

# Sarah Chang, violin

## Lars Vogt, piano

Friday, March 7, 2003, 8 pm

Zellerbach Hall

### PROGRAM

- Maurice Ravel    Sonata for Violin and Piano  
                         Allegretto  
                         Blues: Moderato  
                         Perpetuum mobile: Allegro
- Camille Saint-Saëns    Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano  
                         in D minor, Op. 75  
                         Allegro agitato – Adagio  
                         Allegro moderato – Allegro molto

### INTERMISSION

- César Franck    Sonata for Violin and Piano in A major  
                         Allegro ben marcato  
                         Allegro  
                         Recitativo – Fantasia: Ben moderato  
                         Allegretto poco mosso

Sarah Chang records exclusively for EMI Records.  
Lars Vogt records exclusively for EMI Records.  
Steinway piano

Exclusive Management for Ms. Chang and Mr. Vogt:  
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Sonata for Violin and Piano  
Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)

Hélène Jourdan-Morhange was one of France's most promising violinists in the years after the First World War. She was in her mid-twenties, and recently widowed by the hostilities, when Ravel first met her at a performance of his Piano Trio in which she participated during the War; they were close friends until the composer's death in 1937. (Hélène died at the age of 73 in 1961.) "During his

years at Montfort-l'Amaury [the composer's beloved home 20 miles west of Versailles, today a Ravel museum], Ravel saw a great deal of Hélène," wrote the composer's biographer Madeleine Goss. "The two had much in common: music, love of cats, and understanding and respect for each other's temperament. This sympathy, according to many, ripened into something deeper—at least on Ravel's part, but he was too diffident to express himself unless sure of response. Mme. Jourdan-Morhange remained faithful to the memory of her husband [the painter Jacques Jourdan], killed in the War, but always stayed close to Ravel in friendship." Ravel consulted Hélène frequently on matters of string technique, and had her play many items from the standard violin repertory for his edification. In 1922, she gave the premieres of both the *Berceuse sur le nom de Fauré* and the *Sonata for Violin and Cello*, and urged him (without success) to write a concerto for her. In August 1923, after a visit to London to conduct his *Mother Goose* and *La Valse*, Ravel undertook a *Sonata for Hélène*, promising that "it won't be very difficult, and it won't sprain your wrist." (Violinists might well disagree.) His health and creativity had been damaged by the rigors of the War, however, and work on the sonata went slowly, interrupted by concert tours, rest cures, and the composition of *Tzigane*, the opera *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, and the exotic song-cycle *Chansons Madécasses*. Fate dealt unkindly with Mme. Jourdan-Morhange, however, and by the time that Ravel completed her sonata in the spring of 1927, rheumatism had forced an end to her performing career. (Posterity benefited. She left two valuable books of memoirs about her relationship with the composer: *Ravel et nous* and, with the composer's student Vlado Perlemuter, *Ravel d'après Ravel*.) The brilliant Rumanian composer and violinist Georges Enesco, a friend of Ravel since their student days together at the Conservatoire, gave the sonata's first performance with the composer at the keyboard at the Salle Erard on May 30, 1927, in a concert of works recently published by Jacques Durand. (Ravel had written a one-movement sonata for Enesco in 1897. The student piece was long thought lost, and recovered by Arbie Orenstein only in 1975.) Ravel played the sonata with Joseph Szigeti at his American debut in New York's Gallo Theater on January 15, 1928. The score was dedicated to Hélène Jourdan-Morhange.

