



PROGRAM IN PERFORMANCE | SPRING 2023

Friday, May 5, 2023, 5:30 PM

Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

Senior Recital

William Gu '23

Cello

Featuring:

Nicholas Padmanabhan '23, *classical guitar*

Kairy Koshoeva, *piano*

The use of photographic, video, or audio equipment is strictly prohibited. Please turn off or mute electronic devices for the duration of the performance.

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PROGRAM

**JOHANN SEBASTIAN
BACH**
1685 - 1750

Cello Suite No.3 in C major, BWV 1009

I. Prelude

Duration: 4 minutes

**EDWARD
ELGAR**
1857 - 1934

Cello Concerto in E Minor, Op. 85

I. Adagio - Moderato

II. Lento - Allegro molto

III. Adagio

IV. Allegro - Moderato - Allego, ma non troppo -
Poco più lento - Adagio

Kairy Koshoeva, *piano*

Duration: 32 minutes

**VITTORIO
MONTI**
1868 - 1922

Csárdás

I. Andante - Largo

II. Allegro vivo

III. Molto meno

IV. Meno, quasi lento

V. Allegro vivace

VI. Allegretto

VII. Molto più vivo

Nicholas Padmanabhan '23, *classical guitar*

Duration: 6 minutes

PROGRAM NOTES

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 - 1750) wrote his iconic cello suites in his late twenties during his time serving as the Director of Music in Cöthen, Germany. However, his cello suites were not widely known or performed until the early 20th century, when then renowned cellist Pablo Casals wandered into a second-hand music store in Barcelona and picked up a manuscript of Bach's cello suites. Struck by Bach's compositional style and the suites' emotional depth and technical musicality, Casals spent years studying Bach's cello suites before finally performed the suites publicly for the first time in 1913, in London, where they gained widespread attention and grew in popularity, now considered a cornerstone of cello repertoire. If it weren't for Casals, Bach's half dozen cello suites may have been overlooked and forgotten in history, rather than their status now as a staple of western classical music.

Bach's **Cello Suite No. 3 in C Major** is the second most performed of his six total cello suites. Taking advantage of the cello's standard C, G, D, and A string tuning, the first movement, **Prelude**, is warm and extroverted, with a steady stream of 16th notes that showcase its sensuous harmonies and implicit melodies. The latter half of the movement climaxes at an extended passage of moving arpeggios gliding over an open G string, before arriving at repeated cadenzas of four-note chords, leading listeners to a series of false endings before finally closing on a resonant C-major chord. The movement is best known for its liberating, exuberant spirit and alluring energy.

Edward Elgar's Cello Concerto in E minor, remains one of the most popular concerto works for solo cello today. Like Bach's cello dance suites, the concerto did not gain widespread attention until decades after the passing of the influential English composer in 1934, when cellist Jacqueline Du Pre performed the concerto with the London Symphony Orchestra in 1965, establishing the work as a cornerstone of the cello repertoire and cementing its place in the canon of Western classical music.

Elgar was fiercely patriotic, widely considered the first native-born English composer to gain international prominence after the death of Henry Purcell in 1695. Despite his successes, the early war-torn decades of the 20th century were especially devastating for Elgar, who owed much of his successes as a composer to German conductors and audiences. Disillusioned by the losses of his close friends during World War I and in ill-health, Elgar's cello concerto, written in the summer of 1919, reflects his deeply-seated lament and despair. That same summer, Elgar's wife, Alice, also fell ill. Elgar described her as growing *"mysteriously smaller and more fragile... fading away before one's very eyes."* The summer of 1919 was their last summer together—Alice passed away a couple months later.

Introspective and profoundly sad, the four-movement concerto begins with a funereal cello passage followed by long, flowing elegaic theme that recurs throughout the movement. With brief flickering movements of hope, the movement mingles resignation with bitterness. The second movement begins with a pizzicato allusion to the opening of the first movement, before proceeding to a virtuosic scherzo that is first introduced hesitantly, before taking off in a quick-footed, slightly sinister theme.

The third movement (Adagio) is the heart of the concerto, characterized by its meditative and searching nature, and flows naturally into the final movement, which begins with a brief cello cadenza. What follows is an spirited and energetic main theme in free rondo form built on previous motifs, though the underlying pessimism can hardly go unnoticed. As the concerto comes to a close, the cello recalls a single heartbreaking sentence from the previous Adagio movement and reminiscences with a final, closing statement of the very phrase that started the first movement.

Csárdás, by **Vittorio Monti**, is a popular and lively work originally composed for violin and orchestra, first published in 1904. The piece is based on the traditional Hungarian folk dance called "csárdás", which features a fast-paced tempo and an alternating rhythm between two beats and three beats. This arrangement, for solo cello and classical guitar, is relatively rare, though not unpopular. The combination of cello and guitar can be particularly effective in creating a warm, intimate, and expressive sound, as the instruments can complement each other's strengths and textures. The cello can provide a rich, deep, and resonant bass sound, while the guitar can provide a delicate and intricate harmonic accompaniment.

