

# **THE TSCHOPP SISTERS**

**The College of Wooster**  
Gault Recital Hall  
525 E. University Street  
Wooster, Ohio 44691

Sunday, April 4, 2004  
3:00 P.M.

**The Tschopp Sisters**

***Sponsored by Pro Helvetia***

**Sybille Tschopp, violin  
Isabel Tschopp, piano**

Today's performance by the Tschopp sisters marks their third appearance with the Wooster Chamber Music Series. Violinist Sibylle Tschopp and pianist Isabel Tschopp are both accomplished soloists and chamber musicians, each in her own right, who have performed in important cultural centers worldwide.

Sibylle Tschopp regularly appears in Europe, the United States, Central America, and South Africa. She made her first appearance as a soloist at the age of 14, and went on to perform in venues including Wigmore Hall in London, and Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory. Internationally acclaimed for her musicality, style, and comprehensive repertoire, she has performed most of the major violin concertos, playing with orchestras in cities such as Paris, Berlin, Dresden, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Sibylle Tschopp has received numerous awards, including the Silver Medal of the Academie Arts-Sciences-Lettres of Paris, the 15th International Rostrum of Young Performers prize by Unesco, and the Prix Maurice Sandoz.

Pianist Isabel Tschopp is especially devoted to chamber music, and is known for her sensitive playing and fine technique as both ensemble player and accompanist. Also a devoted teacher, she has introduced many young people to the world of piano music, and has been an advocate of unknown musical masterpieces through both performance and teaching. Isabel Tschopp performs regularly in Switzerland and in European cities including Paris, Hamburg, and Bratislava, and has played in the United States and South Africa. She has performed solos with the SABC Orchestra in Johannesburg, the Sudwestdeutsche Philharmonie, and the Festival of Strings in Lucerne, in addition to participating in numerous music festivals in Europe.

During visits to the United States, the sisters have performed in Washington, D.C., Chicago, Los Angeles, and Bloomington, Indiana. Isabel Tschopp and Sibylle Tschopp have recorded two compact discs: "Sonatas by Grieg, Debussy, Martin" (QU CD 25.395); and "Swiss Composers 2" (MH CD 90.2). Additionally, Sibylle Tschopp has recorded the following: "Le Quattro Stagioni," by Antonio Vivaldi (OCD 025R); "Swiss Violin Concertos" (MH CD 114.2); and "Menhir" Caspar Diethelm (CD Gallo 727).

Sibylle Tschopp and Isabel Tschopp were born in Zurich, and currently reside in Switzerland.

***Written by Sarah Buck***

**The Tschopp Sisters**  
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Sybille Tschopp, violin  
Isabel Tschopp, piano

**Program**

Sonata in A Major, K. 305  
Allegro di molto  
Andante grazioso – Allegro

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
(1756 – 1791)

'Menhir'- Meditation for violin and piano,  
opus 265a (1989)

Caspar Diethelm  
(1926 – 1997)

'Havanaise', opus 83

Camille Saint-Saens  
(1835 – 1921)

**INTERMISSION**

from 'Lieder ohne Worte II' (Songs Without Words)  
(1985-1994)

Heinz Holliger  
(1926 – 1997)

Sonata in G Major, opus 78  
Vivace ma non troppo  
Adagio  
Allegro molto moderato

Johannes Brahms  
(1809-1847)

Presented with support of



## PROGRAM NOTES

### **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)**

**SONATA NO. 22 IN A MAJOR, K. 305 (Composed 1778)** – In 1777 Mozart left his home of Salzburg with his mother, Maria Anna, on a journey to Mannheim. Mozart likely wished to witness the famously talented orchestra assembled at the court of the Elector Palatine by Johann and Carl Stamitz, widely known as the most capable ensemble in Europe at the time. He also attempted (in vain) to secure employment at the court. While at Mannheim, Mozart became acquainted with the violin sonatas of Joseph Schuster, whose Italian influences breathed new life into writing for the violin. The K. 305 sonata, written at Mannheim in early 1778, incorporated many of Schuster's influences. It was published in Paris in 1778 with five other sonatas and collectively titled, oddly, "Opus 1." Dedicated to the Elector Palatine, these sonatas are occasionally referred to as the "Palatine" sonatas.

