ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: ***CELEBRATING THE VOICES OF WOMEN COMPOSERS IN THE SELECTED CELLO COMPOSITIONS FROM THE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES***

Hyun Ji Choi, Doctor of Musical Arts, 2023

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This dissertation examines five cello compositions written during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by women composers, whose works have been largely forgotten in the cello literature until recent times. The works surveyed are *Three Pieces for Cello and Piano* by Nadia Boulanger; *Sonatas for Cello and Piano* by Luise Adolpha Le Beau, Henriëtte Bosmans, and Dora Pejačević; and *Sonate Dramatique: Titus et Bérénice for Cello and Piano* by Rita Strohl. Though far from being comprehensive, this paper aims to serve as a point of reference in providing an overview of the musical contents in each work as well as biographical and historical information on the composers and their works. For the two cello compositions whose published copy is not easily accessible in the United States (Dora Pejačevic's *Sonata for Cello and Piano* and Rita Strohl's *Sonate Dramatique: Titus and Bérenice*), the publisher information and the place of contact for access to the sheet music are included in the introduction section.

CELEBRATING THE VOICES OF WOMEN COMPOSERS IN THE SELECTED CELLO COMPOSITIONS FROM THE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES

by

Hyun Ji Choi

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Advisory Committee:
Dr. Eric Kutz, Chair
Professor Robert DiLutis
Professor David Salness
Professor J. Lawrence Witzleben
Dr. Lawrence Washington

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Introduction

This paper will study five cello compositions written by women composers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: *Three Pieces for Cello and Piano by* Nadia Boulanger; Sonatas for Cello and Piano by Luise Adolpha Le Beau, Henriëtte Bosmans, and Dora Pejačević; and *Sonate Dramatique: Titus et Bérénice for Cello and Piano* by Rita Strohl. The selection of the pieces was based upon consideration of the compositions' musical substances, technical scope for both cello and piano, sustainability of the works in the cello literature, as well as their performance times in forming a program for a live recital and a recording.

The five women all had a remarkable career as composers during their lifetimes. Their music (except in the case of Boulanger who did not promote her own music) was performed widely, and they enjoyed several publishing opportunities, as well as deserved recognition from critics, peers, and the public. Extraordinary for the women composers at the time, Boulanger, Le Beau, and Bosmans all became prize winners in the international music competitions. As accomplished musicians (especially Boulanger, Le Beau, and Bosmans), these women composers led active performing careers and collaborated with renowned musicians which allowed them to stay current in their field and obtain performing opportunities for their own works. Le Beau and Bosmans were recognized especially for their cello compositions. Le Beau's *Four Pieces for Cello with Piano Accompaniment, Op. 24* won her a first prize at an international competition.[1] At the same competition, her *Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 17* also received a certificate from the judges which stated that the

[1] Susan Tephly, "The Works for Cello and Piano by Luise Adolpha Le Beau (1850–1927)," (D.M.A. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1994), 41.

sonata deserved publication.[2] Bosmans, well-known for her affinity for writing cello music, produced two cello concertos and *Poème* for cello and orchestra, which were premiered by the Concertgebouw Orchestra and Haarlem Orchestral Society.[3]

However, most of these composers' cello works have remained largely absent from performance halls after their deaths. Adding to their obscurity in the cello literatures was the difficulty in finding a published sheet music for some of these compositions. When Susan Lynn Tephly wrote her dissertation study on the cello works of Le Beau in 1994, she had to borrow a personal copy for Le Beau's *Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 17* from Judith Olson, author of the study, "Luise Adolpha Le Beau: Composer in Late Nineteenth-Century."[4] For her study of the *Four Pieces for Cello with Piano Accompaniment, Op. 24*, Olson worked with a copy on a microfilm provided by the British Library in London.[5] Fortunately, in 2008, Hildegard Publishing Company reprinted the 1878 publication of Le Beau's *Sonate, Op. 17, for Cello and Piano.* For Dora Pejačević's *Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 35*, the sheet music purchase is currently available only through the Croatian Music Information Centre in Zagreb, Croatia. Several music libraries in the United States hold Pejačević's cello sonata in their circulating collection which can be accessed through interlibrary loans. For Rita Strohl's *Sonate Dramatique: Titus et Bérénice for Cello and Piano,* the sheet music is not available for purchase at this moment. The edited copy of the 1898 publication of her sonata by Enoch et Cie is located in the

[2] Ibid.
[3] Juanita Becker, *A Biography of Henriëtte Bosmans: Pianist and Composer* (Lewiston, Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2016), 27, 31.
[4] Tephly, "The Works for Cello and Piano by Luise Adolpha Le Beau (1850–1927)," 1.
[5] Ibid., 2.

library of the Conservatory of Paris.[6] For the study of this dissertation, I was provided with a digital copy of the sonata by Palazzetto Bru Zane– Centre de Musique Romantique Française (www.bruzanemediabase.com).

The compositions of these five women composers have begun to gain more interest and appreciation in recent years. There have been a number of new performance recordings and research materials on their cello works, as well as websites offering biographical information. This change in the climate is valuable after a long hiatus of these works from the public's view. The stimulation of the performances of these works will not only enrich and expand the current cello literature but also provide a deeper understanding of the compositional and performance practices associated with cello playing during the composers' times. In the following chapters, this paper will delve into each composer's distinct musical language and the rich musical contents of each composition.

[6] Mónica Álvarez, "*Sonate Dramatique: Titus et Bérénice de Rital Strohl:* Una Obra Única En El Repertorio De Violoncello Del Siglo XIX." *AV NOTAS magazine of the CSM Andrés de Vandelvira of Jaén* (2022): 88, http://publicaciones.csmjaen.es/index.php/pruebas/article/view/386/pdf

Chapter 1: Recital Program

Program

Hyun Ji Choi, cello
Alexei Ulitin, piano
April 2, 2022
5 pm
Ulrich Recital Hall

Three Pieces for Cello and Piano — Nadia Boulanger (1887–1979)

I. Moderato
II. Sans Vitesse et à l'aise
III. Vite et nerveusement rhythmé

Sonata for Cello and Piano in D Major, Op. 17 — Luise Adolpha Le Beau (1850–1927)

I. Allegro molto
II. Andante tranquillo
III. Allegro vivace

Sonata for Cello and Piano — HenriëtteBosmans (1895–1952)

I. Allegro maestoso
II. Un poco Allegretto
III. Adagio
IV. Allegro molto e con fuoco

Juliette Nadia Boulanger: Three Pieces for Cello and Piano

Nadia Boulanger (1887–1979) was one of the greatest composition pedagogues of the twentieth century. She fostered a generation of composers and many of her students have gone on to become household names in classical music: Aaron Copland, Philip Glass, Elliott Carter, Virgil Thomson, Astor Piazzolla, and Daniel Barenboim. She was an accomplished keyboard player and was promoted as a concert pianist and an organist. She was also the first woman to conduct some of the major orchestras in the world including BBC Symphony, Boston Symphony, and Hallé. Aaron Copland described Boulanger as someone who knew "everything there was to know about music; she knew the oldest and the latest music, pre-Bach to post-Stravinsky, and knew it cold. All technical know-how was at her fingertips: harmonic transposition, the figured bass, score reading, organ registration, instrumental techniques, structural analyses, the school fugue and the free fugue, the Greek modes and Gregorian chant."[7] Despite her great success as a teacher, performer, and conductor, finding a place for herself as a composer did not materialize easily for Boulanger.

Boulanger was born into a musical family. Her father, Ernest Boulanger, was a composer who had won the Prix de Rome in 1836, and a singing teacher at the Paris Conservatoire.[8] Her mother was a singer and had been a student of Ernest Boulanger before they were married.[9] Nadia Boulanger entered the Paris Conservatoire in 1896

[7] Aaron Copland, *Copland on Music* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1963), 87
[8] Caroline Potter, "Boulanger, Nadia," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi-org.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.03705
[9] Ibid.

and studied harmony, composition, and organ.[10] She was a student of Gabriel Fauré and entered the Prix de Rome competition several times.[11] In 1908, she won second place with her cantata, *La Sirène,* which was the highest advancement she had ever gotten in the competition.[12] In 1913, her younger sister, Lili Boulanger, won the coveted competition and became the first woman to win the Premier Grand Prix de Rome for music.[13]

Boulanger only produced a relatively small body of compositions in her lifetime: over 30 songs for solo voice and piano, seven larger-scale vocal works, five instrumental pieces, a single movement orchestral work, and a *Fantaisie variée* for piano and orchestra.[14] She also collaborated with Raoul Pugno, a celebrated pianist, and her mentor, to compose a song cycle *Les heures claires* and an opera *La ville morte*.[15] Seeing Boulanger's potential as a composer, Fauré had encouraged Boulanger to continue composing. However, Boulanger stopped composing altogether in the early 1920s.[16] Despite her renowned status as a teacher and a performer, her compositions were not widely performed during her lifetime. This was partly because Boulanger never promoted her own works but only made great efforts in promoting her younger sister's works after Lili's premature death in 1918. She was also highly critical of her compositions and would express the sentiment in public: "I am incapable of writing anything valuable. I realized at twenty that I wasn't a

[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.

composer."[17] Regardless of how Boulanger viewed herself as a composer, her *Three Pieces for Cello and Piano* are imaginative and skillful compositions for cellists to program in a recital. The set is a great program opener with a little over seven minutes in duration.

