

Eastern Washington University Presents

Claire Elise Wang

Graduate Piano Recital

Sunday, May 15, 2022, 3:00 P.M.
Music Recital Hall



*Student from the Studio of Dr. Jody Graves.
This recital is presented as partial fulfillment of the Master of Music Degree-Piano*

PROGRAM

Jeux d'eau

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)

Piano Sonata in F Major, K. 332

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

I. Allegro

II. Adagio

III. Allegro assai

Danse Macabre, Op. 40/S. 555

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–1921)

Trans. Franz Liszt (1811–1886)



Program Notes

Jeux d'eau, meaning “fountains,” is a programmatic piece capturing the essence of moving water. It was written by Maurice Ravel in 1901 while he was a student of the great French composer and teacher, Gabriel Fauré. Ravel debuted this work for the elite music club Les Apaches, which shared its name with the American Native American tribe for their so-called “savage” behavior. The group’s members were connected by their mutual desire to explore sounds outside of the norms of Western culture. One such member was Ricardo Viñes, a piano virtuoso and a good friend of Ravel’s, who gave the piece’s first public performance in 1902. Although conservatives such as Camille Saint-Saëns detested *Jeux d'eau* for its flash and dissonance, it was overall well-received by both Ravel’s colleagues and music critics of the time. The piece draws inspiration from Franz Liszt’s *Les jeux d'eaux à la Villa d'Este* (“The Fountains of the Villa d'Este”), and is considered to be one of the great works of piano repertoire.

The inscription included in the piece’s header goes, “*Dieu fluvial riant de l'eau qui le chatouille,*” which translates to, “River god laughing at the water that tickles him.”

Piano Sonata in F Major, K. 332 was written while Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart lived in Vienna. It is a three-movement work, with the first and third movements structured in sonata-form. The basis of this form entails three sections. The exposition introduces the piece’s two main themes. In the development, the two themes are transformed in multiple different keys. Lastly, the recapitulation signals the return of the themes which are followed by a coda. In the melodic structure, the listener can hear the influence of the orchestra. For example, the right hand often represents violins while executing high, ascending figures, and the left hand represents cellos when accompanying the right with repeated eighth notes in the lower register. Occasionally, one might hear brief, wispy phrases that resemble solos for a wind section. Unlike *Jeux d'eau*, the sonata is an example of absolute music, referring to that which is not meant to convey anything other than the notes that are written.

Danse Macabre was originally composed by Camille Saint-Saëns, then transcribed for piano by his mentor, champion, and friend, Franz Liszt. Although Liszt was almost twenty-four years his senior, he had a great admiration for Saint-Saëns’ ability as a composer and as a musician. *Danse Macabre* was adapted into a symphonic tone poem in 1874, then transcribed two years later. The original version, however, was an art song for voice and piano, with a libretto written by the poet Henri Cazalis. He, in turn, was inspired by an old French myth about the personification of death inviting people out of their graves at midnight to join in dance at the sound of a demonic violin. After a mysterious introduction featuring soft, delicate trills, the violin’s dissonance can be heard in the loud, discordant tritones of the right hand.

Danse Macabre, by Henri Cazalis (Translated by Richard Stokes)

Original text

Zig et zig et zig, la mort cri en cadence
Frappant une tombe avec son talon,
La mort à minuit joue un air de danse,
Zig et zig et zag, sur son violon.
Le vent d'hiver souffle, et la nuit est sombre,
Des gémissements sortent des tilleuls;
Les squelettes blancs vont à travers l'ombre
Courant et sautant sous leurs grands linceuls,

Zig et zig et zig, chacun se trémousse,
On entend claquer les os des danseurs,
Un couple lascif s'assoit sur la mousse
Comme pour goûter d'anciennes douceurs.
Zig et zig et zag, la mort continue
De racler sans fin son aigre instrument.
Un voile est tombé! La danseuse est nue!
Son danseur la serre amoureusement.

La dame est, dit-on, marquise ou baronne.
Et le vert galant un pauvre charron—
Horreur! Et voilà qu'elle s'abandonne
Comme si le rustre était un baron!
Zig et zig et zag, quelle sarabande!
Quels cercles de morts se donnant la main!
Zig et zig et zag, on voit dans la bande
Le roi gambader auprès du vilain!

Mais psit! tout à coup on quitte la ronde,
On se pousse, on fuit, le coq a chanté...
Oh! La belle nuit pour le pauvre monde!
Et vive la mort et l'égalité!

English Translation

Tap, tap, tap—Death rhythmically,
Taps a tomb with his heel,
Death at midnight plays a gigue,
Tap, tap, tap, on his violin.
The Winter wind blows, the night is dark,
The lime-trees groan aloud;
White skeletons flit across the gloom,
Running and leaping beneath their huge shrouds

Tap, tap, tap, everyone's astir,
You hear the bones of the dancers knock,
A lustful couple sits down on the moss,
As if to savour past delights.
Tap, tap, tap, Death continues,
Endlessly scraping his shrill violin
A veil has slipped! The dancer's naked!
Her partner clasps her amorously.

They say she's a baroness or marchioness,
And the callow gallant a poor cartwright.
Good God! And now she's giving herself,
As though the bumpkin were a baron!
Tap, tap, tap, what a saraband!
Circles of corpses all holding hands!
Tap, tap, tap, in the throng you can see
King and peasant dancing together!

But shh! Suddenly the dance is ended,
They jostle and take flight—the cock has crowed...
Ah! Nocturnal beauty shines on the poor!
And long live death and equality!

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