Welcome to Virtuosi Concerts

Dear Listeners,

Welcome to the second concert of Virtuosi's "Roots and Branches" season!

The program we are about to hear has been hand-crafted by Marina Thibeault and Janelle Fung, the excellent artists who will bring this incredibly beautiful music to life before our eyes and ears this evening. The pieces they have chosen to present are remarkable not only as masterful compositions by great composers, but also as vehicles for important stories and messages of social, political and personal relevance.

A warm welcome also to pianist Albert Chen who will open the concert as a participant in Virtuosi's Young Artist Program, which fosters connections between emerging artists and established audiences.

Playing and listening to music is an essential expression of humanity, identity and connection, and I am thrilled to share this experience with you this evening.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Thiessen
Artistic Director,
Virtuosi Concerts

Concert Etiquette

Good Scents Policy
Due to the allergic sensitivities of some of our performers and patrons, we ask you to refrain from using perfumes, colognes, hairsprays or other fragrances when planning to attend Virtuosi Concerts performances.

Electronics
Please turn off your cell phone. No recording or photography permitted during the performance.

Candies
Please unwrap lozenges before the music begins. If you are concerned about a persistent cough, please see us at the Patron Services table and we will try to accommodate a seat closer to the exit.

A Little Late?
Please wait at the rear of the Hall. Latecomers will be seated at a suitable interval.

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Musicnet: Virtuosi Concerts is a co-founder of Musicnet, Winnipeg's innovative consortium of musical organizations. Founded in 1994 to promote all forms of music, Musicnet was awarded the first Manitoba Arts Council Foundation Innovation Award in 1998. Musicnet acknowledges the past support of both the Manitoba Arts Council and the Winnipeg Foundation.

Musicnet Members: Agassiz Chamber Music Festival; Camerata Nova, Groundswell, Manitoba Chamber Orchestra, Manitoba Opera, Virtuosi Concerts, Westminster Concert Organ Series, The Winnipeg Chamber Music Society, Series; Winnipeg Jazz Orchestra, Winnipeg Philharmonic Choir, The Winnipeg Singers, Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, The Women's Musical Club. *(Musicnet hopefully resumes soon)*

Virtuosi Concerts acknowledges that we meet and work on Treaty 1 Land, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene Peoples and the homeland of the Métis Nation. We are grateful for their stewardship of this land and their hospitality which allows us to live, work, and find recreation here.

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A Message from our Board President

Welcome to tonight's Virtuosi concert featuring Marina Thibeault, viola, and Janelle Fung, piano!

Marina and Janelle are two of Canada's most acclaimed young chamber musicians, and we are delighted to feature them today. Marina has been named one of CBC's *Top 30 Classical Musicians Under 30* and will be familiar to Virtuosi audiences as part of Trio Saint-Laurent, who were welcomed to our stage in January of 2020. Janelle is the recipient of numerous national and international awards, performing in over twenty countries on five continents. She has appeared in concert with Virtuosi artists, such as Philip Chiu and the Ying Quartet.

Together, Marina and Janelle bring to us a diverse program of music from the Romantic era up to the present day. The duo has chosen to highlight both well-loved works from the classical canon by Clara Schumann, Rebecca Clarke, and Nadia Boulanger, and exciting contemporary pieces by Alexina Louie, Anna Pidjorna, and Manitoba-based violist-composer Melody McKiver.

We thank our Artistic Director Jennifer Thiessen, Interim Executive Director Heather Lewis, and our dedicated Board of Directors for their continued efforts on behalf of our organization. Their hard work and commitment to excellence has resulted in a varied and exceptional programme of live chamber music performances. Tonight's offering is another example of their creative vision.

As always, Virtuosi Concerts is grateful for the unwavering support and patronage of our wonderful audience, our funding organizations, and individual donors. Through your contributions, Virtuosi Concerts can continue to offer a remarkable and intimate musical experience of the highest artistic calibre. Thank you for attending tonight's concert, and we look forward to seeing you again throughout the season!

Paul R.J. McCulloch

Paul R.J. McCulloch
Board President,
Virtuosi Concerts

Bios

Marina Thibeault, viola

Renowned for her "rich and deep sound as well as her virtuosity and exceptional enthusiasm" (The Strad), violist Marina Thibeault invests the musical scene with a renewed fervor as a chamber musician, concert artist and soloist. Convinced that one must "undergo everything, experience everything, face all obstacles, all contradictions" (Pierre Perrault), she sails through the sometimes tumultuous waves of a carefully curated repertoire, approaching old and new works with the same commitment. Through her practice, she constantly questions the traditional place of the performer in order to embody a poetic approach as well as a physical quest and a surpassing of oneself.

