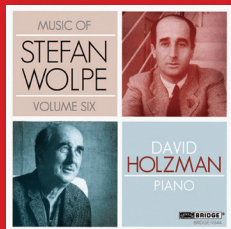
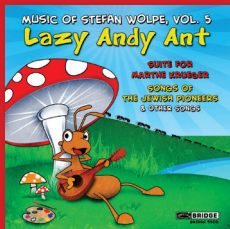


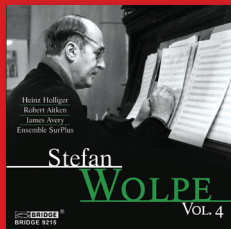
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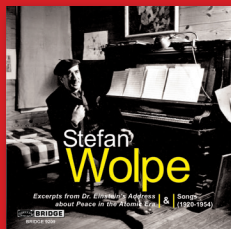
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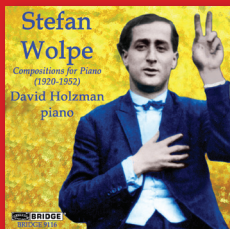
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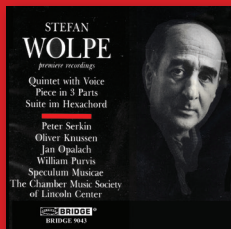
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STEFAN WOLPE VOL. 7

MUSIC FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO
(1924-1966)

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MOVSES POGOSSIAN
SUSAN GRACE
VARTY MANOUELIAN

Stefan Wolpe
(1902-1972)

Movses Pogossian, *violin*

Varty Manouelian, *violin*

Susan Grace, *piano*

❶ **Second Piece for Violin Alone** (1966) (3:14)

Mr. Pogossian

Duo for Two Violins, op. 2 (1924) (13:36)

❷ I. *Allegro molto* (7:52)

❸ II. *Presto (Besessen)* (3:00)

❹ III. ♩ = 112 (2:44)

Ms. Manouelian, Mr. Pogossian

Two Studies for Two Violins and Piano (1933) (5:48)

❺ I. *Overture* (2:00)

❻ II. *Pastoral in the Form of a Passacaglia* (3:48)

Mr. Pogossian, Ms. Manouelian, Ms. Grace

Producer: David Starobin

Engineers: Michael Grace: *Second Sonata for Violin and Piano; Second Sonata for Violin and Piano (fragment); Sonata for Violin and Piano; Two Studies*

Recorded at Packard Hall (Colorado College) Colorado Springs, CO: Feb. 1, 2, 3, 2014

Ben Maas: *Duo for Two Violins, Op. 2; Piece in Two Parts for Violin Alone*

Recorded in Thayer Hall, The Colburn School of Music, Los Angeles, CA: May 19, 2014

Editor: Doron Schächter

Mastering: Adam Abeshouse

Annotator: Austin Clarkson

Publishers: *Second Piece for Violin Alone, Sonata for Violin and Piano*

Piece in Two Parts for Violin Alone **Josef Marx Music Co.; Duo for Two Violins, op. 2**

Two Studies for Two Violins and Piano **Peermusic Classical New York/Hamburg**

Second Sonata for Violin and Piano (fragment) **Stefan Wolpe Society**

Piano Technicians: Kevin Stock, Edward Mulcahey

Cover Painting: *On Space* (Harriet), 1996; Esteban Vicente (American, 1903–2001)
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This recording was made with the generous assistance of the Stefan Wolpe Society, Inc.,
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Varty Manouelian made her American debut in 1993 with the North Carolina Symphony as First Prize winner of the Bryan International Competition. She has also been a prizewinner at a number of other competitions, including the Kotzian International Competition in Czechoslovakia, Performers of Connecticut, and the Wieniawski International Violin Competition in Poland. Manouelian has recorded and appeared as a soloist with numerous orchestras in the United States, Bulgaria, Russia, Armenia, Poland, Spain, and Italy. Her chamber-music performances include participation at the Marlboro Music Festival, the El Paso Festival, and the Olympic Music Festival, among others. She has collaborated with Bruno Canino, Kim Kashkashian, Rohan de Saram, Garriick Ohlsson, Nobuko Imai, Thomas Adès, and members of the Juilliard, Guarneri, Tokyo, Brentano, Borromeo, and Mendelssohn string quartets.

