

Thursday, March 28, 2019 at 8:00PM | Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall
Musical Preview by Princeton University violin students, directed by Anna Lim at 7:00PM

PATRICIA KOPATCHINSKAJA VIOLIN POLINA LESCHENKO PIANO

**BÉLA
BARTÓK**
(1881–1945)

Violin Sonata No. 2, Sz. 76 (1922)

Molto moderato
Allegretto

**FRANCIS
POULENC**
(1899–1963)

Violin Sonata, FP 119 (1943)

Allegro con fuoco
Intermezzo
Presto tragico

INTERMISSION

**GEORGE
ENESCU**
(1881–1955)

Violin Sonata No. 3 in A Minor, Op. 25 (1926)

Moderato malinconico
Andante sostenuto e misterioso
Allegro con brio, ma non troppo mosso

**MAURICE
RAVEL**
(1875–1937)

Tzigane (1924)

About the Program

By Lucy Caplan © 2019

BÉLA BARTÓK (1881–1945)

Violin Sonata No. 2, Sz. 76

Bartók insisted that this sonata was written in C Major, but a listener could be forgiven for not finding that immediately clear. Nor is the piece entirely recognizable as a sonata: its two movements flow into one another without pause, and the composer does away with many conventional elements of sonata form. Stranger still, the violin and piano seem to wander down independent paths, rarely taking up the same musical material or engaging in direct conversation. All of these departures from the norm contribute to the sonata's remarkably freeform sensibility. Shards of languorous melody alternate with frenetic rhythmic patterns; the violin's agitated pizzicati and the piano's percussive outbursts coexist without consensus. The sonata concludes on an eerie note as high harmonics on the violin fade into nothingness.

Yet for all its eccentricities, the sonata also contains a variety of familiar elements. One of two violin sonatas that Bartók composed during a 14-month span in 1921 and 1922, it is expressionistic in style, so dissonant that it veers close to the atonal approach embraced by composers like Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern. At the same time, there are glimmers of Bartók's characteristic embrace of Hungarian folk melodies, especially in the second movement's dance-like passages.

Bartók dedicated this sonata to the Hungarian violinist Jelly d'Arányi, a celebrated performer who was highly in demand in early twentieth-century Europe. The duo performed both violin sonatas together in London during the early 1920s to great acclaim. Their relationship is often characterized in lopsided, gendered terms: Bartók as the great male composer, d'Arányi as the beautiful female muse (Bartók is also reported to have been romantically interested in d'Arányi). But it would be more accurate to describe her as an accomplished artist in her own right, a musician whose brilliant playing made possible the sonata's success.

FRANCIS POULENC (1899–1963)

Violin Sonata, FP 119

If there is a ghost hovering over this evening's program, her name is Jelly d'Arányi. Not only did d'Arányi inspire—and perform—both Bartók's Sonata and Ravel's *Tzigane*, but she also tried for years to convince Poulenc to write her a violin sonata. It didn't work. Poulenc was haunted by his own past attempts: he wrote two violin sonatas early in his career but destroyed them, dissatisfied with the results. It was only at the urging of renowned French violinist Ginette Neveu that Poulenc finally published a

sonata (and even this work was subjected to extensive revisions following Neveu's untimely death at age 30 in a 1949 plane crash).

"To tell the truth," Poulenc once said, "I don't like the violin as a solo instrument." What he disliked about most sonatas, he elaborated, was their instrumental inequality: "The prima donna violin above an arpeggio piano accompaniment makes me vomit." Here, the two instruments are equal partners. In the first movement, they trade skittery sixteenth-note runs before moving into more lyrical territory. The second movement, an Intermezzo, is sweet but profoundly melancholy. In the final movement, which bears the unusual marking "presto tragico," violin and piano come together to generate an abundance of nervous energy.

Composed in occupied France during World War II, the sonata evokes one other ghostly figure: it is dedicated to the Spanish poet Federico García Lorca, who was executed by Fascists during the

Spanish Civil War. The second movement carries an epigraph from Lorca—"The guitar makes dreams weep"—and the violin's strummed pizzicato chords evoke that instrument, which Lorca himself played. With this elegiac movement, and in the sonata as a whole, Poulenc offers a way to mourn both the past and the present.

