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# Guest Artist: Andrej Kurti, violin

Andrej Kurti

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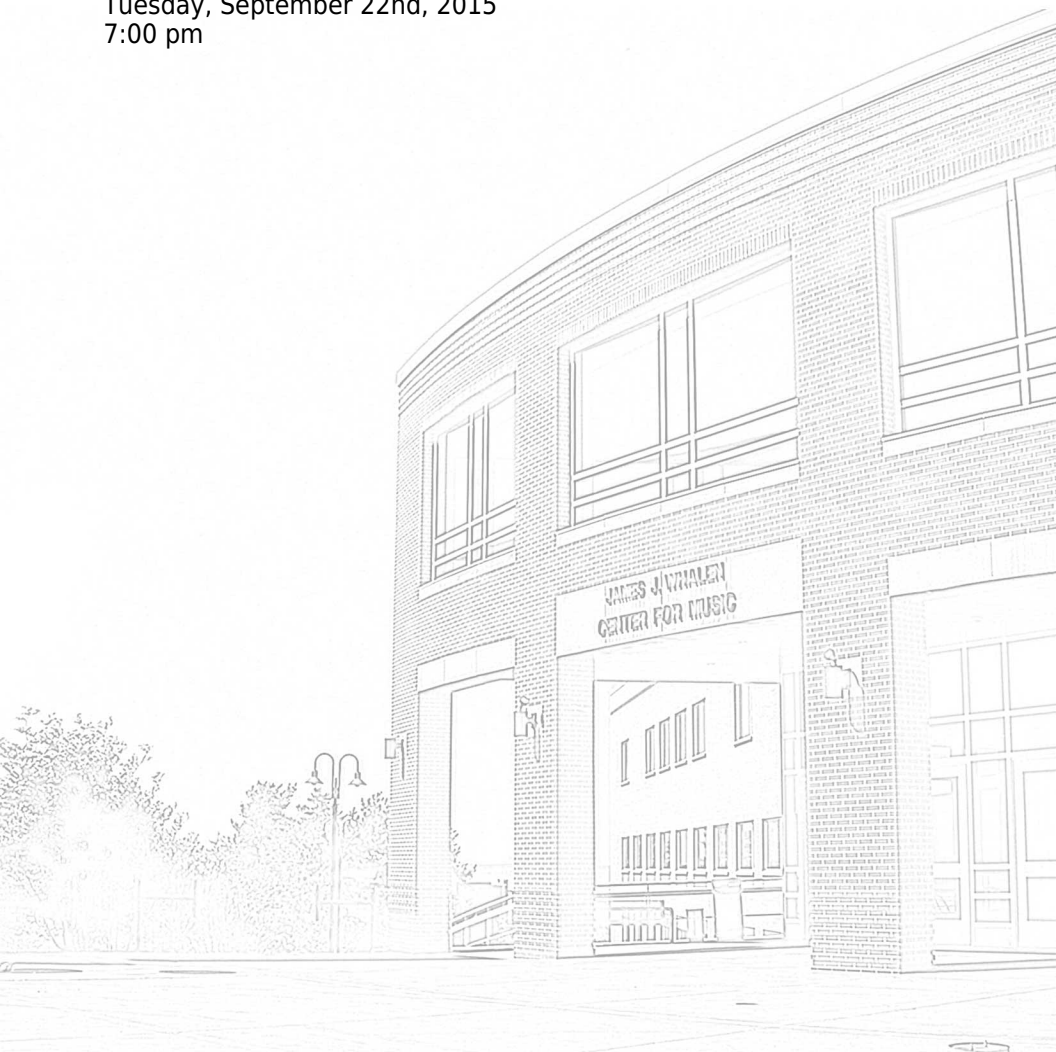
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# Eugène Ysaÿe: Six Sonatas for Solo Violin, Op. 27

Andrej Kurti, guest artist

Hockett Family Recital Hall  
Tuesday, September 22nd, 2015  
7:00 pm



**ITHACA COLLEGE**

School of Music

# Program

Eugène Ysaÿe: Six Sonatas for Solo Violin, Opus 27

Eugène Ysaÿe  
(1858 - 1931)

Violin Sonata in G minor, Op. 27, No. 1

- I Grave
- II Fugato
- III Allegretto poco scherzoso
- IV Finale: Con brio

Violin Sonata in A minor, Op. 27, No. 2

- I Prelude, "Obsession" : Poco vivace
- II Malinconia: Poco lento
- III Sarabande, "Danse des ombres": Lento
- IV Les Furies: Allegro furioso

