



JANET SUNG

sung sessions
edge of youth



edge of youth

GEORGES ENESCU (1881-1955)

Impressions d'enfance (Impressions from Childhood), Op. 28 (1940)

- 1 I. Ménétrier (The Fiddler) 3:28
- 2 II. Vieux mendiant (The Old Beggar) 2:57
- 3 III. Ruisseau au fond du jardin
(The Brook at the Bottom of the Garden) 2:22
- 4 IV. L'Oiseau en cage et le coucou au mur
(The Bird in the Cage and the Cuckoo on the Wall) 2:16
- 5 V. Chanson pour bercer (Lullaby) 1:52
- 6 VI. Grillon (The Cricket) :23
- 7 VII. Lune à travers les vitres
(The Moon Shining Through the Windows) 2:17
- 8 VIII. Vent dans la cheminée (Wind in the Chimney) :25
- 9 IX. Tempête au dehors, dans la nuit (Storm Outside in the Night) 2:03
- 10 X. Lever de soleil (Sunrise) 3:30

MISSY MAZZOLI (b. 1980)

- 11 **Dissolve, O My Heart** for Solo Violin (2011) 7:24

BENJAMIN BRITTEN (1913-1976)

Suite for Violin and Piano, Op. 6 (1935)

- 12 I. Introduction. Andante maestoso :32
- 13 II. March. Allegro alla marcia 2:42
- 14 III. Moto perpetuo. Allegro molto e con fuoco 3:21
- 15 IV. Lullaby. Lento tranquillo 4:49
- 16 V. Waltz. Alla Valse: Vivace e rubato 5:03

DAN VISCONTI (b. 1982)

- 17 **Rave-Up** for Violin and Piano (2012) 4:15

GABRIEL PROKOFIEV (b. 1975)

- 18 **Sleeveless Scherzo** for Solo Violin (2007) 8:41

total time: 58:17



Edge of Youth represents a time when one starts to discover a new, more mature version of their own voice or self. We find confidence in that voice when we allow ourselves to go to the “edge” of what is known or comfortable. Brought up steeped in the traditions of classical music, and deeply influenced by some of the greatest violinists of the “old world”, this album represents some of that artistic journey for me. In curating this collection of works by masters Britten, Enescu and three young, dynamic living composers, Missy Mazzoli, Dan Visconti and Gabriel Prokofiev, I gravitated toward works that were striking to me and in some ways unexpected—whether it was a new sound world, a new perspective on an old familiar work, or the surprising way certain works profoundly grew in their impact.

Each of these works are dramatic, visceral; even ethereal and otherworldly. Some also have moments of soaring lyricism and intimacy. They both embrace and challenge classical traditions, consciously or subconsciously. With their craft and unique sense of style, these composers challenge the artist to forget about the technicalities of the instrument—asking them to become a storyteller through nuance, shading, and color.

Taking in all of our personal influences, we hopefully take flight into our own artistic vision. These works have taken me on a journey that I will continue to traverse.

Janet Sung

Impressions d'enfance, Op. 28 (1940)

Georges Enescu (1881-1955)

Georges Enescu, in his *Impressions d'enfance, Op. 28*, gives us the perspective in this collection of works of an artist looking back to his youth. It is a vivid and sophisticated portrayal of memories through the lens of a wide-eyed child, tinged with the worldly view of an older gentleman (he was 60 at the time) who has experienced life deeply.

Each movement moves seamlessly from one to the next—some fleeting, some that make time languish—each evoking a vivid memory that Enescu seems to have pulled from his consciousness. The work spans the course of a day, from hazy dusk, through evening and night, to the morning sunrise, when the instruments finally converge in a glorious and ecstatic declamation in D major. Enescu's music is more than just merely descriptive. From the strains of a Romanian gypsy fiddler, gently babbling brooks, the chirps of the crickets and a storm blowing through the night, this masterwork evokes sound and imagery that transcends any limitations of the two instruments.

Dissolve, O My Heart (2011)

Missy Mazzoli (b.1980)

Dissolve, O My Heart was originally inspired by Bach's Partita in D minor for Solo Violin, which includes the monumental Chaconne movement.

Such a challenge was, as Missy explained, “utterly terrifying”, but she realized that she could approach Bach through the lens of contemporary music, keeping one toe in the past but both feet walking into the future.

Though it begins with the iconic first D minor chord of Bach's Chaconne, it is the only direct quote, and spins out from there into an “off-kilter series of chords that doubles back on itself, collapses and ultimately dissolves in a torrent of fast passages”. (Mazzoli) The familiar D minor chord anchors the entire piece from its first reflective iteration, even as it eventually threatens to spiral out of control. In discussions with Missy, she offered a wonderful and colorful description of the climactic moment of the work as “slightly aggressive bowing, sort of a raw, old timey fiddling style, slightly deranged.” This was a clear indication of how far the boundaries could be pushed, even with the weight of tradition still in our ears.

Suite for Violin and Piano, Op. 6 (1935)

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Benjamin Britten wrote his *Suite for Violin and Piano, Op. 6*, during his early 20's, and was on the cusp of the international fame and stature that he was to eventually gain from his larger-scale opera and orchestral works.

The Suite is captivating and filled with youthful enthusiasm, wit and humor. A short striking Introduction immediately launches into a witty, almost pointillistic, March, which in turn takes us into an exhilarating Moto Perpetuo. The humor—and the quick changes of tempo and character—shifts from dry wit to light-hearted parody. The Lullaby alone allows a respite of heartfelt beauty and tenderness amidst the more extroverted outer movements.

Britten brings together a collection of movements that each perfectly capture a particular character or mood. He does so with scrupulous attention to craft, and with no superfluosity, which demands the utmost precision and clarity of purpose from performers.

