

2024 Pleyel Piano Concert

Presented by the UNC Department of Music and Music 286-2
Saturday, April 20th at 1:00 pm
Person Recital Hall

Nocturne in C sharp minor, Op. 27 No. 1

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1810 – 1849)

Siddharth Sankaranarayanan, *piano*

Après Un Rêve & Clair de Lune

GABRIEL FAURÉ (1845-1924)

Victoria Song, *soprano*
Coco Chang, *piano*

Dolly Suite

GABRIEL FAURÉ (1845-1924)

II. *Mi-a-ou*

III. *Le jardin de Dolly*

Mia Foglesong, *piano*
Kyle Finley, *piano*

Hai Luli, Cancion de La Infanta, & Na kholmakh Gruzli

PAULINE VIARDOT (1821-1910)

Jeanne Fischer, *soprano*
Mimi Solomon, *piano*

Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann, Op. 20

CLARA SCHUMANN (1819-1896)

Kimberly Liu, *piano*

Alleluia & Mignonne

CÉCILE CHAMINADE (1857 – 1944)

Isabelle Kosempa, *mezzo soprano*
Monet Jowers, *piano*

Douze Valses et Finale, Op. 8

MARIE JAELL (1846 – 1925)

VIII. *Allegretto cantabile*

Camilla Fratta, *piano*
Mandy Lubinski, *piano*

Three Waltzes, Op. 32

FERDINANDO CARULLI (1770-1841)

Waltz No. 2 in D Major

Lucas Jorgensen, *guitar*

Waltz No. 3 in A Major

Coco Chang, *piano*

Grande Valse Brillante in E flat major, Op. 18

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1810 – 1849)

Monet Jowers, *piano*

Translations

Après un rêve by Romain Bussine

Dans un sommeil que charmait ton image
Je rêvais le bonheur, ardent mirage,
Tes yeux étaient plus doux, ta voix pure et sonore,
Tu rayonnais comme un ciel éclairé par l'aurore;
Tu m'appelais et je quittais la terre
Pour m'enfuir avec toi vers la lumière,
Les cieus pour nous entr'ouvraient leurs nues,
Splendeurs inconnues, lueurs divines entrevues.
Hélas! hélas, triste réveil des songes,
Je t'appelle, ô nuit, rends-moi tes mensonges;
Reviens, reviens, radieuse,
Reviens, ô nuit mystérieuse!

After a dream - trans. by Richard Stokes

In sleep made sweet by a vision of you
I dreamed of happiness, fervent illusion,
Your eyes were softer, your voice pure and ringing,
You shone like a sky that was lit by the dawn;
You called me and I departed the earth
To flee with you toward the light,
The heavens parted their clouds for us,
We glimpsed unknown splendours, celestial fires.
Alas, alas, sad awakening from dreams!
I summon you, O night, give me back your delusions;
Return, return in radiance,
Return, O mysterious night!

Clair de Lune by Paul Verlaine

Votre âme est un paysage choisi
Que vont charmant masques et bergamasques
Jouant du luth et dansant et quasi
Tristes sous leurs déguisements fantasques.
Tout en chantant sur le mode mineur
L'amour vainqueur et la vie opportune,
Ils n'ont pas l'air de croire à leur bonheur
Et leur chanson se mêle au clair de lune,
Au calme clair de lune triste et beau,
Qui fait rêver les oiseaux dans les arbres
Et sangloter d'extase les jets d'eau,
Les grands jets d'eau sveltes parmi les marbres.

Moonlight – trans. Richard Stokes

Your soul is a chosen landscape
Bewitched by masquers and bergamaskers,
Playing the lute and dancing and almost
Sad beneath their fanciful disguises.
Singing as they go in a minor key
Of conquering love and life's favours,
They do not seem to believe in their fortune
And their song mingles with the light of the moon,
The calm light of the moon, sad and fair,
That sets the birds dreaming in the trees
And the fountains sobbing in their rapture,
Tall and svelte amid marble statues.

Hai luli by Xavier de Maistre

Je suis triste, je m'inquiète,
Je ne sais plus que devenir.
Mon bon ami devait venir,
Et je l'attends ici seulette.
Hai luli, hai luli,
Où donc peut être mon ami?

