

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

Program Notes for Graduate Recital: December 7, 2016

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of Master of Music in Music, Piano Performance

By

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December 2016

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Table of Contents

Copyright Page	ii
Signature Page	iii
Abstract	v
Performer's note	1
Bibliography	12
Appendix: Recital Program with Performance Link	13

Abstract

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This recital program was selected based on composers who have influenced me over many years. I would like to introduce and perform for the audience works by those composers I have admired since I was very young, and who have influenced me throughout my musical development, and who have made me the pianist I am today. My program includes compositions from the Baroque era to the present day, and includes both original works and arrangements. In the program notes, I use composers' notes, music history, an analysis of the structure of the pieces, and my point of view as a performer/pianist. I wish to help people have more of an understanding of these works by giving some background on the composers and how the pieces were written.

Performer's notes

Schafe können sicher weiden ("Sheep May Safely Graze"), by **Johann Sebastian Bach** (1685-1750) is an aria from the cantata *Was mir behagt, ist nur die muntre Jagd*, BWV 208 ("The Lively Hunt Is All My Heart's Desire"). Also known as the hunting cantata, it was written in 1713 for the Duke of Saxe – Weissenfels for his 31st birthday. The text of the cantata is by librettist, Salomo Frank. Bach was working on his cantatas with Frank after he returned to Weimar in 1708. They had been working together on almost all Bach's cantatas during his church residency in Weimar.

The cantata features personnel Diana, Pales, Endymion, and Pan from Roman and Greek mythology. It was first performed for Christian, Duke of Saxe – Weissenfels after a hunting party in an evening to celebrate his birthday. Below is the text in German and translation:

<i>Schafe können sicher weiden,</i>	Sheep can safely graze,
<i>wo ein guter Hirte wacht.</i>	where a good shepherd watches.
<i>Wo Regenten wohl regieren,</i>	Where regents govern well,
<i>kann man Ruh und Friede spüren</i>	one can sense calm and peace
<i>und was Länder glücklich macht.</i>	and that which makes a land prosperous.

The cantata was scored for soprano I and II, tenor, bass; 2 horns, 2 recorders, 2 oboes, English horn, bassoon, cordes, violone, and continuo. The Aria *Schafe können sicher weiden* ("Sheep May Safely Graze") in B flat major is one of the most frequently played selections from the cantata. Originally *Schafe können sicher weiden* was arranged for second soprano (Pales, a Roman god was a deity of shepherds) and accompanied by two recorders and continuo. This aria has been widely adapted in transcription to many instruments including the solo piano. The arrangement by Egon Petri (1881-1962), in

particular, is one of the most well-known and often played arrangements. It is considered to be a popular transcription for piano recitals. Petri was a Dutchman born in Hanover, Germany. He was an editor and pianist who also played the violin, which he had learned from his father. Petri was tremendously influenced by Ferruccio Busoni (1866-1924), under whom he also studied. Because of Busoni, Egon Petri focused on J. S. Bach's repertoire quite extensively.

Sonata in f minor Op. 57 by **Ludwig van Beethoven** (1770-1827), is known as the *Appassionata*, meaning passionate in Italian. It was composed in 1804-05. Unlike other titled sonatas such as *Pathétique* (Op. 13), Beethoven did not name the sonata himself. A publisher assigned this name after Beethoven's death in 1838 for a four-hand piano arrangement.

Beethoven was a revolutionary in the classical era. He often struggled with health issues, and by the time he composed the *Appassionata*, he had already started losing his hearing. His dread, depression and anxiety at the possibility of becoming deaf after six months of treatment is apparent in a letter he wrote to his brothers Carl and Johann in 1802. Beethoven wrote, "No longer can I enjoy recreation in social intercourse, refined conversation, or mutual outpourings of thought. Completely isolated, I only enter society when compelled to do so. I must live like an exile."

Being a pioneer of romanticism, Beethoven certainly played a pivotal role in music history. The *Appassionata* exhibits strong romantic tendencies. At the time, Beethoven's composing style was gradually transforming from Classical to Romantic and becoming more adept towards expressing inner feelings. Key characteristics include

expanded melodic lines and more advanced harmonic progressions.

