

Ernest Bloch

VIOLA and PIANO

Barbara Hornung ... *Viola*

Danaë Killian ... *Piano*



move

Ernest Bloch (1880-1959)
VIOLA and PIANO

**Meditation and Processional
for Viola and Piano** (1951)

- 1** Meditation 3'56"
- 2** Processional 2'27"

Enfantines

Ten Pieces for Piano for Children (1923)

- 3** Lullaby 1'43"
- 4** The Joyous Party 0'58"
- 5** With Mother 2'37"
- 6** Elves 1'29"
- 7** Joyous March 1'32"
- 8** Melody 2'38"
- 9** Pastorale 1'48"
- 10** Rainy Day 1'30"
- 11** Teasing 1'00"
- 12** Dream 1'53"

Suite for Viola Solo (unfinished 1958)

- 13** Andante 3'04"
- 14** Moderato 2'38"
- 15** Andante 3'40"
- 16** Allegro deciso 2'54"

Suite Hébraïque for Viola & Piano (1950)

- 17** Rapsodie 6'27"
- 18** Processional 2'05"
- 19** Affirmation 3'24"



Danaë Killian
Piano

Barbara Hornung
Viola

move

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Ernest Bloch (1880–1959)

A Jewish American composer of Swiss origin, Ernest Bloch was born in Geneva and died in Portland, Oregon. Ernest Bloch received his first musical instruction from Émile Jacques-Dalcroze. He started learning to play the violin at the age of 9 and began to compose soon after. Among Bloch's violin teachers was the celebrated Eugène Ysaÿe with whom he studied at the Brussels Conservatory. In Germany he studied composition in Freiburg and Munich with Iwan Knorr and Ludwig Thuille.

Ernest Bloch settled in America in 1916 and led a highly productive life holding several posts including composition teacher at Mannes School of Music, the founding Musical Director of the Cleveland Institute of Music and the Director of the San Francisco Institute of Music. Alongside his composing, Bloch engaged in many interests including photography. Later in life, Ernest Bloch moved to the small coastal community of Agate Beach when he lectured at the University of California and continued to compose.

Suite for Viola Solo

The *Suite for Viola Solo* was found unfinished on Ernest Bloch's bedside table after his death in 1959. It is a complex work consisting of four short connected movements. Bloch's musical language is reminiscent of Bach and is cloaked in an atonality which resembles serialism.

There are frequent changes of tempo as well as markings which compress and expand the music such as *poco animato*, *poco slentando* and *allargando* and an effect of desparation, faltering and reviving is achieved. The unfinished final movement, *Allegro deciso*, is a short, ugly and jagged collation of notes which build towards a high B flat where the score discontinues. The conclusion is by Barbara Hornung.

Enfantines

The *Enfantines* are 10 miniature piano works for children. They were composed in 1923 during the time Bloch was serving as Director of the Cleveland Institute of Music and were first published in 1924. Tender and unpretentious, each one represents a moment in childhood. Beautifully decorated with ink drawings by his daughter Lucienne, they are the music of a kindly father.

The *Enfantines* are an imaginative and inherently musical approach towards the mastery of a variety of techniques for the young pianist.

Suite Hébraïque and **Meditation and Processional**

The *Suite Hébraïque* was composed at Agate Beach in 1950 and was dedicated to the Covenant Club of Illinois. Ernest Bloch added an orchestral version as well as an adaptation for violin with piano or orchestra. *Rapsodie*, the first movement of the *Suite Hébraïque*, is solemn and profound drawing on traditional Hebrew themes.

In the *Processional*, the piano provides a lively rhythmic setting upon which the viola proclaims a striking modal melody. The *Affirmation* is in three parts. The first is dance like, rhythmical and buoyant. More contemplative in character, the middle section concludes with rhapsodic emotion. The final section resembles the first and is even more divinely happy as if to expound the affirmation of the human spirit.

The *Meditation and Processional* were composed in 1951 and were dedicated to the distinguished violist Milton Preves. These comprise part of the set of five Jewish pieces. The other three being contained in the *Suite*

Hébraïque. The *Meditation* creates a mood of unquantifiable depth and the viola and piano lines interweave in skilful compositional artistry. There are frequent tempo markings which allow performers a sense of space. Following the ‘other worldly’ conclusion of the *Meditation*, the *Processional* is affirming, canonic and rhythmical.

Barbara Hornung is an Australian violist from a large musical family. She was a member of the Australian Youth Orchestra and received her Bachelor of Music (Hons) degree from the Elder Conservatorium, Adelaide University in 1984. Barbara also studied in the Netherlands at the Royal Hague Conservatory. Numerous orchestras in Australia and overseas have employed Barbara as a freelance violist and she is a dedicated teacher of violin and viola. Barbara is actively involved in performing and recording works by Australian composers and has recently enriched her artistic life by taking painting lessons at the Victorian Artists Society.

Danaë Killian is an Australian pianist whose poetry-infused performances have found regard internationally for their intense originality and rare communicative power. She has been the recipient of the Australian Alumni (W G Walker) Fulbright Postgraduate Scholarship, the Helen Macpherson Smith Scholarship, an Australian Postgraduate Award and an Australia Award Endeavour Research Fellowship. Danaë Killian is an Honorary Fellow at the University of Melbourne, where she earned her PhD in 2010 with a dissertation on Virginia Woolf’s *The Waves* as a modernist imagining of the harmony of the spheres. Danaë Killian’s recording *Arnold Schoenberg: Complete Works for Piano Solo* for the Move label was launched in 2015 to critical acclaim.

Barbara Hornung and **Danaë Killian** have collaborated as a duo for a number of years. Both musicians are highly individual. A free flow of originality and freshness permeates their ensemble.