The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians describes Boulanger's musical language as "often highly chromatic (though always tonally based), and Debussy's influence is apparent in her fondness for modally inflected melodic lines and parallel chordal progressions."[18] The reflections on Boulanger's teaching from her students also lend valuable insights to performers in understanding her compositions and her musical ideals. In her teaching, Boulanger "emphasized structure as the principal source of musical meaning, and analysis as the route to musical understanding."[19] Aaron Copland also wrote about Boulanger's "all-embracing principle, the desirability of aiming first and foremost at the creation of what she called *la grande ligne*– the long line in music: the sense of forward motion, of flow and continuity in the musical discourse, the feeling for inevitability, for the creating of an entire piece that could be thought of as a functioning entity."[20]

The *Three Pieces for Cello and Piano* were originally composed for organ in 1911.[21] The three organ pieces were titled *Prelude, Petit Canon, and Improvisation.*[22] When Boulanger transcribed these pieces for cello in 1914, she left out the *Prelude*

[17] Bruno Monsaingeon, *Mademoiselle: Conversations with Nadia Boulanger* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988), 62.
[18] Potter, "Boulanger, Nadia" in *Grove Music Online.*
[19] Jeanice Brooks, *The Musical Work of Nadia Boulanger: Performing Past and Future between the Wars. Musical Performance and Reception* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 42.
[20] Copland, *Copland on Music,* 89–90.
[21]Caroline Potter, *Nadia and Lili Boulanger* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2006), 77.

[22] Ibid.

and only included *Improvisation* and *Petit Canon* in reverse order and added the third piece to complete the set. The *Three pieces for Cello and Piano* were published by Heugel in 1915.[23] Nowadays, Boulanger's cello pieces are more widely performed than her original organ pieces.

The first piece starts in E-flat minor. The opening piano part is frozen in its oscillation with rising 6ths, each built on Bb and Cb. The piano part is never obtrusive, yet quietly insistent. This gentle rocking piano part provides quiet, yet constant momentum under the cello's sorrowful line. Reminiscent of the music of Claude Debussy, Boulanger structures the section not with the clear harmonic goals, but more with melodic shapes and color in the cello line. The modal harmonic color of the piece is further enhanced by the cello and piano's hushed timbre. For the entire duration of the piece, the cello is *con sordino* and piano is instructed to play *una corda*. This effect gives almost an ethereal or other-worldly quality to the sound of both instruments. The sound is not only gentle and subdued, but the color is also different due to the reduced vibrations on the cello and the shifted placement of hammers on the piano. Thus, even when the cello is at its full volume, the resulting sound is not a direct outcry, but more of a restrained lament. Written in a ternary form, this piece shows off Boulanger's gift of writing long, overarching melodies within each section. The music accelerates and intensifies in the middle section as the cello explores higher registers and distant keys. In the middle of the movement, the piano's right hand never abandons the oscillating figures, but the left hand engages in a canon with the cello's melody. The canonic treatment of the cello melody in the piano's left hand is not entirely verbatim except for the first four measures but is highly effective

[23] Ibid., 79.

in bringing a change in texture, emphasizing the melodic line, and supporting the intensified mood of the cello. The materials from the opening measures return and the piece ends on a brighter note in E-flat major with a Picardy-third.

For the second piece, Boulanger writes *Sans Vitesse et à l'àise* (at a moderate speed and easy-going). The rhythmic motive of this piece is built on the two sixteenth notes, followed by an eighth note. The opening cello melody consists of three sets of the rhythmic motive in either ascending or descending stepwise motion. The stepwise moving gestures then settle briefly on a quarter note, closing the flowy two-measure gesture. The simple, folk-like melody in the opening two-measure is answered with another two-measure gesture before the melody starts to spin out in the following measures. A notable characteristic of this piece is that the melody in the cello part is played in exact imitation by the piano with only an eighth-note separation. This canonic conversation between the cello and piano part gently offsets the feeling of separation within the phrase structures and provides the piece with fluidity and continuity. The middle section within the ternary form of the piece explores the rich middle range of the cello before the opening melody returns in its softest dynamic. The piece ends with the last utterance of the rhythmic motive in a warm, soft whisper, colored with G#. This movement is written in Aeolian mode. The dominant seventh is avoided throughout the piece until the very end, adding modal and folk-like quality to the piece. This modal quality also avoids problems in the canon.

The third piece is an energetic and lively movement. Boulanger instructs the movement to be played *Vite et nerveusement rythmé* (Fast and nervously rhythmic). The bold and fiery downward sprint of the piano in the opening sets up the mood for

cello's equally agitated percussive pizzicato entrance. The heated exchange between the two instruments continues as both instruments take their turns at playing percussive rhythmic background and fast runs while highlighting the home key of C# minor. Next, an exotic dance-like dotted rhythm is first heard in the piano before the cello line takes over the lively beats. The cello wails over the dotted rhythm for a final time before the music suddenly switches gear to a more brooding 5/8 rhythm. The insistent drum-like pacing of the repeated eighth notes in 5/8 sometimes turns lighthearted and both instruments go through an array of different dynamics ranging anywhere from *fortissimo* to a *subito piano.* The music accelerates as the cello races to a piercing high Ab and the piano bolts out a series of ascending parallel minor chords. As if running out of steam, the music changes mood abruptly. In *Très lent* section, the cello melody, ornamented with grace notes and trills, becomes sensual and alluring. Boulanger requests frequent tempo changes (a rotation of *ritardando, a tempo,* and *accelerando* almost in every measure) at the end of the *Très lent* section. After a brief calm, the music gains back its fiery energy and returns to the opening materials. The piece ends with the cello exploiting the entire range of the instrument in a frenzy with a rapid, successive group of accented sixteenth notes. In the final two measures, the cello and piano are in emphatic unison, restating the piano's fiery opening measures in reverse order, accentuating the movement's structure with a mirror-like layer. In this piece, both instruments are on equal footing with each other. Compared to the previous two pieces, this presents an opportunity for interesting and effective ensemble interplay between the performers.

Luise Adolpha Le Beau: Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 17

Luise Adolpha Le Beau (1850–1927) had a wide-ranging career as a pianist, composer, and music critic. Her oeuvre includes over 66 compositions among which 35 works have been published.[24] Her remarkable talent as a composer allowed her to encounter many of the major musical figures of the late nineteenth century including Johannes Brahms and Franz Liszt. She studied with Clara Schumann, Franz Lachner, and Josef Rheinberger.[25] Her compositions impressed major music critics of her time such as Eduard Hanslick, August Bungert, Alfred Kalische, and Wilhelm Tappert.[26] The critics admired Le Beau's command over traditional forms (chamber music as well as larger musical forms such as symphony, cantata, and a fantasy opera) and conventional composition techniques.[27] Her compositional styles, with clear formal plans and harmonic goals, were often described as "manly"– a trait that many critics identified as Le Beau's great strength as a composer.[28]

In 1882, Le Beau's *Four Pieces for Cello with Piano Accompaniment, Op. 24* won first place in an international competition in Hamburg.[29] Equally remarkable for a female composer at the time, her compositions were played in many of the European cities as well as in Australia, Calcutta, Constantinople, and Russia. She also traveled extensively throughout Western Europe as a pianist.[30] Despite her extraordinary success and recognition as a composer and performer, Le Beau had to

[24] Judith Olson, "Luise Adolpha Le Beau: Composer in Late Nineteenth-Century Germany," in Bowers and Tick, *Women Making Music* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 282.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid., 293.
[28] Ibid., 297
[29] Ibid., 284.
[30] Ibid.

face discrimination and challenges throughout her life because of her gender. She struggled to find a major patron to support her compositions and performances. She could not obtain academic teaching positions and had to move frequently in search of better opportunities and environment for her career.[31] She eventually withdrew herself from the performing scene and lived in Baden-Baden until her death in 1927.[32]