Concerning the lengthy gestation of the *Violin Sonata*, his final chamber composition and one of his favorites among his own works, Ravel once quipped that it took him four years to eliminate all the unnecessary notes. Though intended humorously, his comment touches on essential qualities of the work—its lean textures, acerbic harmonic language, and economy of means, characteristics that first appeared in Ravel's music with the remarkable *Chansons Madécasses*, completed in 1926. He said that in the *Chansons*, "The independence of the part writing is pronounced . . . I also asserted this independence in the *Sonata for Violin and Piano*, instruments which, in my opinion, are essentially incompatible. Far from balancing their contrasts, the *Sonata* reveals their incompatibility." The opening movement, patterned on traditional sonata form, is the most convivial portion of the work regarding the sharing of musical materials between the participants, though even here each instrument displays a distinctive personality. The piano writing is notable for its sparseness, only infrequently enlisting more than three voices, and in some passages consisting solely of streams of hollow parallel fifths. The influence of that international musical mania of the 1920s—American jazz—was the inspiration for the second movement, titled *Blues*. During his visit to the United States, Ravel said, "To my mind, 'blues' is one of your greatest musical assets, truly American despite earlier contributory influences from Africa and Spain . . . I venture to say nevertheless that this [*Sonata*] is French music, Ravel's music, that I have written. Indeed, these popular forms are but the materials of construction . . . Moreover, minute stylization of these materials is altogether essential." Ravel's transformations of the elements of jazz—the altered notes of the "blues scale," the jaunty syncopations, the suggestive glissandos, the seductive "slow-drag" tempo—were based on the knowledge of the music he had gained from the Negro bands of the Paris jazz clubs that were all the rage after the War, a source that also inspired Stravinsky, Milhaud, Poulenc, and other European composers during those years. (One of the highlights of Ravel's New York stay was his visit to several Harlem night clubs in the company of George Gershwin and Alexandre Tansman.) The *Sonata's* flamboyant finale, cut from the same virtuoso cloth as *Tzigane*, is designated *Perpetuum mobile*, though the "perpetual motion" is confined entirely to the violin part while the

piano is allotted a considerably more sedate accompaniment into which are woven allusions to the opening movement.

Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano  
in D minor, Op. 75

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–1921)

There has probably never been an entirely complimentary evaluation written of Camille Saint-Saëns. That of Martin Cooper is typical: “Saint-Saëns had the neat, dry mind of an 18th-century ‘philosopher,’ a sensuous concept of beauty, a chameleon-like sense of style, and a dazzling technical skill. His music achieves all that can be achieved by the intelligent use of traditional forms in the hands of a polished, witty member of a very highly civilized community, who is also poor in distinctive qualities and, by an unhappy conjunction of temperament and circumstance, small-hearted.” A review in the *Boston Traveler* following the American premiere of the Third Violin Concerto in that city said, “Saint-Saëns is so completely a master of his musical material that whenever he has a musical idea he is thoroughly enjoyable. To be sure, he does not always have anything to say, and he has written a good deal of music without any apparent idea whatsoever.” Alas, poor, talented Camille; criticized for the very thing he sought to achieve—simplicity and clarity of form enveloped in a beautiful cocoon of sound devoid of heaving Romantic pathos. “He who does not take thorough pleasure in a simple chord progression, well-constructed, beautiful in its arrangement, does not love music; he who does not prefer a lovely folk tune to a series of dissonant and pretentious chords does not love music,” he wrote in 1913. Saint-Saëns’ is an art of beauty, of precision, of formal perfection that he never intended to plumb great emotional depths. It is the musical equivalent of a Fabergé jeweled egg or a Tiffany stained glass window—a flawless realization by a master craftsman. Just as we would be the poorer without Fabergé or Tiffany, so would we deny ourselves a most satisfying pleasure if we belittled the music of Saint-Saëns. Civilized, polished, full of reason and truly beautiful, his music is an experience that should not be denied because some pundit accuses it of lacking qualities beyond the composer’s intentions. Saint-Saëns was nearly 50 before he applied his elegant craft to the composition of a violin sonata. The Sonata in D minor, dedicated to the Belgian violinist and Paris Conservatoire faculty member Martin-Pierre-Joseph Marsick, was composed in 1885, when the composer had finally regained his health on a trip to Algiers after the exhaustion occasioned by the premiere two years earlier of *Henry VIII*, the fifth of his 13 operas. The sonata is an evidence of the French interest in the traditional Classical genres of symphony, concerto, and chamber music that flourished following the founding of the Société Nationale in 1871 by Saint-Saëns and some of his colleagues to foster the musical life of the country (and to redress the pervasive influence in France of Germanic Wagnerism after the humiliation of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870). Saint-Saëns, who had been nurtured on the musical literature of 18th-century Classicism, produced some three dozen chamber works during his long life, from the Quintet for Piano and Strings of 1855 (when he was 20) to the Bassoon Sonata of 1921 (at age 86), a body of work that led Arthur Hervey to comment, “It may be said with truth that Saint-Saëns was the first French composer who showed himself able to compete successfully in the intimate and yet supremely difficult genre [of chamber music] with the German masters of the past.”

