



SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY  
MUSIC DEPARTMENT  
PRESENTS

# **JUNIOR RECITAL**

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## ***WALKS OF LIFE***

**KARENA QIAN,  
PIANO AND VIOLIN**

**WITH**

**ZHANHONG KUANG, PIANO  
SOFIA SEDNEF, VIOLIN**

**NICKERSON STUDIOS  
FRIDAY MAY 26, 2023 | 7:30 P.M.**

# PROGRAM

*Please turn off all cell phones or other noise making devices.  
No photography or recording while concert is in progress.  
Thank you.*

*Please note, this concert is being live-streamed*

Violin Sonata No.2 in A minor, BWV 1003

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Intrada-Suite for 2 Violins, *Gulliver's Travels*, TWV 40:108

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

## INTERMISSION (15 minutes)

Etude Op. 10, No. 12, *Revolutionary Etude*

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

Piano Sonata No. 18, Op. 31 No. 3, *The Hunt*

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Yellow River Concerto for Piano and Orchestra (黄河协奏曲)

I. Yellow River Boatmen's Song (黄河船夫曲)

III. Wrath of the Yellow River (黄河愤)

Xinghai Xian (冼星海) (1905-1945)

*Karena performs tonight in partial fulfillment of a B.A. in Music Performance*

## BIOGRAPHIES

**Karena Qian** is a 2<sup>nd</sup> year transfer student at SPU studying both Computer Science and Music Performance. She has been playing piano for around 14 years—studying under Rebecca Chen, Belinda Chen, and (currently) Dr. Dainius Vaičekonis—and violin for around 12 years—studying under Dr. Marcus Talley and (currently) Ilkka Talvi. Between both instruments, she has participated and gained honors in several local festivals and competitions, including Classical Viennese Festival, Seattle Young Artists Music Festival, Performing Arts Festival of the Eastside, and SPU’s Music Competition (she placed 1<sup>st</sup> (piano) and 2<sup>nd</sup> (violin) this year). She received the ABRSM Level 4 Diploma in Music Performance (piano) from the Associate of the Royal Schools of Music and has served as a leader and/or member in various orchestras, including Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra, Bellevue Youth Symphony Orchestra, and SPU’s string orchestra. Through various summer music programs and SPU’s chamber music programs, Karena has played with several small chamber groups. Her diverse repertoire currently includes Beethoven’s *Pathétique* Piano Sonata, Mahler’s Symphony no 1, Schubert’s *Death and the Maiden* Quartet, and Bach’s Violin Sonata no 1. Karena would like to give a big thank you to her guest performers, Sofia Sednef and Zhanhong Kuang, for sacrificing their time and energy to help this recital come to fruition. She would also like to express immense gratitude to all her mentors, colleagues, friends, and family for helping her come this far in her musical journey.

**Sofia Sednef** is a Seattle-based musician pursuing a BA in Music Performance at Seattle Pacific University. She began her studies in violin at age seven with Josef Bondar and piano at age nine with Marina Blunt, and later with Svetlana Riedel. Prior to her university studies, Sofia was a first violinist for the Tacoma Youth Symphony Association. In her last year of the youth orchestra program, she served as second violin principal and a violinist for one the association’s top string quartets. Sofia is currently in her last year at Seattle Pacific University where she studies violin with Ilkka Talvi and piano with Dainius Vaitiekonis. She serves as the concertmaster for the SPU Orchestra and is an active violinist in her school and in her life as a chamber, orchestral, and solo musician. After completing her BA in Music Performance, Sofia plans to pursue graduate studies in violin performance, working toward a career as a performer and instructor. Sofia also enjoys serving her community and church through music and doing anything that requires creativity.

**Zhanhong Kuang** earned her BA degree in Piano Performance from Seattle Pacific University in 2018. She regularly collaborates with other musicians to perform chamber music, choral music, and church music. She has been working as an accompanist for the Seattle School District since 2017, and has accompanied numerous choir concerts, musicals, music festivals, and competitions. From 2019, she has been serving as the accompanist for the Norwegian Ladies Chorus of Seattle. Besides accompanying, Zhanhong also enjoys teaching. She teaches private lessons at her own studio in Seattle.

**Thank you for coming!**

*Thanks to the Nickerson House and Tech Team*



# PROGRAM NOTES

The theme for my recital is called “Walks of Life.” Why, you may ask? Each piece I will present tonight honors the joys, tears, nuances, and characteristics of a role in society, loudly or subtly. I hope through this program, you can grow to appreciate the differences and the uniqueness of all kinds of jobs, white coats and blue coats alike, and ponder how music can incorporate the intricacies and nature of any type of career into an artistic masterpiece.

So without further ado, let’s examine each role featured today:

## The Mathematician

A musician AND a mathematician? That guy must be a genius! And that is exactly what Johann Sebastian Bach is—well, sort of. He was definitely a musician: a German composer, organist, keyboardist, violinist (believe it or not), even a music teacher. But he wasn’t a mathematician in a literal sense; he didn’t have any formal training in mathematics besides elementary arithmetic. Rather, he was a mathematician in an entirely different sense: a compositional sense. His works, including his Mass in B Minor and his Christmas Oratorio are filled with “mathematically-precise” patterns, structures, recursions, and other features.

Listen closely and see if you can identify any interesting patterns, motifs (repeated ideas), intervals, symmetries, and other “math-inspired” elements as you listen to Bach’s Violin Sonata No. 2. Pay particular attention to the second movement, the fugue, as it is rich with all sorts of mathematical treasures. You might be surprised how many elements you can find!

