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Sono Luminus Releases

Edge of Youth Janet Sung, violin with William Wolfram, piano

Worldwide Release Date: April 26, 2019

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“alternately wistful and electrifying” — *The Huffington Post* on Janet Sung

Sono Luminus announces the **April 26, 2019** worldwide release of *Edge of Youth*, the first album on the label from violinist **Janet Sung**, hailed by *The Washington Post* for her “riveting” playing and “exquisite tone.” *Edge of Youth*, with pianist **William Wolfram**, includes music for solo violin and violin and piano by **Georges Enescu**, **Missy Mazzoli**, **Benjamin Britten**, **Dan Visconti**, and **Gabriel Prokofiev**. The album was produced by Dan Merceruo and recorded, mixed and mastered by Daniel Shores, at Sono Luminus’ world-class studio, located in a former church in Boyce, Virginia.

Sung’s album title references her journey as an artist – for her, the music on this album represents a time of discovery of a more mature version of her voice, and a new self-awareness. *Edge of Youth* includes Georges Enescu’s *Impressions d’enfance (Impressions from Childhood)* for violin and piano (1940); Missy Mazzoli’s *Dissolve, O My Heart* for solo violin (2011); Benjamin Britten’s *Suite for Violin and Piano* (1935); Dan Visconti’s *Rave-Up* for violin and piano (2012); and Gabriel Prokofiev’s *Sleeveless Scherzo* (2007).

Sung writes of the album, “We find confidence in our voice when we allow ourselves to go to the ‘edge’ of what is known or comfortable. Brought up steeped in the traditions of classical music, and deeply influenced by some of the greatest violinists of the ‘old world,’ this album represents some of that artistic journey for me. In curating this collection of works by masters Britten, Enescu and three young, dynamic living composers, Missy Mazzoli, Dan Visconti and Gabriel Prokofiev, I gravitated toward works that were striking to me and in some ways unexpected – whether it was a new sound world, a new perspective on an old familiar work, or the surprising way certain works profoundly grew in their impact.”

Janet Sung enjoys an acclaimed international career as a virtuoso soloist, recognized for her intense, exhilarating performances, and by her signature lustrous, burnished tone; her playing possesses the rare blend of fierce intelligence, subtlety and brilliant virtuosity. She is celebrated for her compelling performances of traditional works from Bach to Berg and is passionate about promoting works of the 20th and 21st centuries. In recent years, she has performed repertoire as diverse as Henri Dutilleux’s *Violin Concerto*, *L’Arbes des Songes*, and Astor Piazzolla’s *Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas*. Ms. Sung has also presented the world premieres of Kenneth Fuchs’ *American Rhapsody for Violin and Orchestra*, Augusta Read Thomas’ *Double Helix*, which was recently released on Nimbus Records, and Kenneth Hesketh’s *Inscription/Transformation for Violin and Orchestra* in Germany. A new *Violin Concerto No. 4* by Augusta Read Thomas has been commissioned for her.

Since her orchestral debut with the Pittsburgh Symphony at age nine (after beginning her violin studies at age seven), she has performed with leading orchestras worldwide. Recent seasons have seen her as soloist with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Göttinger Symphonie Orchester, Pusan Philharmonic (South Korea), Omsk Philharmonic Orchestra, Britten Sinfonia, Cairo Symphony Orchestra (Egypt), the Aspen Festival Chamber Symphony and the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Boston, as well as the orchestras of Boise, Delaware, Dubuque, Fargo-Moorhead, Hartford, Las Cruces, Tacoma and Wyoming, among many others across the U.S. In recital, Sung has been presented in Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Louisville, New York City, Pittsburgh, and St. Louis, as well as in Odense, Denmark, Lausanne, Switzerland and Queenstown, New Zealand, and Jiangyin, China. She is frequently heard as concerto and recital soloist at distinguished festivals, including the Aspen Music Festival, Bellingham Festival, Britt Festival, Hot Springs Music Festival, Sewanee Summer Music Festival, Switzerland’s Lucerne Festival and the Conciertos de La Villa Festival de Santo Domingo.