GEORGE ENESCU (1881–1955) Sonata No. 3 in A Minor, Op. 25

Freedom rings out from Enescu's third violin sonata: freedom to indulge in tempo-twisting rubato, freedom to linger in the spaces between notes, freedom to use the keys of the piano to evoke the sounds of folk instruments like the cimbalom or the accordion. Although the sonata is in three movements in a traditional fast-slow-fast pattern, it has an unstructured feel. The first movement is kaleidoscopic, cycling through both melodies and moods at a rapid pace. The second begins in primordial stillness,

STRING CROSSINGS...

George Enescu's third violin sonata is dedicated to Franz Kneisel whose ensemble—the Kneisel Quartet—was the first group to appear on Princeton University Concerts inaugural season in 1894.



with the piano repeating a single note and the violin floating across a series of ethereal harmonics above. In the final movement, the instruments embark on a dance together before the violin breaks away for a dramatic soliloquy.

There is a striking contrast between the rhapsodic openness of the sonata's sound and the exactitude of its score. The sonata is subtitled "In the popular Romanian character," and it reflects Enescu's extensive knowledge of Romanian musical tradition. Unlike the composer's well-known Romanian Rhapsodies, however, the sonata does not quote folk songs directly. Instead, Enescu wrote original music that evoked the quintessential ingredients of Romanian musical tradition (much in the same way that Dvorák used Native American and African American music in his New World Symphony). To ensure that those elements were properly conveyed, Enescu provided a heavily annotated score: ornamental figures are written out in painstaking detail, and there are instructions to use

vibrato and bow speed a certain way or to play certain notes slightly sharp or flat. These details suggest the inadequacy of conventional Western musical notation to communicate folk musical practices. But they also reveal a paradox: Enescu offers the performers less than the usual amount of interpretive choice, insisting that they obey his directions absolutely in order to create music that sounds wholly improvisatory and free.

MAURICE RAVEL (1875–1937)

Tzigane

The violinist begins alone, at the lowest depths of the instrument's range, and dances upward in a whirlwind of bravura motion. Her fingers slide up and down the instrument's G string, creating an otherworldly timbre. Several minutes into this extended cadenza, the accompanying piano (or orchestra, depending on the performance) tiptoes in, offering a plush cushion of sound on which the violinist can continue displaying her

AS FATE WOULD HAVE IT...

George Enescu may be a featured composer on this program, but he actually gave the PUC premiere of Ravel's *Tzigane* performing on the series as a violinist in 1938!



dazzling technique: harmonics, trills, pizzicati, glissandi, and double, triple, and quadruple stops galore.

Rumor has it that Ravel became inspired to write *Tzigane* when he heard the illustrious Jelly d'Arányi—there she is again!—perform his Duo for Violin and Cello at a private soirée in London in 1922. He was so entranced that he stayed for the afterparty, listening to d'Arányi play Hungarian tunes until five in the morning. It's an appealing story, but it leaves out some crucial details. For one thing, Ravel didn't complete *Tzigane* until two years later. During the intervening time, he consulted extensively with d'Arányi, who premiered the piece in 1924, regarding technical details. For another, the piece draws upon Ravel's

longstanding interest in composing music that represented various ethnic groups. “*Tzigane*” is the French word for gypsy (the pejorative term used for the persecuted Roma people); Ravel also wrote music that claimed to represent Spanish, Italian, Chinese, and Madagascan cultures, among others. In its reliance upon a limited set of sonic clichés, all of this music can blur together, creating a sort of flattening effect in which all exotic “others” look and sound the same. Yet as the musicologist Stephen Zank has written, *Tzigane*'s use of “alleged Gypsy music” is both “acknowledged and effective”: as the violinist makes her way through this brilliant showpiece, it is easy to feel just as spellbound as Ravel must have been when he first heard d'Arányi play.

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About the Artists



Patricia Kopatchinskaja Violin

This concert marks Patricia Kopatchinskaja's Princeton University Concerts debut.

Moldovan-born violinist and one of the most distinctive voices in the violin world, Patricia Kopatchinskaja's unique approach shows itself in her diverse repertoire ranging from baroque and classical works played on gut strings, to new commissions and re-interpretations of modern masterpieces.