The sonata was dedicated to Count Franz von Brunsvik. It has three movements; first movement – *Allegro assai*, second movement – *Andante con moto*, and third movement – *Allegro ma non troppo* – *Presto*. *Allegro assai* is a sonata form, and it starts with a *pianissimo* in the first theme in unison in f minor. The quiet and seemingly tranquillo long melodic lines in unison create an unexpected forte and fast diminished 7th arpeggios followed by a sudden unexpected cadence in C major. The rhythmic motif "short-short-short-long" before reaching the arpeggios brings to mind the theme of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5, which was composed during the same period. From that point, the theme is divided into sections with fortissimo syncopated chords inserted. The transition to the second theme is with repeated notes which stay mainly calm, and of course, with some unexpected *Sf* chords. The secondary theme in the exposition is marked *dolce* in A-flat major which gives the music a warmer tone. The melody line played by the right hand is introduced by the left hand and is accompanied with a continuous timpani-like steady rhythm. The melody of the second theme comes from the first theme that one can recognize right away. It is clear to hear the rhythm pattern from the very beginning of the piece. It is more of a lyrical style in the second theme, and the image is slightly brighter compared to the storm like the first theme. The second theme closes with a fast passage of sixteenth notes in *fortissimo* and dies out in *piano*. The development begins with an E major version of the exposition's first theme. It seems to be peaceful and sweet but all of a sudden, as if a tempest has arrived, the melody shifts to e minor in *forte* accompanied by sixteenth notes. This is somewhat unusual because while a development generally contains motifs from a theme from the exposition, they

are not often transcribed so literally as is the case here. A new element – the quintuplet – is introduced in the development. The melody shifts between left hand and right hand until the key goes to A-flat major. The first climax of the movement is a cadenza like arpeggio which includes hands overlapping, hands together and crossing hands. The whole passage maintains *ff* with agitation. The development ends with a sudden, an unexpected *piano* once again. The end of the development also opens the recapitulation. The difference is that this time it goes from f minor to F major then back to f minor after the fermata. After both themes are reintroduced again in the recapitulation, it reaches the second climax, the peak of the first movement via another cadenza passage. This passage is longer and technically more difficult to play. The arpeggios' range extends to five octaves. The unstable key center is featured in this passage throughout the arpeggios, as is the harmonic progression. The recapitulation finishes with a V7 chord with Adagio coming from a *ritardando*. The coda begins after the extension on the V7 chord. Beethoven used the same chord to begin the section with one last sudden *ff* but had the left hand enhanced to an octave with more voices in the right hand, while the tempo changes to *Piu Allegro*. The excitement continues until the sudden *p* signals the arrival of a single melody line across all registers. The first movement ends with *ppp* from a decrescendo with a f minor long sustained chord.

The second movement, *Andante con moto*, has more of a gentle and soft tone. It is a theme and variation form. It could be said that this is a theme with three variations. The rhythm is a major character in the second movement; it goes from big units to smaller units. In the theme, the rhythm is based on quarter notes. It gradually moves from eighth notes, to sixteenth notes and to thirty-second notes. The theme returns after

these variations and it sounds like it is about to end and we hear this second inversion of a diminished 7th chord rolling in *pp*. While one might think “is this it?”, it continues with another same chord an octave higher in *ff*. This abrupt ending with an unexpected fortissimo 7th chord is the conclusion of the second movement and the bridge to the third movement.

