



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO  
SCHOOL OF MUSIC  
GRADUATE RECITAL

## Paul Salzberg, piano

---

Partita No. 1 in B-flat Major, BWV 825

Johann Sebastian Bach  
(1685-1750)

Praeludium  
Allemande  
Corrente  
Sarabande  
Menuet I  
Menuet II  
Giga

Trois Etudes di Bravoure (Scherzi), Opus 16

Charles-Valentin Alkan  
(1811-1888)

Mouvement di valse  
Moderato (quasi-minuetto)  
Prestissimo

### INTERMISSION

Sonatine in B Minor

Paul Salzberg  
(b. 2001)

Moderato  
Andante  
Allegro con spirito

Piano Sonata No. 30 in E Major, Opus 109

Ludwig van Beethoven  
(1770-1827)

Vivace ma non troppo  
Prestissimo  
Gesangvoll, mit innigster Empfindung (Andante molto cantabile ed espressivo)

Piano Sonata No. 3 in A Minor, Opus 28

Sergei Prokofiev  
(1891-1953)

Allegro tempestuoso

*This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of Master of Music in Performance.  
Paul Salzberg is a student of Kirsten Smith.*

---



THURSDAY, 7:00 P.M.  
NOVEMBER 13, 2025  
CAPISTRANO CONCERT HALL

## PROGRAM NOTES

**Paul Salzberg – November 13, 2025**

Thank you for coming to my final recital for my Master of Music degree in Performance at Sacramento State School of Music! This is the culmination of six years of study at Sac State, and I am looking forward to sharing this music with you.

This program is all about inspiration and dialogue. It may surprise you to hear that I believe that there is little that is truly original in art. I believe every artist must borrow from the language, ideas, and aesthetics of predecessors and contemporaries. But I don't believe this takes the "magic" out of the music. In fact, the possibilities of drawing connections between disparate influences, to see how a musical dialogue synthesizes across continents and over hundreds of years is what motivates and inspires me to continue making music! I hope that in tonight's program you will be able to hear how the various composers on this program took inspiration from others and developed these ideas into sincere and compelling pieces of music.

The first piece on this program is Johann Sebastian Bach's **Partita no. 1 in B-flat Major**. I always like to take the word "partita" back to its etymology; *partire* in Latin means both to divide or to share. Bach's partita thus united the different national dances from many countries in Europe into one single musical collection: an Italian Preludio, a German Allemande, an Italian Corrente, a Spanish Sarabande, two French Minuets, and an Irish Gigue. While the dance suite had been around since the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Bach turned significant time and attention to writing for the genre three hundred years later, inspiring other composers to reevaluate the genre.

However, here I must confess, you won't only be hearing Bach in this Partita. For the Sarabande and the Gigue, I am including my own arrangements of these pieces! Taking inspiration from performers Wanda Landowska and Ferruccio Busoni, I will elaborate both movements texturally on the repeated sections. While including small embellishments like ornamentation on the repeated sections is standard practice for Baroque keyboard music, I go a little bit further by "doubling" sections in octaves and adding additional contrapuntal voices. I hope my arrangements will conjure the rich sound of the dual-manual harpsichord and you will enjoy the virtuosic colors this music can take on. I plan to publish several of my own transcriptions of Bach in the future.

The second piece on the program is by my favorite composer, Charles-Valentin Alkan. It wouldn't surprise me tonight is the first time these three etudes, alternatively titled the ***Scherzi di Bravoure***, have been performed in California, or perhaps the United States. Alkan was 24 years old when he wrote these rather difficult pieces, and I believe you can also hear Alkan developing his own compositional voice by synthesizing elements of Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Bach, and Chopin. I hope that after the partita, one could hear these three *Scherzias* yet another dance suite: a bombastic waltz, a melodramatic minuet (I personally hear it more as a polonaise), and a blistering corrente. Chopin had published his first scherzo in B Minor two years earlier, and I believe Alkan was inspired to devote attention to the genre due to Chopin's influence. I hope you will hear Alkan's genial nature, his lively imagination, and wry sense of humor shine through these pieces.

The second half of the program features three sonatas. The first is my own, a ***Sonatine in B Minor***, which synthesizes several musical influences over the past three years. For my final recital of my Bachelor of Music degree, I played two terrific sonatines by Ravel and Alkan, so I decided to write my own sonatine for my master's degree recital. I composed the first movement as part of my collaboration with Prof. Richard Cionco's seminar for pianist-composers. I deliberately sought a fusion between the Baroque keyboard sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti, and the Romantic-era Anatoly Liadov. For the second and third movements, composed over the last year, I didn't deliberately try to emulate any composer's style, but I feel my influences are evident. In retrospect, the second movement reads as a cross between Pyotr Tchaikovsky, Claude Debussy, and the second movement of Alkan's *Sonatine*. The third movement was a synthesis of the impressionistic Requiem of Maurice Duruflé which I sang with the School of Music Choral Union, the rhythmic intensity and raw power of my colleagues in the Alex Hawvichorst Graduate Jazz Combo, and various piano works of Beethoven, Ravel, and Alkan. Influences aside, I believe my piece is a sincere and unified whole which I hope you enjoy!

The last two sonatas on the program are Ludwig van Beethoven's Sonata in E Major Opus 109, and Sergei Prokofiev's third Sonata in A Minor Opus 28. On the surface, these two pieces appear to be quite different, but I feel they both emanate from the composer's shared inspiration of Baroque music. Beethoven's late style embraced the forms and contrapuntal layering of the Baroque Era; I feel you can hear Beethoven's three movement sonata as a Prelude, Gigue, and Aria with variations. Similarly, Prokofiev's furious and dynamic sonata in one movement, echoes the single-movement keyboard sonatas of Scarlatti. Finally, I imagine the pairing of these two sonatas creates the combined tempi scheme of slow-fast-slow-fast, which would make this collection of music match the layout of a *sonata da chiesa*, another multi-movement seventeenth century instrumental music genre! This was not planned by the composers at all, but makes for a fun curiosity, nonetheless.

Thank you very much for attending my recital! My heartfelt thanks goes out to my students, friends, family, mentors, colleagues, and all those who supported me along the way!

-- Paul Salzberg