## The Traveler

Do you love traveling? If so, have you ever been to a land where aggressive tiny people tie you up? Or a land where a clumsy giant can accidentally smush you into a pancake? Or a land where talking horses welcome you while ugly humans wildly hoot at you like apes? Well, those are exactly the kind of places where poor Lemuel Gulliver ended up visiting during his fictional journey in Jonathan Swift’s book, “Gulliver’s Travels,” the story that inspired Telemann to write his Intrada-Suite for 2 Violins.

The suite starts out with a jubilant introduction, depicting the excitement of setting off into the unknown world. The next movement is filled with light patters as the tiny people of Lilliput scatter willy-nilly. The third movement staggers along as the ugly giants of Brobdingnag attempt to clumsily imitate the lively Minuet. The fourth movement is full of jumps and surprises as the dreamy scholars of Laputa get slapped awake by their flappers. Finally, the suite concludes with a chaotic noisy fight between the Houyhnhnms—a race of sophisticated talking horses—and the Yahoos—a race of grotesque primitive monkey-like humans. And thus ends the crazy but fantastical journey of Gulliver the unfortunate Traveler.

## The Soldier

Smoke, carnage, darkness, death. Shouts of patriotism, cries of pain. The sounds of a battlefield in Warsaw echoed as the remnants of the Polish army fled their Russian opponents. Their hope crushed, their victory impossible. When Polish composer Frédéric Chopin heard about the defeat, he was devastated. “All this has caused me much pain. Who could have foreseen it?” he mourned, year 1831. Thus, the Revolutionary Etude was born.

The left-hand thunders with the roaring waves of clashing swords, banging guns, and shouts of dying soldiers. Meanwhile, the right-hand soars with a song of patriotism filled with hope and despair. This short piece ends with a booming C major chord, declaring the unwavering determination and perseverance of the brave Polish soldier. Let’s give a salute to those who sacrifice their lives to protect their country.

### The Hunter

Let's imagine that we are medieval nobles galloping through a dense forest. We hear the barks of excited hounds. We feel the wind in our hair. We sense the rush of adrenaline at the sound of the blaring hunting horn. A brown figure quickly dodges its pursuers. The zzzz of an arrow pierces the air. The figure stumbles. Falls. Silence. Suddenly, cheers fill the air as everyone celebrates. The last sounds we hear are the hunting horns announcing the good news of the successful hunt with an echoing triumphant anthem.

Beethoven may probably have been imagining this scene (intentionally or unintentionally) as he was writing his 18th Piano Sonata. The hunting horn's proud call can be heard in the first and fourth movements, the latter channeling the energy and joy of hunting in full force. Even though they don't include the trademark horn call, the second and third movements add depth to the hunt scene: the second scherzo movement, breaking away from the expected slow "Minuet and Trio" title, embodies the intense excitement and anticipation of pursuing the prey, and the third movement, replacing the previous as the slow movement, sings an uncommonly romantic and passionate "Minuet and Trio" melody—a hunter either enjoying nature or thinking about his loved ones (or those about to be). As you listen to the "Hunt" Sonata, I hope you can feel the joy, excitement, sentimental, and chaos of old-fashion hunting. Behold, the call of the hunting horn!

### The Boatman

China (中国). The land of pandas. The land of great walls. The land of devastating wars and revolutions. The land of the Qin (秦) emperors and Han (汉) emperors. The land of boatmen floating on the great Yellow River (黄河).

The last piece of this program, the Yellow River Concerto (黄河协奏曲), was originally a cantata written by XingHai Xian (冼星海) during the Sino-Japanese War to celebrate and honor the Yellow River as a symbol of resistance against the Japanese invaders. Later on, a bunch of musicians from the Central Philharmonic Society, under the order of Jiang Qing (江青) (or Madame Mao), rearranged the cantata into the four-movement piano concerto that I'll perform for you today—well, partially.

First movement: amidst the clashing huge waves of the Yellow River, brave and courageous boatmen young and old brashly and boldly sing their songs about conquering the waters—the Yellow River Boatmen's Song (黄河船夫曲). Third movement: unpredictable, the Yellow River at times is calm and still, and other times it is like a wild water monster unleashing its overwhelming fury on any unwelcome visitors. Nevertheless, strong boatmen won't ever stop trekking the sometimes-dangerous journey on its waters, singing their people's folk tunes throughout the highs and lows of their journeys—Wrath of the Yellow River (黄河愤). I hope you can feel the love and passion my people have for our land's great Yellow River.

And there you have it: ah, the wonders of all different types of careers. As you listened to my performance and read through the notes, I hope you discovered and appreciated how powerful music is at expressing the uniqueness and characteristics of different walks of life in multiple creative ways. Now, just curious, how do you think YOUR career (or a future option) might be expressed through music?

Thank you so much for coming (and reading these long walls of text) and I hope you enjoy tonight's performance. God bless you!

Karena Qian

### Extra Resources (for the curious-minded)

<https://mathscholar.org/2021/06/bach-as-mathematician/>

<http://benjaminpesetsky.com/writing/program-notes/suite-for-two-violins-gullivers-travels-twv-40108/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulliver%27s\\_Travels](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulliver%27s_Travels)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%89tude\\_Op.\\_10,\\_No.\\_12\\_\(Chopin\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%89tude_Op._10,_No._12_(Chopin))

<https://classicandsacrum.com/biblioteca/beethoven/sonatas/sonata-18.php>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yellow\\_River\\_Piano\\_Concerto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yellow_River_Piano_Concerto)