Rave-Up (2012)

Dan Visconti (b. 1982)

Dan Visconti, in his virtuosic *Rave-Up*, pushes boundaries in an entirely new direction. His compositional style has been rooted in the improvisational energy and maverick spirit of rock, blues and folk music, merged with his classical training, and the results are often hair-raising. In his words:

“Rave-Up is a short, virtuosic showpiece for violin in the tradition of one of classical music’s earliest “rock stars” Niccolò Paganini, updated to incorporate the wild, over-driven, groove-driven sound

of the modern electric guitar. Blending the dazzling precision of the classical tradition with the raw, explosive timbres and blues bends typical of contemporary guitar heroics, Rave-Up starts slow and builds relentlessly to a scintillating display of pyrotechnics.”

Dan Visconti

Sleeveless Scherzo (2007)

Gabriel Prokofiev (b. 1975)

Gabriel Prokofiev’s *Sleeveless Scherzo* was originally written as a duet between solo violinist and solo dancer, expressing the emotions and thoughts of a woman in turmoil playing out an “internal argument” that drives both to their limits, almost to the edge of sanity. In discussions, Gabriel described the work as, “slightly ‘schizophrenic’... with quite strong mood swings from moments of sadness, to excitement, to joy, curiosity, and then anxiety.” It explores emotional confusion, running the gamut from manic to anguished to dreamy and surreal, and finally, resignation and perhaps acceptance. The work challenges the performer by taking them to the “edge”—technically, mentally and emotionally.



janet sung

Hailed by *The Washington Post* for her “riveting” playing and “exquisite tone”, violinist Janet Sung’s playing possesses the rare blend of fierce intelligence, subtlety and brilliant virtuosity. She has performed worldwide with orchestras including the Pittsburgh Symphony, Pusan Philharmonic, Göttinger Symphonie Orchester, Omsk Philharmonic, Britten Sinfonia, Cairo Symphony Orchestra (Egypt), and the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. Festival appearances as concerto and recital soloist include Switzerland’s Lucerne Festival, Aspen Music Festival, Britt Festival, Bellingham Festival, and the Conciertos de La Villa Festival de Santo Domingo. A prolific chamber

artist, Ms. Sung has regularly appeared at the Bowdoin International Music Festival, the Kreeger Festival in Washington, D.C., the Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival, and the Newport Music Festival, and is a regular guest with the American Chamber Players and the Finger Lakes Chamber Ensemble.

An artist of remarkable versatility, she is celebrated for performances of traditional repertoire from Bach to Berg, and is a sought-after champion of works from the 20th and 21st century. She is featured on recordings of Vivaldi’s *The Four Seasons* and Bach’s *Brandenburg Concerto No. 1*, the latter with members of the Gewandhaus Orchestra recorded at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig, Germany. She has also premiered Kenneth Fuchs’

American Rhapsody for Violin and Orchestra, Augusta Read Thomas’ *Double Helix*, released on Nimbus Records/UK, and Kenneth Hesketh’s *Inscription/Transformation for Violin and Orchestra*.

Ms. Sung studied with legendary pedagogues Josef Gingold, Dorothy Delay, and Masao Kawasaki. She graduated from Harvard University with a double degree in anthropology and music, and The Juilliard School. She was invited as the Clifton Visiting Artist at Harvard University and is currently Head of Strings and Violin Professor at the DePaul University School of Music.

For more information, please visit janetsung.com.



william wolfram

Acclaimed American pianist William Wolfram was a silver medalist at both the William Kapell and the Naumburg International Piano Competitions and a bronze medalist at the prestigious Tchaikovsky Piano Competition in Moscow, and has appeared with many of the greatest orchestras of the world including the Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Saint Louis, Baltimore, Indianapolis, Seattle and New Jersey symphonies, the Buffalo Philharmonic, the National Symphony Orchestra, and the Grand Teton and San Luis Obispo Mozart festival orchestras. He enjoys ongoing close associations with the Dallas Symphony, the Milwaukee Symphony, and the Minnesota Orchestra as well as the musicians of the New York Philharmonic for chamber concerts in the United States. Abroad, Wolfram has appeared

with the BBC Symphony Orchestra of London, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the RTE Symphony Orchestra of Ireland (Dublin), the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the Bergen Philharmonic (Norway), the Beethovenhalle Orchestra Bonn, and many others.

An enthusiastic supporter of new music, he has collaborated closely with composers such as Aaron Jay Kernis, Kenneth Frazelle, Marc Andre Dalbavie, Kenji Bunch, and Paul Chihara. Wolfram has recorded four titles on the Naxos label in his series of Franz Liszt Opera Transcriptions, the music of Earl Kim with the RTE National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, and for the Albany label, the piano concertos of Edward Collins with Marin Alsop and the Royal

Scottish National Orchestra.

As artist-teacher, Mr. Wolfram is a long-standing member of the piano faculty of the Eastern Music Festival and a regular guest at the Colorado College Music Festival. He is also on faculty at the renowned Manhattan School of Music.

A graduate of The Juilliard School, William Wolfram resides in New York City with his wife and two daughters and is a Yamaha artist.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to collaborator William Wolfram, the team at Sono Luminus (Collin J. Rae, Dan Merceruio, Daniel Shores, Caleb Nei, John Veitch and Allison Noah), and for their unwavering support and inspiration, my family—especially my parents, Dukil and Miock Sung.

Janet Sung

Edge of Youth

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PHOTOGRAPHY: Lisa-Marie Mazzucco, Steve Sherman (William Wolfram)

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sonoluminusstudios.com

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PO Box 227, Boyce, VA 22620, USA

sonoluminus.com • sonoluminusstudios.com • info@sonoluminus.com

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