

78TH SEASON OF

# CONCERTS

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART | OCTOBER 20, 2019





Ran Dank and Soyeon Kate Lee, photo by Lisa-Marie Mazzucco

# PROGRAM

**Ran Dank and Soyeon Kate Lee, pianists**

**October 20, 2019 | 3:30**

**West Building, West Garden Court**

Claude Debussy (1862–1918)

Selections from *Préludes, Books 1 and 2* (1909–1910; 1912–1913)

*Bruyères (Heather/Town in Eastern France)*

*Ce qu'a vu le vent d'ouest (What the West Wind Has Seen)*

*Minstrels*

*La puerta del vino (Wine Gate)*

Soyeon Kate Lee, piano

Claude Debussy

*L'isle joyeuse (The Joyful Island)* 1904

Soyeon Kate Lee, piano

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943)

Selections from *Études-Tableaux, op. 39* (1916)

No. 1 in C Minor

No. 2 in A Minor

No. 3 in F-sharp Minor

No. 8 in D Minor

No. 9 in D Major

Ran Dank, piano

## **Intermission**

Marc-André Hamelin (b. 1961)

*Tango* (2019)\*

Ran Dank and Soyeon Kate Lee, piano

Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971)

*Le Sacre du printemps (The Rite of Spring)* (1913)

Ran Dank and Soyeon Kate Lee, piano

\* World premiere

# THE MUSICIANS

## **Soyeon Kate Lee**

First-prize winner of the 2010 Naumburg International Piano Competition and the 2004 Concert Artist Guild International Competition, Korean-American Soyeon Kate Lee has been lauded by the *New York Times* as a pianist with “a huge, richly varied sound, a lively imagination and a firm sense of style,” and by the *Washington Post* for her “stunning command of the keyboard.”

Lee has been rapturously received as guest soloist with the Cleveland and the London Symphony Orchestras, as well as with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, the San Diego Symphony, and the Orquestra de València, including performances under the batons of Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, Jahja Ling, Jorge Mester, and Otto-Werner Mueller. Recent recital appearances include New York City programs at Carnegie Hall’s Zankel and Weill Recital Halls, Merkin Concert Hall, Alice Tully Hall, and Finland’s Maanta Music Festival. A Naxos recording artist, her discography spans recordings of Scarlatti, Liszt, and Scriabin, with upcoming releases of Clementi Sonatas, as well as another volume of Scarlatti Sonatas.

Lee is the cofounder and artistic director of Music by the Glass, a concert series dedicated to bringing together young professionals in New York City. She is an associate professor of music in piano at the Cincinnati-College Conservatory of Music. She lives in Cincinnati with her husband, pianist Ran Dank, and their children, Noah and Ella.

## **Ran Dank**

Ran Dank’s recent programs have included a recital at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, performing Frederic Rzewski’s tour-de-force of thirty-six variations: *The People United Will Never Be Defeated*, followed by appearances at the Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival and a duo recital with pianist Soyeon Kate Lee at the Cooperstown Summer Music Festival. Dank and Lee were also special guest performers at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival’s 2018 Gala. Dank’s past seasons have featured appearances with the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra and Eckart Preu, the Portland Symphony and Ken-David Masur, and the Kansas City Symphony and Michael Stern. He performed chamber music with the Amernet Quartet at Maverick Concerts and had duo appearances with pianist Soyeon Kate Lee at the Smithsonian Institution, Cincinnati’s Linton Music, and (Le) Poisson Rouge in New York City. Solo recitals included the Gilmore Piano Festival, New York City’s Town Hall, the Skaneateles Chamber Music Festival, and Maverick Concerts with the Shanghai Quartet.

Dank is the recipient of numerous honors, including from the Naumburg Piano Competition and the Sydney International Piano Competition, as well as First Prize winner of the Hilton Head International Piano Competition.

# PROGRAM NOTES

## **Claude Debussy, Selections from *Préludes, Books 1 and 2***

Debussy’s two volumes of twelve preludes contain the essence of his uniqueness as a composer. The *Préludes* are truly impressionistic, not only because their titles refer to some extra-musical object or idea, but also because they are moments of music that exist in and of themselves, without any attempt to present a formal beginning, development, or end. Nevertheless, each is a satisfying entity creating as it unfolds a form of its own. In some cases, the composer’s musical impression of the object in the title is fairly easy to grasp; at other times the relationship between the title and the music is subtler, sometimes known only to the composer himself. It is revealing to note that Debussy, in his manuscript, placed the title of each prelude at the end of it, not at the beginning, and may have chosen the title after the music had already been conceived.

