The D'Angelo Department of Music
at
Mercyhurst University

presents

Eden Dolanc, piano

Senior Recital

Walker Recital Hall

Saturday, November 14, 2026
1:00pm

MERCYHURST
UNIVERSITY
D'ANGELO DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

PROGRAM

Sonata in E Minor, M. 17 — Antonio Soler
Sonata in D-flat Major, R. 88 — (1729-1783)

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Sonata in D Minor, Op. 31, No. 2, "Tempest" — Ludwig van Beethoven
Largo—Allegro — (1770-1827)
Adagio
Allegretto

Intermission

Oiseaux Tristes from *Miroirs* — Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)
Des pas sur la neige, No. 6 from Preludes, Book I — Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)
General Lavine, eccentric, No. 6 from Preludes, Book II

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from Ten Pieces from *Romeo and Juliet*, Op. 75 — Sergei Prokofiev
II. *Scene* — (1891-1953)
VIII. *Mercutio*
VI. *Montagues and Capulets*

Please silence all electronic devices. The use of recording devices is strictly prohibited.

NOTES

Sonata in E Minor, M. 17 Antonio Soler (1729-1783)
Sonata in D-flat Major. R. 88

Antonio Soler was born in 1729 in Olot, Spain and died in 1783 at the Monastery of San Lorenzo del Escorial. He was a composer of the late baroque and early classical period. He began his training at the age of six in harpsichord and organ, studying with Domenico Scarlatti at the Monastery of Montserrat. Later he worked his way up at the Monastery of San Lorenzo del Escorial and taught where Scarlatti had as well. From his close work with Scarlatti, his compositions were of a very similar harpsichord style, though Scarlatti naturally got more attention, as he was in the spotlight first. During his career there, Soler composed 120-150 keyboard sonatas, multiple concertos, quintets for organ and strings, and pieces for solo organ. He is most well-known for his keyboard sonatas and the six concertos for two organs.

Antonio Soler's Sonata in E minor, M. 17, like his other sonatas, is typically performed on the modern pianos of today. Soler originally wrote his sonatas for harpsichord, organ, and early fortepiano. Like most of his keyboard sonatas, this one is in a bipartite form. Bipartite is a composition form that is made up of two parts. The first part is characterized by theme A presented in the main tonality, and the second part as theme A or A' presented in the dominant key, followed by theme B in the tonic. Marked *Adagio*, its slow tempo highlights the intricate phrasing, delicate tonal control, and precise ornamentation that is characteristic of Baroque keyboard music. The melody relies heavily on sixteenth-note passages woven with passing tones and trills. Soler uses melodic contour and expressive dissonances to shape these musical lines. The first half of the piece draws to a close on a gentle *pianissimo* dominant chord in B minor. The second section, a development section, opens with a slight shift in color that transitions into ascending trill-based lines. It then builds on a leaping eighth-note motive introduced in the first half, beginning at a *pianissimo* dynamic and gradually building over ten measures to *mezzo forte*. The sonata concludes with a return to the closing material of the first section, rounding out the sonata in the home key of E minor.

Soler's Sonata in D-flat major, R. 88, was composed between 1757-1783 during his time at the monastery. Sonata in D-flat major begins with a strong introduction of octave triplets in a descending D-flat major arpeggio. This leads straight into the main theme beginning with the first trill of many in this piece. The sonata features a great number of rising sequential passages, as well as an abundant use of different registers, which often calls for heavy dynamic contrast. The second section presents the original theme in the dominant key and moves through a developmental section, before leading back into the tonic towards the end of the section.

Sonata in D Minor, Op. 31, No. 2, "The Tempest" L. van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Ludwig van Beethoven was born in 1770 in Bonn, Germany. Initially taught by his father, Beethoven quickly became a child prodigy pianist. Similarly to Mozart, Beethoven's father also took him on tour as a young boy to showcase his talent. By around the age of 10, he began composition lessons with Christian Gottlob Neefe. During this early period of his life, he dedicated himself to studying the masterworks of the composers that came before him. He became well versed in the classical repertoire and developed his skills as a composer within this style. Beethoven moved to Vienna at the age of 21, where he studied composition with Franz Joseph Haydn. He composed a variety of works within the classical style including his first two symphonies, several string quartets, and the first group of his piano sonatas, including what we know as the "Pathetique" and the "Moonlight" Sonatas. Beethoven's middle period was marked by his third symphony, known as the "Eroica," which marked a major expansion of his musical language. From then on, he experimented with form and harmony within the many compositions he produced during this period. His late period, starting around 1816, showcases some of his most creative and virtuosic works including the "Hammerklavier" Sonata, the Ninth Symphony, and his last string quartets. Adding to his internal struggles, Beethoven became completely deaf in his mid to late 40s, yet he did not allow it to stop him from creating music.