Je m'assieds pour filer ma laine,
Le fil se casse dans ma main :
Allons ! je filerai demain,
Aujourd'hui je suis trop en peine.
Hai luli, hai luli,
Qu'il fait triste sans mon ami!

Si jamais il devient volage
S'il doit un jour m'abandonner,
Le village n'a qu'à brûler
Et moi-même avec le village!
Hai luli, hai luli,
À quoi bon vivre sans ami?

Trans. Richard Stokes

I am sad, I am anxious,
I no longer know what's to become of me.
My lover was to have come,
And I wait for him here alone.
Hai luli, hai luli,
How sad it is without my lover!

I sit down to spin my wool,
The thread snaps in my hand:
Well then! I shall spin tomorrow,
Today I am too upset.
Hai luli, hai luli,
Where can my lover be?

Ah! If it's true that he's unfaithful,
And will one day abandon me,
Then let the village burn
And me too along with the village!
Hai luli, hai luli,
What point is there in living without a lover?

Canción de la Infanta by anon. poet

Hablando estaba la reina
 En su palacio real
 Con la infanta de Castilla,
 Princesa de Portugal.
 Ay! que malas penas!
 Ay! que fuerte mal!
 Allí vino un caballero
 Con grandes lloros llorar:
 Nuevas te traigo, señora,
 Dolorosas de contar.
 Ay! que malas penas!
 Ay! que fuerte mal!
 Ay, no son de reyno estraño,
 De aquí son, de Portugal.
 Vuestro príncipe, señora,
 Vuestro príncipe real
 Ay! que malas penas!
 Ay! que fuerte mal!
 Es caído de un caballo,
 El alma quiere a Dios dar.
 Si le queredes ver vivo,
 No queredes detardar.
 Ay! que malas penas!
 Ay! que fuerte mal!
 Allí está el Rey su padre,
 Que quiere desesperar.
 Lloran todas las mujeres
 Casadas y por casar.
 Ay! que malas penas!
 Ay! que fuerte mal!

Na kholmakh Gruzii by Alexander Pushkin

Na kholmah Gruzii lezhit nochnaja mgla;
 Shumit Aragva predo mnoju.
 Mne grustno i legko; pechal' moja svetla;
 Pechal' moja polna toboju,
 Toboj, toboj odnoj... Unyn'ja moego
 Nichto ne muchit, ne trevozhit,
 I serdce vnov' gorit i b'jotsja ottogo,
 Chto ne ljubit' ono ne mozhet.

Alleluia by Paul Mariéton

J'avais douté de votre amour
 Et de ma constance elle-même,
 Mais voici qu'avec le retour
 Du joyeux printemps, je vous aime!
 Le printemps, qui rit dans mon coeur
 Comme un soleil dans une eau pure,
 M'a rendu mon passé vainqueur
 Et son ivresse à la nature.
 Je vous aime, enfant, aimez-moi;
 C'est le printemps qui nous convie!
 Ne sentez-vous pas que la foi
 Qui nous revient, nous rend la vie?
 Alleluia pour les beaux jours
 Du printemps et de l'allégresse!
 Mignonne, en gardant vos amours,
 Vous garderez votre jeunesse!

Mignonne by Pierre de Ronsard

Mignonne, allons voir si la rose
 Qui ce matin avait déclose
 Sa robe de pourpre au soleil,
 A point perdu cette vesprée,
 Les plis de sa robe pourprée,
 Et son teint au vôtre pareil.
 Las ! voyez comme en peu d'espace,
 Mignonne, elle a dessus la place
 Las ! las ! ses beautés laissé choir !
 Ô vraiment marâtre Nature,
 Puis qu'une telle fleur ne dure
 Que du matin jusques au soir !
 Donc, si vous me croyez, mignonne,
 Tandis que vôtre âge fleuronne
 En sa plus verte nouveauté,
 Cueillez, cueillez votre jeunesse :
 Comme à cette fleur la vieillesse
 Fera ternir votre beauté.