The 2018/19 season began with Patricia's debut with Orchestre symphonique de Montréal under the baton of Kent Nagano followed by performances with the Bayerisches Staatsorchester and Berlin Philharmonic under Kirill Petrenko and a European tour with Kammerorchester Basel, conducted by renowned composer Heinz Holliger. In April she will join the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Los Angeles Philharmonic conducted by Mirga Gražinyte-Tyla. Kopatchinskaja recently made another important debut, giving concerts with The Cleveland Orchestra performing Péter Eötvös' *Seven*. Under the baton of Teodor Currentzis she will revive Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto with Musica Aeterna, a piece she recorded

with the ensemble and released on Sony in 2016. They will also tour to Japan with dates in Tokyo and Osaka.

On the recital platform, Kopatchinskaja partners regularly with artists such as pianist Anthony Romaniuk, cellist Jay Campbell (who made his PUC debut in February), and cellist Sol Gabetta, appearing at leading venues such as the Berlin Konzerthaus, Vienna Konzerthaus and Concertgebouw Amsterdam. With pianist Polina Leschenko she released *Deux* in 2018 for Alpha Classics, which the duo toured to summer festivals including Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Engadin and Gstaad this year. In addition to the current tour, the duo will tour Japan this year.

With the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Kopatchinskaja has held the position of Artistic Partner since 2014 and was awarded a Grammy Award in the Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance category in 2018 for *Death and the Maiden* recorded with the orchestra and released on Alpha Classics. Other accolades include the prestigious Swiss Grand Award for Music, which recognizes exceptional talent and innovation, awarded by the Federal Office of Culture for Switzerland in 2017.

Last season began with the world premiere of her new project *Dies Irae* at the Lucerne Festival where she was “artiste étoile.” Following the success of *Bye Bye Beethoven* with the Mahler Chamber Orchestra in 2016, the second staged project was conceptualized using

a theme from the Latin Requiem Mass and features music from composers such as Giacinto Scelsi, Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber and Galina Ustwolskaja. The project was given its North American premiere as part of Kopatchinskaja’s position as Music Director at the Ojai Music Festival this summer. Other highlights include appearances at the Salzburger Festspiele for pieces by Ustwolskaja and Karl Amadeus Hartmann.

A prolific recording artist, the last few seasons have seen a number of releases on Alpha Classics including an album of Giya Kancheli’s music with violinist Gidon Kremer and the Kremerata Baltica and a disc of duos entitled *Take Two*. Kopatchinskaja has recorded Schumann’s Violin Concerto and Fantasy with WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln under Heinz Holliger for Audite and a selection of concerti by Bartók, Ligeti and Péter Eötvös for Naïve Classique, which claimed *Gramophone Magazine*’s Recording of the Year Award in 2013 and a 2014 Grammy Award nomination.



Polina Leschenko Piano

This concert marks Polina Leschenko's Princeton University Concerts debut.

Polina Leschenko was born in St. Petersburg, Russia into a family of musicians and began playing the piano under her father's guidance at the age of six. Two years later she made her solo début with the Leningrad Symphony Orchestra in St. Petersburg. She studied with Sergei Leschenko, Vitaly Margulis, Pavel Gililov, Alexandre Rabinovitch-Barakovsky and Christopher Elton. At the age of 16 she received her Higher Diploma with the greatest distinction from the Royal Conservatory in Brussels.

Leschenko works with orchestras around the world including Camerata Salzburg, Hallé, London Mozart Players, Scottish Chamber, Bournemouth Symphony, Britten Sinfonia, Bern Symphony, Russian National, I Pomeriggi Musicali in Milan, Orquesta Sinfónica de Euskadi, and the Australian Chamber Orchestra. A regular visitor to the Hallé, she performed in their 150th birthday celebration concert in February 2008, and in September 2008 she toured South America with the orchestra and Sir Mark Elder. As

a chamber musician, Polina Leschenko also performs frequently at many festivals, including Aldeburgh, Cheltenham, Risør, Stavanger, Istanbul, Progetto Martha Argerich in Lugano, the Salzburg Festival and Musiktag Mondsee. Regular collaborations with artists include violinists Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Alissa Margulies, Priya Mitchell, Daniel Rowland, Alexander Sitkovetsky, and Ivry Gitlis, violist Maxim Rysanov, cellists Mark Drobinsky, Natalie Clein, Heinrich Schiff, and Torleif Thedéen, and the Auryn Quartet. Leschenko has given major solo recitals in Vienna's Konzerthaus, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw and New York City's Carnegie Hall as well as in Salzburg, Milan, London, Paris, Brussels, Minnesota, and Atlanta.

