the starting gate with a swirling vortex of 16ths in the piano, fretting anxiously over a chromatically creeping theme in the mid-range that is soon picked up by the violin.

¹ Alan Elsner, "Music and Spirituality: Thoughts on Cesar Franck's Violin Sonata", *Huffington Post*, November 28, 2011, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/music-and-spirituality_b_1112982.

Its worrisome collection of motives is based on the same small-hop intervals that opened the first movement, but reversed in direction and cast in the minor mode.

A sunnier mood prevails in the second theme



which, however, ebbs away as both instruments take stock of the ground covered in a sober interlude marked *Quasi lento*, which is based on the opening "fretting" theme, but in augmentation (i.e., longer note values).



The development section engages in a full and frank discussion of the two themes until the convulsive agitation of the opening theme returns in the recapitulation. Despite the turbulence roiling at the heart of this movement, it still manages to pull a major-mode ending out of a hat for its final cadence to conclude its "race-to-the-finish-line" coda.

The slow third movement, a free-form meditation marked *Recitativo-Fantasia*, is bruised with the memory of the first movement's bliss. Its opening musings contain a bewildered quotation of the first movement's opening theme.



As this thematic material is brooded over, the violin tries to change the subject several times in distracted flights of fancy but eventually agrees to join with the piano in a ruminative journey that passes from nostalgic reminiscence to heart-wrenching pathos. The searing intensity of the octave-leap "wailing" motif at the end of this movement is the most profound moment in the sonata.



No major-mode ending here.



All tensions are eased, all hearts healed, however, in a last-movement rondo that offers up a simple tuneful melody in continuous alternation with brief sections of contrasting material.



This tune, so harmonically rooted as to suit being presented in strict canonic imitation (like a round), is shaped from the melodic outline of the theme that opened the sonata, bringing its cyclical journey to a close. Even the "wailing" motif from the previous movement is recalled to the stage to give it, too, a happy ending.

British musicologist David Fanning got it right when he intuited the celebratory meaning beneath Franck's remarkable use of imitative counterpoint for the end of this "wedding present" sonata:

It is hard to resist reading this as a musical symbol of married bliss, especially when the dialogue is placed even closer together, at a distance of half a bar rather than a full bar, on the deliriously happy closing page.

Robert Schumann Violin Sonata No. 1 in A minor Op. 105

Sonata form in the Classical era of Haydn and Mozart was predicated on presenting two contrasting themes, each with its own expressive character, in two distinct key areas. But by 1851, Robert Schumann had other ideas.

And so, in that year, he composed two virtually monothematic sonata-form outer movements that deemphasize key relationships for his Violin Sonata No. 1 in A minor, Op. 105, to more closely represent his misty poetic ideals.

Organic unity through continuous evolution is Schumann's aesthetic goal in this sonata rather than balanced contrast and the resolution of large-scale tensions between key areas. His is an aesthetic of blending, and the two "sister" themes of this sonata's first movement provide a vivid example of the process.

The work opens with a darkly passionate but restless theme in the violin, heaving with two-note sigh motives and rippling with hemiola in its alternation of 6/8 and 3/4 measures.



His second theme is identical in mood and is in the same rhythm. It sounds just like a continuation of the first theme, and it even shares some of the same keyboard texturing.



But themes are not the only object of Schumann's "blending" aesthetic. He also blends the timbres of his performing forces, as well.

Note how low in the range the violin plays, especially at the opening, on the G string. Schumann makes the violin into an honorary viola, with the piano figuration doubling its melodic line to create a kind of single, integrated piano-and-string instrument presenting the movement's themes.

The two instruments are like an old married couple that complete each other's sentences and echo each other's sentiments. All the more natural, then, are the passages in canonic imitation in the development section, which slides hand-in-glove into the recapitulation as if by magic. One moment, you see, you are hearing the opening melody in augmentation, i.e., stretched out in long notes, and the next you are hearing it at normal speed – and the recapitulation has begun without your even noticing it.

The only note of real contrast in the movement comes in the brisk coda that suddenly looks at its watch, gathers its hat and coat and heads for the door in a sweeping gust of 16th notes.

* * *

Schumann composes neither a real slow movement nor a zippy scherzo for this sonata but instead writes a kind of intermezzo at *Allegretto* tempo that combines the functions of both. With its short musing phrases and quizzical mood, it resembles the *Andantino grazioso* intermezzo from Schumann's Piano Concerto.

Structured in the form of a rondo, it opens in what seems to be mid-thought, childlike and curious as it reviews the notes of the F-major scale before indulging in one of the many thoughtful pauses that populate this movement.



Its first rondo episode is quite the opposite. It consists of one long, timid phrase in the minor mode that simply refuses to cadence at all until returning to the opening refrain tune.



The second episode, by contrast, will have none of it and kicks off its shoes to dance around the campfire with gypsy abandon.



But all dance parties must end sometime, and the movement ends in the mood of mild amusement and curious questioning with which it began.

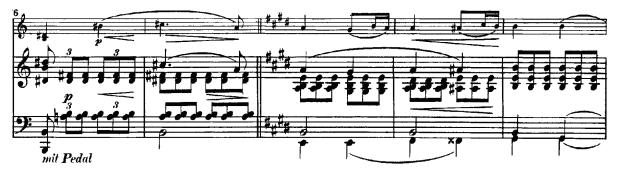
* * *



Schumann's sonata-form finale lives up to its billing. It is certainly *lebhaft* (lively), opening with an "antsin-the-pants" *moto perpetuo* that features the violin and piano as a dynamic duo sharing equally in the excitement.



Lyrical impulses do break through, however, in a second theme in F major. But even here Schumann "blends" the two themes together with a reminder of the frantic opening.



The real surprise of the movement, though, comes in the development section, which unexpectedly bursts into song with a completely new lyrical melody plumped up by loving, pillowy triplets from the keyboard.



But just like the "official" second theme, even this dreamy escapade is laced with references to the opening patter of 16ths, as is the sudden nostalgic recall of the sonata's opening bars that initiates the coda.

Those rascally 16ths are everywhere in this finale, but here, finally, we see where they come from. They are just a rapid-fire sequence of the little semitone sigh motives from the first movement's opening theme (!) that Schumann lets have the last word in closing out this organically conceived, unusually unified sonata.

Program notes by Donald G. Gíslason 2024

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This list was created on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, and includes bequests, gifts of cash, donations of securities, sponsorships and ticket donations dating back to January 1, 2023. Should you discover any errors or omissions, please accept our sincere apologies and contact Arlo Spring, Administration, Fundraising, and Box Office Coordinator, by email to arlo@vanrecital.com or by phone at 604.602.0363, so that any necessary corrections can be made.

There are many ways to support the VRS including making a philanthropic gift, sponsoring a concert and/or including us in your estate plans. If you would like more information, please contact us at 604.602.0363.



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Vancouver Recital Society acknowledges that we are on the traditional and unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the x*məθkwəy'əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl' ílwəta?/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.



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