Song of the infanta - trans. Lorena Paz Nieto

The queen was speaking
 In her Royal Palace.
 With the Infanta of Castile,
 the Princess of Portugal.
 Oh! What terrible pain!
 Oh! What awful woe!
 There came a knight
 With great tears in his eyes:
 "News I bring you, my lady,
 So painful to tell"
 Oh! What terrible pain!
 Oh! What awful woe!
 "Oh, it is not from a far off kingdom,
 It's from here, from Portugal.
 Your prince, my lady,
 Your royal prince"
 Oh! What terrible pain!
 Oh! What awful woe!
 "He has fallen from a horse,
 He wants to give his soul to God.
 If you want to see him alive,
 You must not delay"
 Oh! What terrible pain!
 Oh! What awful woe!
 There is the King, his father,
 Who is in despair.
 All the women are crying,
 both the married and the unmarried.
 Oh! What terrible pain!
 Oh! What awful woe!

On Georgia's Hills - trans. Philip Ross Bullock

Georgia's hills are clad in the darkness of night;
 The Aragva roars before me.
 I am sad, yet also calm; my sorrow is radiant;
 My sorrow is filled with the thought of you,
 Of you, of you alone... Nothing torments
 My sadness, nothing disturbs it,
 And my heart burns again and beats because
 It cannot live without loving.

Hallelujah - trans. Caroline Polito

I had doubted your love
 And my own constancy,
 But now, with the return
 Of joyful spring, I love you!
 Spring, which laughs in my heart
 Like sunshine in pure water,
 Has restored my past glory
 And its intoxication to nature.
 I love you, child, love me;
 It is spring that invites us!
 Don't you feel that the faith
 That returns to us, gives us life?
 Alleluia for the beautiful days
 Of spring and joy!
 Sweetheart, by keeping your love,

Trans. Thomas Daughton

Darling, let us go and see if the rose
 That just this morn had changed its clothes
 To robes of purple in the sun,
 Has changed again now day is done.
 The folds of its robe purpurean
 And its blush with yours were as one.
 Alas! You see in just how little time,
 My sweet, the rose has fallen from its prime,
 Alas, alas, to see its beauty fade!
 O Nature's cruelty is vast,
 That such a flow'r can only last
 From dawn until the evening's shade!
 And so, you must believe me, dear,
 So long as your age doth appear
 In all its greenest novelty
 Embrace, embrace your radiant youth
 For like this flower, in all truth,
 Cruel age will tarnish your beauty.

Our Pleyel

“The Pleyel piano was owned by the Pleyel family until it was purchased by Col Owen Hill Kenan in 1920 for his residence in Paris at 44 Rue du Bac. It was reputed to have been played by Chopin when he was a young man and a favorite of the Pleyel family. The Pleyel was the piano of choice of Chopin during his active career as a composer and pianist. Mr. Frank H. Kenan purchased the piano from Col Kenan’s estate and gave it to his son Tom who gifted it to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. It has been carefully restored by John Foy.

The piano was built in 1843.”

—Thomas S. Kenan, III

One distinctive characteristic of the UNC Pleyel is its elegant, ornate appearance. From its legs, which remind me of decorative vases, to the textured ridges and rosettes carved into the wood beside and below the keys, the UNC Pleyel’s intricate aesthetic very much reflects the time and place from which it originates: 19th-century Paris, a city known for its sophistication and a vital hub for classical music.

Notably, Frédéric Chopin favored the sound of the Pleyel piano, performing his debut concert in Paris on a Pleyel and owning one later in his life. He even famously declared the instrument “the last word in perfection,” once remarking, “When I feel out of sorts, I play on an Erard piano where I easily find a ready-made tone. But when I feel in good form and strong enough to find my own individual sound, then I need a Pleyel piano.”

In comparison to a modern-day grand piano, the timbre of the UNC Pleyel is silvery, soft-edged and warm, crafted to be played in the intimate environment of a showroom salon versus a sweeping concert hall. As a result, its sound carries a mesmeric closeness, flowing with a uniquely operatic quality and allowing the deeply felt lyricism of Romantic-era pieces to shine particularly bright. From our program’s soaring emotional highs to its mellower moments of melancholy, we hope hearing these 19th-century keyboard pieces in the authentic voice of the UNC Pleyel will transform your experience of them, resonating beyond Person Recital Hall to another world.