The Violin Sonata No. 1, like Saint-Saëns’ Third Symphony (“Organ”) and Fourth Piano Concerto, is divided into two large parts, each of which contains a pair of linked movements. The opening section of the sonata is built from two themes: a melody of anxious melancholy in compound triple meter, and a broadly heroic strain given by the violin above the rippling accompaniment of the piano. These handsome themes are juxtaposed until they lead without pause to the Adagio, which is built on a contemplative song entrusted to the violin. The music becomes more animated as it proceeds, but rediscovers its halcyon demeanor by the end of the movement. Part II begins with a sparkling scherzo that recalls similar movements of Mendelssohn in its aerial sprightliness; a long-note melody in the violin provides contrast in the central trio section. The finale, which follows without pause, is an uninhibited display of blazing virtuosity for both participants, one of the great showpieces in the violin sonata repertory.

Sonata for Violin and Piano in A major  
César Franck (1822–1890)

Franck first considered writing a violin sonata in 1859, when he offered to compose such a piece for Cosima von Bülow (née Liszt, later Wagner) in appreciation for some kind things she had said about his vocal music. He was, however, just then thoroughly absorbed with his new position as organist at Ste.-Clotilde in Paris, and was able to compose nothing that year except a short organ piece and a hymn. (His application to his duties had its reward—he occupied the prestigious post at Ste.-Clotilde until his death 31 years later.) No evidence of any work on the proposed sonata for Cosima has ever come to light, and it was not until 20 years later that he first entered the realm of chamber music with his Piano Quintet of 1879. Franck's next foray into the chamber genres came seven years after the Quintet with his Sonata for Violin and Piano, which was composed as a wedding gift for his friend and Belgian compatriot, the dazzling Eugene Ysaÿe, who had been living in Paris since 1883 and befriending most of the leading French musicians. In tailoring the sonata to the warm lyricism for which Ysaÿe's violin playing was known, Franck created a work that won immediate and enduring approval, and which was instrumental in spreading the appreciation for his music beyond his formerly limited coterie of students and local devotees. The premiere, given by Ysaÿe and pianist Léontine Bordes-Pène in Brussels on December 16, 1886, was an extraordinary event, of which Franck's pupil Vincent d'Indy left the following account: "It was already growing dark as the Sonata began. After the first Allegretto, the players could hardly read their music. Unfortunately, museum regulations forbade any artificial light whatever in rooms containing paintings; the mere striking of a match would have been an offense. The audience was about to be asked to leave but, brimful of enthusiasm, they refused to budge. At this point, Ysaÿe struck his music stand with his bow, demanding, 'Let's go on!' Then, wonder of wonders, amid darkness which now rendered them virtually invisible, the two artists played the last three movements from memory with a fire and passion the more astonishing in that there was a total lack of the usual visible externals that enhance a concert performance. Music, wondrous and alone, held sovereign sway in the blackness of night. The miracle will never be forgotten by those present."

The Sonata for Violin and Piano excited the enthusiasm not only of musicians, but also inspired other artists to capture its essence in their particular media. Under the work's influence, the sculptor Victor Rousseau created a statue titled Ecstasy, in which two figures reach upwards in thankfulness for the divine music issuing from the heavens. Camille Mauclair's novel *The City of Light* contains a vivid description of Ysaÿe and Chausson performing the Sonata in Rodin's studio. The most famous literary passage prompted by Franck's sonata, however, appears in the first volume of Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*. Of the interplay of the instruments at the work's beginning, Proust wrote, "At first, the piano complained alone, like a bird deserted by its mate; the violin heard and answered it, as from a neighboring tree. It was as at the first beginning of the world, as if there were not yet but these twain upon the earth, or rather in this world closed against all the rest, so fashioned by the logic of its creator that in it there should never be any but themselves, the world of this sonata."

The quality of verdant lyricism that dominates Franck's Sonata is broken only by the anticipatory music of the second movement and the heroic passion that erupts near the end of the finale. The work opens in a mood of twilight tenderness with a main theme built largely from rising and falling thirds, an intervallic germ from which later thematic material is derived to help unify the overall structure of the sonata. The piano alone plays the second theme, a broad melody given above an arpeggiated accompaniment that is never shared with the violin. The movement's short central section, hardly a true development at all, consists only of a modified version of the main theme played in dialogue between violin and piano. The recapitulation of the principal and secondary subjects (*dolcissima ... semper dolcissima ... molto dolcissima*—"sweetly ... always sweetly ... very sweetly," cautions the score repeatedly) rounds out the form of the lovely opening movement. The quick-tempo second movement fulfills the function of a scherzo in the sonata, though its music is more in the nature of an impetuous intermezzo. Two strains alternate to produce the movement's form. One ("scherzo") is anxious and unsettled, though it is more troubled than tragic; the other ("trio") is subdued and rhapsodic. They are disposed in a pattern that yields a fine balance of styles and emotions: scherzo—trio—scherzo—trio—scherzo. The third movement (*Recitativo—Fantasia*)