The *Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 17* was written in 1878 and was published in Hamburg by A. Cranz around the same year.[33] Le Beau wrote two other sonatas– *Sonata for Piano, Opus* 8 and *Sonata for Piano and Violin, Opus* 10.[34] According to Susan Tephly, Le Beau's three sonatas all "reflect the influence of her teacher Joseph Rheinberger in their limited chromaticism, well-defined musical structure, and expressive, melodic character."[35] Tephly also comments on how Le Beau's cello sonata, "particularly the nature of the melody, largely homophonic texture and the register of the cello," resembles the cello compositions of Felix Mendelssohn and Anton Rubinstein.[36]

The first movement, "Allegro molto," opens with a high-spirited and soaring main theme situated wonderfully in the cello's middle register. The movement is written in the key of D major and is in duple time. The earnest and melodious main theme, moving largely in triadic motions in the cello part, is accompanied by the piano's perpetual eighth-note motion. The piano's bright D major harmonies and energetic eighth note patterns, coupled with the cello's leisurely-paced dotted rhythm

[31] Ibid., 288.
[32] Tephly, "The Works for Cello and Piano by Luise Adolpha Le Beau (1850–1927)," 10.
[33] Ibid., 11.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.

lend a fresh and youthful character to the movement. The D major key allows the cello to sound more resonant with the instrument's open strings matching many of the pitches in the key. The cello's main theme group is divided into three 8-measure phrases + 4-measure phrases. The abbreviated last phrase concludes with an elided cadence, at which point the piano takes the main melody while the cello provides the dizzying rhythmic vigor in endless eighth notes. The piano does not present the main theme in its full length in the following section, but quickly transitions to the second theme via the arpeggiated D-sharp diminished seventh chord and the chromatic eighth-note ostinatos emphasizing an E.

The tender second theme begins in the cello with a series of quarter notes in melodic curves. The second theme has two distinct leaping gestures of a falling fifth and a rising seventh interval, each separated by a quarter rest. When the piano takes over the second theme, the cello's leaping gestures appear in a slight augmentation with the piano playing them in continuous half notes. Underneath the piano's second theme, the cello provides the rhythmic counterpart in a pattern of four repeating chromatic eighth notes followed by a leap of fourth. The exposition closes with a brief restatement of the opening theme in the key of A major. The development section starts with the piano's iteration of the opening theme in F major. The augmented second theme in the key of D-flat major follows in the piano part before the melody finds its way back to the main theme in A-flat minor. Nearing the end of the development section, the cello suddenly begins the aggressive triplet figures in a rising motion, highlighting the key of A minor and D minor. The piano's arpeggiated G-sharp diminished seventh chord and the pedal tone in A provide the harmonic

background as the cello starts on a long and percussive chromatic climb that grows in its intensity and volume to the recapitulation. In the recapitulation, the cello's main theme is back in the key of D major. However, when the piano presents the same theme, the melody shifts to the D minor key. In this way, Le Beau creates a tonal contrast when the second theme returns in the home key of D major in the recapitulation section. The movement closes triumphantly with the cello's last iteration of the main theme.

The "Andante tranquillo" is a beautifully expressive and melancholy movement in B minor. The ternary form's A section starts with the cello's sorrowful melody connected in frequent small leaps and short stepwise movements over the piano's long descending dotted half notes. The recurrent small leaps occurring on the weak third beat in the melody, as well as the gentle dotted quarter note rhythm in 3/4 time seems to portray a reserved sadness and longing. In the B section, the music turns hopeful as the key shifts to B major, as if the memory of the happier times has surfaced, accompanied by a feeling of brief tenderness and warmth. The animated piano part, with its arpeggiated sixteenth note figures, adds to the atmosphere change at the start of the B section. In this middle section, Le Beau creates tension with the use of the diminished seventh chords and augmented sixth chords under the cello's sustained melody. At the return of the A section, the cello theme remains unchanged. The piano part, however, pulses faster with the moving eighth notes instead of the opening section's slow dotted half notes and half notes, as if the memory of the happier days has made the person's heartbeat faster. The movement closes as the cello and piano converse closely. The cello reminisces on the opening measures'

leaping motives as the piano follows closely with the gentle dotted quarter note rhythm.

The last movement, "Allegro vivace," is energetic and vibrant. Natasha Farny observes some close similarities between this movement with the first movement of Mendelssohn's cello sonata, written in 1843. Both movements are written in the key of D major in 6/8 time and start with the same three notes on F#, A, and D.[37] Both movements feature a F#-E appoggiatura in their opening measures.[38] Mendelssohn and Le Beau respectively chose *Allegro assai vivace* and *Allegro vivace* as their movement's tempo.[39] One can only speculate the possible connection between the similarities in the two works. Le Beau had performed Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 25 with the Baden Court Orchestra ten years prior to writing her cello sonata.[40] Farny poses the interesting possibility of Le Beau being "guided" by Mendelssohn's writing and that this movement is perhaps her way of responding to the older composer's cello sonata.[41] This idea is compelling because it is based on a few striking similarities that the audiences can easily recognize when listening to the two works. I believe it is an idea that could manifest well in programming the two works in a recital.

The final movement is a sonata rondo form (ABACABA) in which the C section functions as a development section. The main theme of the A section consists of the vibrant rising cello melody which leaps to an A by an interval of fifth, followed

[37] Natasha Farny, "Worthy of the Canon" Romantic Cello Sonatas by Women," *College Music Symposium 61, no. 2 (2021),* 71, https://www.jstor.org/stable/48645699
[38] Ibid., 72.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid., 71.
[41] Ibid.

by an octave leap to a high D before slipping down in small steps. Underneath, the piano provides constant rhythmic swirls in eighth notes within a duple, compound meter. In the A section, the piano also introduces, in its left-hand, a descending scalar motive in staccatos which alternates between a quarter note and an eighth note in a compound time. This fleeting and jumpy motive will return as the main cello melody in the C section. The B section, in the key of B-flat major, starts with the theme most often moving at the interval of thirds and in dotted quarter notes. During the B section, the harmony shifts to G minor but returns to B-flat major through the piano's pedal points on a B-flat and F, followed by the authentic cadence on the tonic. The brief transitional materials carry the harmonic center to a key of B major as the A section returns. The reprise of the A section quickly becomes harmonically unstable as the music explores the key centers that are chromatically rising (B-C-Db) before shifting to the key of A-flat minor for the arrival of the C section. In the C section, the contrapuntal texture is created as Le Beau juxtaposes previously introduced themes from different sections on each instrument: the cello reminisces the scalar motive in jumpy rhythm from the A section, while the piano's right-hand cycles through the main theme of the B section. The tonal shift from D minor to the pedal point on A prepares the final reprise of the A section. The final ABA sections appear in the tonic key of D major. The closing A section is a fast coda. A *stringendo* pushes the cello's impatient rise to the high D in nervous triplet figures. The movement closes triumphantly on a *fortissimo* dynamic with the cello's insistent iterations of the tonic chord over the piano's fiery arpeggiations.

Henriëtte Bosmans: Sonata for Cello and Piano

Henriëtte Bosmans (1895–1952) was a Dutch-Jewish composer and a piano virtuoso. Her father, Henri Bosmans, was a principal cellist of the Concertgebouw Orchestra. Her mother, Sara Benedicts, was a celebrated concert pianist who also taught piano at the Amsterdam Conservatory for 40 years. Bosmans studied piano with her mother and studied harmony and counterpoint with Jan Wilem Kersbergen and instrumentation with Cornelis Dopper. Bosmans had a thriving solo career as a concert pianist, performing 22 times as a soloist with the Concertgebouw Orchestra between 1929 and 1949.[42] She also had a highly successful career as a composer. She promoted and performed her own compositions through many successful performances. Bosmans knew that the performance of her compositions was important in order for her music to survive. Looyestijn writes that Bosmans, during her life, "surrounded herself with conductors and musicians who performed her works with enthusiasm, and she knew that her fellow composers respected her. Her work was followed with interest and the reactions were, upon the whole, uncommonly positive."[43]

Bosmans' early works were written in the German Romantic tradition. However, she had a strong desire to break away from that tradition. After studying with Willem Pijper from 1927–1929, her music began to incorporate Debussian

[42] Helen Metzelaar, "Bosmans, Henriëtte," In *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi-org.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.03662
[43] Ellen Looyestijn, "Henriëtte Bosmans," in *Zes vrouwelijke componisten,* ed. Helen Metzelaar, (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1991), 140–141, quoted in Juanita Becker, *A Biography of Henriëtte Bosmans: Pianist and Composer* (Lewiston, Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2016), 91.

impressionism as well as polymeters and polytonality.[44] Juanita Becker describes Bosmans' musical characteristics that remained consistent throughout her varying compositional styles: her use of a cyclic integration of thematic materials, her fondness for alternating meters to create a sense of rhythmical excitement, the use of the extreme registers and thick textures in the piano writing, and her harmonic language which remains mostly tonal.[45] During the Second World War, Bosmans stopped composing. Because of her Jewish heritage, she was not allowed to perform in public but could appear only in private concerts. After the war, she regained her status as a concert pianist and a composer. In her later years, Bosmans mostly concentrated on writing vocal music.