Named Revelation of the Year 2016-2017 by Radio-Canada, Marina has since been invited to perform as a soloist internationally with the Philharmonic Orchestra of the Northern Czech Republic, the Orchestra of Mariánské Lázně, the Chamber Orchestra of Santiago, as well as in recital in Verbier. In Canada, audiences have heard her with the Metropolitan Orchestra, La Sinfonia Toronto, and the Agora Symphony Orchestra, among others. As a chamber musician, she has collaborated with members of the Guarneri Quartet and the Cleveland Quartet, as well as with Charles Richard-Hamelin, Marie-Nicole Lemieux and Johannes Moser. Her interest in new music has led her to work with composers John Corigliano, Joan Tower and Krzysztof Penderecki.

Marina has recorded three albums, all for ATMA Classique, to great critical and public acclaim. Her first release, Toquade (2016), was selected in the "Classical Album of the Year" category at the 2017 ADISQ Gala as well as the "Record of the Year" category at the 2018 Opus Awards. Recorded in 2019, ELLES has contributed to the recognition of the work of women composers who are unjustly forgotten or unknown to the general public. Her most recent musical venture, Viola Borealis (2022), is a testament to her willingness to weave different languages into creative programming. With this album, she revisits her own relationship to the north by traversing works by Latvian composer Pēteris Vasks and Anishinaabe artist Melody McKiver, as well as the very first viola concerto, composed around 1716 by Telemann.

Widely awarded with scholarships and honors, Marina is a graduate of McGill University and the Curtis Institute of Music. Since 2019, she has had the privilege of teaching at the University of British Columbia as an assistant professor where she helps awaken and affirm the sometimes unsuspected artistic vocations of her students.

Having studied the connections between sports psychology and performance as part of her DMus, Marina happily feeds her artistic practice by exploring the surrounding landscapes on her bike or run.

Reconnu-e pour "sa sonorité riche et profonde ainsi que sa virtuosité et son enthousiasme exceptionnel", l'altiste Marina Thibeault voyage à travers le monde en tant que chambriste, concertiste et soliste. Professeur.e adjoint.e à l'Université de la Colombie-Britannique depuis 2019, l'altiste et pédagogue présente des concerts dynamiques avec une présence sur scène engageante et inspire les prochaines générations d'altiste à une pratique musicale inclusive et audacieuse. Nommé-e Révélation de l'année 2016-2017 par Radio-Canada, l'altiste a depuis partagé son talent comme soliste à l'international avec l'Orchestre Philharmonique de la République tchèque du Nord, l'Orchestre de Mariánské Lázně, l'Orchestre de chambre de Santiago, ainsi qu'en récital à Verbier. Son premier album, Toquade, sur étiquette ATMA Classique, a été nommé dans la catégorie «Album classique de l'année» au Gala de l'ADISQ 2017, puis aux Prix Opus 2018, dans la catégorie «Disque de l'année, musique moderne, contemporaine». Son deuxième disque, ELLES, salué par la critique, a été lancé en mars 2019. Il rend hommage aux compositrices, pédagogues et interprètes, de Clara Schumann à aujourd'hui. Son plus récent disque *Viola Borealis*, est sorti en 2022 et reçoit depuis des critiques élogieuses.

Janelle Fung, piano

Canadian pianist Janelle Fung has performed in concert from coast to coast in Canada, including tours with Prairie Debut and Jeunesses Musicales du Canada. Winner of the "Artist of the Year" award from the BC Touring Council in 2014, her international concerts have taken her to over twenty countries on five continents. An avid chamber musician, Ms. Fung has appeared in concert with the Ying Quartet, New York Woodwind Quintet, Timothy Chooi and Matt Haimovitz. Her first solo album, *Aubade*, received glowing reviews and a nomination for the *Prix Opus* for album of the year.

Ms. Fung has been a prize winner in numerous national and international competitions, including the Joanna Hodges International Piano Competition, the Concours OSM-Standard Life, and the Canadian Music Competition. She has been featured on radio stations nationally and internationally including CBC, Radio-Canada, Classical 96.3 FM, NPR, and Radio France.

