

First Fridays at St. Mary's

presents

A virtual concert of

Strings and Pipes

Romantic songs for violin, piano,
and solo organ

Dr. Letitia Jap, *violin*

Margaret-Mary Owens,
piano and organ

November 6, 2020, 7:30pm

Concert and more information available at
serccmusiccorner.weebly.com

Program

Romance for violin and piano, Op. 23 (1893) ★

Amy Beach (1867-1944)

Estrellita (Little Star) (1912) ★

Manuel M. Ponce (1882-1948)

Arranged for violin & piano by Jascha Heifetz (1901-1987)

Deux Arabesques, L. 66 (1891) ★★

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Arranged for organ by Margaret-Mary Owens (b. 1995)

Praeludium and Allegro “in the style of Pugnani” (1910) ★

Fritz Kreisler (1875-1962)

Letitia Jap, violin, Margaret-Mary Owens, piano ★

Margaret-Mary Owens, organ ★★

Program Notes

You may notice that these composers were all born at around the same time. These musicians were writing at about the turn of the century, which marks the transition between the late-Romantic period (1800-1910) and the Modern period (20th Century) in the development of classical music. Even as musicians, we often forget how nebulous time periods really are, and how many popular styles co-exist within a generation.

The “Romantic” period does not always equal “romantic,” as in sweet, soft, and sentimental. Music from the Romantic period can be some of the darkest, most passionate music you can hear, because the style thrives on contrast, pathos, and colorful harmonies to better express the extremes of the human experience. This makes for very highly expressive music that can change moods quite quickly (think of Beethoven’s 5th or 9th Symphony!). You can hear this drama in our last piece, even though it was written in the style of a much earlier composer. Other Romantic music blends Classical harmony of the 18th and 19th centuries with refreshing colors, like the piece by Amy Beach. Other Romantic/early Modern composers, like Debussy, explore a whole new soundscape associated with the Impressionism art style and contemporary literature’s fascination with nature. And still other Romantic music goes straight for the sweet and sentimental! Estrellita is highly expressive, but do not be deceived by the singing violin; there are some really creative harmonies in there that border on jazz! The 1910s were not that far from The Jazz Age...

So you see, even though these four composers were all writing at about the same time, the variety found at the turn of the century really shows how many styles and hybrids were delighting audiences at the time. Letitia and I hope that their timelessness delights you too, and that you will enjoy this three-dimensional glimpse into the pop music of yesteryear.

About the Performers

Born and raised in Seattle, **Letitia Jap** has an immense passion in spreading music around the nation through performing and pedagogy. Her passion has allowed her to solo with orchestras, as well as working with children and adolescents in Austin, Texas and Boston, Massachusetts. Letitia taught at the University of Texas String Project Program and the New England Conservatory Preparatory School. Letitia has received degrees from the University of Texas at Austin (BM) and the New England Conservatory (MM), and her Doctor of Musical Arts at the Eastman School of Music, where she held two Teaching Assistant positions. Letitia is currently on faculty at the Eastman Community School of Music and Nazareth College in Rochester, New York. Letitia loves to read, try new restaurants, watch Shark Tank, and explore cities.

Margaret-Mary Owens is a 2nd year doctoral student at the Eastman School of Music studying organ with Prof. Anne Laver. Originally from Tampa, FL, she has been the Associate Director of Liturgical Music at the Southeast Rochester Catholic Community since 2018. Margaret started piano lessons at age 5, played French horn for three years, managed her own piano studio in high school, started organ at age 16, and enjoys playing all kinds of music on any instrument with a keyboard – including an accordion she bought in October. In the rare moments when she is not practicing music or working on classwork, you can find Margaret exploring Rochester's many trails, trying out new recipes, or listening to lectures. Margaret and Letitia have been housemates for the past 2.5 years.