

**DMA RECITAL
VIOLA THROUGH THE AGES**

Tuesday, February 14, 2023
Recital Hall
7:30 pm

JAKE PIETRONIRO, VIOLA

PROGRAM

Suite for Viola, No. 1 in g minor, Op. 131d

Max Reger
(1873-1916)

- I. Motto Sostenuto
- II. Vivace
- III. Andante Sostenuto
- IV. Molto Vivace

BRIEF PAUSE

Partita No. III In E major, BWV 1006

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

- I. Preludio
- II. Louré
- III. Gavotte en Rondeaux
- IV. Menuet I
- V. Menuet II
- VI. Bourée
- VII. Gigue

BRIEF PAUSE

Sonoran Storm

Nokuthula Ngwenyama
(b. 1976)

Suite for Viola, No. 1 in g minor, Op. 131d, Max Reger

Max Reger was a German composer, instrumentalist, and instructor. As a composer, his most prolific output revolved around organ works and Lieder, while using Baroque forms in a distinctly contemporary style. In the early part of the 20th century, this was seen as an unusual use of older traditional forms, which generally saw their revival through the neoclassicism of Stravinsky, among others. A great example of Reger's approach to this revival of style comes to us in the form of Op. 131d, a collection of three works for solo viola. This was the final collection that Reger wrote, though he never heard it performed at the premier in 1916, as he died shortly before the performance.

Reger's compositional style in these pieces can be said to emulate, not replicate, the music and writing of J.S. Bach for solo instruments. As would become commonplace further into the 20th century, composers like Reger, Hindemith, Britten, and Berg would begin to establish a firm tradition of writing for solo viola, which prior to the 20th century had seen little repertoire dedicated to it.

This first suite for viola can be seen to emulate elements of Bach's first sonata for solo violin in G minor, from the first chord in the Andante sostenuto, to the fiery fourth movement, evoking elements of the presto from the same sonata.

Partita No. III In E major, BWV 1006, (arranged for viola), Johann Sebastian Bach

Johann Sebastian Bach was renowned for his keyboard skills and his mastery of counterpoint, but was also a proficient violinist with a profound knowledge of its repertoire. Completed in 1720, the six sonatas and partitas for solo violin are widely regarded as the zenith of instrumental writing and to this day are upheld as a the gold standard and inspiration for all future solo instrumental writing, especially for strings. This set was produced at an especially prolific time in Bach's compositional output, in which he also wrote the six cello suites, the Brandenburg concertos, and the first book of the Well-tempered Klavier, all widely studied and essential pieces to the classical repertoire. Though we now hold Bach and his compositional output in high regard, he was largely forgotten after his death in 1750. It wasn't until the revival of pieces like the Saint Matthew's Passion by the likes of Felix Mendelssohn in the middle part of the 19th century that Bach's music was revitalized.

The E major partita opens with a Preludio, the perpetual motion of which creates rhythmic variety and incredible excitement. This opening is so famous that it is found as a direct quotation in another composer who sought to emulate Bach-Eugene Ysaye, in his sonata No. 2 for solo violin. After the Preludio's exciting ending, the partita unfolds with five movements in the style of French courtly dances: a Loure, a Gavotte en Rondeau, a pair of contrasting Minuets, a Bouree, and a Gigue.

Sonoran Storm, Nokuthula Ngwenyama

Nokuthula Ngwenyama is an internationally recognized composer and performer. Winner of the Primrose International Viola Competition at age 16, Ms. Ngwenyama has garnered international attention ever since as a soloist, chamber musician, and educator. Find out more, at <https://thulamusic.com>.

“A description by the composer on Sonoran Storm”....

Humidity rises in the desert. That scorch blaster hitting the face feels fuller and expectant upon exit. Haboob dust causes a metal gate to clang. It's bulging brown outside. Feet scamper across parched earth as clouds approach. Expanding into the atmosphere, they amass to quench aridity's obsession.

Anti-trades carry sea moisture across Baja California to the Sierra Madres during the monsoons. It drifts north across el Camino del Diablo and swirls above the Mogollon Rim.

Cumulus giants, made stronger by el Niño, dwarf the eastern landscape. The sun sets, the earth cools, and the desert braces for thermal dynamism. Tree branches partner with updrafts while downdrafts pelt the land. Angular veins shoot through darkness.

Thunder rumbles with an abusive baritone's vigor while the saguaro leads succulents in thirsty supplication, arms toward the sky.

Static tendrils demand audience: jagged voltage constructs melody in joyful obeisance. Virga stop teasing as ten miles of heaven drop to the floor (section A). Big weather enjoys a snailpaced game of bumper cars, reforming whilst arboreal cards stand empty. It's calm. Is it over?

Abated leaves bathe in temporary starlight (section B).

But summer westerlies do not relent, and another thunderhead descends. The romp resumes, culminating in a celebration of renewal and life (section A1).

UPCOMING EVENTS

University and Concert Bands Concert

Monday, February 20
7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

Symphonic Band Concert

Monday, February 27
7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

Chamber Jazz Concert

Wednesday, March 1
7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

Gianna Schicchi

Thursday March 2, Friday March 3
7:30 p.m., Bryant Jordan Hall

Chamber Music Tuscaloosa-Quartets Plus

Sunday, March 5
5:00 p.m., Concert Hall

Faculty Recital Series: Piano

Monday, March 20
7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

University Choirs Spring Concert I

Thursday, March 23
7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

Scenic Ventures

Sunday, March 26
3:00 p.m., Bryant Jordan Hall

Spring Faculty Composition Recital

Saturday, April 1
7:30 p.m., Recital Hall

2'o'clock Jazz Concert

Tuesday, April 4
7:30 p.m., Concert Hall

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