ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: SELECTED PIANO SONATAS FROM THE EARLY-THROUGH MID-20TH CENTURY

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Composers of piano music in the first half of the twentieth century challenged the musical conventions of the previous century. Employing elements of their national traditions, they experimented with rhythm, tonality, texture and form. The sonata format, in particular, provided composers with an infinite variety of creative approaches.

The solo keyboard sonata developed in the Classical era and continued to interest composers during the 19th century. In the 20th-century it became a flexible tool for exploring the thematic process, modulation and many other elements.

The 20th-century piano sonata is well-suited for this dissertation project. The works selected—among the most substantial in the repertoire—demand the most from the performer in terms of analysis, technique and aesthetics. Further, Charles Ives’ Piano Sonata No. 2, Concord, Mass., 1840–60 is seldom heard in concert.

This Dissertation comprises three piano recitals that showcase piano works by Debussy, Copland, Prokofiev, Ravel, Bartok, Berg, Barber, and Ives. The performances took place in 2008 and 2010 in Gildenhorn Recital Hall of the Clarice Smith Performing
Arts Center, and in 2011 in Ulrich Concert Hall at the University of Maryland. The recordings are documented on compact discs that are housed within the University of Maryland Library System.
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## CD 1

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Sonata for Violin and Piano in g minor  
I. Allegro vivo  
II. Intermède, fantasque et léger  
III. Finale: Très animé

Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

Sonata for Violin and Piano  
I. Andante semplice  
II. Lento  
III. Allegretto guisto

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

Sonata for Violin and Piano in D major, Op. 94b  
I. Moderato  
II. Scherzo: Presto  
III. Andante  
IV. Allegro con brio

## CD 2

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Sonatine  
I. Modéré  
II. Mouvement de Menuet  
III. Animé

Alban Berg (1885-1935)  
Piano Sonata in B minor, Op. 1
Béla Bartok (1881-1945)
Sonata for piano
I. Allegro moderato
II. Sostenuto e pesante
III. Allegro molto

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)
Sonata in Bb major No. 7, Op. 83
I. Allegro inquieto
II. Andante caloroso
III. Precipitato

CD 3

Charles Ives (1874-1954)
Second piano Sonata “Concord, Mass., 1840-1860”
II. Hawthorne
III. The Alcotts
IV. Thoreau

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)
Piano Sonata Op. 26
I. Allegro energico
II. Allegro vivace e leggero
III. Adagio mesto
IV. Allegro con spirito