Bosmans had an affinity for writing cello compositions. Her friendship with cellists Marix Loevensohn and Frieda Belinfante inspired Bosmans to write several cello works including a sonata, two cello concertos, a trio for piano, viol, and cello and *Poème* for cello and orchestra.[46] When Marix Loevensohn, a soloist of the Concertgebouw Orchestra, premiered *Poème* with her orchestra under the direction of Pierre Monteux in 1927, the performance received a review in *De Maasbode Avonblad*.[47] The review describes the work as "composed by one who cherished a remarkable fondness for the cello" and Bosmans as a composer who is "aware of how to utilize all the soloistic potential of the violoncello."[48]

[44] Becker, *A Biography of Henriëtte Bosmans,* 35.
[45] Ibid., 63.
[46] Metzelaar, "Bosmans, Henriëtte," In *Grove Music Online.*
[47] Becker, *A Biography of Henriëtte Bosmans,* 31.
[48] Ibid., 31–32.

The *Sonata for Cello and Piano* was dedicated to Marix Loevensohn who premiered the work with the composer on the piano.[49] Composed in 1919, the cello sonata is considered as one of Bosmans' early works.[50] The first movement, "Allegro maestoso," is dark, intense, and dramatic. Written in a sonata allegro form, the movement features several compositional devices that are highly traditional: clearly structured sections, primary and secondary themes that are distinctly contrasting in character (rhythmic vs lyrical), a repeated exposition (which had become an archaic custom by the early 20th century), and the use of the retransition at the end of the development section. The harmonic rhythm of the movement is very quick, which creates an atmosphere of high Romanticism full of absolute restlessness and intense energy. Interestingly, even though the harmonic shifts are often swift with thick texture and chromatic tendencies, the composer doesn't use many extended tonalities or dissonances. In fact, there are ways in which Bosmans bases her harmony in a very traditional setting, especially at the important junctions of the movement, with her use of the pedal tones, secondary dominant chords, and conventional cadences. The main theme of the movement features the cello in an agitated state with the dotted rhythm energized with the running 32nd notes. The cello's dotted rhythmic motive moves continuously as it encounters dramatic leaps and falls. The opening section of the movement is outlined by the piano's extended pedal point on the tonic. Above the A pedal tone, the piano rapidly progresses through various harmonies that sometimes suggest a traditional harmonic movement such as a circle of fifths or an authentic cadence as well a move to a Neapolitan harmony on Bb. The quickly shifting

[49] Ibid., 24.
[50] Ibid.

harmonies add varying degrees of tension against the piano's insistent pedal tone and accentuate the restlessness of the cello melody. The rhythmic vitality and the harmonic emphasis on the tonic of the main theme contrasts greatly with the secondary theme in the following section.

The secondary theme begins with the cello's two-measure sorrowful descending motive (three descending notes constructed on a half-step + whole step) that is lyrical and emotionally pleading. Underneath, the piano produces the harmonic background that is murky and unclear. Bosmans seems to deliberately play with the harmonic ambiguity during the initial statement of the secondary theme, in which the piano part has a collection of notes with some aspects to both whole-tone (if A is taken out) and octatonic scales on F#-G#-A-C (B is missing). Though the tonal center is not clear in this section, the key of F-sharp minor is implied with the F# as the lowest sounding voice in the piano and the cello's falling gesture from G# to F# which mimics a resolution. The two-measure phrase closes with the piano's arpeggiation on a B-flat major chord. The same phrase, sequenced at a half step lower in the cello, moves from F minor chord to an A minor one. The use of the sequence and the harmonic shifts based on a mediant relationship between the keys (F#-Bb/A# and f-a) observed in these two phrases are the devices that Bosmans uses repeatedly to link and develop her musical materials in the sonata. Only at the end of the exposition does the harmonic uncertainty resolve. The secondary theme (A-G#-F#) is restated one octave lower in the cello melody as the piano finds its way with the major chords in a Lydian mode. It's the first time that this motive is presented in a harmonically identifiable setting. The repeat of the exposition is preceded with the

piano providing the subdominant and dominant harmony near and at the first ending, foreshadowing the return of the primary theme in a home key.

In the development section, the composer takes time to develop and explore both the primary theme and the second theme. First, the lyrical descending gestures in triplet rhythm from the secondary theme are augmented to quarter notes in the piano part. Next, the dotted rhythmic motive of the primary theme sneaks in quietly in the piano part, but quickly builds momentum and is transmitted to the cello part. The cello part becomes thunderous as it climaxes with an octave leap to a D# and a further surge to a high A# in *fortissimo* before violently tumbling down with a dominant harmony in E minor. The phrase cadences very traditionally on the piano with the secondary dominant and dominant chords finally shifting to an E minor. The cello lingers on its fiery trill on E before starting the motivic sequence again. The intense and aggressive final statements of the secondary theme in the piano, closely followed by the cello in a call and response setting, signal the closing of the development. The retransition section, built on the piano's dominant pedal tremolos, juxtaposes the motivic materials from the two contrasting themes on each instrument, with the cello playing the edgy rhythmic motive underneath the piano's descending melodic gestures.

The primary theme is more agitated and forceful when it returns in the recapitulation section. The cello is placed in a higher register and the piano part has gained a rhythmic intensity in which it leaps, with the dotted rhythm, from the tonic pedal tone to the evolving chords. In the recapitulation, the secondary theme is heard in the piano part instead of on a cello. In the exposition, the primary motive shifted

from A minor to F-sharp minor. In the recapitulation, now the shift is from A minor to C-sharp minor. The mediant relationship between the keys can once again be observed in Bosmans' harmonic organizations as well as the fifth relationship (F# and C#) between the two secondary themes. The coda is brief, and the composer builds this final section again on the tonic pedal tone. The Neapolitan harmony of the B-flat major chord against the A pedal tone in the coda is reminiscent of the harmony used in the opening measures. The movement closes on a calmer note on the piano's A major chords that descend in register and volume as the cello melody resignedly relaxes on the tonic after tracing the melodic contour of the piano's Neapolitan and fully diminished harmonies in the final measures.

Instead of being a lively and upbeat dance movement, "Un poco allegretto" is a hauntingly expressive and melancholy movement written in F-sharp minor in ¾ time. The ternary movement's main theme is built on the motivic idea of a quarter note followed by four rolling eighth notes. The opening ten-measure phrase, in which the melody continually rises and falls in mostly stepwise motions, is first heard in the cello. The cello pauses as the piano echoes with the same ten-measure melody. Both phrases end on a half-cadence. The cello resumes the melody over the piano's F-sharp pedal tone but is interrupted by the sudden rhythmic surge on the piano. The iteration of the piano's rhythmic triplet figures is the first time anything resembling the scherzo-like character is heard in the inner movement. The piano's rhythmic triplet figures appear three times in short iterations during the A section, and they allow the music to shift its harmonic gears to and from the movement's dominating pedal tone on F-sharp. The trio section starts with the cello churning out the rolling eighth notes

from the main motive. The pedal tone is taken up by the cello's insistent eighth notes during the first half of the B section. The cello provides three descending pedal points on F#, F, and E, which also govern the piano's harmonic context. Although there are many shifting harmonies on the piano, all the chords share a common tone with the corresponding pedal tone from the cello. The repeating eighth notes are passed to the piano in the second half of the B section. The piano's pedal point moves the harmonic center from Eb back to F#. The B section closes on a deceptive cadence, actively stimulating the return to the A section.

The "Adagio" feels like a short interlude. The movement's main motive is built on a long-held note preceded by a dotted eighth-sixteenth figure that features the tritone. With the movement being played at a surprisingly slow tempo (quarter note= 42– 44), both the cello's theme and the piano's accompaniment figures feel stretched out or frozen in slow motion. Bosmans also uses the register and textural changes in the piano part to dramatize the movement's contemplative and wandering quality. The piano writing repeatedly expands gestures on the harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic levels in which the smaller intervals grow to bigger intervals, the chords become thicker in texture and there is a gradual increase in the rhythmic speed and register of the notes. Though there are shifting harmonies, the movement is centered largely in the key of B-Major. The composer uses B as its recurring pedal tone, and several harmonic progressions broadly trace the subdominant and dominant functions in the B-Major key. Interestingly, the whole movement behaves almost as a big dominant center that connects the second movement to the final movement. After the

final and hushed statement of the tritone motive that is augmented in time, the last movement starts abruptly with the piano's percussive dominant pedal tones on E.