Manouelian spends her summers performing and teaching chamber music with her husband, violinist Movses Pogossian, and their children, Eddie, Cara, and Anoush at the Apple Hill and Sebago festivals in New England. Since joining the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 2004, Manouelian has frequently performed at the Philharmonic's Chamber Music Society and Green Umbrella new-music series, as well as at Camerata Pacifica and the Dilijan Series. Currently teaching at the Colburn School, Varty Manouelian holds degrees from the State Music Academy in Bulgaria and the Cleveland Institute of Music, where she studied with Boyan Letcher and Donald Weilerstein. She is a pathetic gardener, passionate back seat driver, and enjoys going to her kids' soccer games and roasting coffee to perfection.

Sonata for Violin and Piano (1949) (28:48)

- 7 I. *Un poco allegro* (6:29)
- 8 II. *Andante appassionato* (8:37)
- 9 III. *Lento* (3:33)
- 10 IV. *Allegretto deciso* (10:09)

Mr. Pogossian, Ms. Grace

11 Second Sonata for Violin and Piano (fragment) (1958/59) (1:30)

Mr. Pogossian, Ms. Grace

Piece in Two Parts for Violin Alone (1964) (14:56)

- 12 I. $\text{♩} = 80$ (8:37)
- 13 II. $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 112$ (6:19)

Mr. Pogossian



The Violin In Wolpe's Life

As a child Stefan Wolpe studied the violin and the piano, and by his teens he wished to become a concert pianist and composer. His life transformed when, at the age of 18, he visited the Bauhaus at Weimar and sat in on the Preliminary Course of the painter and progressive educator Johannes Itten. While in Weimar, Wolpe began to practice Taoist meditation, which led to his composing pieces without notating them. When he did write down a piece, he would destroy it after it was performed, thinking that, “one doesn’t need to be burdened with concrete manifestations of what one does. The main thing is that one makes some progress.”¹ Wolpe later regretted that he had destroyed so much of his music, including a *Sonata for Violin and Piano, Op. 21*. In 1924 he began a new set of opus numbers with Songs after Friedrich Hölderlin. While composing the songs, Wolpe wrote in his diary:

*Poetry is the history of the world within us. Do you know the face of the world, this overwhelming, unique thing? Instead of the anxiety and fear of the world in which man finds himself caught up and judged, poetry shall uphold and gather together material things, and out of the real and the concrete make intimate and rich thoughts for yourself.*²

Throughout his life Wolpe maintained that art has the power to transform the individual and society.



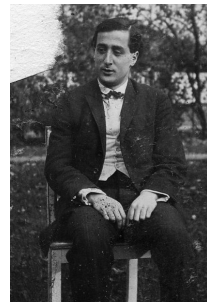
Susan Grace has performed solo and chamber recitals, and has appeared as soloist with orchestras in the United States, Europe, the former Soviet Union, India and China. She has, in addition, performed in numerous series and festivals, including the Aspekte Festival in Salzburg, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra’s new-music series Engine 408, Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C., the Grand Teton Festival, Music at Oxford, and the Helmsley Festival in England. Ms. Grace is Artist-in-Residence and Lecturer in Music at Colorado College and Music Director of the Colorado College Summer Music Festival. She is a member of *Quattro Mani*, an internationally acclaimed two-piano ensemble that made its New York debut in January 2001 in Carnegie Recital Hall to a sold-out hall. They were immediately re-engaged for four more seasons. In 2012 *Quattro Mani* performed with the Alabama Symphony in Carnegie Hall.

Ms. Grace has recorded for Bridge Records, the Belgium National Radio, WFMT in Chicago, the Society of Composers, Wilson Audio, Klavier International and Klavier Music Productions. New releases on Bridge Records are *Kindred Spirits*, *Concertos for Two Pianos* and *The Music of Stefan Wolpe*. She was nominated for a Grammy in 2005 in the Best Small Ensemble Performance category. Ms. Grace is a recipient of the 2005 Business and Community Alliance Partner award for making a significant contribution to the non-college community in Colorado Springs, CO. In April 2009, Ms. Grace received a Pikes Peak Arts Council “Force for the Arts” award, which celebrates Colorado Springs community members who contribute to the arts in education. In September 2009 the ninth annual Pikes Peak Arts Council Awards honored her work as music director of the Summer Music Festival with the “Vision, Courage and Achievement Award.”