Sonata in D Minor, Op. 31, No. 2, also referred to as "The Tempest," was written between 1801 and 1802. The subtitle comes from a reference to Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, as well as the turbulent nature of the sonata itself. The first movement in D minor is based on two ideas—the first being a slowly rolled chord, followed by the second, a conflicting series of rapid two-note slurs. These themes are elaborated upon throughout the movement while remaining in sonata-allegro form. Beethoven plays with the back and forth between slow *adagio* moments and rumbling tempestuous sections. After the exposition, the development is highly dramatic, expanding upon the short contrasting motives from the exposition. He focuses on the opening arpeggio line and writes it in sequences to travel through different key centers. Here he breaks the structural rules of form by giving the development a function of a dramatic continuation on the exposition's two themes, rather than a section purely devoted to key-wandering. The closing of the movement is in the tonic of d minor, and utilizes a pianissimo rumbling arpeggio on the left hand, to quietly, yet still dramatically, finish out the movement.

Marked *Adagio*, the second movement maintains a steady, deliberate tempo throughout. In contrast to the D minor tonality of the outer movements, this movement is set in the warm key of B-flat major. Like the opening of the first movement, it begins with an arpeggiated chord in the tonic. Given its slow pacing, the main theme is expansive and evocative of a slow woodwind chorale. After the main thematic material, Beethoven introduces a low, timpani-like motif featuring thirty-second-note triplets in the left hand, providing a rhythmic accompaniment beneath a soaring lyrical melody in the right hand. Though these thematic ideas recur later in the movement, its formal structure is frequently debated. Some scholars view it as sonata form without a development section, where Beethoven replaces thematic development with varied accompaniment patterns and key shifts. The movement closes with a gentle coda derived from the primary theme and transition, fading quietly into the home key of B-flat major.

The third and final movement returns the listener to the home key of D minor. Marked *Allegretto*, it is driven by an unrelenting perpetual motion of sixteenth notes from start to finish. The main theme is woven directly into this continuous flow, announced immediately by the pickup beats

that open the movement and recur at every measure. This four-note motif is rapidly tossed across registers, generating an urgent and anxious momentum. True to the sonata's nickname, "Tempest," Beethoven creates a sense of turbulent drama not through drastic tempo contrast, but through wide dynamic shifts and expansive keyboard range. The development relies heavily on this opening motif as it modulates through G minor, A minor, B-flat minor, and C minor. The recapitulation emerges from a cadenza-like dominant pedal, restating the primary theme in D minor with subtle harmonic variations. The movement closes with a substantial coda featuring its own developmental passage before resolving into a quiet, descending D minor arpeggio.

Oiseaux tristes from *Miroirs* Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Maurice Ravel was born in Ciboure, France in 1875 and died in Paris in 1937. Although not a child prodigy, he studied piano and composition from a young age. By age 14, he was admitted to the Paris Conservatoire where he was heavily exposed to and influenced by French Impressionism. He eventually studied at the Conservatoire with Gabriel Fauré, who became a great mentor in Ravel's musical development. Some of Ravel's most famous works include the orchestral pieces *Bolero* and *La Valse*, the ballet *Daphnis et Chloé*, and the monumental piano work *Gaspard de la nuit*.

Ravel's *Miroirs* was composed in 1904-5, including five distinct piano pieces, each one being dedicated to a different close friend of his and a member of Les Apaches, a group of musical friends formed in 1903. *Miroirs* began a new era of his compositional style in which, he said, "marked a rather considerable change in harmonic evolution."