The third movement, *Allegro ma non troppo – Presto*, continues with the same chord that ends the previous movement without break and with a dotted rhythm. The dotted rhythm delivers the urgent message. When it commences with dotted quarter notes followed by dotted eighth notes, it suddenly condenses. Phrases comprised of sixteenth notes are introduced after these dotted seventh chords. Rapid-running sixteenth notes are mainly carried through until the coda. Beside the non-stop running sixteenth notes, one can also hear many sixteenth notes followed by quarter notes (which sounds like the dotted rhythm), off-beat eighth notes and syncopation. It is a very colorful in rhythm movement. The coda begins with *Presto* which gives the sonata an agitated and powerful conclusion. The *Presto* does not provide an immediate change to make one feel in *Presto* because of the rhythm change. It begins with half notes followed by eighth notes, so even now we move the tempo faster but the rhythm is twice slower and that does not make it sound faster necessarily. After two times of repeat from two phrases, the sixteenth notes come back. Now we feel the exciting fast-even-faster passage with the non-stop-rapid-running sixteenth notes. There are also numerous *Sf* in this passage, almost one per measure, in this passage which gives the thrilling ending a kick. The movement finishes with *f* minor arpeggios descending a long way and ends with strong and powerful *f* minor chords.

Fado (2011) is an etude from “Motes & Meters” Piano Etudes Vol. 1 composed by **Milen Kirov** (b. 1977). Dr. Milen Kirov is an award-winning Bulgarian-American composer, pianist, performer and producer. He has been recognized by the United States Congress for his work as a director of an international music ensemble for showcasing Bulgarian culture and for supporting Los Angeles’ tradition of multiculturalism. He was born in Plovdiv, Bulgaria to a family of musicians. His father Dr. Todor Kirov is a renowned Bulgarian ethnomusicologist, composer and scholar. His mother Vili is a singer and performer of Bulgarian folk music. His brother Plamen is a drummer based in Los Angeles, California. Milen Kirov started playing the piano at an early age, and he gave his first public performance at age of six and solo recital at age of ten. He attended D. Petkov Music High School and later Plovdiv Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts before he moved to the United States to attend the University of Nevada, Las Vegas where he was offered full scholarship. At UNLV, he majored in piano performance and also studied jazz piano and composition. He began to be even more active in performing not only in the style of classical piano but also jazz, funk and rock. He transferred to California Institute of the Arts to study with pianist Vicki Ray, who is well-known for performing contemporary works. He was fascinated by the diversity of music and decided to pursue his Master’s in composition. Dr. Kirov earned his Master of Music in composition from California State University, Northridge, where he studied with Dr. Liviu Marinescu. At the time, he was in a rock-electroclash band, A.i., as the keyboardist and he enjoyed playing concerts, touring and nurturing his creativity in performing. He then entered the groundbreaking program of Performer-Composer back at the California Institute of the Arts, where he studied with Vicki Ray and David Rosenboom and

received his Doctor of Musical Arts. Dr. Kirov is currently on the faculty at Los Angeles City College.

As a pianist, Milen Kirov values the importance of etudes and appreciates what they can offer. He believes that every pianist can benefit from etudes and this belief has inspired him to compose them with many different kinds of skills in mind. His compositions are with abundant Bulgarian color and elements – modes, folk dances and tunes, Balkan music and complex rhythm. This volume of piano etudes, *Modes & Meters* includes 10 etudes, including two for two pianos, one for one person with two keyboard instruments and seven for solo piano. Each etude comes with program notes to help the pianists understand the music, modes, his compositional motif behind the music. *Fado* and *Paidushko* are etudes for solo piano.

The word *Fado* itself means destiny, or fate. *Fado* is a music genre which can be traced to the 1820s or earlier in Portugal. It usually has melancholy themes and is typically accompanied by guitars or mandolins. *Fado* is in 9/8 (2+2+2+3). In the beginning of the piece one can clearly hear the ostinato in the rhythm pattern going up and down. The theme is introduced after two phrases composed by ostinato are played. Throughout the piece you will hear the melody like ostinato and a theme line. The challenge is to bring out the themes musically and to keep a smooth flow within the mood in spite of hand switches bringing the ostinato up and down. The theme circles around with different types of harmony and rhythm each time until it reaches a climax towards the end and the ostinato gradually descends. Everything fades away in the closing section with the melody line now introducing just one single long note at a time. The piece ends with repetition on the last set of ostinatos and leaves the atmosphere in

mystery.