The opening of **Csárdás** features a slow and melancholic introduction, played by the solo cello, which builds up to a fast and energetic dance section. The cello plays virtuosic and intricate runs, accompanied by the classical guitar, in a dazzling display of technical skill and musical expression.

Csárdás has become a popular work in the classical and folk repertoire, loved for its catchy melody, virtuosic writing, and infectious dance rhythms. Its combination of Hungarian folk music and classical music elements has made it a favorite of audiences and performers alike.

ABOUT THE ACCOMPANISTS

Guitarist **Nicholas Padmanabhan '23** was a prizewinner in the National YoungArts Foundation competition in both 2018 and 2017. He appeared in 2018 as a soloist on National Public Radio's classical-music program From The Top, recorded before a live audience in San Francisco and broadcast nationally. Nicholas was the first-place winner in the 2018 Mission College Young Artist Concerto Competition, the Sierra Nevada Guitar Competition in 2016 and 2014, and the 2016 California statewide guitar competition of the American String Teachers Association. He was runner-up in the 2017 Mondavi Center Young Artists Competition, where he was also awarded the Bouchaine Young Artists Prize for Festival Napa Valley. Nicholas is a former student of Laura Oltman at Princeton and Scott Cmiel and Jon Mendle at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music's Pre-College Division.

At Princeton, Nicholas is majoring in computer science and is a member of the Opus Chamber Music Group.

Kairy Koshoeva, on the faculty of the New School for Music Study since 2015, holds a Doctorate in Musical Arts from the University of Missouri, Kansas City, in addition to Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the Gnessin Academy of Music in Moscow and an Artist's Diploma from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. Dr. Koshoeva has garnered awards from around the globe including top prizes at the International Piano Competition in Vicenza, Italy, the N. Rubinstein Competition in Paris, the Gold Medal at the 2004 Rachmaninoff Awards in Moscow, and first prize at the Chautauqua Music Festival concerto competition in New York.

Dr. Koshoeva has played internationally, in Israel, France, Germany, Russia, Turkey, Switzerland, as well as in the United States. She has performed as a soloist with many prominent orchestras including the Kansas City Symphony and the Chautauqua Music Festival. She has also performed with the Moscow chamber orchestra "Cantus Firmus." Dr. Koshoeva has been the recipient of major awards for performances in collaboration with the Owen/Cox Dance Group. In 2013 she was awarded the prestigious title of Honored Artist of Kyrgyzstan. In 2019 The Royal Academy of Music honored her as a Teacher of Distinction in Carnegie Hall. Most recently she won First Prize at the 2020 "Musica Classica" International Competition in Moscow, Russia.

ABOUT WILLIAM GU

William Gu began his classical music training through piano at the age of 4, and began his cello training 3 years later, studying under Sieun Lin, of Juilliard Pre-College faculty, and Jonathan Koh, of U.C. Berkeley and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

William served as principal cellist of the San Jose Youth Symphony's premier Philharmonic Orchestra from 2016 - 2019. He has previously soloed with the SJYS Chamber Orchestra, performing *Haydn's Cello Concerto in C*, as well as with the Philharmonic Orchestra, performing *Tchaikovsky's Variations on a Rococo Theme* and *Dvorak's Cello Concerto in B minor*, with solo performances ranging from the California Theatre to Carnegie Hall. In 2019, William was honored to tour South America as a soloist, performing the *Saint-Saëns Cello Concerto No. 1 in A minor* across internationally acclaimed opera houses and concert halls, notably, the Teatro Solís in Uruguay, Argentina's Teatro Colon and Buenos Aires' Centro Cultural Kirchner, the third largest concert hall of its kind in the world.

William has been the recipient of major awards for music performance, including the 2018 U.S. Open Music Competition, 2018 ENKOR International Music Competition, 2018 Rising Talents of America Strings Competition, 2017 Burlingame Music Competition, 2017 VOCE Competition, and the 2016 American Protégé International Piano and Strings Competition. William has also played alongside the California All-State String Orchestra, California Music Preparatory Academy, and the Meadowmount School of Music.

William is honored to have worked with internationally acclaimed cellists, playing in masterclasses for Tamás Varga, principal cellist of Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Astrid Schween of the Juilliard Quartet, Nicholas Canellekis of Curtis Institute of Music, and Gloria Chien of the Chamber Society of Music at the Lincoln Center.

At Princeton, William will be graduating in the spring of 2023 as an Economics major, with certificates in Music Performance and Finance. He is a former student of Princeton's Alberto Parrini, and currently studies under Nayoung Baek. On campus, he is a member of La Vie en Cello and Princeton University Orchestra, with which he toured internationally for the fifth time in the spring of 2023.