The sonata's two-movement structure is likely based on the popular "galant" style practiced by Schuster and others. Mozart scholar Alfred Einstein describes the lighthearted work as "ideally untroubled... full of freshness and innocence." The opening *Allegro molto* flows gracefully; its principal themes are set off by both instruments in cheerful unison. As an homage to his temporary home, Mozart occasionally employs robust crescendos, used so frequently in the music of the Mannheim orchestra that the device became known as the "Mannheim crescendo." The second movement offers a delightfully memorable theme in the piano followed by six variations of contrasting color. The variations abound with the effortless lyricism that continues to make the works of Mozart appealing over two centuries after his death.

### **Camille Saint-Saens (1835-1921)**

**HAVANAISE IN E MAJOR, OP. 83 (Composed 1887)** – Camille Saint-Saens was an eclectic and well-traveled composer. He frequently sought to employ elements of popular musical forms he encountered along the way. The Havanaise, for example, is inspired by the Cuban dance known as the Habañera (literally meaning a dance from Havana). The dance, set in 2/4 time, features constant repetition of a particular rhythmic pattern, three eighth-note triplets followed by two regular eighth notes. Saint-Saens wrote this showpiece for his friend, violinist Raphael Diaz Albertini (with whom he toured France and Germany two years earlier) as an homage to his Cuban heritage.

The piano begins by gently introducing the Habañera rhythm, and the violin quickly takes it up as well, presenting an easygoing opening melody. Saint-Saens quickly shifts between parts of the major and minor scales, creating a wistful quality. The relaxed atmosphere of the piece's outset is quickly broken, though, by a fiery and virtuosic contrasting section. The composer seamlessly moves the listener

through a number of alternately reflective and intense passages before graceful harmonics in the violin draw the piece to a satisfying conclusion.

### **Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)**

**SONATA NO. 1 IN G MAJOR, OP. 78 (Composed 1878-79)** – As with the symphony, Johannes Brahms waited until the latter portion of his career to seriously explore the realm of solo instrument sonatas. Of the seven such pieces which Brahms composed (three for violin, two for cello, and two for clarinet), only a Cello Sonata (Op. 38) predates today's piece. The piece was composed in two summers following perhaps his most prolific activity in the realm of large-scale works, a time which produced the composer's first two symphonies and his violin concerto. Fresh from the completion of the concerto, Brahms set out to transfer this newly-gained expertise in solo violin writing to chamber music, resulting in his first violin sonata.

Opening the first movement (marked *Vivace ma non troppo*) is a simple dotted rhythm in the violin which evolves into an important structural element throughout each of the piece's three movements. The beautiful lyricism of the opening movement likely owes to the inspiration for the sonata as a whole: The *Regenlieder* ("Rain Songs") of Op. 59. It is for this reason that the sonata is occasionally attributed the descriptive title "Rain." The first movement as a whole is characterized by competing rhythmic patterns in the violin and piano; the two occasionally align for great dramatic effect.

For the second movement *Adagio*, an elegant opening melody (first in the piano, then in the violin) is contrasted with a much darker funeral march, featuring the same dotted rhythm that opens the first movement. Eventually the more optimistic strains of the opening melody win out and close the movement. Brahms omits the traditionally expected *Scherzo* for this sonata, moving from the slow movement directly to the finale (marked *Allegro molto moderato*). The dotted rhythm of the first movement makes itself obvious from the opening bars of the movement, which are direct inspiration from one of the *Regenlieder*. The minor-key melody of the "rain song" proceeds as expected until the constant motion of the piano comes to an abrupt halt and we are momentarily transported back to the cheerful melody of the slow movement. The optimism of the second movement moves the finale to the major-key environment of the piece as a whole, culminating in a *Coda* whose undeniable beauty marks the end of a brilliantly crafted exploration of contrasting emotions.

***Program Notes by Brian Biddle***

**A very special thanks to  
Mrs. Joseph Fishelson for her support.**

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