"Oiseaux Tristes" was the first of the set to be composed and was Ravel's favorite of the five pieces. It was dedicated to one of his mentors, Ricardo Vines. Translating to Sorrowful Birds, the piece evokes the sounds of somber bird calls. He achieves this sound of nature through several methods of composition. He writes a different time signature for each hand which creates an overlapping atmosphere of syncopation and two against three. Dynamic markings are often marked at *pp* or *ppp*. The middle section of the piece is much quicker and involves thicker textures

with clashing chords. This evokes sounds of the frantic fluttering of birds. The final section of the piece includes a cadenza-like passage that utilizes nearly the entire range of the keyboard. It then moves to a more somber tone similar to the beginning. Ravel labels the ending section of fading bird calls as *sombre et lointain*, meaning dark and distant.

Prelude VI, Book I: *Des pas sur la neige* Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
Prelude VI, Book II: *General Lavine, eccentric*

Claude Debussy was born 1862 in St. Germain-en-Laye, France. A graduate of the Paris Conservatoire, he became one of the most influential figures of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century music. He was one of the most prominent composers in the Impressionistic era of music, however he rejected the term Impressionism and aligned himself with the Symbolist poets of the time. Some of his most well-known works include *Clair de lune* for piano, the opera *Pelleas et Melisande*, and the symphonic masterpieces *Prelude a l'apres-midi d'un* and *La Mer*.

Debussy's "Des pas sur la neige," or "Footsteps in the Snow," is the sixth prelude in Preludes, Book I, written between 1909-1910. The beginning of the piece is marked *Ce rythme doit avoir la valeur sonore d'un fond de paysage triste et glace*, instructing the pianist to play the recurring rhythmic figure as a quiet, atmospheric backdrop that feels cold, desolate, and distant.

The main motive consists of an interval of a second, representing the trudging footsteps across a frozen landscape. This figure gradually becomes layered with harmonies that create an exuberance of color. However, the overall thin texture still retains the starkness of the scene, punctuated by frequent chromaticism. The climax of the prelude uses previously stated material to build to the loudest point in the piece, which reaches only a carefully shaped range of dynamics no louder than about *mezzo piano*. The closing section is marked even slower—as if the wintry scene is taking over—and the final marking of *morendo* at *pianississimo* dies away in descending fourths and fifths, finishing with a chilling whisper of a chord at the opposite ends of the keyboard's registers.

Debussy's "General Lavine, eccentric" falls directly in the middle of his second book of Preludes from late 1912. It hints to any unusual mood changes throughout the piece, however Debussy titles his preludes at the end of the piece, leaving it up to the performer to create their own first interpretation. The form of the prelude has clear and contrasting A and B sections with a returning A prime section, ending the piece with a dramatic passage of new harmonies.

General Lavine was an African American man who lived during the late nineteenth century. He was a part of a circus act that traveled around America and later Europe. Though he performed many clown-like roles in the act, he was known for his juggling, where he juggled unusual objects. Inspired by Lavine's unique circus act, Debussy writes this prelude by dehumanizing the act to a puppet like performance put to music. This can be heard through the staccato eighth notes giving detached, marionette-like passages. With this he used a variety of emotions and characteristic changes to possibly portray the many personas shown in General Lavine's circus act. One of them specifically being compared to a Cakewalk (an African American uplifting dance originating from slavery). Throughout the piece there is the reoccurring marionette-like theme, however its context is always different. Debussy uses varying tempo and substantial dynamic contrasts to differentiate character changes during transitions to new sections, and sometimes directly in the middle of a phrase, giving the listener a less predictable musical form. "General Lavine, the eccentric" delights the listener with its unique melodies, odd rhythms, and unpredictable mood changes.

From Ten Pieces from *Romeo and Juliet*, Op. 75 Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

II. *Scene*
VIII. *Mercutio*
VI. *Montagues and Capulets*

Sergei Prokofiev was born in Ukraine and lived from 1891 to 1953. As a young boy, he began both piano lessons and learning to compose, guided by his mother, an accomplished pianist. He continued his music education at the Conservatory at St. Petersburg where he gained a firm foundation of academic fundamentals of music. Towards the end of his

schooling, he composed his first large-scale work, the Piano Concerto No. 1 in D-flat major. As he continued composing, he quickly expanded his range of musical genres and began writing symphonies, operas, ballets, film music, and program pieces. Inspirations for this variety of music came from many sources including the newer forms of theatre, poetry, and painting.

