

University of Missouri School of Music

Senior Recital • 2022-2023 Series

Dean Roberts, Viola
Natalia Bolshakova, Piano

4/19/2023 • 8:30 PM • Sinquefield Music Center

Program

Sonata for Viola and Piano in C Minor Op. 18 York Bowen
(1884-1961)
Allegro Moderato
Poco Lento e Cantabile
Finale Presto

Brief Pause

Chahagir for Solo Viola Alan Hovhaness
(1911-2000)

Brief Pause

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

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Music degree in Viola performance. Dean Roberts is a student of Leslie Perna.

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Program Notes

Sonata for Viola and Piano in C Minor, Op. 18 by York Bowen (1884-1961)

Edwin York Bowen was an English composer and pianist. Bowen's musical career spanned more than fifty years during which time he wrote over 160 works. As well as being a pianist and composer, Bowen was a talented conductor, organist, violist and horn player. As a violist, he was a fervent believer that the instrument had a better tone than the violin. He wrote a large number of compositions for viola, and is recognized as one of the leading writers for viola to this day. His compositions have been dedicated to and premiered by several renowned musicians, including Fritz Kreisler, who premiered *Suite in D minor for Violin and Piano, Op. 28* (1910). During his early years of composing, he wrote and dedicated several works to Lionel Tertis, who remains one of the most recognized violists of all time. He premiered Bowen's *Viola Concerto in C minor, Op. 25* (1908), and *Phantasy for Viola and Piano* (1917). The duo made great strides in shaping how viola music is written.

One of Bowen's most considerable works, which was also premiered by Lionel Tertis, is his *Sonata for Viola and Piano in C Minor Op. 18*, written in 1907. The first movement, *Allegro moderato*, has rich romantic melodies in sonata form. The second movement, *Poco lento e cantabile*, is slower with a calm and serene mood, also in sonata form. The third movement, *Finale: Presto*, is a fast-paced dance that restates the introduction of the first movement.

Chahagir for Viola Solo, Op. 56a by Alan Hovhaness (1911-2000)

Alan Hovhaness was an American-Armenian composer of the modern era. He is one of the most prolific modern composers of his time with 434 opus numbers and over 500 works. The actual number of compositions is thought to be much higher, since he destroyed the vast majority of his early works. Hovhaness made several trips to Asia searching for inspiration from the ancient traditions and customs of India, Japan, and South Korea, in order to incorporate them into his music. He also wrote several works that contained attributes of his own Armenian culture, which historians later called his "Armenian Period."

One work from the Armenian Period is *Chahagir for Solo Viola*, written in 1945. *Chahagir*, or "Torchbearer", is based on an Armenian folk song. The piece begins with a dark, mysterious mood, as if there is no light in the setting. One can hear the Torchbearer, a female character from the story, and her clash with the darkness, depicted by the repeating dark mysterious themes from the opening. At the end of the piece, the struggle between her light and the darkness is depicted by clashing major and minor chords, followed by the triumphant victory of the light, as a final C major chord sounds.

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

Rebecca Helferich Clarke was a British-American classical composer and violist. Clarke has played a substantial role in shaping what viola music, vocal music and chamber music became in the modern music era. Clarke is most known for her chamber music compositions, ranging from vocal to instrumental works, including *Daybreak for Voice and String Quartet* (words by John Donne) (1940), and *Passacaglia on an Old English Tune for Viola and Piano* (or Cello and Piano) (1940-1941).

One of her most notable works is *Sonata for Viola and Piano* (1919). The composition was written for a competition sponsored by Clarke's neighbor, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge. Out of 72 entries, Clarke's *Sonata* tied for first prize with Swiss composer Ernest Bloch's *Suite for*

Viola and Piano (1919). After further review, Bloch was declared the winner, as the judges declared that choosing Clarke as the winner would show signs of favoritism on Coolidge's part. Some believe it was because the judges did not think a female composer could write such music. Today, the piece is a standard in the viola repertoire. The sonata is one of the only multi-movement pieces that Clarke wrote. The first movement, *Impetuoso*, is in a sonata form, and begins with a powerful and free cadenza. Clarke uses modal and whole tone scales similar to those used frequently by impressionist composers. The second movement, *Vivace*, is composed in an ABA format. The first section has a playful feel, and uses many special effects such as harmonics and pizzicato. This transitions to the slow middle section, which uses more modal and whole tone scales. The third movement, *Adagio*, starts slowly and pensively, then builds in energy to a final re-statement of themes from the first movement, coming to a dramatic close in E major.

Preston (Dean) Roberts is a Senior at the University of Missouri, studying Viola Performance, and represents the University Philharmonic as the principal violist. With UPO, he has performed the World Premier of *Mass: A Celebration of Love and Joy* composed by André Thomas at the Kauffman Center in Kansas City, and has also performed theater works ranging from musicals such as Terrance McNally's *Ragtime*, to operas including Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*. During his time at Mizzou, he won First Place in the Missouri Music Teachers Association (MMTA) Upper Class Strings Competition in 2021 and 2022, was a finalist in both the 2022 MU Emerging Artist Competition and the 2022 MU Concerto Competition. He won the position of principal viola in the 2022 Missouri All State Collegiate Orchestra, under the direction of Christopher Lees. He has contributed his expertise to groups such as 7th Column, University of Missouri Chamber Soloists, and MU Camerata.

Currently, Roberts teaches for the Missouri String Project, the Missouri Academy of Music, and the Missouri Symphony Conservatory, where he aims to inspire the next generation of musicians around the City of Columbia. Roberts has traveled to perform across the midwest with groups such as the Southside Philharmonic, the Quincy Symphony, and the award winning Leme Ensemble. He also contributes to groups close to home, performing with the Odyssey Chamber Series, and serving as principal violist for the Missouri Symphony, along with the Columbia Civic Orchestra. Roberts has received instruction from Morgan Owen and Leslie Perna. After he graduates from the University of Missouri, Roberts plans to attend the University of Texas - Austin to pursue his Masters of Music degree in Viola Performance.