

PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

a life more beautiful

PREVIEW
NOTES

XAVIER FOLEY, *double bass*

SEJOON PARK, *piano*

Friday, January 25 – 7:30 PM

Benjamin Franklin Hall, American Philosophical Society

PROGRAM (*Selection of Program Notes*)

Prelude and Fugue in C Major from *The Well-Tempered Clavier*—Book I, BWV 846 [Arr.]

Johann Sebastian Bach

Born: March 31, 1685, in Eisenach, Germany

Died: July 28, 1750, Leipzig, Germany

Composed: 1722

Duration: 5 minutes

One of the monumental landmarks in the history of music, Bach's *Well-tempered Clavier* has come to represent the "Old Testament" of the pianist's repertory (Hans von Bülow). The two books of preludes and fugues in alternately major and minor keys – twenty-four in each. They occupied Bach across most of his creative life, from his late twenties to about sixty. The Prelude and Fugue in C Major, the portal through which we enter the *Well-tempered Clavier*, is technically extremely simple. In contrast to the simplicity of the first prelude, the first fugue is one of the most intricate, tightly woven, and masterfully constructed.

Violin Sonata in E Minor, K. 304 [Arr.]

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Born: January 27, 1756, in Salzburg, Austria

Died: December 5, 1791, in Vienna, Austria

Composed: 1778

Duration: 15 minutes

In 1778, Mannheim flutist Johann Baptist Wendling encouraged Mozart to write "duets for piano and violin" to help make a living once he got to Paris. Known as the Palatine sonatas because Mozart dedicated them to Maria Elisabeth, wife of the Elector of Palatine, Five of the Palatine Sonatas, including the E Minor, consist of only two movements, a configuration Mozart may have borrowed from Johann Christian Bach or Haydn. The E Minor Sonata, which many consider the greatest of the Palatine Sonatas, is one of only two chamber works with piano and strings in which Mozart employed a minor key (the other being the G Minor Piano Quartet, K. 478).

Sonata in A Minor, D. 821, *Arpeggione*

Franz Schubert

Born: January 31, 1797, in Vienna, Austria

Died: November 19, 1828, in Vienna, Austria

Composed: 1824

Duration: 25 minutes

Schubert composed the *Arpeggione Sonata* in late 1824 and it remains today the only significant composition for the instrument. The arpeggione, invented in 1823 by a Viennese guitar maker, was a six-stringed instrument with frets but bowed like a cello. The instrument experienced a brief period of popularity after its invention and it is likely Schubert wrote the sonata in response to a commission. However, by the time the sonata was posthumously published in 1871, all interest in the instrument had died out. Today, the work is mostly commonly performed on cello or viola. Transcriptions for other instruments, such as the double bass, flute, clarinet and guitar, also exist.

Gran Duo Concertante

Giovanni Bottesini

Born: December 22, 1821 in Crema, Italy

Died: July 7, 1889, in Parma Italy

Composed: 1880

Duration: 15 minutes

Although the composer and double bass virtuoso Bottesini is largely unknown today, he frequently toured internationally and was widely recognized in his time. He was even nicknamed "the Paganini of the Double Bass," and Rossini described him as one of the most accomplished musicians in Europe. Today, the *Gran Duo Concertante* is one of Bottesini's most frequently performed pieces. The work's most striking feature is its operatic style. The fact that Bottesini employed lyrical and dramatic elements is not surprising, considering he composed several operas as well as numerous fantasies for double bass and piano based on popular operas.