



3-25-2023

In the Moment

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Recommended Citation

Korn, Laura, "In the Moment" (2023). *Honors Theses*. 3735.
https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/honors_theses/3735

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“In the Moment” Program notes

The title “In the Moment” came to be because I wanted to name my recital after something that’s felt important to me over the past four years. When I was trying to think of a common thread through all of the most significant experiences I’ve had in what seemed like a college experience full of challenges, growth, and surprises around every corner, I took note that for every one of those experiences, I had been living completely “in the moment.” I had no fear of what was to come, no regret for anything that had come before... I was fully present and fully myself in those moments, and the times I have been making music up on a stage have stood out as being the experiences most abundant with presence and awareness. I hope you’ll look back on the moments where you’ve felt the most like yourself, as I have, and join me in creating a new experience “In the Moment” here today.

J.S. Bach *Flute Sonata in E minor, BWV 1034*

Bach’s E minor Sonata was originally written around 1723 for the modern day flute’s predecessor: the traverso, or Baroque flute. These flutes were usually made with a hard wood like boxwood, sometimes even ebony and ivory. This flute had a much different sound than today’s modern flutes; it had a more “airy” tone which was uneven across the instrument’s entire register, giving each note on the traverso a unique personality.

The four movements alternate fast and slow tempi, following the popular Baroque *sonata di chiesa*—otherwise known as the “church sonata” form. The flute and harpsichord exchange melodic lines throughout the piece’s four movements, often making it feel more like a duet than an accompanied flute solo.

Each movement of Bach’s compositions would often illustrate one effect at a time—usually beginning with the initial thematic content or melodic idea, which is then elaborated upon throughout the rest of the movement. He rarely introduced new motives or ideas within one movement, making each of them incredibly effective in conveying a specific idea or feeling.

Bach is also known for emphasizing chord structure rather than relying on tools like dynamics and articulation to convey a movement’s desired effect. Because of this, there are very few dynamic and articulation markings in his compositions, leaving it up to the performer to write in their own interpretation. Phrase and breath markings are also often left out. This happens in the second movement; Bach includes a passage of over 100 consecutive sixteenth notes with no phrase markings, breaths, dynamics, or articulation.

Sergei Rachmaninoff “Vocalise”

“Vocalise” is the last composition in a series of fourteen published by Sergei Rachmaninoff in 1915, known as *14 Romances, Op. 34*. “Vocalise” was originally composed in 1912 for soprano voice with piano accompaniment, but has since been arranged for countless variations of instruments.

Unlike the other thirteen songs in the collection, “Vocalise” has no text, and instead utilizes a wordless vocalization of the soloist’s choice. Rachmaninoff felt that not all music required text to convey intense emotion; rather, the absence of... is one of the contributing factors to its immense expressivity. Rachmaninoff uses chromatic harmonies in a minor key along with tense, heartbeat-like accompaniment in the piano to create a human experience through music.

Think of this piece as a conversation between two people. What does it say to you?

Valerie Coleman *Danza de la Mariposa*

Valerie Coleman’s *Danza de la Mariposa* is a rhythmic, melodic tone poem, giving the listener a tour of South America. Inspired by the various species of butterflies inhabiting the continent, this work is full of rich color, with butterflies dancing and weaving in syncopated rhythms while alternating between the feel of 3 over 4 throughout. Its slower sections pay homage to the beautiful and sorrowful sounds in the style of Yaravi, a Peruvian lament song. The melodies and rhythm eventually evolve into the spirit and syncopation of Argentinean concert tango, and the conclusion returns to the feel of Yaravi.

Eugénie Rocherolle *Sonata No. 1*

Eugénie Rocherolle’s *Sonata No. 1* for flute and piano is her only work for flute, and is dedicated to flutist Jeanne Baxtresser, a master teacher and performer. Rocherolle wrote this piece purely as a pedagogical work. Frequently shifting between keys and tempi, the piece features three distinct movements in a variety of modes. The first movement, “Allegro moderato,” is the only movement that stays in one key throughout. The second movement is a slow heartfelt “Andante” that drifts between the keys of Db Major and Bb Major with waves of eighth notes, lulling the listener into a sort of “calm state” before the final “Allegro moderato” movement of this sonata.

This movement starts out in C major with an electric passage of eighth notes. In the “presto” section of this movement, Rocherolle’s New Orleans roots really shine. The jazz-like harmonies and melodic ideas change the texture and bring a new personality to the movement. The third and final movement changes the most frequently, starting in E major, returning to Db Major, then back to the C7 with a #9, the ever changing key signatures and articulations in this movement keep the listener guessing, and with a final statement—a sustained C above the staff at the end—our program comes to a dramatic close.

