

# Brian Way

## piano

Partita #1 in B flat major (BMV 825)

Praeludium

Allemande

Corrente

Sarabande

Menuet 1/ 2

Giga

J.S. Bach  
(1685-1750)

Sonata #31, Op. 110 in A flat major

Moderato Cantabile

Scherzo

Adagio, fuga, arioso, fuga

Ludwig Van Beethoven  
(1770-1827)

**-INTERMISSION-**

Le Tombeau de Couperin

Prelude

Fugue

Forlane

Rigaudon

Menuet

Toccata

Maurice Ravel  
(1879-1937)

Sonatine Transatlantique

Foxtrot

Alexandre Tansman  
(1897-1986)

*Presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for Music 645B*





## PROGRAM NOTES

### **Bach: Partita #1 in B flat major (BMV 825)**

The term Partita is used at different times to mean a variation, a piece, a set of variations, and a suite or other multi - movement genre. In this case, "Partita" represents a collection of 17<sup>th</sup> Century dance movements, similar to the composer's French or English suites. Partita #1 in B Flat major is the first of six Partitas written by Bach for the keyboard. This suite consists of six movements - Praeludium, Allemande, Corrente, Sarabande, Menuet 1 and 2, and Giga.

### **Beethoven: Sonata #31, OP. 110, a flat major**

Completed on Christmas Day in 1821, this sonata is (represents) the next to last written by Beethoven. The first movement opens with a gentle first theme, but then goes on to exploit the extremes of the piano. The Scherzo is powerful with fast and furious stresses (due to the 2/4 meter). Beethoven plays with the sense of where strong and weak beats of the phrases occur in this movement. The final movement opens with a Lament which then gives way to a serene fugue, based upon a 1<sup>st</sup> movement theme. This is followed by a second lament or "arioso", which is then followed by a surprise of an upside-down version of the fugue's theme which then increases in activity and grows to a sweeping close this sonata. I find it interesting that Beethoven, late in his life, was quoted as having said that he "found the piano to be an unsatisfactory instrument."

### **Ravel: Le Tombeau de Couperin**

Written in 1917, this work served both as an epitaph to friends lost in war as well as a tribute to French composer Francois Couperin. It also pays homage to the great clavecinistes of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Suite is framed by the opening Prelude and Fugue and the closing Toccata. Within this frame are three 17<sup>th</sup> Century dance movements - Forlane, Rigaudon, and Menuet.

### **Tansman: Sonatine Transatlantique**

Alexandre Tansman was a French composer and pianist of Polish birth. He moved to Paris in 1920, and was friends with Stravinsky and Ravel. During his first American tour as a pianist with Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1927, Tansman became acquainted with Gershwin. It is this acquaintance, in addition to this love of contemporary American jazz which may well have provided the inspiration for the Sonatine Transatlantique, written in Paris in 1930.

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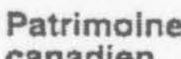
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