2005

Poeme Nocturne

Alan Schmitz

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Poème nocturne

for Violin and Piano

Alan Schmitz

2005
Notes about Poème nocturne
by the composer

This composition, written for my daughter Emily Schmitz Vardanyan and premiered on her senior recital at the Eastman School of Music during the spring of 2006, is based on two pre-existing themes. The first was taken from Chausson's Poème - op. 25 (a piece also included on Emily's recital) and the other from a composition for flute and piano entitled Nocturne that I had written some time earlier. Poème nocturne opens with Chausson's theme, presented initially in its original key (Eb minor), but with some modifications/additions and a completely new harmonic accompaniment. It is recognizable though "different." Next, my theme, from the flute piece, appears. During the course of this work, versions of the Chausson theme are presented in different keys and meters thus creating a few variations, while my flute theme is used as contrasting material and finally as the basis for a cadenza performed on the violin alone. Following the cadenza the two themes are combined in the violin part while the piano accompanies. Poème nocturne concludes with a recap of the opening measures, thus taking the listener back to the first key and Chausson's theme.

Not only does this work function as a companion piece to Chausson's op. 25, it relates, as well, to another project I was involved with during its composition. I was writing a chamber opera based on Turgenev's short story "The Song of Triumphant Love." According to the preface of the G. Henle edition of the piano reduction score of Chausson's op. 25, "The Song of Triumphant Love" was its literary inspiration. That is, Chausson wrote his piece after being inspired by Turgenev's short story, the same story I found interesting enough to make into an opera. Therefore, it seemed appropriate to use Chausson's theme in Emily's violin/piano piece (since she was performing his Poème on her recital) and in my opera based on our shared literary inspiration.

Poème nocturne - Alan Schmitz
Poème nocturne
for Violin and Piano
to Emily

Moderato \( \text{d} \) \( \text{ca.66} \)

\( \text{Vln.} \)

\( \text{Pno.} \)

8vb

loc"
Poème nocturne - Alan Schmitz
\textbf{Poème nocturne - Alan Schmitz}
Cadenza quasi rubato

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