Ms. Fung's interest in opera have led to collaborations with Nicole Cabell, Teresa Stratas, and William Warfield. She has toured twice as Touring Artistic Director for opera productions presented by Jeunesses Musicales du Canada and has been on faculty at Highlands Opera Studio since 2016.

Born in Vancouver, Canada, Janelle Fung began her piano studies at the age of four. Her principal teachers have included Nelita True, Julian Martin and Marc Durand. Ms. Fung holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music and The Juilliard School. She has made her home in Montreal since 2010 and joined the faculty of the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal as Professor of Piano and Chamber Music in the fall of 2022.

La pianiste canadienne Janelle Fung s'est produite en récital partout au Canada, particulièrement à l'occasion de tournées organisées par Prairie Debut et par les Jeunesses Musicales du Canada. Gagnante du prix « Artiste de l'année » du Conseil des artistes en tournée de la Colombie-Britannique en 2014, elle a également joué dans une vingtaine de pays sur les cinq continents. Passionnée de musique de chambre, elle s'est souvent jointe en concert au Quatuor Ying, au Quintette à Vent de New York ainsi qu'au violoniste Mark Fewer et au violoncelliste Matt Haimovitz.

Mme Fung a obtenu de nombreux prix dans divers concours canadiens et internationaux, parmi lesquels la Joanna Hodges International Piano Competition, le Concours OSM-Standard Life et le Concours de musique du Canada. On a pu l'entendre sur les ondes de la CBC, de Radio-Canada, du Classical 96,3 FM de Toronto et de Radio France.

Virtuosi Concerts wishes to thank

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Young Artist Program

Albert Chen, *Piano*

Études-Tableaux, no. 9, op. 39
Sergei Rachmaninov, 1873-1943

From Far Above: Bringer of Light

Clara Schumann (1819-1896)
3 romances Op.22

Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979)
Trois pièces pour violoncelle et piano arr. for alto and piano (1914)

Anna Pidgorna (b. 1985)
The Child, Bringer of Light for solo viola (2013)

Alexina Louie (b. 1949)
I leap through the Sky with Stars

Intermission

Melody McKiver (b. 1988)
Niizh (2017)

Rebecca Clarke (1886-1979)
Sonata for viola and piano 1919

This afternoon's concert is generously sponsored by the Zita and Mark Bernstein Family Foundation.

Program Notes

Clara Schumann (1819-1896)
Trois Romances, Op. 22

The career of Clara Schumann-Wieck marks a transition point. Her career as a concert artist and teacher was about the most brilliant that could have been dreamed of in the middle of the 19th century by a woman. She had begun composing when she was nine, but underestimated her work; "I am just a woman, after all," she wrote in 1838, "and women are not made to be composers. That's how I console myself." After she married Robert Schumann, in 1840, she had to juggle her professional activities with her duties as a housewife, wife, and mother. Her three Romances, Op. 22 date back to 1853, the tragic year in which her husband began to succumb to mental illness. Written for the celebrated violinist Joseph Joachim, a great family friend, they are imbued with Robert Schumann's style.

Clara Schumann-Wieck se situe à la croisée des chemins. Celle qui exerça une des plus brillantes carrières de concertiste et de pédagogue dont pouvait rêver une femme en plein XIXe siècle, commença à composer dès l'âge de 9 ans, mais sous-estima longtemps sa musique, avouant en 1838: «Après tout, je ne suis qu'une femme et les femmes ne sont pas faites pour composer. C'est ainsi que je me console.» Mariée à Robert Schumann en 1840, elle devra concilier ses activités professionnelles avec celles de maîtresse de maison, d'épouse et de mère. Ses trois Romances opus 22 datent de 1853, année tragique qui verra son mari sombrer peu à peu dans la maladie et la folie. Elles ont été composées pour le célèbre violoniste Joseph Joachim, grand ami de la famille, et sont imprégnées du style de Robert Schumann.

Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979)
Trois pièces pour violoncelle et piano

A student of Gabriel Fauré and of Charles-Marie Widor, and the daughter and sister, respectively, of two Grand Prix de Rome winners, Ernest and Lili Boulanger, Nadia was mainly known as a pianist, organist, conductor, and teacher. Her students included such varied figures as Jean Françaix, Aaron Copland, Elliott Carter, Walter Piston, Virgil Thomson, Astor Piazzolla, Vladimir Cosma, and Michel Legrand.