begins with a cyclical reference to the third-based germ motive that opened the sonata. The violin's long winding line in the Recitativo section is succeeded by the Grecian purity of the following Fantasia, one of the most chaste and moving passages in the entire duet literature. The main theme of the finale is so richly lyrical that its rigorous treatment as a precise canon at the octave is charming rather than pedantic. When the piano and violin do eventually take off on their own paths, it is so that the keyboard may recall the chaste melody of the preceding Fantasia. Other reminiscences are woven into the movement—a hint of the third-based germ motive in one episode, another phrase from the Fantasia—which unfolds as a free rondo around the reiterations of its main theme in a variety of keys. The sonata is brought to a stirring climax by a grand motive that strides across the closing measures in heroic step-wise motion.

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Sarah Chang (violin) is recognized the world over as one of classical music's most captivating and gifted artists. Appearing in the music capitals of Asia, Europe, and the Americas, she has collaborated with nearly every major orchestra, including the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony, the Boston Symphony, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Berlin Philharmonic, the Vienna Philharmonic, the principal London orchestras, and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam.

Among the esteemed conductors with whom she has worked are Daniel Barenboim, Sir Colin Davis, Charles Dutoit, Bernard Haitink, James Levine, Lorin Maazel, Kurt Masur, Zubin Mehta, Riccardo Muti, André Previn, Sir Simon Rattle, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Leonard Slatkin, and Michael Tilson Thomas. Her notable recital engagements have included her Carnegie Hall debut and performances at the Kennedy Center in Washington (DC), Orchestra Hall in Chicago, Symphony Hall in Boston, the Barbican Centre in London, the Philharmonie in Berlin, and the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. She has reached an even wider audience through her many television appearances, concert broadcasts, and best-selling recordings for EMI Classics. The remarkable accomplishments of her career were recognized in 1999, when she received the Avery Fisher Prize, one of the most prestigious awards given to instrumentalists.

As a chamber musician, Chang has collaborated with such artists as Pinchas Zukerman, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Yefim Bronfman, Martha Argerich, Leif Ove Andsnes, Stephen Kovacevich, Yo-Yo Ma, Lynn Harrell, and the late Isaac Stern.

During the 2002–03 season, Chang and pianist Lars Vogt will embark on a duo recital tour of the major music centers of North America and Europe. Other notable highlights include an appearance with the London Symphony on the occasion of Sir Colin Davis' 75th birthday; a gala concert with the Los Angeles Philharmonic as it bids farewell to the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion; and participation in the opening of the new Esplanade Center in Singapore with Kurt Masur, the London Philharmonic, and the Singapore Symphony (while in Singapore, Chang will conduct a workshop for young violinists).

In recent seasons, Chang has appeared with the Orchestre National de France, the Houston Symphony, the London Symphony, the London Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Montreal Symphony, the New York Philharmonic, the Philharmonia Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Seattle Symphony, and Zurich's Tonhalle Orchestra.

Sarah Chang records exclusively for EMI Classics and has released three varied collections (Debut, Simply Sarah, and Sweet Sorrow); the Tchaikovsky Concerto with Sir Colin Davis and the London Symphony; the Paganini Concerto No. 1 and works of Saint-Saëns with Wolfgang Sawallisch and the Philadelphia Orchestra; a pairing of the Lalo *Symphonie espagnole* and the Vieuxtemps Violin Concerto No. 5 with the Royal Concertgebouw and Philharmonia orchestras led by Charles Dutoit; and the Mendelssohn and Sibelius concertos with Mariss Jansons and the Berlin Philharmonic. She has also recorded Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending* with Bernard Haitink and the London Philharmonic; a Richard Strauss album, featuring his Violin Concerto and Violin Sonata, recorded with Wolfgang Sawallisch both at the piano and conducting the Bayerische

Rundfunk Orchestra of Munich; and the Goldmark Violin Concerto, with James Conlon and the Gürzenich Orchestra of Cologne.

Her latest releases are *Fire and Ice*, an album of popular shorter works for violin and orchestra, with Plácido Domingo conducting the Berlin Philharmonic, and a disc of chamber music for strings (Dvořák's Sextet and Tchaikovsky's *Souvenir de Florence*) with current and former members of the Berlin Philharmonic. Scheduled for release in the spring of 2003 is the Dvořák Violin Concerto with the London Symphony and Sir Colin Davis, along with the Dvořák Piano Quintet (with Leif Ove Andsnes, Alex Kerr, Georg Faust, and Wolfram Christ).