By Luna Hou

We’d also like to thank Nicholas DiEugenio, Tama Hochbaum, Michele Natale, and Cat Zachary

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Program Notes

Traversing the sonic worlds of love and heartbreak, joy and sorrow, the repertoire of UNC's 2024 Pleyel Concert serves as a vibrant, enchanting celebration of 19th-century piano music. We open with Chopin's Nocturne Op. 27 No. 1 in C-Sharp Minor, an elegant, mystical ode to night. Though this piece begins softly and moodily, it eventually builds to an intense, passionate climax, one that feels both revelatory and revelrous. Alternating between dark, sweeping minor cadences and lilting, surprising major ones, Chopin's Nocturne invites listeners to sink into a phantasmic dream, one of deep, lyrical emotion and musical ecstasy.

Gabriel Fauré's following two pieces continue to explore the dimensions of nighttime, musically embodying the elusive, mysterious connotations associated with night in the 19th century. *Après un rêve* draws on text from Romain Bussine, in which the speaker laments their inability to live in the fantastical world of their dreams, where they and their lover may be together. Similarly, the lyrics of *Clair de lune*, authored by Paul Verlaine, paint a world in which "[y]our soul is a chosen landscape," alive with a certain moonlit, melancholy magic. In contrast, the second and third movements of Fauré's *Dolly Suite*, II. *Mi-a-ou* and III. *Le Jardin de Dolly*, provide an abruptly delightful change of pace. Dedicated to the daughter of Fauré's love interest Emma Bardac, these pieces are joyful, bright, and warm, marking a thematic transition from a love of night to an engagement with the waking world.

Our concert also aims to commemorate the remarkable work of female composers in 19th-century France. One of the most influential of these composers was Pauline Viardot, a close friend of Chopin's. Notably, Viardot presided over a lively musical salon in the rue de Douai, where composers from many different corners of Europe would gather and perform; her esteemed lineups would include Parisian residents like Chopin as well as German composers like Clara Schumann, among others. The three Viardot pieces our program showcases reflect her celebrated proficiency in both voice and piano. The first, *Hai luli*, with text composed by Xavier de Maestre, agonizes over the loss and potential unfaithfulness of a lover, its key moodily switching between minor and major as if to reflect the speaker's emotional turmoil. *Canción de la infanta*, too, is a song of woe, with a refrain that chromatically descends, mirroring the speaker's emotional descent into sadness. Lastly, *Na kholmakeb Gruzji* is perhaps the most dynamic of the three pieces, with an undulating piano accompaniment painting the rolling landscape of the song's titular Georgian hills.

Clara Schumann's Variations on a Theme is the longest piece on the program, a musical microcosm of the diverse moods and textures our program seeks to encompass. Throughout the piece, Schumann's lyrical, haunting opening theme is transformed to enthralling effect. Some variations heighten its tempo to a roiling, agitated pace while others linger in its melancholy; some variations are densely ornamental while others stand out for their harmonic complexity. The final variation in the piece serves to embody all of these qualities at once, making for a dynamic, showstopping conclusion—one that highlights Schumann's talent, versatility, and vision as a musician.

Cécile Chaminade's *Alleluia: J'avais douté de votre amour* and *Mignonne: Mignonne allons voir si la rose* mark the start of our concert's thematic arc toward joy. Both lyrically contemplate themes of spring, love, and youth, with a flowy, expressive sense of momentum that feels at once bright, tender, and moodily melodic. Finally, our program concludes with four waltzes, the first by Marie Jaëll, who notably wrote many four-handed pieces for piano. One such piece is from her Douze Valses et Finale: VIII. Allegretto cantabile, a piece that elegantly juxtaposes a steady, lilting pulse in the piano's lower register with sparkling ornamental flourishes in the piano's higher register. Next are Waltz No. 2 in D major and Waltz No. 3 in A major by Ferdinando Carulli, featuring classical guitar and piano—a delightfully unusual combination that lend the pieces a uniquely plucky, playful texture as the two instruments take turns serving as the melody and accompaniment. Finally, given Chopin's particular affinity for the Pleyel, the influence of his music in 19th-century Parisian showroom salons, and the rich legacy of his music, our concert is bookended by his compositions. If Chopin's Nocturne might be likened to the sensation of falling asleep, intended to immerse listeners in a musical dreamworld, Grande valse brillante in E-flat major serves as the most brilliant of wake-up calls: bright, busy, triumphant, and wholly, shimmeringly alive.

By Luna Hou