Armenian-born violinist **Movses Pogossian** made his American debut performing the Tchaikovsky Concerto with the Boston Pops at Symphony Hall in 1990, about which Richard Dyer of the Boston Globe wrote: “There is freedom in his playing, but also taste and discipline. It was a fiery, centered, and highly musical performance...” Movses Pogossian has since performed with orchestras such as the Brandenburger Symphoniker and the Halle Philharmonic in Germany, the Sudety Philharmonic in Poland, the Tuscon Symphony, the

El Paso Symphony, the Scandinavian Chamber Orchestra of New York, and the Toronto Sinfonia. His recent and upcoming performances include recitals in New York, Boston, Ann Arbor, and concerts in Korea, Japan, Germany, Armenia, and Cyprus. He is a Prize-winner of the 1986 Tchaikovsky International Competition, and the youngest-ever First Prize winner of the 1985 USSR National Violin Competition, previous winners of which included David Oistrakh and Gidon Kremer. An active chamber musician, Mr. Pogossian has performed with members of the Tokyo, Kronos, and Brentano string quartets, and with such artists as Kim Kashkashian, Jeremy Denk, Lynn Harrell, Ani and Ida Kavafian, and Rohan de Saram. He frequently collaborates with the Apple Hill Chamber Players, teaching annually at their summer music festival in New Hampshire. Movses Pogossian is the Artistic Director of the critically acclaimed Dilijan Chamber Music Series, which performs at Zipper Hall in downtown Los Angeles, and is currently in its ninth season (<http://dilijan.larkmusicalsociety.com>). Since earning his advanced degrees from the Komitas Conservatory in Armenia and the Tchaikovsky Conservatory of Music in Moscow, Mr. Pogossian has held teaching positions at Duquesne, Bowling Green, Wayne State, and SUNY Buffalo Universities. His principal teachers were L. Zorian, V. Mokatsian, V. Klimov, and legendary Louis Krasner. Movses Pogossian is currently Professor of Violin at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music. He resides in Glendale, California with his wife, Los Angeles Philharmonic violinist Varty Manouelian, and their three children.



Stefan Wolpe, 1925, Berlin. Photo courtesy Paul Sacher Foundation.

DUO FÜR ZWEI GEIGEN
Op.2 (1924)
für Victor Schlichter

Stefan Wolpe
1924

I

Allegro molto $\text{♩} = 100$

ff

rit. *a tempo*

II

ff

7

Un poco meno mosso $\text{♩} = 116$
(*sarft und leise drängend*)

p

Duo for Two Violins. Courtesy, Peermusic.

Wolpe then composed *Duo for Two Violins, Opus 2*, which he dedicated to the young Viennese virtuoso Victor Schlichter (1903-1986). The Duo links the lyricism of the Hölderlin Songs with music on the cutting edge. The first movement emerges from the abrupt alternation of two themes that are related in interval but differ sharply in gesture. The extensive movement develops rhythm as intensely as melody, harmony and texture. The second movement raises the Bartókian *moto perpetuo* to a new level of rhythmic complexity with tempi that push the boundaries of physical possibility. The third and presumably last movement breaks off after 73 bars (the last pages of the manuscript are lost). The intimate introduction is followed by a vigorous triple time dance with the violins in D and E-flat major, respectively. In 1925 Wolpe composed Piano Sonata *Stehende Musik* [Music of Stasis] (Bridge, Vol. 2), which he also named *Opus One*. Its hard-edged rhythmic structures and extreme physicality were Wolpe's answer to the prevailing aesthetic of developing variation. The Songs, the Duo and the Sonata together form the cornerstone of Wolpe's oeuvre.



Stefan Wolpe, Vienna, 1933. Courtesy, The Paul Sacher Foundation.

Endnotes

1. "Stefan Wolpe in Conversation with Eric Salzman," *The Musical Quarterly* 83/3 (1999): 395.
2. Stefan Wolpe, Diary I, p. 13. Stefan Wolpe Collection, Paul Sacher Foundation. Translation by the author, with the assistance of Nora Born.
3. Letter, Stefan Wolpe to Joseph Livingston, 14 July 1954. Stefan Wolpe Collection.
4. The New York Times, 17 Nov., 1949.
5. Stefan Wolpe, "Thinking Twice." In: Thomas Phleps (Ed.), *Stefan Wolpe, Das Ganze überdenken: Vorträge über Musik 1935-1962* (Saarbrücken: Pfau Verlag, 2002), p. 187.
6. Raoul Pleskow, "On Wolpe's Piece in Two Parts for Violin Alone." In A. Clarkson (Ed.), *On the Music of Stefan Wolpe: Essays and Recollections* (Hillsdale NY: Pendragon Press, 2003), p. 311.
7. Stefan Wolpe, "Thinking Twice," p. 191.

