



School of Music
University of Missouri

2025-2026 Series | Faculty Recital

Valerie Malvinni, viola
Peter Miyamoto, piano

March 1, 2026 | 2:00pm
Whitmore Recital Hall

Program

Märchenbilder for Viola and Piano. Op.113 (1851) **Robert Schumann**
(1810-1856)

Nicht schnell

Lebhaft

Rasch

Langsam, mit melancholischem Ausdruck

Sonata for Viola and Piano, Op.11, No.4 (1919) **Paul Hindemith**
(1895-1963)

Fantasie

Thema mit Variationen

Finale (mit Variationen)

Intermission

Sonata for Viola and Piano (1919) **Rebecca Clarke**
(1886-1979)

Impetuoso

Vivace

Adagio

Professor Valerie Malvinni, viola
Dr. Peter Miyamoto, piano

Program Notes for a Viola and Piano Recital

Valerie Malvinni, viola and Peter Miyamoto, piano

Robert Schumann (1810-56), *Märchenbilder (Scenes from Fairy-Tales) for Viola and Piano, Op. 113 (1851)*. Schumann's poetic and musical sensibilities combined dramatically in his chamber music, prominently exhibited in these four *Märchenbilder*. A polemical essayist, his compositional fame exploded with his song cycles of 1840 dedicated to his wife Clara, known as his *Liederjahr* (year of song; they married in September of that year). His four *Märchenbilder* are drawn from the wonder, melancholy and irony underlying the romantic German fairytale as practiced by Goethe and E.T.A. Hoffman among others (in collections as *romantische Märchen*). It appears that a publisher suggested to him this literary kernel for a set of pieces that would appeal to amateur players, who would often entertain friends and family in scenes of "domestic music-making" (*Hausmusik*). However, lacking indications and not knowing Schumann's state of mind, we can speculate as to the programmatic content of the movements, while still knowing that they are attempts to transfer into sound the magical world of the fairy-tale.

Tonally the piece's four movements present a unified, sonata-like sequence, from D minor (*Nicht schnell*, Not fast) to F major (the relative major; *Lebhaft*, Lively) to D minor (*Rasch*, Quick) and then D major (the parallel major; *Langsam mit melancholischem Ausdruck*, Slowly, with a melancholy expression). Despite the piece's humble *Hausmusik* intent, Schumann's inspiration and writing for both instruments are of the first rank, with the opening melody with its rising minor arpeggio immediately evokes the magical world of the fairy tale. A scherzo-like movement follows, and then a swirling third movement marked *Rasch* (Quick) where the viola plays perpetual-moto-like figurations with *spiccato* (bouncing) bow. The final autumnal movement is the most delicate and melancholy of the set, bringing the stories to an enigmatic close befitting the ironic convention of the genre, perhaps with the melancholy voice of the composer himself bursting through the frame of the story-telling.

Paul Hindemith (1895-1963), Sonata for Viola and Piano, Op. 11 No. 4 (1919). Paul Hindemith's Viola Sonata, Op. 11/4 was conceived as one of six string sonatas (for violin and viola respectively, solo and with piano) that he composed after a brief stint in the German army during World War I. A violist himself, Paul Hindemith is one of the most prolific composers for the instrument, writing seven sonatas for the instrument among other iconic works for it. This Viola Sonata is the first one he wrote for viola, and is the

fourth sonata of the six published together as his opus 11. A somewhat controversial composer with a mixed reception history complicated by his advocacy for the aesthetic program of *Gebrauchsmusik* (purposeful music), his compositions have been enthusiastically embraced by violists eager to expand the recital repertoire and call attention to the viola's solo voice. From the perspective of exploring the capabilities of the viola's unique timbre, Hindemith's music does not disappoint, and advances the cause of the instrument.

The three movements are through-composed and meant to be played as a continuous work, that is, without pause between them—he writes that the second movement's theme and variations continues in the third movement (a unique formal idea), effectively binding the work together. Commentators often point to the impressionistic tonal language used by Hindemith, and that the work's sound is indebted to Debussy. The first movement is labelled a fantasy, a form from the Renaissance and employed to great effect in the Baroque to connect instrumental music composition, ironically, to its once improvisatory roots. Hindemith writes virtuosically for both instruments, and his constant indications in the score demand the highest level of attention to detail for the ensemble, but if handled well the interpretation of this difficult score becomes immediately communicative to the audience. The second movement's theme is played quietly and directly (or simply) as if a folksong (*Ruhig und einfach, wie ein Volkslied*; Peaceful and simply, as if it were a folk song). This must be interpreted against the background of the great folk-song collecting happening in Eastern Europe, ignited by the enthusiasm for this tradition by Bartók and Kodály, who both thought that the folk song of the rural peasant living in villages cut-off from modernity represented a living example of melody coming almost from nature itself. After the simplicity of this theme to be played in direct and non-artificial manner, and after Variation I's lyricism, the next three variations of the movement are very exciting with changing time signatures and tonality, with brilliant interplay between the musicians. The final movement continues the variations but is simultaneously in sonata form, while also bringing back the first movement's opening theme to make it a cyclical work; a particular highpoint of the variation writing is in the fugato Variation VI. The work offers the perfect ending for a recital, with its onward rush of energy and power issuing forth a glowing peroration for the Finale.