'Mademoiselle', as Nadia was known, came second in the Grand Prix de Rome competition in 1908. She wrote some 50 works, mainly vocal,

between 1905 and 1920, but then abandoned composition, claiming her music "wasn't good enough to be beautiful, nor bad enough to be amusing." She completed her three pieces for cello and piano in 1913. The first two of these are actually transcriptions of improvisations for organ: a cantilena supported by a parallel and syncopated ostinato, and a modal canon played with "bleached-out sonic colors." The third piece, more rhapsodic, prefigures Claude Debussy's Sonate pour violoncelle et piano (1915). The transcription of these pieces for viola makes a fine addition to that instrument's repertoire.

Élève de Gabriel Fauré et de Charles-Marie Widor, fille et sœur de deux Grands Prix de Rome, Ernest et Lili Boulanger, Nadia fut principalement connue comme pianiste, organiste, chef d'orchestre et pédagogue. Parmi ses élèves figurent des personnalités aussi différentes que Jean Françaix, Aaron Copland, Elliott Carter, Walter Piston, Virgil Thomson, Astor Piazzolla, Vladimir Cosma et Michel Legrand.

Deuxième Grand Prix de Rome en 1908, « Mademoiselle », comme on l'appelait, a composé entre 1905 et 1920 une cinquantaine d'œuvres, principalement vocales, mais y renonça, affirmant : « ma musique n'était pas assez bonne pour être belle, et pas assez mauvaise pour être drôle». Ses trois pièces pour violoncelle et piano ont été terminées en 1913. Les deux premières sont en réalité des transcriptions d'improvisations pour orgue: une cantilène soutenue par un ostinato parallèle et syncopé, et un canon modal se jouant « avec une sonorité décolorée ». Plus rhapsodique, la troisième pièce préfigure la Sonate pour violoncelle et piano de Claude Debussy (1915). Leur transcription pour alto est un bel ajout au répertoire de cet instrument.

Anna Pidgorna
The Child, Bringer of Light

Born in Ukraine in 1985, Anna Pidgorna came to Canada when she was 12 and pursued her musical studies here, in New Brunswick and Alberta. She is now completing a doctorate in composition at Princeton University. She describes herself as a composer and visual artist, and her works employ various acoustic and electronic procedures.

The Child, Bringer of Light, composed for solo cello, was premiered in 2012 at Carnegie Hall, as part of a series of composition workshops directed by Kaija Saariaho and Anssi Karttunen. Anna Pidgorna transcribed the work for the French violist Claire Poillion. According to the composer, the work "explores Carl Jung's archetype of the Child and the journey this mythic being takes to discover itself, conquer darkness,

and bring light into the world." The eight sections of this very expressive piece use a contemporary musical language, rich in sonic effects such as harmonics, tremolos, glissandi, and pizzicati.

Née en Ukraine en 1985, Anna Pidgorna est arrivée au Canada à l'âge de 12 ans et y a fait toutes ses études musicales, au Nouveau-Brunswick et en Alberta. Elle complète actuellement un doctorat en composition à l'Université de Princeton. Elle se définit comme compositrice et comme artiste visuelle et combine dans ses œuvres divers procédés acoustiques et électroniques.

The Child, Bringer of Light a été composé pour violoncelle seul et créé en 2012 à Carnegie Hall, dans le cadre d'ateliers de composition dirigés par Kaija Saariaho et Anssi Karttunen. Anna Pidgorna en a réalisé la transcription pour l'altiste française Claire Poillion. Pour l'auteure, son œuvre « explore l'archétype de l'Enfant de Carl Jung, et le voyage qu'entreprend cet être mythique pour se découvrir, conquérir l'obscurité et apporter la lumière dans le monde. » Les huit sections de cette pièce très expressive exploitent un langage musical contemporain, riche en effets sonores (sons harmoniques, trémolos, glissandi, pizzicati).

Alexina Louie (b. 1949)
I Leap Through the Sky with Stars

One of Canada's most sought after composers, Alexina Louie has written for many of the country's leading soloists, chamber ensembles, new music groups and orchestras. Louie has twice won JUNO awards for Best Classical Composition. In addition to the JUNOs, she is the recipient of many awards and honours including the Jules Léger Prize for Chamber Music, the National Arts Centre Composers Award, the Chalmer's Award in Composition, an honourary doctorate from the University of Calgary, as well as many other distinctions. In 2002, Louie was named an Officer of the Order of Canada. She is also a recipient of the Order of Ontario and the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal.