Born in Philadelphia to Korean parents, Sarah Chang began to study the violin at age 4 and within a year had already performed with several orchestras in the Philadelphia area. Her early auditions, at age 8, for Zubin Mehta and Riccardo Muti led to immediate engagements with the New York Philharmonic and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Following high school graduation and completion of the Juilliard School's pre-college program, she enrolled at Juilliard as a college student, where she studied with the late Dorothy DeLay.

Chang is a past recipient of the Avery Fisher Career Grant, Gramophone's Young Artist of the Year award, Germany's "Echo" Schallplattenpreis, "Newcomer of the Year" honors at the International Classical Music Awards in London, and Korea's Nan Pa award.

Lars Vogt (piano) has rapidly established himself as one of the leading pianists of his generation. Born in the German town of Düren, he first came to international attention by winning second prize at the 1990 Leeds International Competition. Since then, he has pursued an active career that comprises major concerto and recital performances throughout Europe, Asia, and North America.

An exclusive EMI recording artist, Vogt has made 15 discs for the label. These include the Schumann and Grieg concertos and the first two Beethoven concertos with the City of Birmingham Symphony and Sir Simon Rattle, who has described him as "one of the most extraordinary musicians of any age group that I have had the fortune to be associated with." Vogt has also made solo recordings of works by Beethoven, Brahms, Haydn, Mussorgsky, Schubert, Schumann, and Tchaikovsky. His recording of Prokofiev and Shostakovich cello sonatas with Truls Mørk was awarded a Diapason d'Or in 1997. His most recent releases are Hindemith's *Kammermusik No. 2* with the Berlin Philharmonic and Claudio Abbado, and a solo disc with Brahms' *Piano Sonata Op. 5* and *Ballades Op. 10*.

Vogt's 2002–03 season includes concerto appearances with the Baltimore and Cincinnati symphonies and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, as well as duo recital tours both in the United States and Europe with violinist Sarah Chang. Abroad, Vogt makes his concert debut with the Berlin Philharmonic and Sir Simon Rattle, and makes further appearances with the Bayerische Rundfunk Orchestra, the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, the Camerata Salzburg, and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, among others. He also brings a program from his chamber music festival in Heimbach, Germany, to London's Wigmore Hall.

Vogt has met with outstanding success in North America. In February 2002, he made his Carnegie Hall debut with the Orchestra of St. Luke's and its new music director, Donald Runnicles, to critical acclaim. He has developed a close relationship with the Los Angeles Philharmonic that has included regular subscription concerts, two Hollywood Bowl appearances with Sir Simon Rattle, a third with Paavo Järvi to open the 2002 summer season, and a recent program on its recital series. He has also given recitals in Vancouver, Toronto, and Chicago (both at Symphony Hall and Ravinia). Vogt has made successful debuts with the Cleveland and Minnesota Orchestras (where he has returned several times), and the Atlanta, Baltimore, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Montreal, Saint Louis, San Francisco, and Toronto symphonies. He has also made return appearances at New York's Mostly Mozart Festival.

In Europe, Vogt has recently performed with such orchestras as the Royal Concertgebouw, Philharmonia, London Symphony, Vienna Symphony, Deutsches Symphonie Berlin, Dresden Staatskapelle, Tonhalle Zurich, Santa Cecilia (Rome), Orchestre Nationale de France, and the Oslo Philharmonic. In September 2001, he performed with the Detroit Symphony on their European tour. He has given recitals in London, Amsterdam, Rome, Milan, Frankfurt, Cologne, and Munich, and has toured Australia, North Africa, the Baltic States, and southeast Asia. In July 2002, he

returned to Tokyo for his recital debut at Kioi Hall and four televised performances with the NHK Symphony.

Lars Vogt is renowned as a fine chamber musician and in June 1998 founded his own festival in Heimbach, Germany. Known as Spannungen, the festival's phenomenal success has been marked by four live recordings on EMI. He enjoys regular partnerships with colleagues such as Christian Tetzlaff, Boris Pergamenschikov, Heinrich Schiff, and Truls Mørk. He also collaborates with the actor Klaus-Maria Brandauer in a program based on Doctor Faustus, and with comedian Konrad Beikircher.

Lars Vogt lives near Cologne with his wife, the Russian composer Tatjana Komarova. Earlier this year, they celebrated the birth of their daughter, Isabelle.

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