The Stefan Wolpe Society

The Society is a non-profit organization founded in 1981 to further the knowledge and understanding of the music of Stefan Wolpe. Funds raised by the Society are directed to meeting the following needs: preparation and publication of critical scores for the use of musicians and scholars; sponsorship of recordings of outstanding performances of the music; assistance to performers and scholars in obtaining information on the music and writing of the composer.

development—how many! And then again, afterwards, how not to do it! How not to take that trip! Suppose you have a steady state in which you can elect to remain, but a state the parts of which can be rearranged endlessly, kaleidoscopically. Now let's start again! Take these three notes G, A, and B, play them five times and then stop! And then. . .

Second Piece is a playful, wistful state of being that utterly belies the rigidity of Wolpe's body.

Placing the latest piece at the start of this program invites us to hear Wolpe's music – early, middle and late – as a whole, and to marvel at his determination to transform and regenerate music in order that it might continue to serve people through changing times and circumstance. To paraphrase Wolpe's words from his early twenties: Out of the real and the concrete, his music continues to make intimate and rich thoughts for us.

*Austin Clarkson
Toronto, March 2015*



Pastorale in Form einer Passacaglia, 1933. Courtesy, Peermusic and The Paul Sacher Foundation.

In 1928 Wolpe joined Hanns Eisler's Workers' Music Movement and wrote anthems for labor unions, march songs for agitprop troupes and incidental music for Communist-aligned dance and theater companies. Forced into exile when Hitler seized power, Wolpe visited the Soviet Union in the spring of 1933 and was enthused by Soviet socialism. He spent the fall of the year in Vienna. While studying with Anton Webern, he planned a symphony on the model of the Leningrad modernists. He laid out five movements based on scenes from the so-called "Revolutionary Scenario" on which Shostakovich had modeled his Second and Third Symphonies. After completing *Two Studies for Large Orchestra*, he

arranged them for two violins and piano in expectation of a concert of his music in Vienna. But in December the police expelled Wolpe from Austria, and he did not complete the symphony.

The *Overture* corresponds to “Dark Chaos of the Unenlightened Past” from the Revolutionary Scenario, and *Pastorale in Form of a Passacaglia* to a “Pastoral Idyll”. The remaining movements likely would have depicted “Awakening Revolutionary Consciousness”, “Struggle between the Forces of Revolution and Reaction” and “Victory Celebration”. Wolpe the Hegelian believed (along with Schoenberg and Webern) that twelve-note music was the inevitable goal of a historical process, while Wolpe the socialist insisted that twelve-note music “express human experience simply and directly”. The Two Studies mark the first step in Wolpe’s life-long project to provide modern music for “the man on the street”.

Wolpe may have had in mind Schoenberg’s *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, Op. 16, when he composed the *Overture*. The first four bars are lost, but the last two bars of the introduction and the remainder of the movement depict “Dark Chaos” with an intensity of transformation that approaches Schoenberg’s *The Obbligato Recitative* (Op. 16/5). The twelve-note subject of the *Pastorale* emerges quietly from the *Overture*. It is unlike any row of the Viennese, as it consists entirely of thirds and tritones, contains common triads and outlines a portion of an octatonic mode. The prime form of the row, which appears in all nine variations, is presented in counterpoint with its retrograde and is transposed twice. Otherwise it is treated



Wolpe, *Second Piece for Violin Alone*. Pencil holograph. Courtesy, McGinnis & Marx Music Company, and The Paul Sacher Foundation.

In 1966, again at the invitation of Max Polikoff, Wolpe composed *Second Piece for Violin Alone*. As the manuscript shows, writing down the notes was a grievous struggle. This time Wolpe provided a note, which Polikoff read before the premiere on May 11, 1966.

Three notes found in the major scale—G, A, B—and played simply on the lowest string. Classical music, folk music, how many pieces start that way! How many pieces start that way and then take you on a musical journey, like a symphony, down the great Mississippi River from one state to another, from one region to another—levels, motion,

smallest intervallic, space-like life in the belly-button of the piece, in turn co-existing with winding, multi-directional, multi-focal shapes rapidly covering the musical canvas. And I can speak about your rich vocabulary of hinging, how phrase is connected with phrase, or is overlapping, or waiting for phrase And how the symmetrical four-note and eight-note units are separated by asymmetrical rests, rests that end, and rests that continue and unexpectedly turn silence to sound. And I can speak of my fascination for your process of moving through a piece by unfolding limited material that undergoes large and small trans-shapings, material that is habit-less.... The virtuosity of constant re-shifting and re-shuffling the familiar as different, the different as unexpected. And I sense a kind of polyphony implied in the Solo Piece.⁶

