



Lieutenant Colonel Ryan J. Nowlin, Director

CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES
Sunday, January 28, 2024 at 2:00 P.M.
John Philip Sousa Band Hall
Marine Barracks Annex
Washington, DC
SSgt Dominic Muzzi, coordinator

SSgt Tyler Lindsay*

“Solitude and Calming Waters”

SSgt Dominic Muzzi, piano

Ottorino Respighi (1879–1936)
arranged by SSgt Dominic Muzzi*

Notturmo

GySgt Sheng-Tsung Wang, violin
SSgt Dominic Muzzi, piano

Ottorino Respighi (1879–1936)

Violin Sonata in B minor, P. 110

Moderato
Andante espressivo
Allegro moderato ma energico

GySgt Sheng-Tsung Wang, violin
SSgt Dominic Muzzi, piano

INTERMISSION

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Largo from Violin Sonata No. 3 in C, BWV 1005

MSgt Erika Sato, violin

Richard Strauss (1864–1949)

Violin Sonata in E-flat, Opus 18

Allegro, ma non troppo
Improvisation: Andante cantabile
Finale: Andante – Allegro

MSgt Erika Sato, violin
SSgt Dominic Muzzi, piano

*Member, U.S. Marine Band

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PROGRAM NOTES

“Solitude and Calming Waters” SSgt Tyler Lindsay*

This short work showcases an experiential delight of harmony. Tyler Lindsay’s extensive background in jazz is evident with this work’s frequent dense, rich chords. Though not his primary instrument, Lindsay’s ability as a pianist produced a songlike, improvisatory work which is organized around a lyrical melody, typically in the right hand. The intense middle section stretches into the deepest bass notes of the instrument and demands as many as eight or nine simultaneous notes from the pianist.

The arc of the work is immediately observable, as the dynamic and emotional climax takes place just after the middle point, predicted by a long arpeggio in the pianist’s left hand. Fitting with the descriptive title, the listener can imagine the long string of notes bubbling up to the middle register like an undercurrent.

Notturmo

Ottorino Respighi (1879–1936)
arranged by SSgt Dominic Muzzi*

Ottorino Respighi’s Notturmo comes from a larger collection of six solo piano pieces and is the most tranquil and meditative among them. Nocturnes are typically single movement pieces containing a melodic singing line and a fluttering accompaniment.

Frédéric Chopin wrote over twenty well-known nocturnes, but composers such as Gabriel Fauré, Alexander Scriabin, and Erik Satie have also written in the genre. Nocturnes, being the music of the night, are generally characterized by a serene, expressive quality, and this example is no different.

This nocturne is in a rounded form, so the beginning and the ending sections consist of similar material. The arrangement essentially gives the melody that would be interwoven between the hands of the pianist and lends it to the violin. One of the interesting effects that Respighi uses in this work are the repeated thirds that trickle over the keyboard, creating a beautiful wash of notes that seem to sound stylistically somewhere between nineteenth-century romanticism and twentieth-century impressionism and modernism.

The piece also features a dramatic climax that reaches into the higher registers of both instruments, replete with rapid arpeggios from the piano and rumbling octaves.

Violin Sonata in B minor, P.110 **Ottorino Respighi (1879–1936)**

Following one of the earliest American performances of this work, Ottorino Respighi’s Violin Sonata was described by the *Chicago Daily Tribune* as being of interest for several reasons: “Quite outside of its own merits, which were many, this sonata served to indicate how the new generation of Italian composers is laboring to get away from the theory that Italian

music means Italian opera...Respighi has written rather a good sonata...conceived along broad lines and on large ideas." At nearly a half hour in length, this work represents not only one of the composer's most serious essays in this format, but a major staple of violin and piano duo repertoire.

Composed in 1917, this piece comes from a period of two other popular orchestral works: *Fountains of Rome*, the first piece in his great Roman trilogy and *La boutique fantasque*. Respighi trained on violin and piano simultaneously as a child, and for the first twenty years of his compositional career he favored the two instruments heavily. He uses many atypical musical devices in this work, particularly those that have to do with meter. The time signature of 10/8 shows up in the second movement, though the melody is still in 4/4. The intense chromaticism nods more to Richard Strauss and Richard Wagner than to Johannes Brahms.

The gripping and melancholic character of the sonata can be attributed to the death of his mother in 1916. In April of that year, Respighi wrote: "Now I feel so lonely; it is as if my right arm has been cut off...My beautiful house is so quiet, so sad that I dare not return...My house is destroyed. There is no longer my mother, the good genie of the house waiting for me! No one can ever replace her, no one ever!" Wrought with depression over his loss, Respighi temporarily stopped teaching and took a retreat to Bologna, his childhood home. The B minor Sonata stands out among this period of compositions as a deeply personal and emotional outpouring. The last movement ends with fire and fury weighty enough to offset the otherworldly beauty of the middle movement.

Largo from Violin Sonata No. 3 in C, BWV 1005 **Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)**

German composer Johann Sebastian Bach penned the six Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin between 1715 and 1720. This collection of pieces is one of the paramount achievements of composition for the solo instrument, representing a culmination of stylistic understanding and is a cornerstone for the modern musician's repertoire.

The earliest surviving manuscript hails from 1720 Köthen, Germany, though it might have been written earlier. A similar work by Johann Paul von Westhoff exists just before the turn of the eighteenth century. Westhoff was also a court musician in Dresden and Weimar, so it's possible that the two musicians knew each other. Bach had a penchant for reworking earlier pieces, so he may have begun working on these pieces as early as 1703.

Bach biographer Philip Spitta says about these works: "The overpowering wealth of forms pouring from a few and scarcely noticeable sources displays not only the most perfect knowledge of the technique of the violin, but also the most absolute mastery over an imagination the like of which no other composer was ever endowed with."

Violin Sonata in E-flat, Opus 18 **Richard Strauss (1864–1949)**

Though primarily known for tone poems and opera, German romantic composer Richard Strauss began work on this substantial work for violin and piano around 1887, following the completion of his cello sonata. Simultaneously, Strauss fell in love with Pauline de Ahna, a

German operatic soprano, who would eventually become his wife. Listeners might glean from the passionate writing, the long singing lines, and the conversation between the instruments as reflections of the feelings he was experiencing during this period.

This piece perhaps the last work Strauss wrote while using classic sonata form. Sonata form includes three parts: the exposition, development, and recapitulation. One can conceive of it as a journey from the starting point of home to a new destination, usually with some dramatic tension. The twisting and turning of the music, often through different key areas, is the development. The resolving of this tension and the return to original material, is the point of recapitulation. Typically, it is the most emotionally satisfying point of the movement. The outer sections are unified by similar melodies and a common starting and end point. In this case, 'home' is the key of E-flat major.

The work is in three movements, following a fast-slow-fast pattern. The first of these is ebullient, dense in its textures with double notes in both instruments. The listener may be able to hear ideas in this work that germinate into pieces like *Der Rosenkavalier*, written two decades later. Strauss uses dramatically stretched melodies over lush chords to give the music a soaring quality. The second movement is an intimate, slow improvisation, with a stormy middle section. The writing here uses the entire range of the modern piano and is overflowing with sparkling, fleeting figures that feel almost like magic. The work ends with a rollicking dance in 6/8 meter that is again in three major sections, the middle of which is contrasting. Strauss uses an irregular key choice of C major in the middle of the last movement, and the musical material there is benediction-like, occurring nowhere else in the work.