

Program Notes

Program *Broc Hite, piano*

Frühlingstimmen, Op. 410 Johann Strauss, Jr.
(1825-1899)

Spring Song from *Songs without Words*,
Op. 62, No. 6 Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)

The Seasons Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)

Avril: Perce-neige
Mai: Les nuits de mai
Juin: Barcarolle

Jardins sous la pluie from *Estampes*
Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

"Frühlingstimmen", Op. 410 ("Spring Voices" or commonly "Voices of Spring") was written by Johan Strauss II in 1882 and is a delightful waltz for orchestra and soprano, and also for solo piano. The waltz was not a great success at its premiere, but was more successful when performed by Strauss on a tour of Russia in 1886. A piano arrangement by the composer contributed much to its success beyond Vienna.

Songs Without Words, German **Lieder ohne Worte**, collection of 48 written songs for solo piano rather than voice, by German composer Felix Mendelssohn. Part of the collection—consisting of 36 songs—was published in six volumes during the composer's lifetime. Two further volumes—with 12 more songs—were published after Mendelssohn's death in 1847. Most famed of the four dozen *Songs Without Words* is the lighthearted and aptly named "Spring Song," Op. 62, No. 6, in A major, from the fifth volume.

The Seasons—In 1875, Nikolay Matveyevich Bernard, the editor of the St. Petersburg music magazine *Nouvellist*, commissioned Tchaikovsky to write 12 short piano pieces, one for each month of the year. Bernard suggested a subtitle for each month's piece. Tchaikovsky accepted the commission and all of Bernard's subtitles, and in the December 1875 edition of the magazine, readers were promised a new Tchaikovsky piece each month throughout 1876. The January and February pieces were written in late 1875 and sent to Bernard in December, with a request for some feedback as to whether they were suitable, and if not, Tchaikovsky would rewrite February and ensure the remainder were in the style Bernard was after. March, April and May appear to have been composed separately; however the remaining seven pieces were all composed at the same time and written in the same copybook. Tchaikovsky did not devote his most serious compositional efforts to these pieces; they were composed to order, and they were a way of supplementing his income. He saw the

writing of music to a commission just as valid as writing music from his own inner inspiration. However, for the former he needed a definite plot or text, a time limit, and the promise of payment at the end. Most of the pieces were in simple ABA form, but each contains a minor melodic masterpiece or text.

Avril (April): *Perce-neige* (Snowdrop)

The blue, pure snowdrop — flower,
and near it the last snowdrops.

The last tears over past griefs,
and first dreams of another happiness.

Mai (May): *Les nuits de mai* (Starlit Nights)

What a night!

What bliss all about!

I thank my native north country!

From the kingdom of ice,
snowstorms and snow,
how fresh and clean May flies in!

Juin (June): *Barcarolle* (Barcarolle)

Let us go to the shore;
there the waves will kiss our feet.

With mysterious sadness
the stars will shine down on us.

Estampes ("Prints"), L.100, is a composition for solo piano by Claude Debussy and was finished in 1903.

Estampes contains three movements:

"Pagodes" (Pagodas)

"La soiree dans Grenade" (Evening in Granada)

"Jardins sous la Pluie" (Gardens in the Rain)

"*Jardins sous la pluie*" describes a garden in the Normandy town of Orbec during an extremely violent rainstorm. Throughout the piece, there are sections that evoke the sounds of the wind blowing, a thunderstorm raging, and raindrops dropping. It makes use of the French folk melodies "*Nous n'irons plus aux bois*" and "*Dodo, l'enfant do*". Chromatic, whole tone, major and minor scales are used in this movement.



Broc Hite

Broc Hite has been the Organist and Associate Director of Music at First United Methodist Church of Bella Vista since 2012. He also teaches piano privately and at the Shepherd Music School based at Central United Methodist Church in Rogers. Prior to moving to Arkansas in 2010, he was the Organist and Music Director at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Fairfield, Connecticut.

He earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Piano Performance from Purchase College in Purchase, New York, studying under German Diez. He earned the Master of Music Degree in Piano Accompanying at The Juilliard School, studying under Margo Garrett and Marshall Williamson, and performance classes with Samuel Sanders and Jonathan Feldman. In conjunction with his other career in business, he achieved the Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Connecticut.



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FUMCBV
2018 Spring Fling
Concert Series
Noon in Becker Hall
Sunday, May 20
Featuring Voices from
the Chancel Choir and the Praise Band
Sunday, June 3
Broc Hite playing the piano
featuring works of Johann Strauss, Jr,
Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky, and Debussy