Paidushko (2010) is in 5/8 (2+3) that integrates two different modes, *Hijaz* and *Mustaar* for the higher and lower register while having the ostinato in the middle. *Paidushko*, or so called *Paidushko Horo*, is a traditional Bulgarian dance. *Paidushko* has a brisk tempo from the dance rhythm 2+3 with expressive dynamics, accents and syncopations, just like the spirit of the dance. The 4-note ostinato pattern in 5/8 gives each measure a different starting note as the downbeat and enriches the rhythmic color. The technical focuses in the piece are to maintain the ostinato evenly and without any accents, bring out the melodic line and to play the piece in a delightful manner. The single ostinato later evolves to a double ostinato, going from left hand to right hand. Cross hands are featured frequently during the piece and it is challenging to maintain a good balance with such complicated rhythm and technical difficulties. The quirky melody played against the two-line tranquillo ostinato creates a polyrhythmic interplay effect. The piece finishes with unison; the 4-note ostinato featuring accents highlighting the downbeats and the dynamic goes from *mp* and crescendo to the end in *fff*.

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849) **Ballade No. 2, Op. 38** was composed in 1838 dedicated to Robert Schumann (1819-1856), in return for Schumann's dedicating *Carnaval*, Op. 9 (1834-35) to Chopin. According to Schumann, who claimed to have heard it from Chopin himself, the four Ballades were inspired by reading the poems *Ballady i Romanse* (Ballades and Romances) (1822) of Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855), a Polish poet, Chopin's fellow and friend. As with other compositions by Chopin, this ballade is enriched with Polish elements and nationalism. Ballade No. 2 was inspired by the poem

Świtez (The Lake of the Willis) from *Ballady i Romanse*. The poem is about this lake, smooth as a sheet of ice, which was situated upon the site of a town formerly besieged by Russian hordes. According to legend, the earth suddenly opened up and swallowed the young Polish maidens so that they would not fall prey to the conquering Russian. The maidens were transformed into mysterious flowers which adorned the shores of the lake and brought woe to anyone who touched them.¹ Perhaps this explains the two contrasting characters of the structure in the piece. One is slow, lyrical and melancholy, while the other is fast, agitated and impulsive. In his review, Schumann wrote:²³

We must direct attention to the ballade as a most remarkable work. Chopin has already written one composition of the same name – one of his wildest and most original compositions; the new one is different, as a work of art inferior to the first, but equally fantastic and inventive. Its impassioned episodes seem to have been inserted afterwards. I recollect very well that when Chopin played the ballade here, it ended in F major; now it closes in A minor. At that time, he also mentioned that certain poems of Mickiewicz had suggested his ballade to him. On the other hand, a poet might easily be inspired to find words to his music; it stirs one profoundly.

Johannes Brahms' (1833-1897) **Op. 119** (1893) is the last piano solo work he composed. Op. 119, a set of four piano pieces, was premièred along with Op. 118 in 1894 in London. Op. 119 was entitled *Klavierstücke* (Piano Pieces). There are four pieces in this collection; the first three are titled Intermezzo followed by a Rhapsody in the end. No. 1 Intermezzo – *adagio* is in b minor and speaks in dreamy tones. The intermezzo has its own depth to interpret. The descending lines sound like one is sighing, regretting, or just simply trying to recall sweet old memories. The dotted rhythm in the middle section is as if someone has changed their breathing patterns and now breathes

¹ Alfred Cortot, Chopin Ballades

² Robert Schumann, *On Music and Musicians*, 143

³ Dorota Zakrzewska, Alienation and Powerlessness: Adam Mickiewicz's "Ballady" and Chopin's Ballades, *Polish Music Journal*, Vol. 2, Nos. 1-2

heavily. The first part then returns but with a different rhythm pattern. The structure of this piece is a ternary form, A-B-A. Perhaps we can get a glimpse of the ideas behind this work from a letter Brahms wrote to Clara Schumann (1819-1896) in 1893:⁴

I am tempted to copy out a small piano piece for you, because I would like to know how you agree with it. It is teeming with dissonances! These may [well] be correct and [can] be explained – but maybe they won't please your palate, and now I wished, they would be less correct, but more appetizing and agreeable to your taste. The little piece is exceptionally melancholic and 'to be played very slowly' is not an understatement. Every bar and every note must sound like a ritard[ando], as if one wanted to suck melancholy out of each and every one, lustily and with pleasure out of these very dissonances! Good Lord, this description will [surely] awaken your desire!"

