CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

GRADUATE RECITAL

An abstract submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of Master of Music,
Performance

By

Young Joo Lee

March 2012
The abstract of Young Joo Lee is approved:

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ABSTRACT

A GRADUATE RECITAL IN VIOLIN
By
Young Joo Lee

Master of Music, Performance

The pieces that I selected for my recital program represent composers whose music existed in the extremes, both chronological and technical. The four selections by Edvard Grieg, Claude Achille Debussy, Handel- Halvorsen, and Johannes Brahms all have their own unique identity within the Baroque period, Romantic period and Contemporary which include various moods, styles and nationalities.
Edvard Grieg (1843–1907)

Violin Sonata No.3 in C minor Op.45

Edvard Grieg’s Violin Sonata in c minor No.3 Op.45 uses Norwegian nationalistic color and folk dance-music rhythms as well as features unique to Grieg. In the history of European Music toward the end of the nineteenth century, a considerable number of composers started to show interest in their national music and cultural background, and as a result, Nationalism in music started in Russia and Eastern Europe. Nationalism formed the basis of Romanticism and inspired many composers to compose works with a folk flower. By harmonizing Norwegian folk music and including national traits in his music, Grieg represented not only Norway but also the whole Scandinavian Peninsula and significantly influenced the world of Nationalism in music.

Grieg’s Violin Sonata No. 3 was one of the most successful pieces that combined the nationalist style with the composer’s own musical style. It consists of a total of three movements. The first movement is in a modified sonata form which has exposition, development, recapitulation, and coda. The first theme of exposition has extended tunes arisen from the opening theme. The second theme is followed by third theme in the same way that the first theme calms down after the opening theme as if trying to express a hero's bravery owing to the use of a strong musical motif. In the development section, the first theme and the third theme are played without separation. This again appears in the end of recapitulation.

In the final section Coda I, an extreme sense of tension is maintained by the use of dynamics in pianissimo and a change into a Presto tempo. Subsequently, the conclusion is made with a short Coda in c minor like thunder. Also, this movement contains much
imitation, as if having a conversation between the Violin and Piano. This can also be found in the mixed chord in major and minor, which had been used often by composers in the Romantic Period. The second movement is also in sonata form, in a three-part structure. The exposition begins with a lyric melody in a calm and peaceful Piano Solo. In the development section, the melody is like a folk music from Norway, which is cheerful and playful. The third movement is in sonata form, but without a development section. There is a fast passage that uses a melody like a Norwegian dance. In the measures 43, there is an exciting accompaniment as the piano whirs along with under the passionate melody of the violin. This is also repeated in the recapitulation. Then in the Coda, a sense of tension is created by a chromatic progression that repeats with the melody one octave higher. It finishes with a fierce ending that is again conversational. Every movement is in the expressive style of the musical form in the Romantic period in the late 19th century. There is a motive, which was can be seen in each movement. Mutual imitation between violin and piano was notable. Also, through the use of Norwegian folk elements, namely, melody in syncopation and long phrasing, it can be seen to express his love of his country. But he also employed from the romantic techniques, chromatic melodies and half-diminished seventh chords.
During the nineteenth century, impressionism was a trend in music that appeared in France. It tried to be free from the classical and romantic styles in order to create a new form that could reflect the nationalism of European countries in that period. Claude Debussy is one of the composers who established impressionism in music in the late nineteenth century. He turned away from the contemporary German musical writings which have been characterized as being Wagner-centered along with large-scale orchestrations and extreme chromaticism. However, as he turned away from traditional musical forms and styles, he created his own musical language with a new perception of colors and harmonic progressions, based on the ideas from impressionist painters and Symbolist writers.

Debussy's Sonata for Violin and Piano in G minor is one of his last works where he has enjoyed his own musical language, free from the traditional sonata form. In the formal structure, the first movement is a three-part form of A-B-A'. He did not follow the traditional sonata form and there is no secondary subject. The second movement is a Rondo in free style. The third movement is, again, a Rondo, where the musical ideas from the first movement are used again along with an interlude. As a result this composition follows the traditional structure of sonata: the first movement is Sonata-allegro, second movement is free form and third movement is a fast finale. However, the musical ideas in this sonata are completely different from traditional sonatas: rather than the usual development of the primary and the secondary themes, the composer creates contrasting melodies from the thematic motives, and he utilizes the introduction as
musical materials for the interlude, an incomplete Rondo. This can be considered as an innovation. Debussy's own musical characteristics are represented in the rhythmic, harmonic, and melodic structures. He has frequently used syncopations as well as irregular rhythms which bring ambiguity of bar-lines, in addition to ostinatos. In the harmonic writings, he has made use of the church modes, whole-tone scales, pentatonic scales, as well as multi-tonality, presenting innovative but beautiful melodies. While studying this sonata, I realized that Claude Debussy established himself, as a connection between the Romantic and Twentieth-century music by creating his own musical style and language through the traditional sonata genre.
Handel-Halvorsen's "Passacaglia" is a duo piece written for violin and cello. Originally, Handel composed 12 suites for harpsichord. The Passacaglia is taken from Suite #7 in G Minor where it serves as the sixth movement. This work is very demanding on the performers; part of its virtuosity entails having the two instruments simulate the sonority of a string quartet, through the use of double stops.