The finale, "Allegro molto e con fuoco," is a modified rondo form (Introduction+ABACABA+Main Theme of the first movement). It begins with the cello reintroducing the dotted rhythmic motive from the third movement. The motive's previous wandering and hesitant quality is here completely replaced. The cello sounds nervous, paranoid, and raging as it explores the fast dotted rhythmic motive and the eighth notes that jump up and down in tritone. The movement's uneven 5/4 time signature heightens the impatient and jittery feeling. The movement's main theme sounds like a hard-thrown ball that bounces uncontrollably and unpredictably in every direction. The flowing quarter notes and eighth notes that rise and fall in gentle slope make up the lyrical theme of the B section. The theme in the C section is the exact replica of the lyrical secondary theme from the first movement. The cello begins the melody adapted to the 5/4 time before the piano takes it over and finishes the original phrase. The C section holds the central balance within the movement's formal plan. In addition to recalling the secondary theme of the first movement, other ways in which Bosmans integrates some of the melodic and harmonic ideas she had used in the previous movements into her final movement include the use of the B-flat major chord as the Neapolitan harmony, the whole tone chords, and the tritonal relationship between the harmonic shifts. As she did in the second movement, Bosmans also uses the chromatic descending pedal tones (F#-F) to arrive on the E pedal tone at the final return of the A section. This extended pedal point on E summons the movement's introductory measures. After the final iteration

of the A section, the emotionally powerful main theme of the first movement returns. Underneath the cello's intense dotted rhythm and agitated leaps, the piano returns with the unfaltering tonic pedal on A from the sonata's opening measures. The movement comes to a dramatic close as the piano progresses from a B-flat major chord to E-flat major chord and attempts a final tritone shift to an A major chord, reiterating in short succession some of the important harmonic structures used throughout the sonata.

Chapter 2: Recorded Program

Dissertation Recording Project

Program

Hyun Ji Choi, cello
William Chang, piano

Gildenhorn Recital Hall

Sonata Dramatique for Cello and Piano: Titus et Bérénice — Rita Strohl (1865–1941)

I. Allegro moderato
II. Vivace
III. Lento
IV. Allegro molto movimento

Sonata for Cello and Piano in E minor, Op. 35 — Dora Pejačević (1885–1923)

I. Allegro moderato
II. Scherzo. Allegro
III. Adagio sostenuto
IV. Allegro comodo

Rita Strohl: Sonate Dramatique: Titus et Bérénice for Cello and Piano

In 1892, Rita Strohl (1865–1941) composed one of the most unique compositions for cello and piano. Her *Sonate Dramatique* unites chamber music with a literary program. In the nineteenth century, composers such as Hector Berlioz, Franz Liszt, and Richard Strauss created symphonic works which integrated abstract music with programmatic contents. In such works, the extra-musical narratives govern the musical structures and organization, expressing its literary contents in musical tones rather than in words. Program music has most often been manifested in larger orchestral works such as Liszt's symphonic poems and tone poems of Strauss. In comparison, the volume of program music in the solo or smaller chamber music genre has been more limited. In her research, Arévalo Álvarez found "four chamber works which combine sonata form with a programmatic speech: Dussek's *The Sufferings of Queen of France* (1793), Clementi's *Didone abandoned* (1821), Liszt's *Dante Sonata* (1849), and Strohl's *Sonata Dramatique: Titus et Bérénice* (1898)."[51] Among these four works, Strohl's dramatic sonata is the only composition written for cello and piano.

Rita Strohl, a graduate of the Paris Conservatory, was an established composer who was a member of the *Société des Auteurs, Compositeurs, et Éditeurs de Musique* (SACEM).[52] She had an affinity for writing music with programmatic influences. Some of her notable orchestral compositions include *La Foret, La Mer,*

[51] Álvarez, "*Sonate Dramatique: Titus et Bérénice de Rital Strohl:* Una Obra Única En El Repertorio De Violoncello Del Siglo XIX.", 87.
[52] Pamela Feo, "Strohl, Rita," In *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi-org.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.2242642

and Jean D'Arc for orchestra, solo and chorus.[53] For the cello and piano duo, Strohl composed *Sonate Dramatique: Titus and Bérédice* as well as *Solitude,* a brief and moving reverie.[54] At the height of her compositional career, she left Paris to build *La Grange* in Meudon, a theater comparable to Richard Wagner's *Bayreuth Festspielhaus*.[55] At *La Grange,* Strohl wanted to perform her *Fresques Lyriques*, the three monumental operatic cycles based on Christian, Celtic, and Hindu myths.[56] World War I and her financial situation forced Strohl to abandon her dream of building a theater.[57] Later in her years, she retreated from the active musical life of Paris which had a damaging effect on her compositional career.[58]

The *Sonate Dramatique* was published in 1898 by Enoch et Cie.[59] The work was dedicated to Charles Furet, who was a student of Jules Delsart (a nineteenth century cellist who is best known for arranging Franck's Violin Sonata in A major for cello and piano).[60] The sonata is based on the French playwright Racine's play Bérénice, a tragedy in five acts which premiered in 1670. The play is about Bérénice with whom both Titus and his friend Antiochus are in love with. Titus' dilemma is that he has become an emperor of Rome and the Romans are not in support of his relationship with Bérénice, the queen of Palestine. According to the rule of the Roman Senate, the emperor can only marry a Roman woman. Bérénice is in love with

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[53] Álvarez, "*Sonate Dramatique: Titus et Bérénice de Rital Strohl:* Una Obra Única En El Repertorio De Violoncello Del Siglo XIX.", 109–110.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Feo, "Strohl, Rita," In *Grove Music Online.*
[56] Ibid.
[57] Álvarez, "*Sonate Dramatique: Titus et Bérénice de Rital Strohl:* Una Obra Única En El Repertorio De Violoncello Del Siglo XIX.", 92–93.

[58] Ibid., 92.
[59] Ibid., 95.
[60] Ibid.

Titus and is blissfully unaware of Titus' predicament until Antiochus, the king of Commagene, informs her. Antiochus is hoping to use the couple's unfortunate circumstance to his advantage for a chance to win Bérénice's love. In the end, Titus chooses his duty as an emperor over his love for Bérénice and all three characters go in their separate ways. Racine's play is a tragedy without any deaths. The tragedy lies in the fact that the characters go on living without being able to fulfill their love.

The score of the *Sonate Dramatique* includes a quote from the prologue of Racine's *Bérénice*: "Titus, who loved Berénicé passionately, and who even, as it was believed, have promised to marry her, drove her away from Rome, against his will and hers, in the first days of his reign." While this quote provides a general context on which Strohl creates her work, the composer chooses a specific segment –a quote or a scene description– from Racine's play for the organization of each movement. Álvarez writes that Strohl "delves into the psychology of the characters" differently in each movement.[61] The first movement is organized from Titus' perspective, the second from an external source, the third explores Bérénice's emotion, and the fourth movement presents the perspectives of both lovers.[62] Álvarez also notes how Strohl does not include Antiochus, the third character in a love triangle, in the sonata's narratives.[63] Instead, the programmatic content of the sonata focuses only on the emotional drama between Titus and Bérénice's character.[64]

Strohl sets the literary framework for the first movement with the following words: "Titus's uncertainty…passion… hope of subduing Rome, which, 'By a law

[61] Ibid., 96
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.

that refuses any foreign blood'." Strohl uses a sonata allegro form to introduce the two recurring themes in this movement. The two themes serve, for the whole sonata, as the tonal representations of Titus and Bérénice's conflicting emotion of love and agony. Strohl's treatment of the two themes in the sonata imitates Wagner's use of the leitmotif (a recurring musical idea associated with a character, emotion, or idea).

The sonata begins with a piano introduction featuring a series of sextuplet figures alternating between two Fs that are an octave apart. Strohl instructs the sextuplets to be played within the gently fluctuating *piano*, *pianissimo*, and *pianississimo* dynamics. The faintly turbulent sextuplets sound like tremolos. The piano introduction is highly anticipatory, and one can almost picture the curtain rising to reveal a stage as the cello, a musical narrator, begins to tell the tale of Titus. Strohl writes *recitativo* for the cello's five-measure introductory phrase. The cello enters cautiously but the melody soon becomes assured and affectionate. Underneath, the piano writing turns to a chorale texture in A-flat major, accentuating the poised character in the cello melody.