The piece Brahms was referring in this letter is the Intermezzo No. 1. Clara wrote back with some positive comments. She was thrilled and excited about this work Brahms was composing and asked to see the remaining ones once he has finished composing.

No. 2 Intermezzo – *Andantino un poco agitato* is in e minor with a rhythmic first section (double sixteenth notes of intervals exchanging in between hands) and a lyrical second section before the first section returns. It is also in a ternary form.

In No. 3 Intermezzo – *Grazioso e giocoso* the key now goes to a *major* key, C major. The two groups within the 6/8 make it sound like triplets which increase the cute and playful feeling. The melody is hidden in the inner voice of the right hand within the chords while the left hand's accompaniment has a free melodic line traveling through the octaves.

No. 4 Rhapsody – *Allegro risoluto* is in E-flat major. The atmosphere now not just changed but well-transferred from the Intermezzi. The Rhapsody is with unrestrained passion and enthusiasm. The key of E-flat major in *Allegro* properly introduces the emotion for the Rhapsody. The theme is built upon the heavy chord

⁴ Berthold Litzmann, *Clara Schumann: Ein Künstlerleben nach Tagebüchern und Briefen*, vol.III, 570-571

oriented passage in the opening. The theme comes back three times in the Rhapsody, and each time it connects to a different key. The coda starts with *fp* builds up with *crescendo* after *crescendo* and with *sf*, the piece finishes with *sf* in *ff*.

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Appendix: Recital Program



present



In her Graduate Recital

A student of John Perry

Wednesday, December 7, 2016, 7:30 PM

Nordhoff Hall

Special thanks to ...

My parents,

for your unconditional love and support.

My dearest teacher Mr. Perry,

*for your guidance, encouragement, love and patience.
I would not be here if it weren't you. I cannot thank
you enough for what you have done for me.*

Prof. Roscetti,

for your coaching and your friendship.

Dr. Rachmanov,

for your guidance and assistance throughout the years.

Dr. Thachuk,

for your advisement and support.

Dr. Roscigno,

for all the great experiences with CSUN orchestra.

Dr. Thomas,

for being my mentor.

Dr. Kirov,

for your music and your inspiration.

David Adam Ettegui,

for the photos, posters, programs and website.

My dear schoolmates and friends,

for your greatest support!

All of you, for sharing this memorable night with me!

RitaShen.net

In partial fulfillment of the Master of Music degree in Piano Performance

<p style="text-align: center;">PROGRAM</p> <p><i>Schafe können sicher weiden.....</i> Johann Sebastian Bach ("Sheep May Safely Graze") (1685-1750)</p> <p>Sonata in f minor, Op. 57, <i>Appassionata</i>.....Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">I. <i>Allegro assai</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">II. <i>Andante con moto</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">III. <i>Allegro ma non troppo - Presto</i></p> <p><i>Fado</i> (2011).....Milen Kirov (b.1977)</p> <p><i>Paidushko</i> (2010)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Intermission</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;"><i>Please join us for a reception in room 101 following the recital.</i></p>	<p>Nocturne Op. 19 No. 4.....Pyotr Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)</p> <p><i>Moments Musicaux</i> Op. 16 No. 4.....Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)</p> <p>Ballade No. 2, Op. 38.....Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)</p> <p><i>Klavierstücke</i> Op. 119.....Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">I. Intermezzo - <i>Adagio</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">II. Intermezzo - <i>Andantino in poco agitato</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">III. Intermezzo - <i>Grazioso e giocoso</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">IV. Rhapsody - <i>Allegro risoluto</i></p> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 20px;">  </div> <p>Performer, Piano Instructor RitaShen.net RitaShenPiano@gmail.com Los Angeles, CA. 90012</p>
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Performance Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kz97bXs5yZ4&feature=youtu.be>