Prokofiev's Ten Pieces *from Romeo and Juliet, Op. 75,* was first written as a ballet score in 1935. Before being set to dance, several dancers read through the score and requested substantial edits and cuts. This was because ballet directors claimed it would be too difficult to dance to. Other complaints were made by the Soviet authorities of the time, asking that Prokofiev re-write his happy ending to match the original Shakespeare ending, as Prokofiev's version violated the ideological requirements of the Socialist Realism of the time and the preservation of Shakespeare's tragic ending. Because of the major delay in the production of his ballet, Prokofiev was able to arrange two orchestral suites and the collection of ten piano pieces before the ballet premiered for the first time in 1938.

"Scene (The Street Awakens)" is the second of the ten arranged piano pieces. It is from Act I, which sets the morning scene of the city. The music depicts a rising sun and a city coming to life with a quiet yet exuberant melody in a duple meter. The main theme is introduced five measures into the piece and is repeated throughout in several variations by utilizing different registers of the keyboard, key signatures, and tempi. Prokofiev shows some humor and foreshadowing twists in this shorter piece of the set with sudden shifts in tonal center such as the move from D major to F minor within the first half of the piece. These unexpected aspects of the piece are an example of one of the five defining characteristics of his compositions: humor. Throughout there are also cluster chords and "wrong note chords," such as the final chord of the piece, which is deliberately made up of consonant and dissonant notes setting the scene for tension in the story about the two star-crossed lovers.

"Mercutio" is the eighth piece in the set and represents the overall character of Mercutio. Shakespeare wrote him as Romeo's closest friend

in the story. Mercutio is known as a prankster with constant quick wittiness. Though he is quite the comedian, he still plays a crucial role in the story by downplaying the possibility of romantic love between Romeo and Juliet. Mercutio is killed later in the story by Tybalt in a duel that was meant to be between Tybalt and Romeo.

This piece perfectly captures these distinctive traits. Set in the key of A-flat major, the music moves at a rapid pace. The right-hand melody is constantly shifting and evolving, while the offbeat patterns in the left-hand brilliantly expose Mercutio's quick-witted nature. Prokofiev writes this right-hand line using crisp staccato articulations and irregular accents that demand precise control. The melody spans a wide and unpredictable range on the keyboard, leaping across registers to allude to Mercutio's energy. Written in ternary (ABA) form, the outer A sections spotlight his humorous quirks, whereas the contrasting B section represents his calculated wit amidst tense situations, such as arguments with Romeo and Juliet's families, or the duel that ultimately leads to his death. In this B section, the music undergoes a striking textural shift. Prokofiev marks it as *moderato scherzando* and *tranquillo,* contrasting from the frantic and energetic character of the A section. He introduces unexpected accidentals and harmonies, subtle modulations, and leaping grace note chords to keep Mercutio's wittiness alive. The return of the A section brings back the original theme with grander, thicker chords and pianistically demanding stretches that reach beyond an octave. Finally, the piece comes to an abrupt close on a stumbling A-flat major chord.

"Montagues and Capulets" is the sixth piece in the set and notably the most well-known of the ten. This movement is a combined work of two distinct moments from the original ballet—The Dance of the Knights and The Duke's Decree. The Dance of the Knights symbolizes the immense tension and rivalry between the Montagues and Capulets in the original Shakespeare plot. The Duke's Decree is portraying the orders from the duke to cease the battling families' war. Prokofiev masterfully reconstructed these into a loose ternary form to reflect both as a whole movement, while still showing the developing plot of the duke's attempted orders versus the two impassioned families.
The first half of the piece comes from The Dance of the Knights and is obvious in its display of vehement conflict between the Montagues and

the Capulets. The left hand begins the familiar underlying ostinato of low and stomping octaves in the key of e minor, marked with the term *pesante.* The right hand brings in the well-known melody of rising and falling arpeggios. Together they form the basis of the emotions and physical sparring of the families. In Prokofiev-like fashion, he uses more contemporary chords and sounds to give new flavors to the heavy dance, including highly dissonant harmonies, forceful accents, and thick chordal textures that emphasize the aggressive and combative nature of the dance. The second half of the piece shifts suddenly to a *piano* dynamic and staccato technique, with a slow waltz to represent the duke's orders to cease the war. Still in e minor, the main theme comes back after the duke's decree, but now starts at a *piano* dynamic and slowly crescendos through to the end of the piece, showing that the rivalry between the Montagues and the Capulets is strong enough to ignore such a decree.