After a brief musical prologue, the "Moderato" section begins as the "love" theme is introduced as a cello melody. The cello is lyrical, dreamy, and tender over the piano's prolonged pedal tone on F. The four-measure phrase of this theme consists of a tonic that falls and rises the interval of a fourth, followed by an expressively rising triplet figure in stepwise motion. A leap of a third and a stepwise climb follow the triplet, bringing the cello melody to its characteristic peak (sixth from the tonic) before falling smoothly back. The "love" theme appears several times in this movement: first in the tonic key of F major, next in C major at the start of the

development, D-flat major in the recapitulation, and finally in F major in the coda. The "love" theme is not always presented in its original structure, but sometimes is fragmented and transformed to appear in its varied representations.

The "agony" theme is first presented in the piano part over the cello's pizzicatos. This theme is characterized by the leaping motions in a succession of dotted rhythm. In this section, Strohl explores the mediant relationship in her harmonic plans, shifting from the tonic key to the key of A minor. The dotted rhythmic motive of this secondary theme is also used as an organizing material for the transition and development sections.

The second movement, "Vivace," starts with the following scene description: "Bérénice's quarters. Her ladies-in-waiting try to entertain her with songs and dances." This movement is bustling with energy with the piano and cello in close conversation with each other. The piano writing is virtuosic: full of quick turns, trills, short fiery runs often moving in chords. The cello writing, equally acrobatic, bursts with decorative turns, lightning leaps, and rhythmic vitality. The movement sounds witty and highly animated as the instruments go through quick character changes from playful to alluring to lyrical, depicting exotic songs and dance movements illustrated in the narratives. Dramatically, this movement does not focus on the characters of Titus and Bérénice or their emotion. For that reason, the two main themes from the first movement do not appear, which allows the composer a freedom to explore new and fresh themes in a scherzo-like setting without any programmatic restrictions associated with the previous movement. In addition to granting a musical scene change, the literary content of the second movement fulfills the dramatic interest as

well, exposing the listeners to an auditory glimpse at a foreign queen's day. Harmonically, Strohl surveys a mediant relationship between the keys in the exposition, moving from D major to B minor before briefly settling in F-sharp minor. In the development section, minor dominant key (A minor) and subdominant key (G major) are explored before heading back to the exposition's tonal plan in the recapitulation. The final iteration of the main theme in the tonic key sounds exhilarating, adorned with the decorative runs and scalar figures. The movement ends on a vivacious whisper with the cello's playful pizzicatos and piano's main motive on a perpetual four-octave climb in the *pianississimo* dynamics.

The "Largo" is an emotional center of the sonata and represents Bérénice's soliloquy. Strohl extracts a quote from Racine's play and combines it with her own narratives: "Berenice knows everything… Titus, despite his love, sacrifices her for the Empire. Berenice: 'I am restless, I run, languid, dejected. Strength abandons me, and rest kills me'." The movement's A section opens with a hauntingly expressive main theme in A minor, presented first as a piano introduction before the cello takes over the melody. The head of the main theme is characterized by a dominant note which climbs up to an appoggiatura before falling back down. Sorrowful, heartbroken, and lost, the cello laments with the "sighing" dotted rhythm and a group of descending notes preceded by a leap of sixth. In the B section, the "love" theme from the first movement returns in the key of A major. However, it does not remain in its affectionate character for long, but quickly turns impassioned and dark as Bérénice discloses her devastation. The harmony shifts from F major to B-flat minor as the cello violently tumbles down in a multitude of small steps resulting in an octave fall.

The piano is equally agitated and emotionally unstable with its descending tremolo-like sextuplet figures first seen from the sonata's quiet opening measures. When the A section returns, its main theme sounds more resigned and desolate after the middle section's outpouring of emotion. During the brief coda, the "agony" theme reappears in the piano, foreshadowing the couple's impending breakup.

The "Allegro molto movimento" begins with the following words: "The terrible moment approaches, the separation will take place. Scene of love– heartbreak. Titus: 'This day surpasses all. I have never confessed that I loved you so tenderly, and never…' Bérénice: 'You love me, you support me, and yet I am leaving, and you order me to do to! Ah, cruel! For pity's sake, show me less love!'" The movement begins tumultuously with the piano's urgent arpeggios in F minor and the cello's two-measure scalar passage with moving eighth notes ending on a leap. The cello's stormy melody continues with 2+2+6 measure phrases which cadence on the dominant. The cello's leaps during the opening measures are inconsistent and unpredictable as if to portray the conflicting emotion of the couple. The secondary theme in A-flat major is first heard on the piano. Lyrical and sweet, the contrasting theme seems to capture the tender moments of love the characters share. In the development section, the main theme of the exposition shifts through various harmonic treatments as Strohl explores chromatic and mediant relationships between the keys. Emotionally distraught and in agony, the music intensifies as the tempo quickens at the end of the development section. The piano's agitated arpeggios and the cello's expanding leaps furiously reaching the peak, mark the end of the development section. The extensive statement of the "love" theme returns at the end

of the long recapitulation. Perhaps the characters are confessing the love that they have for each other for the last time, sharing a promise that despite the physical separation they will have to endure, their love and memories will be kept alive. In the coda, the closing phrase recalls a series of fast moving eighth notes which marked the end of the first movement. The closing phrase culminates in the cello's frantic and thundering four-octave climb to a high C. The cello's resounding F in *fortississimo* dynamic over the piano's tonic chord placed low in the register brings the final curtain down to an epic drama of love and tragedy.

Dora Pejačević: Sonata in E Minor for Violoncello and Piano, Op. 35

Croatian composer Dora Pejačević (1885–1923) is affectionately known as "Dora" or "Our Dora" by the people of her hometown, Našice.[65] The affection for the composer is not confined within the limits of her hometown. In recent years, a series of artistic works – Zvonimir Berkovic's film *Contessa Dora* (1993), romanticized biography by Stanko Rozgai *Young Dora* (1995), and Marijan Slakić's graphics *Fantasies*– has been created, all testaments to the enduring reputation of the composer and her music's appeal.[66] Pejačević's biographer, Koraljka Kos, notes an increased interest in the music and life of Pejačević following the celebration of the centenary of the composer's birth in 1985.[67] Her music collection, preserved and kept almost in its entirety in the archives of the Croatian Music Institute as a gift from the

[65] Koraljka Kos, *Dora Pejačević* (Zagreb: Croatian Music Information Center, 2008), 141.
[66] Ibid., 139.
[67] Ibid., 5, 21.

composer's family, is gaining more attention and recognition from the musicologists and performers both abroad and at home.[68] This welcome change, however, was preceded by an extended period of the composer's anonymity after her untimely death in 1923.

Dora Pejačević was born into an affluent family on September 10, 1885. Her grandfather and her father were both Croatian-Hungarian governors and her mother was a Hungarian countess with many artistic talents.[69] Pejačević started composing at the age of twelve and was sent to study abroad in Zagreb, Dresden, and Munich.[70] She also visited Vienna, Prague, and Budapest often and knew many of the leading artists, writers, and intellectuals of the period such as Rainer Maria Rilke and Karl Kraus. Their poems as well as Nietzsche's (in whose writings the composer was deeply immersed) became the texts for Pejačević's vocal works.[71] Karl Kraus was so happy with Pejačević's setting of his text with *Verwandlung* that he showed the work to Arnold Schöenberg, who acknowledged the work with satisfaction but added that a woman cannot be a composer.[72]

Though Pejačević had received some private instruction in composition and instrumental studies, she had no formal education. She was an excellent pianist and violinist, and she was mostly self-taught as a composer.[73] She wrote 58 compositions

[68] Ibid., 31.
[69] Ibid., 7.
[70] Ibid., 11, 13.
[71] Ibid., 131.
[72] Ibid., 51.
[73] Ibid., 13.

over a period of 26 years.[74] During her lifetime, she was received well as a composer and her works were performed in Zagreb, Dresden, and Vienna.[75]

Pejačević's early works are largely piano and violin miniature pieces.[76] From 1902, Pejačević methodically began composing within the strict forms of chamber and orchestral music, producing one major work per year on average.[77] After 1913, she had a period of great creative output, producing some of her larger chamber and orchestral works with stylistic maturity[78]. Kos writes that Pejačević's work is "similar to that of those masters of the musical Modern who did not break with tradition, but rather enriched the heritage of European music with new themes and expressive nuances."[79] Some of Pejačević's Romantic models were Mendelssohn, Schumann, Mahler, Bruckner, and Rachmaninoff.[80] Around 1908, Wagner became a strong influence, and she began to introduce "Wagnerian harmony into her musical idiom," and made a chromatic texture a feature of her compositions.[81] Kos also notes the similarity in Pejačvić's compositional method found in many of her instrumental pieces with Brahms' use of the "developing variations"[82] (a constant modification of motives and ideas in a theme).

