From Keys to Strings

with the Davin-Levin Duo
Colin Davin, guitar
Emily Levin, harp

October 17, 2020
3 p.m.
Online
MAKE Trio returns to the FACP stage with a program of juxtapositions: reality and imagination, past and future, certainty and unknown. Including Béla Bartók’s *Contrasts*, MAKE will also perform works by Maurice Ravel, Darius Mihaud, and Dallas composer Quinn Mason.

Featuring MAKE Trio
Grace Kang Wollett, violin
Danny Goldman, clarinet
Mikhail Berestnev, piano
Davin-Levin Duo

A “clearly felicitous combination of two plucked string instruments,” (Cleveland Classical), the Davin-Levin Duo is comprised of Emily Levin, Principal Harp of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and Artistic Director of the Hallam Family Concert series (Fine Arts Chamber Players), and Colin Davin, Guitar Co-Head at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Since their first performance together in 2015, the Davin-Levin Duo has revolutionized the genre, expanding the repertoire through commissions and arrangements and establishing their instrument combination as a dynamic chamber music experience. The Davin-Levin Duo has appeared around the country, performing concert experiences ranging from (Le) Poisson Rouge in New York City to intimate wine cellars in Boulder, CO. They have been featured at the Cleveland International Classical Guitar Festival, Fine Arts Chamber Players, University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and others. In February 2019, they recorded the Duo’s first album in a live concert, featuring their arrangements of de Falla, Ravel, and Philip Glass, alongside two commissions by Dylan Mattingly and Will Stackpole. Banter was released in April 2020 and is available to purchase or stream online.

A Note on the Program

As we gather virtually to kick off the 2020-2021 season, I am so thankful to each one of you for supporting the Fine Arts Chamber Players and our community of music. I believe strongly that the universal language of music has a powerful role in connecting us to one another, and this power is especially poignant when we cannot gather together in person. Today, I hope the music fills you with emotion and provides an opportunity to escape the world for a little bit. I hope you enjoy.

—Emily Levin, FACP Artistic Director

About the Music

The Davin-Levin Duo first performed for FACP in November 2017, with a program of sweeping orchestral arrangements and new works commissioned by the Duo. This time, they present their first performance of an entirely new program, intimate and detailed in scope, as each piece was originally written for solo piano.

The program opens with Claude Debussy’s Suite Bergamasque in four movements, each rippling with lush harmonies and delicate articulations. Of particular note is the third movement, “Clair de Lune,” iconic from the opening mysterious intervals. Following Debussy is Three Roses by African-American composer Florence Price, presented in three evocative movements—the first warm and lyrical, the second reserved and haunting in its stillness, and the third a wild romp through waltzlike rhythms, with a brief return of the melody from the first movement.

The climax of the program arrives in György Ligeti’s arresting Musica Ricercata. Each of the 11 movements contains a fixed number of pitches—the first movement contains only two notes (A and D), the second three notes (E-sharp, F-sharp and G), and so on. The result is a slow, dramatic build in intensity and melodic structure, culminating in the final movement, which structurally resembles a medieval chant but is so dense with notes (all 12 pitches) that the result is a delightfully crunchy texture. It is a true tour de force for the performers. The program concludes with a piano etude by Philip Glass, with repetitive grooves and rhythms that allow both the performers and the listeners a chance to bask in the music.

Each piece on the program was arranged by Colin Davin and Emily Levin, and after a whirlwind week of rehearsal, they are delighted to present this program of music for the very first time. Enjoy the debut!
I believe creativity is the very essence of life. It unites us, inspires us, challenges and changes us.

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Suite Bergamasque
(approximate duration 17 minutes)
I. Prélude
II. Menuet
III. Clair de Lune
IV. Passepied

Three Roses
(approximate duration 7 minutes)
I. To a Yellow Rose
II. To a White Rose
III. To a Red Rose

Musica Ricercata
(approximate duration 23 minutes)
I. Sostenuto – Misurato – Prestissimo
II. Mesto, rigido e cerimoniale
III. Allegro con spirito
IV. Tempo di valse (poco vivace – "à l’orgue de Barbarie")
V. Rubato. Lamentoso
VI. Allegro molto capriccioso
VII. Cantabile, molto legato
VIII. Vivace. Energico
IX. (Béla Bartók in Memoriam) Adagio. Mesto – Allegro maestoso
X. Vivace. Capriccioso
XI. (Omaggio a Girolamo Frescobaldi) Andante misurato e tranquillo

Piano Etude No. 6
(approximate duration 5 minutes)

Colin Davin, guitar
Emily Levin, harp

Performance filmed at Arts Mission Oak Cliff, Dallas
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