Wolpe's student Morton Feldman admired how Wolpe made the two-part form his own. Generally, one part is slower, with a gathering, centering action, the events well formed and the thought directed and orderly, while the other part is faster, with a scattering action, the shapes fractured, and the mode of thought disruptive and unstable. Images appear and depart without ceremony:

There is nothing to develop, because everything is already there in reach of one's ears.... On the back of a bird, inside of an apple, dancing on the sun's ray, speaking to Machaut, and holding the skeleton's hand of the incredible Cezanne.⁷

very freely. The last variation closes in a state of suspended animation, perhaps in homage to Schoenberg's *Farben* (Op. 16/3). Wolpe's next project of twelve-note music for the common man resulted in *Four Studies on Basic Rows*, of which the fourth is a *Passacaglia* on a far vaster scale (Bridge, Vol. 6).

Irma Schoenberg (1902-1984), the Romanian pianist and Jacques-Dalcroze teacher, helped Wolpe to escape from Berlin in March of 1933 and again came to his rescue when he was expelled from Austria. She brought him to her home in Bucharest and obtained papers for them to immigrate to the British Mandate of Palestine. They travelled to Palestine in the spring of 1934, settled in Jerusalem and were married. During the next four years Wolpe dedicated himself to creating a repertoire of choral, vocal and instrumental music for the longed-for democratic nation of Israel. But his music and politics were too radical for the conservative community of Jerusalem, and in 1938 the Wolpes departed for America.

During the mid-1940s Wolpe submitted his music to a radical critique. He composed over one hundred studies in which he explored new means of handling the elements of music. The title of one set of studies reveals his aim: "Displaced Spaces, Shocks, Negations, A new sort of relationship in space, Pattern, Tempo, Diversity of Actions, Inter-reactions and Intensities" (1946). The first piece in his new style was *Sonata for Violin and Piano 1949* (see inside traycard). Having worked out the foundations of the new language in many sketches, Wolpe composed the Sonata rapidly. He wrote the second movement between June 20 and July 6, the first movement from July 8 to July 23, and completed the third and fourth movements by August 22.



Stefan Wolpe in 1940s New York. Courtesy, Nora Born.

In 1954 Wolpe sent remarks on the Sonata to his student Joe Livingston, who was writing the sleeve notes for the Esoteric recording:

I very much like to maintain the flexibility of sound structures (as one would try to draw into water). That leads me to the promotion of a very mobile polyphony in which the partials of the sound behave like river currents and a greater orbit spread-out is guaranteed to the sound, a greater circulatory agility (a greater momentum too). The sound gets the plasticity of figures of waves, and the magneticism, and the fluid elasticity of river currents, or the fire of gestures, and the generative liveliness of all what is life (and Apollo and Dionysos, and the seasons of the heart, and the articulate fevers).³

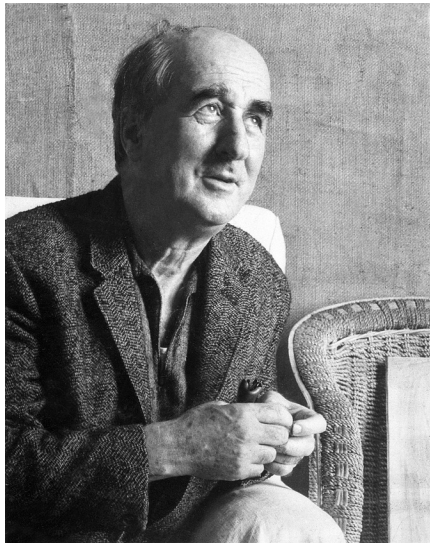


Piece in Two Parts for Violin Alone. Courtesy, McGinnis & Marx Music Company.