Pejačević's *Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 35* was written in 1913 and revised in 1915.[83] The sonata is a four-movement work nearing 30 minutes in performance duration. In the sonata, the composer is skillful at writing melodies that

[74] Ibid., 31.
[75] Ibid., 73, 83, 91.
[76] Ibid., 59.
[77] Ibid., 31.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid., 137.
[80] Ibid., 129, 137.
[81] Ibid., 133.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid., 87.

are memorable. The sonata lends the cello ample opportunities to exploit the wide-ranging registers of the instrument within a harmonically rich context. Pejačević's piano writing in the sonata is reminiscent of Rachmaninoff's with its dense and chromatic chordal texture intertwined with lyricism. The Brahmsian device of treating the musical ideas through a frequent modification unifies many musical elements as an underlying thread in the sonata. The sonata is a complex work of late Romanticism and a deserving addition to the cello literature.

The sonata opens with the cello's broad and impassioned melody in E minor. The cello melody develops through a series of intervallic progressions where Pejačević alternates small scalar figures with bigger leaps (6th) and sudden falls (3rd and 4th) in a rather quick succession. The resulting effect is the drawn-out cello melody which evolves like turbulent and emotional waves. Natasha Farny describes the opening theme as the "upward sweep leading to a falling third and a falling fourth" and how "top notes of these two intervals outline an appoggiatura of an F# falling to an E."[84] The distinctive intervallic gestures of the opening measures appear in many corners of the sonata and are used as a basis for the melodic and rhythmic variants.

The first movement, "Allegro moderato," is written in a sonata allegro form. While the composer remains strictly traditional with her formal plans, she is more adventurous with her harmonic schemes. She combines traditional harmonic gestures with an unstable movement between the keys such as a sudden shift between the major/minor tonality and the exploration of the chromatic key relationships. In the exposition, the composer progresses quickly through many key areas: e-Eb-b-B-F-Ab-E-B-c#-C#-b. Many of the same key areas are also explored in the development

[84] Farny, "Worthy of the Canon" Romantic Cello Sonatas by Women," 78.

section. In the exposition's transition to the second theme, the cello and piano parts travel through a sequence of expanding leaps, outlining the characteristic intervallic structures from the opening measures. Pejačević highlights the B-minor harmony during this section but stages an unexpected harmonic shift to B major at the arrival of the second theme. The gesture of the scalar triplets expanding to a leap in the second theme is built upon the first three notes (B-C#-D#) of the cello's opening motive. The composer provides a rhythmic variant in this section, creating a feeling of rhythmic modulation from a duple to compound time. After exploring the distant tonal regions during the second theme, the closing theme briefly settles on E major. The composer uses the same device of altering major/minor tonality during the transition to the development section, moving from C-sharp minor to C-sharp major before arriving in F-sharp minor at the start of the development section. During this section, a falling third and falling fourth motives appear in an augmented state as the cello makes an abrupt ascent to a high E and slowly climbs down to outline the A major chord. Underneath, the piano's iteration of the opening motive dissipates quickly into the fragmented leaps which spreads to the cello part. The arrival of the recapitulation is prepared by exploring the G major harmony, a relative major key of E minor. In the recapitulation, the second theme now finds its voice settled in A major. It appears that the composer is using the main key of the movement–E minor–to serve as the axis for each of the second themes appearing in the exposition and recapitulation. In both instances, the composer travels either up or down to the dominant of the main key (E minor to B Major in the exposition, E minor to A Major in the recapitulation). The repeated implementation of the E minor harmony drives

the coda, first motored by the piano's triplets underneath the cello's relentless falls in thirds and fourths. This is followed by the perpetual climbing of the cello's triplets, hurling the music to its final peak. The movement ends tragically with the cello wailing on a high E as the piano makes an urgent descent to the tonic chords.

The second movement, "Scherzo. Allegro," provides a welcome relief from the dramatic intensity of the previous movement. The piano writing is virtuosic with frequent arpeggiations, fast-paced chordal passages, and galloping rhythm. The cello melody is capricious and lively with a hint of mischief brought out by the energetic eighth and sixteenth note rhythms (recalling the beats of the military snare drum) on *spiccato* bow strokes, punctuated articulation on the dotted quarter notes, and slurred eighth notes leading to a sudden leap. The cello's sudden leap to a harmonic E is prolonged, as if suspended in the air, by the piano's exaggerated arpeggiations (on F# dominant seventh chord and F# half-diminished seventh chord). However, hovering in the air is short lived and the cello tumbles down to the bottom of the hill. The piano's authentic cadence in a new key (E minor), placed at the end of the cello's long-winded fall, adds to the comical effect. The scherzo section ends with the cello's playful leap to the tonic, played with the harmonic notes. The trio section begins in C major and is calm, mellow, and affectionate with its cello melody full of gentle leaps (largely thirds) and flowing eighth notes. In the trio section, the music wanders through many keys, but always manages to find its way back to the main theme in C. At the end of the trio section, the remnants of the opening measures' rhythmic motive appear, announcing the return of the scherzo section. The spirited scherzo brings the movement to a close.

The "Adagio sostenuto" movement opens with the piano introducing the solemn and mournful melody in E minor. Natasha Farny describes the movement as a "funeral march."[85] The sorrowful melody in the piano's right hand is accompanied by the halting offbeat octaves in the left-hand. This writing, coupled with the unusual 5/4 meter, is devastating in its expressiveness and effective in conjuring up somber images– a sinking heart, sound of a hammer putting nails in the coffin, a foot limping in the funeral march. When the cello takes over the main theme, it is placed low in its register. The theme moves slowly, sometimes in stepwise motion, or in gentle leaps, and with "sighing" octave falls. The cello line turns more declamatory and resolute before the return of the opening theme, marked by the sequence of the two sixteenth notes leading up or down to the accented quarter notes. When the opening theme comes back for the second time, it is played one octave higher in the cello than its first appearance. The piano also participates more actively with increased rhythmic intensity, melodic engagement with the cello line, and thicker texture. The fluctuating falls in thirds and fourths are a constant in the piano writing, sometimes appearing in duple rhythm, other times in triplets. When the main melody returns for the final time, it is in its most agitated state: the cello line charges faster with additional moving notes and bigger leaps; the piano, unable to maintain its restraint, bursts in with the arpeggiated sixteenth notes in a dense texture and fuller range. After the outpouring of emotion, the movement fades away as the cello resignedly settles to its final E over the piano's long E pedal. The movement is written in a modified rondo form: ABACBA. The recurring main melody (always in E minor) alternates with the B section (first in A minor, then G minor) and C section (modulating from E minor to G

[85] Ibid., 80.

minor), each separated by the short transitional materials. The composer uses the movement's formal design to organize her musical materials which grow progressively in their melodic scope, instrumental range, texture, and rhythmic speed, at the return of each section (both A and B sections).

The opening theme for the "Allegro comodo" movement is high-spirited and robust. Written in E major, the theme is characterized by a half note followed by a dotted rhythm. The piano is in close conversation with the cello in this movement, providing rhythmic vitality, changing the texture at a quick rate (light staccato notes, rolled chords, fast arpeggios, dense chords) and in contrapuntal exchanges with the melody. Other than the characteristic dotted rhythm from the opening motive, most of the materials used and developed in the exposition are based on the constant interval leaps (especially 6^{th}) and scalar passages providing momentum. The dotted rhythmic motive from the opening measure begins the development section in F-sharp major. The triplet rhythm is an important rhythmic characteristic of the development. The cello and piano take turns to reverse their roles in playing the dotted rhythm and triplet passages. The cello's percussive pizzicatos and ascending scalar triplets against the piano's full chordal texture drives the movement's dynamic level up to a *fortissimo*. When the recapitulation begins, the second theme is now in A major (G major in the exposition). The closing theme begins in E major and progresses hurriedly, with moving eighth notes and interval leaps, toward a dramatic pause on a half cadence, emphasized by the cello's long trill on B and a *fermata* on both parts. The coda begins with the increased rhythmic speed coupled with frequent usage of the dotted rhythmic motive and fast-moving arpeggios on the piano. The interplay

between the duple and triple rhythm between the two instruments and the virtuosic piano writing with dense chords moving in a series of fast triplets bring excitement and drive to the end the movement. The last movement ends exuberantly with the distinctive "F#-E appoggiatura"[86] on the dotted rhythm.

