

Alice Tully Hall

Home of the Chamber Music Society
Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts

THE SHEPHERD SCHOOL OF MUSIC Rice University

SERGIU LUCA, *Violin*
BRIAN CONNELLY, *Piano*

Tuesday Evening, November 24, 1987, at 8:00

WILLIAM BOLCOM **Second Sonata***
Summer Dreams
Brutal, fast
Adagio
In Memory of Joe Venuti

RAVEL **Sonate**
Allegretto
Blues: Moderato
Perpetuum mobile: Allegro

Intermission

BRAHMS **Sonata in G Major, Op. 78**
Vivace ma non troppo
Adagio
Allegro molto moderato

SCHUBERT **Rondeau Brilliante, D.895***
Andante-Allegro

*This concert is presented in celebration of
seventy-five years of classes at Rice University.*

*Recorded by Sergiu Luca on Nonesuch Records.

In consideration of the performing artists and members of the audience, those who must leave before the end of the performance are asked to do so between numbers, not during the performance.
The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not allowed in this building.

Notes on the Program

Second Sonata

WILLIAM BOLCOM

(b. 1938)

Composer and pianist William Bolcom has won many awards for his compositions, including BMI, two Guggenheims, several Rockefeller Foundation Awards, an award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Koussevitzky Foundation, and many others. Recent recordings of his own works include a violin and piano album on Nonesuch (with Sergiu Luca) and his Piano Concerto on Pantheon. As a pianist, he has been teaching composition at the University of Michigan, where in 1977 he was given the Henry Russel Award; he has been Full Professor of Composition since 1983. In 1984 his setting of William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, a full-evening work with soloists, choruses and orchestra, was given its American premiere at Ann Arbor, having had its world premiere at the Stuttgart Opera; the work was also performed at Grant Park in Chicago in 1986, and the Brooklyn Philharmonic has included the work in their 1986 season. His Concerto in D for Violin and Orchestra was given for the first time by Sergiu Luca under the baton of Dennis Russell Davies at Saarbrücken in 1984, and his *Fantasia Concertante* was premiered by the Vienna Philharmonic in 1986 in Salzburg by James Levine.

The Second Sonata for Violin and Piano (1978) was commissioned by the McKim Fund in the Library of Congress at the request of Sergiu Luca, and had its premiere by Mr. Luca and the composer at the Coolidge Auditorium, Washington D.C. on January 12, 1979. The work was composed in Ann Arbor, Michigan, New York City, and at the Aspen Music Festival in Colorado, where Mr. Bolcom was the composer-in-residence in 1978. As Mr. Luca has shown a deep interest in American jazz violin styles (particularly that of the late Joe Venuti, who died just before the work's completion), several passages throughout the composition show this influence, especially the last movement. Many of the short slides, characteristic of Venuti's style, have been notated throughout the score. The work incorporates a wide-ranging exploration of the expressive possibilities of both instruments.

Sonate

MAURICE RAVEL

Born March 7, 1875, in Ciboure, Basses-Pyrénées, France

Died December 28, 1937, in Paris

Ravel's Sonate for violin and piano was born in 1927 out of the rejected project of a Violin Concerto of 1923. It was premiered by Georges Enesco and the composer the same year. It is a work of research rather than of spontaneous inspiration; Ravel employs great clarity and sensitivity in stressing the two instruments' incompatibility instead of softening their contrast. The opening *Allegretto* has moving melodic lines with pronounced independence of the two instruments, creating a dialogue of flowing lyricism between the two equally important parts.

Ravel was fascinated by the elements of jazz music, and included many of them in the second movement, *Blues*. The disunion of the two instruments here is carried to the extent of affecting their respective key signatures—one sharp for the violin and four flats for the piano. The violin part includes guitar-like strumming, off-beat accents and sad slides, while the piano maintains a steady, crisp honky-tonk rhythmic pattern with syncopation. The harshness of this music creates a feeling of anguish.