*This program note originally appeared in a performance at the National Gallery of Art on Sunday, January 30, 1994, with the pianist Peter Takács.*

## **Sergei Rachmaninoff, *Etudes-Tableaux, op. 39***

Sergei Rachmaninoff was one of the leading piano virtuosos of the twentieth century and is equally known for the beauty of his own music. His use of strong melodies embellished with elaborate technical flourishes creates intensive crystallizations of a particular mode or subject, and the *Etudes-Tableaux* could also be described as small tone poems in their own right. Indeed, the fifteen *Etudes-Tableaux* of opuses 33 and 39 (the latter heard in today’s program) were thought to be sonic representations of the same number of paintings, but the source of Rachmaninoff’s inspiration for these impassioned works remains a mystery.

*This program note originally appeared in a performance at the National Gallery of Art on Sunday, June 16, 1996, with the pianist Stephen Prutsman.*

## **Marc-André Hamelin, *Tango***

“A performer of near-superhuman technical prowess” (*New York Times*), pianist Marc-André Hamelin is known worldwide for his unrivaled blend of musicianship and brilliant technique in works of the established repertoire, as well as for his intrepid exploration of the rarities of the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries. Hamelin has composed nearly thirty compositions over the course of his career. Lynne Withey and Michael Hindus commissioned his newest work, *Tango*, making its world premiere today. Born in Montreal, Hamelin is the recipient of a lifetime achievement award from

the German Record Critics' Association and has received seven Juno Awards and eleven Grammy nominations. He is an Officer of the Order of Canada, a Chevalier de l'Ordre du Québec, and a member of the Royal Society of Canada.

### **Igor Stravinsky, *Le Sacre du printemps* (*The Rite of Spring*)**

The chaotic premiere of Igor Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps* in 1913, coupled with the outbreak of World War I, caused this monumental work not to be heard again in an orchestral version for seven years, except for this version for piano four hands.

The genesis of the composition came to Stravinsky in 1910, as he was finishing *The Firebird*. In a "fleeting vision," Stravinsky says, "[I saw] a solemn pagan rite: sage elders, seated in a circle, watching a young girl dance herself to death. They were sacrificing her to propitiate the god of spring."

Stravinsky immediately started planning this work in collaboration with the Russian painter and archeologist Nikolai Roerich, before a note of music was written. Roerich would ultimately work on the set and costumes for the premiere of the ballet at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, along with the choreographer Vaslav Nijinsky. At a party in Paris at the home of French critic Louis Laloy, prior to the ballet's premiere, Stravinsky cajoled Claude Debussy to play the arrangement for piano four hands with him for the guests. Debussy later remarked that the music of *Le Sacre du printemps* haunted him "like a beautiful nightmare."

After the publication of the orchestral version in 1921, this version for four hands faded from memory, until 1967, when the pianist, conductor, and composer Michael Tilson Thomas and pianist Ralph Grierson, with Stravinsky's blessing, performed and recorded the work. Since then it has become a staple of piano duos, last heard here at the National Gallery of Art in 2016, with the Anderson and Roe Piano Duo.



Edmond Lebel, *Still Life of Musical Instruments*, c. 1863, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Robert B. Menschel Fund, 2006.109.1

### **Upcoming Events of the Seventy-Eighth Season of The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lamot Belin Concerts**

Unless otherwise noted, concerts are held in the West Building, West Garden Court.

Sound Sketch

**Jacqueline Pollauf, harp**

*Lamentations, Prayers, and Meditations in Contemporary Art and Music*

East Building Library

October 25, 12:10

**Slavic Soul Party!**

*Far East Suite*

A reimagination of Duke Ellington's *Far East Suite* with an Eastern European brass band twist!

October 27, 3:30

**Gaelynn Lea, singer-songwriter and violinist**

*Presented in honor of Disability Employment Awareness Month\**

October 29, 12:10

West Building Lecture Hall

**Jenny Scheinman and Allison Miller**

*Parlour Game\**

November 3, 3:30

\* This concert is part of a series of performances by female violinists, showcasing the brilliance and stylistic versatility of the instrument.

### **General Information**

Admission to the National Gallery of Art and all of its programs is free of charge, except as noted.

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed.

Please be sure that all portable electronic devices are turned off.

Concerts are made possible in part through the generosity of donors to the National Gallery of Art through The Circle. Reserved seating is available in recognition of their support. Please contact the development office at (202) 842-6450 or [circle@nga.gov](mailto:circle@nga.gov) for more information.

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