Conclusion

In *Women Making Music,* Jane Bowers and Judith Tick wrote that "the absence of women in the standard music histories is not due to their absence in the musical past."[87] In the realm of cello literature, Bowers and Tick's statement rings true for the five women composers and their cello compositions this paper surveyed. All five composers–Nadia Boulanger, Luise Adolpha Le Beau, Henriëtte Bosmans, Rita Strohl, and Dora Pejačević–possessed unique and complex musical languages which spoke compellingly to the audiences of their times. Their posthumous fall into relative obscurity as composers is both unfortunate and unmerited. It is hard to avoid questioning the correlation between their current obscurity as composers and their status as women composers. However, though some discussions and reflections on the five composers' gender and its effects on their careers and compositions are unavoidable, I felt that their works also deserve to be enjoyed and celebrated without limiting categorization. Thus, rather than focusing on the gender of these composers, I opted to concentrate more on learning about the musical language and contents of each composition. Their cello compositions, surveyed at length in this paper, stand

[86] Ibid., 78.
[87] Bowers and Tick, *Women Making Music*, (Urbana, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 3.

not only as persuasive representations of the tradition, innovation, and the musical sensibilities the composers were able to capture in their works for the past era, but as artistic works which still hold relevance, interest, and value in current times. I hope that this study contributes to the increased inclusion of this repertoire in the cello literature and is a source of reference for performers and listeners.

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Álvarez, Mónica A. "*Sonate Dramatique: Titus et Bérénice de Rita Strohl:* Una Obra Única En El Repertorio De Violoncello Del Siglo XIX." *AV NOTAS magazine of the CSM Andrés de Vandelvira of Jaén, 2022;* online ed., http://publicaciones.csmjaen.es/index.php/pruebas/article/view/386/pdf

The first academic writing on Strohl's *Sonate Dramatique: Titus et Bérénice* in Spanish. The paper delivers an in-depth analysis of the dramatic sonata's musical and literary contents. The author also provides comprehensive research on the historical context of the sonata during the late nineteenth century. It discusses the nationalistic sentiment among the French composers to break away from the German tradition and the rise of the French cello school which stimulated the creation of many cello compositions.

Becker, Juanita. *A Biography of Henriëtte Bosmans: Pianist and Composer*. Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2016.

In the book, Becker provides a thorough review of Bosmans' fascinating life as a composer and a piano virtuoso. The biography divides Bosmans' musical career into three periods: the early years, before World War II, and during and after World War II. It traces the development of the composer's musical style.

Bosmans, Henriêtte. *Sonata for Cello and Piano*. Amsterdam: Broekmans & Van Poppel, 1919.

Performance score.

Boulanger, Nadia. *Three Pieces for Cello and Piano.* Paris: Heugel & Cie, 1915.

Performance score.

Brooks, Jeanice. *The Musical Work of Nadia Boulanger: Performing Past and Future between the Wars. Musical Performance and Reception*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Brooks explores Boulanger's view on musical forms and structures and how those ideas affected her performances as well as her teaching styles.

Cohen, Aaron I. *International Encyclopedia of Women Composers*. 2nd ed. New York: Books & Music, 1987.

The encyclopedia devotes a section on Luise Adolpha Le Beau which contains the composer's biographical information as well as a list of her works.

Copland, Aaron. *Copland on Music.* New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1963.

Copland dedicates a small section of this book to discuss his experience studying with Nadia Boulanger. In the section, Boulanger's teaching principles and musical aesthetics are discussed.

Farny, Natasha. "Worthy of the Canon: Romantic Cello Sonatas by Women." *College Music Symposium* 61, no. 2 (2021): 68–82, https://www.jstor.org/stable/48645699

In the article, Farny surveys the cello compositions by three women composers: Luise Adolpha Le Beau's *Cello Sonata in D Major, Op. 17;* Ethel Smyth's *Sonata in A Minor, Op. 5; and* Dora Pejačević's *Sonata in E Minor, Op. 35.* The article seeks to promote the reputation of the three women composers and to broaden the listening public's positive perception of them by providing their biographical information and a brief overview of the interesting musical characteristics featured in their cello works.

Feo, Pamela. "Strohl, Rita." In *Grove Music Online.* Oxford University Press, 2013; online ed., https://doiorg.proxyum.researchport.umd.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.2242642

Feo writes about Strohl's fascination about mythic pasts and incorporation of Eastern tonal systems in her later works.

Kos, Koraljka. *Dora Pejačević. Zagreb: Croatian Music Information Centre, 2008.*

Kos discusses Pejačević's life, her oeuvre, her complex musical language rooted in the German tradition, her music's reception in the past as well as in the present, and the philosophical values that guided her as a composer. The book is an invaluable resource written in Croatian and translated in English.

Lawrie, Aurora. "She Writes 'Like A Man': Classical Music for the Cello by Women." Performance thesis, DePaul University, 2019, https://academics.depaul.edu/honors/curriculum/archives/Documents/2019%20Honors%20Senior%20Theses/Lawrie,%20She%20Writes%20Like%20a%20Man%20-%20Classical%20Music%20for%20the%20Cello%20by%20Women.pdf

Lawrie examines the women composers' underrepresented status in today's music literature and shares the difficulties she had encountered in finding the available (or reliable) editions and recordings for several of the cello works

that she has chosen to play for her recital. Among the works she performed are the two cello sonatas by Dora Pejačević and Henriëtte Bosmans.

Le Beau, Luise A. *Sonate for Cello and Piano, Op. 17.* Worcester: Hildegard Publishing Company, 2009.

Performance score.

Metzelaar, Helen. "Bosmans, Henriëtte." In *Grove Music Online.* Oxford University Press, 2001; online ed., https://doi-org.proxy-um.researchport.umd.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.03662

This article provides biographical information on the life and career of Bosmans.

Monsaingeon, Burno. *Mademoiselle: conversations with Nadia Boulanger*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988.

Boulanger's interviews are presented in a dialogue format. Boulanger shares her thoughts on music, teaching, and her students, as well as how she viewed herself as a composer.

Olson, Judith. "Luise Adolpha Le Beau: Composer in Late Nineteenth-Century Germany." In *Women Making Music.* Jane Bowers and Judith Tick, editors. Urbana, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986.

Olson investigates the life and music of Le Beau and illustrates several musical examples to describe the composer's musical style. The author discusses the reception of Le Beau's music and her struggles to be accepted into a male-dominated music scene during the late nineteenth century.

Pejačevic, Dora. *Sonata for Cello and Piano in E Minor, Op. 35.* Zagreb: Izdanja Muzikološkog Zavoda MuZičke Akademije, 1977.

Performance score (edited by Milan Nagy).
Milan Nagy notes that the manuscript of the sonata, currently kept in the library of the Croatian Music Institute, is full of changes and emendations. In the manuscript, the penciled piano part has traces of numerous changes and additions as well as errors such as missing clef signs or bar lines. The cello part, written in ink, is in better condition, but there are marks of several register changes. Nagy writes that the score includes some editorial interventions. For example, the first movement's effective ending in which the cello reaches high E was changed to uninteresting variant in the manuscript. The editor instated the first version.

---. *Sonata for Cello and Piano in E Minor, Op. 35*. Zagreb: Croatian Music Information Centre, 2015.

Performance score (edited by Koraljka Kos).
The 2015 edition of the sonata features slight changes in the cello part from the 1977 edition.

Potter, Caroline. *Nadia and Lili Boulanger*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2006.

Potter's book discusses the life, career, and music of Nadia and Lili Boulanger. A great resource in understanding Nadia Boulanger's complicated career as a composer and her eventual abandonment of the discipline. The historical information on Nadia Boulanger's *Trois Pièces for Organ*, which she later transcribed for cello and piano, was obtained from this book.

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A brief overview of Boulanger's biographical information and the influence of Debussy's musical style on her compositions.

Sensbach, Stephen. *French Cello Sonatas, 1871-1939.* Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2001.

The book surveys over 130 published and unpublished cello sonatas written by French composers between 1871–1939. The author provides a brief overview of the historical background on each sonata and biographical information for the composer. Sensbach comments on the extensive length of Rita Strohl's *Sonate Dramatique: Titus et Bérénice for Cello and Piano* in his concise entry for the sonata.

Strohl, Rita. *Sonate Dramatique: Titus et Bérénice for Cello and Piano.* Paris: Enoch & Cie, 1898.

Performance score (a digital copy generously provided by Palazzetto Bru Zane– Centre de Musique Romantique Française (www.bruzanemediabase.com).

Tephly, Susan Lynn. "The Works for Cello and Piano by Luise Adolpha Le Beau (1850-1927)," DMA diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1994.

This dissertation studies the life of Le Beau and her three cello compositions. The historical context and in-depth analysis of Le Beau's cello compositions are provided. The dissertation also features an appendix section which contains an extensive documentation of Le Beau's performance reviews.