I Leap Through the Sky with Stars was commissioned by the Canada Council for the Arts for the Canadian Music Competitions in 1991. It is based on a Zen poem and shows her uniquely personal and expressive style which is rooted in a blend of east and west. The piece has light, shimmering sections that require an agile pianistic touch, as well as forceful hammered effects in the lowest register.
(from www.alexinalouie.ca)

Melody McKiver
Niizh

Melody McKiver's (they/them) musical work integrates electronics with Western classical music to shape a new genre of Anishinaabe compositions. A proud member of Obishikokaang Lac Seul First Nation, Melody is currently Assistant Professor of Indigenous Music (tenure-track) with the Desaultels Faculty of Music at the University of Manitoba and a member of the Mizi'iwe Aana Kwat (LGBTQ2S+ Council) within the Anishinaabe Nation of Treaty #3. They are the 2020 recipient of the Canada Council's Robert Flaming Prize awarded annually to an exceptionally talented young Canadian composer, and a recurring invited participant in the Banff Centre for the Arts' Indigenous Classical Music gatherings.(from www.melodymckiver.com)

McKiver's debut recording, *Reckoning*, released in 2017, began as the soundscape for an eponymous theatrical production dealing with the painful effects of residential schools. The work is dedicated to the memory of McKiver's grandmother, a survivor of the Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential school in Kenora, Ontario.

The six movements of *Reckoning* — simply titled by the numbers one through six in Anishinaabe — were originally improvised by McKiver, using a pedal to activate electronic effects such as reverb and echo. A first transcription of these improvisations was made with the help of Robert Drisdelle, who produced McKiver's disc. During the summer of 2020, Marina Thibeault became interested in this music. With McKiver's approval and collaboration, violist François Vallières made an arrangement for solo viola, preserving much of the richness of the original work, adding double stops, harmonics, and circular bowing as substitutes for the electronic effects.

Incantatory in style, *Niizh*, according to McKiver, "looks at the wounds inflicted on nature, and attempts to preserve nature." The work plays with nuances, leaving an expressive song to emerge through passages with double-stopping and harmonics.

Melody McKiver (iel/ile) est un musicien anishinaabe, altiste, compositeur, et danseur traditionnel de powwow. Son origine est issue de la Première Nation de Obishikokaang Lac Seul ainsi que de l'Écosse et de la Lithuanie. Ile est professeur adjoint de musique autochtone à l'Université du Manitoba. Melody a maintenant établi ses quartiers à Winnipeg Manitoba dans la térritoire de Traité No. 1, mais était

élevée en Ottawa. À titre d'artiste soliste, ile explore toute la gamme des possibilités de l'alto, de l'expression musicale minimaliste jusqu'à la musique cinématique. (from www.melodymckiver.com)

En 2017 paraît *Reckoning*, («compte» ou «jugement»), le premier enregistrement de McKiver, conçu comme trame sonore d'une pièce de théâtre éponyme ayant pour sujet les douloureuses conséquences des pensionnats autochtones. L'œuvre est dédiée à la mémoire de sa grand-mère, une survivante du pensionnat Cecilia Jeffrey de Kenora (Ontario).

Les six mouvements de *Reckoning*, dont les titres sont simplement leurs numéros en langue Anichinabée, étaient à l'origine improvisés par McKiver, qui activait au moyen d'une pédale des effets électroniques tels la réverbération et les échos. Une première transcription en a été réalisée avec l'aide du producteur de son disque, Robert Drisdelle. Durant l'été 2020, Marina Thibeault a été interpellée par cette musique : avec l'accord de McKiver, l'altiste François Vallières en a donc fait un arrangement pour alto seul, intégrant au moyen de doubles cordes, d'harmoniques et de coups d'archet circulaires certaines richesses des effets électroniques de l'œuvre originale.

De style incantatoire, *Niizh*, selon McKiver, jette «un regard sur les blessures et sur la préservation de la nature». Cette pièce joue sur les nuances, laissant émerger un chant expressif à travers des passages en doubles cordes et en sons harmoniques.

Rebecca Clarke (1886-1979)
Sonata for Viola and Piano

First a violinist and then a violist, British musician Rebecca Clarke studied composition with Charles Villiers Stanford. As well as performing both in England and the United States, she composed more than 100 works. In 1944, she married a former fellow-student, James Friskin. Despite the latter's encouragement, chronic depression and the difficulties of getting her work published led her to abandon composition at the beginning of the 1950s.

