

# Jonathan Crow, piano

## Artist's Vision

This program is partly based on a CD that I recently recorded which includes tonight's Bach and Prokofieff pieces. There are many recordings of complete Bach suites and complete Paganini Caprices but listening to the solo violin can be a little overwhelming. It is rare to hear a solo violin sonata. Part of the issue is that there is a huge gap in the repertoire. There is the baroque repertoire, the Bach pieces which we hear a lot, then a few suites, and then nothing. Through the entire classical and romantic periods there is no solo violin repertoire until the time of Ysaye and that actually is why I like to program the Bach, Prokofieff and Ysaye to see the connections between these standards. I like playing all these works but for different reasons. The Prokofieff is not performed very often despite being learned by every violin student at some point so it may have an unfair reputation as a student's piece. It was actually written for violin in unison so that it could also be played by an entire class. I find it unfortunate that it is not performed because it is a very beautiful piece, so I'll attempt to rectify that tonight.

So often when reading about the process behind a piece we hear that it was a great brooding thing that took years. That's why I love reading about the Eckhardt-Gramatté *Caprices* and the way they came about; how she was inspired by the things around her, at the theatre, by a dance or traveling on a ferry. I love that they were simply these ideas that just had to come out - pure inspiration. Not that they aren't fleshed out entirely, but they are so open to interpretation for the performer because not everything



can be written down.

What I like about the Ben-Haim Solo Sonata are the influences other than western culture and the very different sounds and effects that would not be heard in a straight recital of Brahms or other traditional composers. I find it a very interesting piece and one that you enjoyed when my teacher, Yehonatan Berick played for you last season. Finally the Ysaye Sonata No 3 is the most famous of this composer's solo violin sonatas. It is very romantic and I find it very effective. It encompasses so much and combines so many different ideas within that one movement. To me, it's like an orchestral tonal poem for the violin.

*(Jonathan Crow)*