In the final movement, *Vivace*, the violin begins with a few introductory statements that build into an exciting perpetual motion. The intensity strengthens until the explosive climax. At the same time, the piano withdraws into the background as an accompanying part.

Sonata in G major, Op. 78

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Born May 7, 1833, in Hamburg

Died April 3, 1897, in Vienna

Brahms composed the Sonata in G major, Op. 78, in the summers of 1878 and 1879 and at a time when he was entering his greatest creative period. It is known as the *Rain Sonata* because Brahms uses the central melodic themes from his songs, "Regenlied" and "Nachklang," which originated a few years earlier. Brahms had a passion for water and acknowledged that some of his best ideas came to him in the bath or while walking in the rain. The impression or feeling of water is certainly present in this sonata; the thrice-repeated note in dotted rhythm is prominent in all three movements.

This sonata, which is known to have pleased Brahms more than either of his later violin sonatas, was strongly felt by his closest friends to be one of his most personal and intimate compositions. The monotonous, incessant patter of rain, for the most part suggested by the running piano figure in the sonata's last movement, is expressed with a restrained reminiscence over his childhood as expressed in the text of "Regenlied":

Walle, Regen walle nieder
Wecke meine alten Lieder
Die wir in der Türe sangen
Wenn die Tropfen draussen Klängen!
Möchte ihnen wieder lauschen
Ihrem süssen, feuchten Rauschen,
Meine Seele sanft betauen
Mit dem frommen Kindergrauen—

Pour down rain
Awaken my old songs
which we used to sing at the door
when the drops were pattering outside.
Would that I could listen to you again,
hear your sweet splashing,
and steep my soul softly
in the holy wonder of childhood.

—Claus Croth and Johannes Brahms

The work was introduced to the public in 1880 by the eminent violinist Joseph Joachim and Brahms. It found its way to people's hearts perhaps more than any of Brahms' previous works. Its first effect upon Clara Schumann at once confirmed this as she wrote to a friend that she "simply had to have a good cry for delight at it."

Rondeau Brillante, D.895

FRANZ SCHUBERT

Born January 31, 1797, in Liechtenthal, Vienna

Died November 19, 1828, in Vienna

Schubert was born into a household where the violin was considered almost indispensable to life itself. Schubert's father and brothers maintained a family quartet in which he played viola, and he received several years of formal instruction on the violin. This environment partly accounts for the numerous string quartets he produced early in his career. Schubert wrote surprisingly few compositions for piano and single-stringed instruments together, the greater number of these belonging to his earlier period. *Rondeau Brillante*, composed in 1826, is a product of Schubert's artistic maturity. It is probably his finest work for a solo instrument and piano, appropriately titled because of its expression of joyous excitement and purpose. Schubert's Vienna was overflowing with rondeaus, and given its simple form (Introduction-ABACA-Coda), his treatment of the structural components of the genre are considered to be highly imaginative.

Rondeau Brillante was premiered in 1827 by violinist Josef Slawik and pianist Karl Maria von Bocklet. It is worthy to note that from 1825 on, performances of Schubert's music in Vienna were second in number only to Rossini's, an incredible achievement for a composer less than thirty years of age.

Meet the Artists



"A fiddler's fiddler" is how the violinist **Sergiu Luca** was described by a reviewer in the *Washington Post*. This is typical praise for a concert personality who has enjoyed a world-wide career as one of the great violinists of this generation since his debut with the Philadel-

phia Orchestra in 1965. Known for his performances with orchestra and in recital, Mr. Luca combines an unparalleled diversity with an inspired virtuosity and performs annually at major music capitals throughout the world. While remaining a leading exponent of the familiar Romantic violin literature, he has been acclaimed for his performances of the Baroque and Classical literature using authentic bows, instruments, and tunings of the period.

A native of Rumania, Mr. Luca made his debut with Israel's Haifa Symphony at the age of nine. Following his studies in England and Switzerland, he came to the United States, at the suggestion of Isaac Stern and under the sponsorship of the America-Israel Cultural Foundation, to study with the legendary pedagogue Ivan Galamian at the Curtis Institute.

