

...the eye sees not itself, but by reflection, by some other things. -William Shakespeare

Part One, **Admiration**

HAYDN: Fantasia in C major, Hob. XVII:4, Capriccio (1789) (6 mins)

DEBUSSY: *Hommage à Haydn* (1909) (2 mins)

RAVEL: *Menuet sur le nom d'Haydn* (1909) (2 mins)

BROWN: *Etude-Fantasy on the name of Haydn* (2020) (3 mins)

Part Two, **Reflection**

RAVEL: *Miroirs* (1904–1905) (29 mins)

I. Noctuelles (Night Moths)

II. Oiseaux tristes (Sad Birds)

III. Une barque sur l'océan (A Boat on the Ocean)

IV. Alborada del gracioso (The Comedian's Aubade)

V. La vallée des cloches (The Valley of Bells)

Intermission

Part Three, **Love**

DELPHINE Von SCHAUROTH: Three Songs Without Words, Op. 18, No. 1 in E Major, No. 5 in A Minor, No. 6 in F Major (7 mins)

MENDELSSOHN: Fantasy in F-sharp Minor, Op. 28 (12 mins)

BROWN: Breakup Etude for Right Hand (2020) (7 mins)

Two transcriptions from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by Felix Mendelssohn

MENDELSSOHN-RACHMANINOFF: Scherzo (4 mins)

MENDELSSOHN-LISZT-HOROWITZ-BROWN: Wedding March (7 mins)

Michael Stephen Brown, piano

The works on the program share common inspirations of folklore, nature, and love. Part One explores the musical voice of Franz Joseph Haydn, opening with his humorous *Fantasia in C Major "Capriccio."* The work is based on the Austrian folk song, "*The farmer's wife has lost her cat.*" To commemorate the centenary of Haydn's death in 1909, Maurice Ravel and Claude Debussy were commissioned to write short homages based on musically spelling out H-A-Y-D-N. Alongside their tributes, I include my recent *Etude-Fantasy* on the name of Haydn featuring the same pitches used by Debussy and Ravel to close out a set honoring Haydn.

Part Two features one of Ravel's great piano masterpieces, *Miroirs*. Ravel claimed that his *Miroirs* was inspired by this line from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, "...the eye sees not itself, but by reflection, by some other things. With its evocative titles and pianistic innovations, these pieces remain among the most pictorially vivid in the repertoire. The five pieces that comprise *Miroirs* are variously dedicated to a poet, a pianist, a painter, a music critic, and a composer, all members of a circle of Parisian artists known as "*Les Apaches.*"

Part Three explores the world of love with an emphasis on Felix Mendelssohn. He was enamored with a pianist-composer named Delphine Von Schauroth, a musical figure of the past whose music is virtually unheard nowadays. The two had a mutual affection and she wrote *Songs Without Words* for him and he dedicated various works to her in a musical love exchange. The two wound up marrying other people. On a similar subject, my *Breakup Etude for Right Hand Alone* pours out my own aching soul in the form of a masochistically difficult piece written for my right hand alone when my left hand was stuck in a splint. The recital concludes with two transcriptions from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by Felix Mendelssohn, Rachmaninoff's dazzling transcription of the *Scherzo*, and my own spin on Liszt and (Horowitz's) *Wedding March*. **-MSB**