Violin Sonata in D minor, Op. 27, No. 3, "Ballade"

## Pause

Violin Sonata in D minor, Op. 27, No. 4

- I Allemande: Lento maestoso
- II Sarabande: Quasi lento
- III Finale: Presto ma non troppo

Violin Sonata in G major, Op. 27, No. 5

- I L'aurore: Lento assai
- II Danse rustique: Allegro giocoso molto moderato

Violin Sonata in E major, Op. 27, No. 6

## Biography

**Andrej Kurti** was born in Belgrade, Serbia, where he completed his elementary and high school education in the studio of Professor Djula Tesenji. He continued his studies in Moscow “Tchaikovsky” Conservatory in studios of professors Levon Ambartsumian and Zorya Schikmurzaeva. Kurti finished his graduate studies in the University of Georgia, where he received doctorate degree in violin performance.

He was a recipient of five first prizes in competitions in Yugoslavia, four first prizes in competitions in Georgia and Florida, and a finalist of the MTNA (Music Teacher National Association) Competition in 1998.

In 2000, Kurti became a recording artist for classical label Blue Griffin Recordings, for which he later recorded Six Sonatas for Violin Solo by Eugene Ysaye, op.27. These Sonatas were the topic for his doctoral dissertation.

In 2004, Kurti became a professor of violin at Northwestern State University of Louisiana, where he teaches students from several countries.

He appeared as a soloist with many symphony orchestras in the United States, Serbia, Montenegro, Italy, Greece, Russia and France. He also appeared as a chamber performer in Spain, France, Latvia, Canada, and South Korea.

Kurti appeared as a performer and arranger on more than forty albums of popular and modern music, which he recorded for many different music labels in the United States.

Since 2007, Kurti has been invited to several international music festivals where he most often performed music written for solo violin.

## Program Notes

**Eugène Ysaÿe** was born in 1858 in Liege, Belgium to a musical family. His father Nicholas taught him to play violin at a young age. When he was seven years old, he was able to take a seat in his father's orchestra. That same year he began studying at the Conservatoire, by the time he was thirteen, Ysaÿe was able to play works for violin by Paganini, Bach, Beethoven, Wieniawski, and the fellow Belgian violinist Vieuxtemps.

In 1876, Ysaÿe moved to Paris and began composing. Benjamin Bilse, conductor of the orchestra at the Konzerthaus in Berlin, offered him position of the first violin. Ysaÿe later returned to Paris, where he established himself as a member of the musical elite. In 1886 Ysaÿe accepted a position at the Brussels Conservatoire. Two years later he began composing his first string quartet and took over the musical directorship of the "Twenty Club," an association which played an important role in the musical history of Brussels.

Between 1889 and 1894, Ysaÿe traveled throughout Europe, performing with great success. Towards the end of 1894, he began to experience pain in his left hand. This pain did not prevent him from playing until it became more severe in 1900. Between 1900 and 1905 he turned his attention to conducting. In 1912, Ysaÿe returned to teaching at the Brussels Conservatoire.

Ysaÿe traveled to England and the United States after World War I, serving as conductor for the Cincinnati Orchestra for four years. In 1918 he returned to Belgium and resumed many of his former activities, including teaching and concertizing. He played his last concert in 1930. His opera, *Oedipe*, was completed soon after and given its premiere at the Theatre Royal in Liege a few weeks before his death in 1931.

Ysaÿe was inspired to write Six Sonatas for Solo Violin, Op. 27, in 1923 after hearing violinist Joseph Szigeti playing a concert of music by Bach. He retired to his room, leaving instructions that he was not to be disturbed, except that meals were to be brought to him. Over the course of the next twenty-four hours he sketched out the six sonatas.

For these sonatas, Ysaÿe had two purposes in mind. First, he wished to complete a cycle of six works for unaccompanied violin in the manner of Bach's music for solo violin. Second, he wanted to tailor each sonata to a different virtuoso, capturing something of each performer's style in the piece for whom it was written. These dedicatees include extremely distinguished names - Szigeti, Thibaud, Enesco, and Kreisler (sonatas 1 to 4 respectively)- as well as two whose fame has not lasted - Matthew Crickboom and Manuel Quiroga (sonatas 5 and 6 respectively).

Opus 27 was inspired by Ysaÿe's friends, musically reflecting their origins, stories, and personalities. However, the work also expresses much about Ysaÿe, most obviously his immense love of music and violin.