In 1918, she was composing in New York under the name Anthony Trent. In a composition competition sponsored by the American patron of the arts Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge the following year, Clarke's sonata for viola and piano, signed with her real name, was first tied for first place with Ernest Bloch's Suite for viola, but then Sprague Coolidge decided the prize should go to Bloch alone. The judges had trouble

believing a woman could have written such a sonata and suspected that a male composer, such as Bloch himself or even Maurice Ravel, was hiding behind a pseudonym.

The celebrated line Poète, prends ton luth (Poet, take up your lute) from La nuit de mai by Alfred de Musset, appears as an epigraph on the first page of the sonata. With its French Impressionism coloration, the first movement, the very rhapsodic Impetuoso, has several echoes of Claude Debussy's Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune. The Vivace is a capricious scherzo in which the viola and piano engage in sparkling dialogue. The last movement opens with a delicate modal recitative. This allusion to La nuit de mai gradually flares up, as if to continue Musset's lines: "le vin de la jeunesse fermente cette nuit dans les veines de Dieu (the wine of youth ferments tonight in the veins of God)."

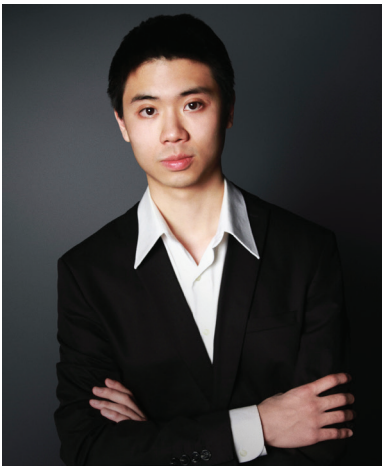
Violoniste puis altiste, la Britannique Rebecca Clarke a étudié la composition avec Charles Villiers Stanford. Parallèlement à sa carrière d'instrumentiste, qu'elle partagera entre l'Angleterre et les États-Unis, elle compose près d'une centaine d'œuvres. En 1944, elle se marie avec un ancien condisciple, James Friskin. Malgré les encouragements de ce dernier, elle renoncera à composer dès le début des années 1950 en raison d'un état dépressif et de la difficulté qu'elle éprouve à se faire publier.

En 1918, elle compose à New York sous le nom d'Anthony Trent. L'année suivante, lors d'un concours de composition organisé par la mécène américaine Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, sa sonate pour alto et piano, signée de son vrai nom, se classe ex-aequo avec la Suite pour alto d'Ernest Bloch, qui remporte finalement le prix en raison du vote prépondérant d'Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge. Le jury a du mal à croire qu'une femme ait pu composer une telle sonate, pensant que son nom cachait peut-être celui de Bloch ou même de Maurice Ravel !

Très rhapsodique, l'Impetuoso, qui cite en exergue le célèbre « Poète, prends ton luth » de La nuit de mai d'Alfred de Musset, a une certaine couleur impressionniste française, avec quelques échos du Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune de Claude Debussy. Le Vivace est un scherzo capricieux que s'échangent avec brio l'alto et le piano. Le dernier mouvement commence par une délicate mélopée modale. Cette allusion à La nuit de mai s'enflamme peu à peu, comme pour continuer la citation de Musset : « le vin de la jeunesse fermente cette nuit dans les veines de Dieu ».

Program notes written by Irène Brisson
Translated into English by Seán McCutcheon
Except where noted otherwise

Virtuosi Young Artist



Albert Chen

Included in the 2019 edition of CBC Music's "30 Under 30" list of Canadian classical musicians, pianist Albert Chen has appeared as a soloist with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and performed in concert venues around the world including Carnegie Hall in New York City and the Forbidden City Concert Hall in Beijing. He received the Willard Schultz prize at the 2014 CFMTA National Piano Competition in Halifax for being the "most promising artist" selected by the jury. From 2012 to 2016, Albert took part in the international Morningside Music Bridge program, where his recordings have been included in two of their Highlight CD's showcasing the top performances each year. During his university studies, he toured across Manitoba and Saskatchewan as the winner of the biennial CFMTA Western Young Artist Series Competition and received top prizes in the Lawrence Genser and U of M Concerto Competition as well as the Aikins Memorial and Lieutenant Governor's Trophy. Awarded the University Gold Medal as a 2020 graduate, Albert holds a Bachelor of Music Degree in Piano Performance from the Desautels Faculty of Music and is currently in his 2nd year of medical school at the Max Rady College of Medicine.

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Special thanks to our Ensemble of Friends
A beautiful bunch!