Johan Halvorsen was among the most prominent Norwegian composers in the generation following Edvard Grieg, and may well have been the most important figure of his time associated with the theater, both as composer and conductor. Halvorsen started his concert career as a violinist, but soon turned to conducting. He led numerous performances both in the areas of theater and opera, and as a composer he wrote over 30 scores to accompany plays, most of which, unfortunately, are not performed much today. But he wrote a lot of other orchestral music, including three symphonies and the two Norwegian Rhapsodies, compositions cited by his admirers as among his greatest works.

The term passacaglia (Spanish: pasacalle; French: passacaille; Italian: passacaglia, passacaglio, passagallo, passacagli, passacaglie) derives from the Spanish pasar (to walk) and calle (street). It originated in early 17th century Spain as a Spanish: 'rasgueado' (strummed) interlude between instrumentally accompanied dances or songs. This piece can be divided as three parts: from the theme to Var.10, Var.11 to Var.17 and Var.18 to Coda: which is A-B-A. In the A part, the chord progression is i – iv6 – VII – III – VI –ii6
V – i. (in the key of g minor) but in the last Var.10, it is changed to I – vii7/D – V/Bb – vii/A – vii/D – V/g – i6 – ii6 – V6 – i. The B section starts with slow variation. Especially in this part, it can be observed that violin and cello play the melody in turns and there are various changes in color by harmonics, ponticello and flautato. The last A’ section is the most energetic and passionate part in this piece. It starts with double-stops of the main theme which is twice the extended value. It is followed by fast three octave scale from the violin, which raises the tension to the climax also continuing a pedal tone and chromatic chord progression, resulting in a dramatic ending.
Johannes Brahms (1833~1897)

Violin sonata No.3 in d minor Op.108

Even though Romanticism was the predominant style in the 19th century, Brahms was a notable composer who was conservative, logical, and academic. He had a great taste for solid and substantial forms in his music which was inherited from Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) and Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827). But distinguishably, Brahms aimed to honor the purity of these venerable German structures and advance them into a Romantic idiom, in the process creating bold new approaches to harmony, melody and, especially, rhythm. That makes his chamber music takes an important place in music history. Among his chamber music, the first violin sonata was finally published at the age of 40 because of his self-critical personality. This No.3, Op.108 in d minor is the last violin sonata Brahms composed. He started to compose this piece at the age of 53 and finished at 55 in Switzerland. Brahms employed a four-movement scheme. It reflects profundity and seriousness of his late period. Key relationships between each movement are d minor- D Major- f# minor - d minor. Brahms used unexpected key progressions as Beethoven did. He moves unconventionally to the parallel key and the median key in the first movement in the second and third movements instead of the relative key relations. Consequently, not only did he adhere to the classical tradition, but also he made a great effort to construct lyrical melodies with romantic harmonies. As a performer, the most challenging part of this music was how the violin and piano fit together, because a Brahms violin sonata is more like a piano sonata with violin obbligato which requires a careful balancing of dynamics, tone, and interpretation.
To sum up, all the music that I selected represents an extraordinary originality and creativity each in their own way. In Grieg’s violin sonata, his Norwegian nationalism can be seen in his lyrical melody. Also impressionism music within early contemporary is presented in Debussy’s violin sonata. The passionate and brooding melodies of the Passacaglia shows the powerful solemnity. And as the most disciplined composer, Brahms presents narrative melodies under the experimental tonal and structural skills with deep and rich harmonic textures.
California State University, Northridge

The Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication

Department of Music

Present

Young joo Lee, Violin

In her Master of Music Recital*

Accompanied by Gyeseon Choe

A student of Michael Ferril

Sunday, January 29, 2012, 4:30 PM
Music Recital Hall

*In partial fulfillment of the Master of Music degree
in Violin Performance
PROGRAM

Violin Sonata No.3 in c minor, Op.45………..……. Edvard Grieg
(1843-1907)

Allegro molto ed appassionato

Allegretto espressivo alla Romanza

Allegro animato

Violin Sonata in g minor, L 140 ……………..……...Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

Allegro vivo

Intermède: Fantasque et léger

Finale: Très animé

-INTERMISSION-

Passacaglia for Violin and Cello………………G.F.Handel
(1685-1759)

Arr. Johan.Halvorsen
(1864~1935)

Cello……..Min Kyung Lee

Violin Sonata No.3 in d minor, Op.108 .....Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

Allegro

Adagio

Un poco presto e con sentimento

Presto agitato