Soon after his Philadelphia debut, he was chosen by Leonard Bernstein to play the Sibelius Violin Concerto with the New York Philharmonic for a special CBS television network tribute to the Finnish composer. He has subsequently performed with many of the world's leading orchestras in Europe, Israel, and Latin America, and in the United States with orchestras including the Cleveland, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Indianapolis, Atlanta, and National Symphony Orchestra.

Mr. Luca's highly praised recordings on the Nonesuch label offer a survey of the breadth of his virtuosity. He received wide critical attention for the first recording of the complete unaccompanied violin works of J.S. Bach on original instrument and Baroque bow. He has recorded the complete violin/piano music of Bartók, sonatas of Schumann and Mendelssohn, a selection of Czech music, three

works of Schubert, music of Tartini and Chabran (also on original instruments), and works by William Bolcom, with the composer at the keyboard. His orchestral recordings include the massive Violin Concerto and two shorter works by Dvorák with Leonard Slatkin and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and a recording of three Beethoven works and a Spohr Concerto with David Zinman and the Rochester Philharmonic.

As a recitalist, Mr. Luca has performed in Europe, Mexico, Japan, and throughout North America. He has collaborated with such keyboard artists as Emanuel Ax, Albert Fuller, Anne Epperson, Joseph Kalichstein, and Peter Serkin. A significant association for the last several seasons has been his work with fortepiano virtuoso Malcolm Bilson in the complete violin/keyboard sonatas of Mozart.

In the midst of his concert and recording activities, Mr. Luca enjoys a career rich in diversity and challenge. The founder and director (for ten years) of Chamber Music Northwest in Portland, Oregon, he is The Dorothy Richard Starling Professor of Classical Violin at The Shepherd School of Music, Rice University.



Brian Connelly is a modern virtuoso who has received outstanding acclaim for his commanding and communicative performances. He is on the faculty of The Shepherd School of Music at Rice University, where he is Artist Teacher of Piano. He has taught chamber

music for several summers for the University of Michigan at Interlochen.

Widely recognized as a pianist of extraordinary diversity, Connelly performs frequently with renowned violinist Sergiu Luca and with award-winning saxophonist Laura Hunter. Particularly devoted to the performance of contemporary music, Connelly has premiered works by such composers as William Albright, William Bolcom, Paul Cooper, David Diamond, and Ross Lee Finney.

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Long known for its achievements in science and engineering, Rice University of Houston, Texas acquired a resplendent new voice in 1975: The Shepherd School of Music. The boldest of a number of advances in the arts and letters then underway at Rice, the new school began with a small number of serious students and dedicated musician-teachers.

The Shepherd School now offers a full range of programs: baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degrees in music history and theory, conducting, composition, orchestral performance, keyboard studies, vocal performance, and chamber music. The current student body is international in representation with 235 young musicians from North and South America, Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan, and Europe.

In its first decade the Shepherd School has earned a national reputation as a first-rate professional school of music, offering the highest level of education, with many graduates already launched on significant professional careers. At the same time, the school has

perceptibly enlarged the quality of intellectual discourse and artistic experience at Rice, not only for members of the academic community, but also for the many Houston residents who enjoy Shepherd School concerts and recitals.

Under the leadership of President George Rupp and the Rice Board of Governors, the University has embarked on a major building program that will gather the Shepherd School's now far-flung components under one roof. This spring, ground will be broken for a building that will include practice rooms, classrooms, rehearsal and small ensemble spaces, teaching studios, a recital hall, a music listening library, and a large concert hall. Occupancy is scheduled for Fall 1990. Throughout the facility, priority will be given to the special and finely-tuned acoustical environments necessary for studying and performing music. The new building will provide the Shepherd School with a sense of identity and physical presence while enhancing the Rice campus and creating a meeting place between academe and community.

ALICE TULLY HALL

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