In 2009 Leschenko began a new position as International Chair in Piano at the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama in Cardiff, where she had a three-year residency.

In 2003 Polina Leschenko recorded a debut CD for EMI in the series Martha Argerich Presents with works by Liszt, Chopin, Kreisler/Rachmaninov, Brahms, and Bach/Feinberg. *Gramophone Magazine* described her as having “technical dexterity in abundance, and signs of a major artist in the making.” She has also recorded a disc of Prokofiev chamber music with pianist Martha Argerich, cellist Christian Poltéra, and violinist Roby Lakatos for Avanticlassic, with whom she has a recording contract. Her recital disc—featuring an all-Liszt program including

the B-minor Sonata—was released in May 2007 by Avanticlassic. The disc has won several awards: a Choc du Monde de la Musique, *Pizzicato Magazine*'s Supersonic, and a Joker from Belgian magazine *Crescendo*. Released by EMI Classics was a recording of Glinka's Sextet as part of the Martha Argerich and Friends Live from the Lugano Festival series from 2009.

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PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
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Glimpses of a Remarkable History: Princeton University Concerts over the Past 125 Years

By Professor Emeritus Scott Burnham, © 2018

Imagine Princeton in 1894, the year Princeton Borough began governing itself as an entity fully independent from Princeton Township. And now imagine the Old Princeton Inn, a building that stood where Borough Hall stands today. At half past three on a Monday afternoon in late October, a group of music enthusiasts gathered there to enjoy a concert performance by the renowned Kneisel Quartet. They concluded with a piece of new music, namely Antonin Dvorak's most recent string quartet, the so-called "American" quartet, which the Kneisel players had premiered in Boston some months earlier and which was one of the fruits of Dvorak's extended stay in America.

That inaugural concert was organized by the "Ladies Musical Committee," founded in 1894 by Philena Fobes Fine. Mrs. Fine was a remarkable spirit who persuaded the community to rally round and underwrite this new venture, which in its early years presented about six concerts annually. She was the first in a long line of such spirits: to an extraordinary degree, the history of Princeton University Concerts is a history of determined women making wonderful things happen. The initial committee was all women, and the driving forces for supporting and managing the concert series throughout the entire history of Princeton University Concerts have been mostly women, exclusively so for the first fifty years. Mrs. William F. Magie became chair of the

committee after Mrs. Fine's death in 1928 (in an interesting parallel, her husband, William F. Magie, had succeeded Mrs. Fine's husband, Henry B. Fine, in the role of Princeton University's Dean of Faculty back in 1912). And for a fifteen-year span during the 20s and 30s, Mrs. Williamson U. Vreeland did much of the heavy lifting, organizing the concerts, choosing the artists, and managing the finances.

Had you been around in the 1920s, you would have caught the Princeton debut of violinist Fritz Kreisler in March of 1920; or heard Pablo Casals, then lauded as the world's greatest cellist, play Bach in 1922; or heard 23-year-old Jascha Heifetz play five encores after his concert on April 7, 1924; or attended the historic concert in 1925 that featured Polish pianist, composer and statesman Ignaz Paderewski in a program including Beethoven's "Waldstein" Sonata and Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody. Not to mention a steady array of orchestral performances by the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

A turning point for the Ladies Musical Committee came in 1929, marking a new and crucial stage in its relationship with Princeton University. The first move was to stabilize and augment the committee's finances. Mrs. Fine had led the concert series for over thirty years at the time of her death. During those years, she had managed to raise about \$35,000 to support the concerts. In 1929, Mrs. Jenny Hibben and others helped increase

that number to about \$52,000, and the committee established a fund in Mrs. Fine's memory, stating that the monies had "been raised for the purpose of securing for Princeton audiences better music than they could otherwise afford." The name of the committee changed to Princeton University Concerts Committee at this time as well, but its constitution insisted that "at least a majority of the members shall be women" (this wording was not altered until 1977!). In accordance with the name change, the University became increasingly involved throughout the 1930s and 40s. Nominations to the committee had forthwith to be approved by the President of Princeton University (the President at the time was John Grier Hibben, husband of Mrs. Jenny Hibben); the university Controller's Office soon began keeping the books; and in 1946 President Harold Dodds authorized payment for the building of a stage set that would enable the chamber concerts to move to McCarter Theater, where the orchestral concerts and showcase recitals were already happening.