By 1964 Parkinson's disease cramped Wolpe's fingers so that he could barely write, but his musical imagination was unfettered. ***Piece in Two Parts for Violin Alone*** is one of several pieces that he composed for solo instruments. It is dedicated to Max Polikoff, who gave the first performance on 26 April 1964. Two years later, Raoul Pleskow (b. 1932), who assisted Wolpe in the music department of C.W. Post College, gave a talk on *Piece in Two Parts* in Wolpe's presence:

The various levels of language are uniquely yours. It is wondrous that these contoured phrases, with their classic dotted rhythm in an octave-and-a-half confinement, asking, "Does one still write music like that?" can co-exist with three-note fluctuations pressed into the breath of the

In 1958 Wolpe began a *Second Sonata for Violin and Piano*. The sketch, which breaks off after 29 bars, begins with fragments of anonymous material, as in the First Sonata, but now they are poised in space, free of time and gravity, objects in a mobile sculpture. Thirds and fifths are still as prominent as seconds and sevenths, while the violin explores wide spaces. The *Second Sonata* gave way to *Form for Piano* (1959), which ushered in the works of Wolpe's late period.

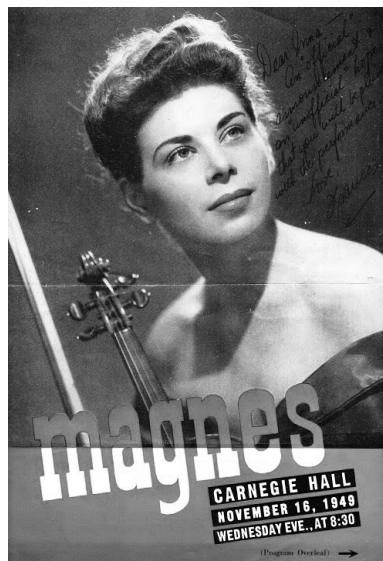


Stefan Wolpe at the American Academy in Rome, 1963. Courtesy, The Paul Sacher Foundation.

Wolpe usually avoided attaching personal associations and literary ideas to his music, preferring instead to liken it to physical and chemical processes of nature and as the expression of an objective, universal life force. The reference to the mythical antagonists Apollo and Dionysos and to the seasons of the heart may have been inspired by the fact that in 1949 he had fallen in love with the poet Hilda Morley. They were married in 1952.

The first movement begins with a 38-second “phrase”, which Wolpe described as cells of anonymous, primordial material that feed everything in the movement. The violin and piano are independent actors, often with separate barring to emphasize their rhythmic differences. In the last movement the two hands of the pianist also differ in barring. The violin and piano employ a wide range of technical resources and sonorities to convey the driving energy of swirling currents, pounding waves and quiet eddies in a fast moving river. The movement ends as it began with an open fifth G-D.

The action of the second movement is more long breathed and lyrical. The piano for the most part underlines the violin's variegated moods, only occasionally taking the lead with contrasted gestures. In the slow movement the violin has long repeated notes, while the piano is the more active and solicitous partner. A lively scherzo-like passage intervenes, followed by an abbreviated reprise of the opening. The fourth movement begins in the antic mood of the first, but with more purposeful intent, almost a striding march. The action slows for what Wolpe described as the montage of an image from the past, as in a Picasso painting,



Frances Magnes Concert Flyer

frances
Magnes
violinist

Program

I.

Sonata in C major, K. 403	MOZART
Sonata in A minor, Op. 105	SCHUMANN
Sonata 1949	WOLPE

dedicated to Frances Magnes
(first public performance)

Intermission

II.

Zapateado Romance Andalus Caprice Basque	}	SARASATE
--	---	----------

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a “radiant thing from olden times.” With this melody “of seriously admonishing beauty” he bade farewell to the past. A vigorous dance, a hora perhaps, breaks in and broadens into a radiant cadenza as the violin soars free.

Sonata 1949 was commissioned by Frances Magnes (1919-2010), who performed the premiere with Irma Wolpe’s student David Tudor (1926-1996) in Carnegie Hall on November 16, 1949. Howard Taubman praised the Sonata as consequential music with character, vigor and a burning intensity, adding that it has pathos but no self-pity, passion but no sentimentality. He commended Wolpe as a composer “who has worked out his own idiom.”⁴

Sonata 1949 ushered in a period of masterworks that Wolpe composed while on the staff of Black Mountain College, the progressive campus in the mountains of North Carolina. In 1956 the College closed its doors and Wolpe was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to Germany. He gave a lecture at the Darmstadt summer course on new music in America, with examples performed by David Tudor. He was inspired by the Webern revival to revisit the music of his one-time teacher, and he again submitted his music to a radical critique. In the lecture "Thinking Twice" (1958-1959) he set forth music of the discontinuum, music that does not develop because everything is already present:

*A sound's protrusion and recession, violence and stillness. A sound's mass and its fraction all become contiguous, the leap is next to the step, the infinite farness recoils into infinite closeness.*⁵