

12
july

THURSDAY

7 PM

Barry Shiffman, *artistic director*
Osvaldo Golijov, *composer-in-residence*

COLIN CARR, *cello*

Bach Suites

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750)

SUITE NO. 1 IN G MAJOR, FOR UNACCOMPANIED CELLO, BWV 1007 (CA.1720)

Prélude
Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Menuet I&II
Gigue

SUITE NO. 2 IN D MINOR, FOR UNACCOMPANIED CELLO, BWV 1008 (CA.1720)

Prélude
Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Menuet I&II
Gigue

SUITE NO. 3 IN C MAJOR, FOR UNACCOMPANIED CELLO, BWV 1009 (CA.1720)

Prélude
Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Bourée I&II
Gigue

:: INTERMISSION ::

SUITE NO. 4 IN E-FLAT MAJOR, FOR UNACCOMPANIED CELLO, BWV 1010 (CA.1720)

Prélude
Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Bourée I&II
Gigue

GLOVSKY

Counselors-at-Law

*Festival
Corporate Partner*

: SHORT PAUSE :

SUITE NO. 5 IN C MINOR, FOR UNACCOMPANIED CELLO, BWV 1011 (CA.1720)

- Prélude
- Allemande
- Courante
- Sarabande
- Gavotte I&II
- Gigue

: SHORT PAUSE :

SUITE NO. 6 IN D MAJOR, FOR UNACCOMPANIED CELLO, BWV 1012 (CA.1720)

- Prélude
- Allemande
- Courante
- Sarabande
- Gavotte I&II
- Gigue

This concert is sponsored in part by the generosity of Mary and Harry Hintlian.



Portrait of Johann Sebastian Bach, believed to date from his time as court Kapellmeister in Cöthen: "He perfectly understood the possibilities of all the violin family. His solos for violin and cello without bass bear witness to this." [C.P.E.Bach, 1774]

SIX SUITES FOR UNACCOMPANIED CELLO, BWV 1007 – 1012

Johann Sebastian Bach (b. Eisenach, Germany, March 21, 1685; d. Leipzig, Germany, July 28, 1750)

Composed ca.1720; 126 minutes

Bach's second surviving son, Carl Philipp Emanuel, paid tribute to his father's skill on string instruments in a letter written in 1774. In it, he mentions the six solo works for violin (three Sonatas and three Partitas) and the six Suites for cello—music that is at the pinnacle of solo instrumental writing. Bach titled the violin collection *Six solos for violin, without accompaniment, Book One, by Joh. Seb. Bach, 1720*. The Cello Suites, his only works for solo cello, were the sequel, Book Two. So, it is quite possible that Bach had in mind to write a whole series of solo suites for different instruments—continuing with the flute, perhaps, since a single Partita for solo flute has survived. It's also possible that by grouping the Suites into the customary set of six, Bach intended to have the works published.

We can't be sure whether Bach designed the six Cello Suites as anything beyond "exercises" (*Übungen*), as there is no evidence to show why or exactly when they were composed. But, by grouping them into a set of six (along with the Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin, the *Brandenburg* Concertos, the Violin Sonatas, the French and English Suites), Bach was following what has been referred to as a "guiding impulse" throughout his entire working life—to bring a particular genre to completion and then to turn from it to other things. In these collections, Bach sets out to display the full musical potential of an instrumental genre and to uncover its full technical possibilities. The Cello Suites grow increasingly complex from the First Suite to the last. The principal manuscript sources show that Bach made revisions to the score in terms of phrasing and ornamentation. However, it is often impossible to tell where Bach's revisions end and the bowing and phrasing markings of his interpreters begin. Unlike the six solo violin works, none of the Cello Suites has come down to us in a manuscript score written in Bach's hand.



Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-88)

There are, however, four principal sources to which cellists can turn. Two copies of Bach's original manuscript were made in his lifetime and two were made after his death. One of the former was made by Bach's second wife, Anna Magdalena, in the 1720s, probably at the request of a former pupil; the other was made by Bach's friend the organist and composer Johann Peter Kellner. In 1988, the authoritative New Bach Edition thought it had arrived at a reasonable editorial compromise by printing one version of Bach's Suites that reflected the two copies made in his lifetime together with another version reflecting the two anonymous manuscripts made after his death. Three years later, they bowed to pressure and issued facsimiles of all four manuscripts and left it to cellists to come up with their own edition. Performers are now compelled to make decisions and choose between alternatives. So, paradoxically, it has proved to be the very absence of authoritative phrasing and bowing directions that has helped keep performances of the Suites fresh and alive and not beholden to tradition.



Bach wrote the Cello Suites for the gut-strung cello of the mid-18th century. The instrument was played without the endpin that is widely used today, supported by the player's calves or resting on a small stool. Most of the Suites are designed for the four-string cello. In the Fifth Suite, however, Bach asks that the highest of the four strings be tuned down from A to G—a technique that adds resonance and permits a number of chords that are otherwise not possible. In the Sixth Suite, he calls for a five-string instrument, with an additional upper string. The instrument may have been a regular-size *piccolo* cello, with an added string, or a *viola pomposa*. This was a smaller instrument that is believed to have been invented by Bach himself. Johann Forkel, Bach's first biographer, described it as "somewhat larger than a viola, and attached with a ribbon so that it can be held resting on the arm, in front of the chest."

In the Suites, Bach's overriding concern seems to have been one of symmetry. Each Suite consists of a sequence of dance movements (Allemande, Courante, Sarabande and Gigue), which form the core of the traditional 18th-century suite. In each case, the dances are preceded by a *Prélude*, which offers Bach the opportunity to evoke a different mood for the instrument and provide the maximum amount of contrast from one suite to another. He also adds several more "modern" dances to the suite, grouped into a contrasting pair, much like the minuet and trio of the classical sonata and symphony. The first two Suites include a pair of Minuets, the middle two Suites a pair of Bourées, and the last two, a pair of Gavottes.

There are no known precedents for Bach's unaccompanied Cello Suites. As exercises in the minimal that imply much more than their single line at first appears to offer, they are unmatched in 18th-century music. They have remained the yardstick by which successive generations measure solo instrumental music for the cello. For the performer, they remain one of the major challenges of the repertoire. For the audience, the six Suites invite participation and our active involvement as we uncover the implied polyphonic richness of their secrets. Johann Forkel put it well more than two hundred years ago when he wrote that Bach "develops his melodies from the internal resources of the art itself, without regard for the dictates of fashion...his melody never grows old."



18th-century cello and cellist from a painting titled "The Music Party" by Philip Mercier, 1733

– Program notes © 2018 Keith Horner. Comments welcomed: khnotes@sympatico.ca

COLIN CARR, cello



Colin Carr appears throughout the world as a soloist, chamber musician, recording artist and teacher. He has played with major orchestras worldwide, including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, The Philharmonia, Royal Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, the orchestras of Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington, Philadelphia and Montréal and all the major orchestras of Australia and New Zealand. Conductors with whom he has worked include Simon Rattle, Valery Gergiev, Charles Dutoit, Mark Elder, Stanislaw Skrowaszewski and Neville Marriner. He has been a regular guest at the BBC Proms and has twice toured Australia. As a member of the Golub-Kaplan-Carr Trio, he recorded and toured extensively for twenty years. Chamber music plays an important role in his musical life. He is a frequent visitor to international chamber music festivals worldwide and has appeared often as a guest with the Guarneri and Emerson string quartets and with New York's Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

FREE FAMILY CONCERT

DOVER QUARTET

SATURDAY, JULY 14 :: 10 AM

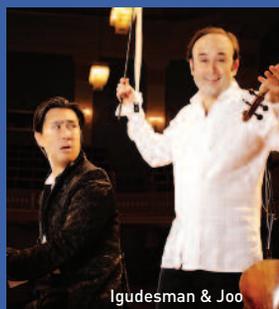


CLASSICAL CABARET

SATURDAY, JULY 14 :: 10 PM

Enjoy an intimate, casual performance in the third floor reception hall of works by Debussy, Schumann and David Popper's Requiem for Three Cellos and Piano!

TICKETS: \$20



Igudesman & Joo



Paul Watkins



Dover Quartet