Her solo performances have frequently been aired on radio and television, nationally and internationally, including multiple broadcasts of her performance of Korngold's Violin Concerto on NPR's "Performance Today," and regular featured performances on Chicago's Classical WFMT. She is featured on recordings of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* and Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No. 1*, the latter with members of the Gewandhaus Orchestra recorded at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig, Germany. Her upcoming recording projects include the complete works by J.S. Bach for Violin and Keyboard with pianist and Bach specialist, Sean Duggan, and a concerto album for SOMM Recordings (UK) with the Britten Sinfonia, featuring Vaughan Williams' Violin Concerto in D, Kenneth Hesketh's *Inscription/Transformation for Violin and Orchestra* (premiere), and Ravel's *Tzigane*.

Janet Sung was chosen by Leonard Slatkin as the recipient of the prestigious Passamaneck Award. She studied with legendary pedagogues Josef Gingold, with whom she started studying at age nine, and Dorothy Delay. She graduated from Harvard University with a double degree in anthropology and music, and The Juilliard School. She was later invited as the Clifton Visiting Artist at Harvard University and, as a highly sought-after artist-teacher, regularly conducts master classes at conservatories throughout the U.S. and abroad. She is currently Head of Strings and Violin Professor at the DePaul University School of Music. Janet Sung plays a c.1600 Maggini violin crafted in Brescia, Italy.

About the Music on *Edge of Youth*

"Each of these works are dramatic, visceral; even ethereal and otherworldly. Some also have moments of soaring lyricism and intimacy. They both embrace and challenge classical traditions, consciously or subconsciously. With their craft and unique sense of style, these composers challenge the performer to forget about the technicalities of the instrument – asking the performer to become a storyteller through nuance, shading, and color." – Janet Sung

Paraphrased from the album's liner notes, written by Janet Sung:

In Georges Enescu's *Impressions d'enfance (Impressions from Childhood)* (1940) for violin and piano, the composer looks back to his youth, with each of the ten movements evoking a vivid memory – "The Fiddler," "The Brook at the Bottom of the Garden," "Lullaby," "Cricket," and "Wind in the Chimney," to name a few. This masterwork evokes sound and imagery that transcends any limitations of the two instruments.

Missy Mazzoli's *Dissolve, O My Heart* for solo violin (2011) was inspired by Bach's Partita in D minor for Solo Violin, which includes the monumental Chaconne movement. Though it begins with the iconic first D minor chord of Bach's Chaconne, it is the only direct quote, and spins out from there into what Mazzoli describes as an, "off-kilter series of chords that doubles back on itself, collapses and ultimately dissolves in a torrent of fast passages."

Benjamin Britten wrote his *Suite for Violin and Piano* (1935) during his 20s, when he was on the cusp of international fame. Sung writes of the work, "Britten brings together a collection of movements that each perfectly capture a particular character or mood. He does so with scrupulous attention to craft, and with no superfluousness, which demands the utmost precision and clarity of purpose from performers."

Dan Visconti writes of his piece *Rave-Up* for violin and piano (2012), "*Rave-Up* is a short, virtuosic showpiece for violin in the tradition of one of classical music's earliest 'rock stars' Niccolò Paganini, updated to incorporate the wild, over-driven, groove-driven sound of the modern electric guitar. Blending the dazzling precision of the classical tradition with the raw, explosive timbres and blues bends typical of contemporary guitar heroics, *Rave-Up* starts slow and builds relentlessly to a scintillating display of pyrotechnics."

Gabriel Prokofiev's *Sleeveless Scherzo* (2007) was originally written as a duet between solo violinist and solo dancer, expressing the emotions and thoughts of a woman in turmoil playing out an internal argument that drives them to the edge of sanity. Prokofiev describes the work as, "slightly schizophrenic... with quite strong mood swings from moments of sadness, to excitement, to joy, curiosity, and then anxiety."

***Edge of Youth* | Janet Sung, violin | William Wolfram, piano | Sono Luminus**

Release Date: April 26, 2019 | Total time: 58:17

1-10: Georges Enescu (1881-1955): *Impressions d'enfance (Impressions from Childhood)*, Op. 28 (1940)

11: Missy Mazzoli (b. 1980): *Dissolve, O My Heart* for Solo Violin (2011)

12-16: Benjamin Britten (1913-1976): *Suite for Violin and Piano*, Op. 6 (1935)

17: Dan Visconti (b. 1982): *Rave-Up* for Violin and Piano (2012)

18: Gabriel Prokofiev (b. 1915): *Sleeveless Scherzo* for Solo Violin (2007)