When Mrs. Magie resigned in 1944, Professor Roy Dickinson Welch took over as head of the committee. Welch was also the father of the Music Department, which began in 1934 as a subsection of the Art and Archaeology department. A dozen years later, in 1946, Music became an official university department, housed in Clio Hall. In that same year, Welch hired Mrs. Katharine (Kit) Bryan as concert manager. They had collaborated before: in 1935, Mrs. Bryan co-founded the

Princeton Society of Musical Amateurs with Welch; the group still exists today.

Among the many highlights during Mrs. Magie's tenure was the historic 1937 appearance of American singer Marian Anderson, who sang four sets of arias and Lieder and then concluded with a stirring set of spirituals. Also notable were several concerts by the Trapp Family Singers in the early 1940s. Highlights of Mrs. Bryan's early years as concert manager include performances by the recently formed Bach Aria Group, founded and directed by Princeton legend William H. Scheide.

When Mrs. Bryan retired in 1964, she was replaced by Mrs. Maida Pollock, who greatly professionalized the entire operation, bringing it up to speed in ways that are still in effect today. A force of nature, Mrs. Pollock ran the Princeton University Orchestra as well, and was also very involved with the Princeton Friends of Music. Due to the greatly increased expense of hiring symphony orchestras, the concert series stopped programming orchestras in 1975 and began focusing exclusively on chamber music. In a recent interview, Pollock asserted that her most cherished goal was to get a worthy concert hall for chamber music up and running at the university, and in the 20th year of her 22-year tenure, her efforts were finally rewarded. Richardson Auditorium became the concert hall it is today in 1984, thanks to a donation from David A. Richardson '66, in memory of his father David B. Richardson '33, a

lifelong enthusiast of classical music.

One of the most memorable nights of Mrs. Pollock's reign was almost a disaster, because Spanish singer Victoria de los Ángeles had to cancel at nearly the last minute. Pollock quickly obtained the services of Russian soprano Galina Vishnevskaya, who happened to be the wife of Mstislav Rostropovich; he played the piano for her in an electrifying performance.

After Mrs. Pollock retired, Nate Randall took over in 1988. Randall broadened the purview of Princeton University Concerts, introducing programs of jazz music and world music. He also oversaw the 100th anniversary season of the series, and assisted with the inauguration of the Richardson Chamber Players, along with their Founding Director, Michael Pratt.

Our current Concert Director, Marna Seltzer, came to Princeton in 2010. Recognized by Musical America in 2017 as one of their "30 Movers and Shapers," Seltzer's many audience-friendly innovations have clearly established Princeton University Concerts at the forefront of the future of classical music. These include new ways to interact with the musical artists, such as live music meditation sessions, late-night chamber jams, and "Performances Up Close" that feature onstage seating. In introducing these additional ways to get involved in music, Marna Seltzer continues to honor the original and sustaining intention of Philena Fobes Fine: that Princeton

University Concerts should reflect the values of our community as a whole. As such, it enjoys pride of place as perhaps the finest ongoing town/gown affiliation in Princeton.

The history of Princeton University Concerts has been remarkably consistent for these past 125 years. Passionate, committed women (and a few men) have presented the premier musical artists of their age, from fiery 20-somethings taking the concert world by storm to larger-than-life stars who can captivate us merely by taking the stage. An exalted lineup of the world's finest string quartets has always maintained pride of place in the series, from the Kneisel Quartet in the first decades through the Budapest Quartet in the 1930s to the Takács, Brentano, and Jerusalem Quartets today. A special relationship has always endured between all these musical artists and their Princeton presenters. Back

in the day, Mrs. Fine, Mrs. Magie and Mrs. Vreeland often entertained artists after the concert; as an early history of the Concerts Committee put it: "the artists came to think of Princeton people as their friends." That holds true now more than ever, for our visiting artists regularly declare that they love playing in Richardson Auditorium, they love the way they are treated by Marna and her staff, and they love all of you, who so demonstrably value the experience of music, who take in and give back the brilliant energy of their cherished performances.

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