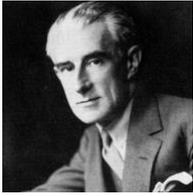


2021 Preview Notes • Week Three • Persons Auditorium

Saturday, July 31 at 8:00 pm



Piano Trio in A Minor (1914)

Maurice Ravel

Born March 7, 1897 • Died December 28, 1937

Duration: approx. 30 minutes • Last Marlboro performance: 2016

Ravel had a unique compositional challenge before him: how to reconcile the contrasting sonorities of the piano and the string instruments, and how to achieve balance between the three instrumental voices – specifically, how to make the cello stand out from the others, which are more easily heard. Ravel used an orchestral approach: making extensive use of the extreme ranges of each instrument, creating a texture of sound unusually rich for a trio. He employed effects such as trills, tremolos, harmonics, glissandos, and arpeggios, thus demanding a high level of technical proficiency from all three musicians. To achieve clarity in texture and to secure instrumental balance, Ravel frequently spaced the violin and cello lines two octaves apart, with the right hand of the piano playing between them.

Inspiration for the work came from a variety of sources, from Basque dance, a heritage Ravel was very proud of, to Malaysian poetry. The trio follows a common structure for a four-movement work, with the outer movements in sonata form flanking a scherzo and trio and a slow movement. Nevertheless, Ravel manages to introduce his own innovations within this conventional framework.

Participants: Ariel Lanyi, *piano*; Emilie-Anne Gendon, *violin*; Alexander Hersh, *cello*



Chanson perpétuelle, Op. 37 (1898)

Ernest Chausson

Born January 20, 1855 • Died June 10, 1899

Duration: approx. 7 minutes

Last Marlboro performance: 2019

Chanson perpétuelle is one of Chausson's most famous works, as well as his last completed one. The lushly-written song, of which Chausson composed both an orchestral and a chamber version, communicates a woman's anguish upon the departure of her lover. She calls upon nature to witness her intent to surrender herself to the water, and the piece was finished just months before Chausson's own untimely death at the age of 44, which has been variously characterized as an unfortunate bicycle accident and as a willful suicide. Charles Cros, the poet whose text was set by Chausson, was considered an artistic peer of Verlaine and Rimbaud by contemporaries. In true tragic fashion, he lived to be but one year older than Chausson at the time of his own death.

Participants: Jennifer Johnson, *mezzo-soprano*; Yvonne Lam & Claire Bourg, *violin*; Zoë Martin-Doike, *viola*; Julia Yang, *cello*; Janice Carissa, *piano*



Piano Quartet in G Minor, Op. 45

Gabriel Fauré

Born December 16, 1770 • Died March 26, 1827

Duration: approx. 30 minutes • Last Marlboro performance: 2016

Not much is known about the origins of Fauré's second piano quartet. It was probably composed during the years 1885/86. It was not commissioned, and appears to have been written because Fauré was interested in exploring the piano quartet medium, and was wary of writing chamber music with no piano part. Fauré adopts the classical four-movement structure: an opening Allegro is followed by a scherzo, slow movement, and finale. The work opens with a unison string melody accompanied by continuous piano figuration. The piano takes the theme, after which the viola introduces an expressive variation of the main theme.

Participants: Janice Carissa, *piano*; Elizabeth Fayette, *violin*; Sally Chisholm, *viola*; Zlatomir Fung, *cello*

2021 Preview Notes • Week Three • Persons Auditorium

Sunday, August 1 at 2:30 pm



Drei Quartette, Op. 64 (1862-74)

Johannes Brahms

Born May 7, 1833 • Died April 3, 1897

Duration: approx. 26 minutes • Last Marlboro performance: 1963

Written during Brahms's first winter in Vienna this song is elaborately laid out: Brahms draws a motet-like range of color from the four voices in harmony, treating them like a tiny chorus with canonic imitations, solos and a cappella passages. Set to Karl Sternau's text, a conventional praise of the poet's homeland. Followed by a setting of Friedrich Schiller's *Der Abend*, a late poem full of Classical metaphor which Brahms brings to life with a male/female dialogue for Apollo and Thetis and a haunting piano accompaniment mimicking the step of the sun-god's horses; the horses stop and drink from the sea in long female-voice phrases. Op. 64 concludes with a translation of a Turkish folk-poem made by the poet Georg Friedrich Daumer.

Participants: Caitlin Aloia, *soprano*; Marie Engle, *mezzo-soprano*; Daniel McGrew, *tenor*; William Socolof, *bass-baritone*; Lydia Brown, *piano*



String Quartet in A Major, K. 464

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Born January 27, 1756

Died December 5, 1791

Duration: approx. 30 minutes

Marlboro: Premiere

In England this quartet is known as "the Drum" because the cello part in variation six, of the Andante, maintains a staccato drum-like motion. Also more widely known for its use of several different contrapuntal devices. In his biography of Mozart entitled *Mozart: A Life*, musicologist Maynard Solomon quotes Beethoven as telling his pupil Carl Czerny that this work, with its complex contrapuntal techniques, was Mozart's way of saying to the world, "Look what I could produce, if only you were ready for it." Beethoven thoroughly studied this quartet he much "admired and even copied into score", which he used as model for his String Quartet in A major, Opus 18 No. 5.

Even though it is one of Mozart's longest quartets, there is a great economy to the writing. The finale is monothematic, with all the development deriving from the opening two phrases, and the other movements make use of a small amount of melodic material for their development sections. The minuet builds primarily on two small motifs.

Participants: Robyn Bollinger & Stephanie Zyzak, *violin*; Samuel Rhodes, *viola*; Alexander Hersh, *cello*



Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 63 (1847)

Robert Schumann

Born June 8, 1810 • Died July 29, 1856

Duration: approx. 30 minutes • Last Marlboro performance: 2018

Piano-driven, romantic, and highly personal, the Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 63, is one of Schumann's most popular piano trios. The piece begins with a restless movement marked with energy and passion, the latter designation calling for the suffering indicated in the original sense of the word. The strings embroider the texture of the piece as the piano wanders from idea to idea, sometimes lighting on the bounciness as in the Scherzo of the second movement, sometimes on melancholy as in the third movement, and ultimately concluding, in defiance of the fact that Schumann confessed the piece was written "in a time of gloomy moods," with the verve and vigor of heroic fire.

Participants: Jonathan Biss, *piano*; Maria Ioudenitch, *violin*; Zlatomir Fung, *cello*