Rebecca Clarke (1886-1979), Sonata for Viola and Piano (1919). Rebecca Clarke is best known for her compositions for the viola, especially *Morpheus* and the Viola Sonata. A virtuoso violist, she studied composition and viola in England, counting Lionel Tertis as one of her teachers. In demand as a performer, she wrote the Viola Sonata for the 1919 Berkshire chamber music competition sponsored by the American patroness Elizabeth

Sprague Coolidge. In the competition the judges were split on awarding first prize, and her sonata was tied ironically with another piece for viola and piano, Ernest Bloch's Suite. In the end, Coolidge herself cast the deciding vote in favor of Bloch's piece. In three movements, Clarke's Viola Sonata has an epigraph from "The May Night" by the French Romantic poet, Alfred de Musset (1810-57): "Poet, take up your lute; the wine of youth ferments this night in the veins of God." In the poem, the muse calls the poet to use his art to overcome his emotional misery. Although the sonata falls in the category of autonomous music (or "absolute"), this epigraph invites the performers to construct a poetic dialogue after Musset's meditation.

The first movement (*Impetuoso*) has some dramatic writing for both instruments, with the cadenza-like viola part starting with a searching motif that returns cyclically at the work's end, and then a lyrical piano interlude (*poco meno mosso*; a little bit less motion) that takes the movement in a new direction; the musical language is modern but tonal, and still fresh sounding with its deployment of alternative scales (pentatonic, octatonic) and modes (Dorian) of recent French impressionism and English music. The second movement (*Vivace, Lively*) is played *con sordino* (with mute), and is a traditional scherzo in ABA format with a coda. The Finale third movement, the longest of the sonata, presents the most challenging material for the performers, and rhetorically delves into the disparate, fragmentary style common in the early 20th century; the Finale's music builds to a virtuosic and demanding climax before coming down to a soft-landing with the opening theme harmonized with cascading lines in the piano.

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Biographies

Valerie Malvinni, an avid performer and teacher on the violin and viola, is currently Visiting Assistant Professor of Viola at University of Missouri, Columbia where she also serves as Executive Director of the Missouri String Project. She has taught violin, viola and chamber music at many schools and colleges including Santa Barbara City College, Westmont College, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, and the Suzuki Violin School of Santa Barbara.

As an orchestral player, Valerie held principal positions with the Santa Barbara Chamber Orchestra, SB Symphony and was principal viola of the Haddonfield Symphony (now called Symphony in C) under Alan Gilbert. She was a regular substitute with the Los Angeles Philharmonic for many years, performing under the direction of both Esa-Pekka Salonen and Gustavo Dudamel. A passionate chamber musician, she was mentored by Isaac Stern, Guarneri Quartet, Emerson Quartet, Juilliard Quartet, Takács Quartet, American Quartet, and Robert McDonald. She is currently the violist in the Esterházy string quartet in residence at Missouri, which has been in existence for over 50 years.

Valerie has performed in some notable halls such as Carnegie Hall, Disney Hall, Hollywood Bowl, Library of Congress, and with members of the NY Philharmonic, LA Philharmonic and internationally at Rencontres Musicales d'Evian. She is a graduate of Curtis Institute of Music where her teachers included Karen Tuttle, Felix Galimir, and Joseph dePasquale, and with Heiichiro Ohyama for her Master of Music degree from University of California Santa Barbara, and finally did doctoral studies at UCLA with Ralph Fielding and Paul Coletti.

This summer, Valerie is looking forward to teaching and performing at the Chigiana Global Academy Program in Siena, Italy.

Pianist **Peter Miyamoto** has enjoyed a brilliant international career, performing to great acclaim in recital and as soloist in Canada, England, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Switzerland, China, and Japan, and in major US cities such as Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington D.C. In 1990, Miyamoto was named the first Gilmore Young Artist. He won numerous other competitions, including the American Pianist Association

National Fellowship Competition, the D'Angelo Competition, the San Francisco Symphony Competition and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Competition, and was a top-prize winner in the National Chopin Piano Competition.

Peter Miyamoto holds degrees from the Curtis Institute of Music, Yale University School of Music, Michigan State University, and the Royal Academy of Music in London. His teachers included Maria Curcio-Diamand, Leon Fleisher, Claude Frank, Peter Frankl, Marek Jablonski, Aube Tzerko, and Ralph Votapek, as well as Szymon Goldberg, Felix Galimir and Lorand Fenyves for chamber music. A dedicated chamber musician, he has collaborated with such musician as Charles Castleman, Victor Danchenko, Joel Krosnick, Lara St. John, Anthony McGill, Amit Peled, David Shifrin, Allan Vogel, singer Lucy Shelton, and members of the Juilliard, Borromeo and Pacific String Quartets. He is the Executive Director of the Plowman Chamber Music Competition.

Currently Middlebush Chair of Piano at the University of Missouri, where he was also named 2021 Professor of the Year, Peter Miyamoto formerly taught at Michigan State University, and the California Institute of the Arts. He has presented lectures and master classes through the Irving S. Gilmore Keyboard Festival and the Amadeus Piano Festival, at numerous music institutions including the Colburn School, Interlochen Academy of the Arts, Oberlin Conservatory and the University of Michigan among many others, as well as internationally in Canada, China, Greece, Japan and Serbia. From 2003-2015 he served as head of the piano faculty at the New York Summer Music Festival and has served on the piano faculty of the Curtis Institute of Music's Young Artist Summer Program and the Curtis Mentor Network Program in Philadelphia.

Miyamoto's six solo CDs, available on the Blue-Griffin label, have received excellent reviews in periodicals such as *Gramophone*, *International Record Review*, *Fanfare*, and *American Record Guide* and were recognized by the American Prize. He has also recorded a CD with violinist Julie Rosenfeld of world-premieres of six works for violin and piano on the Albany label, produced by GRAMMY Award winner Judith Sherman.