THURSDAY, JUNE 29 :: 7:30 PM

Santiago Cañón Valencia, *cello*
Jeanie Chung, *piano*

SUITE NO. 2, IN D MINOR, FOR UNACCOMPANIED CELLO, BWV 1008 (C.1720)
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)
Prélude
Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Menuets I&II
Gigue

SONATA IN A MAJOR, OP. POSTH. (1897)
Maurice Ravel (1875–1937),
arranged by Christian Prosk for cello and piano (2012)

SHADOW OF THE HAWK (1997)
Gareth Farr (b. 1968)

:: INTERMISSION ::

SONATA FOR CELLO AND PIANO, OP. 49 (1979)
Alberto Ginastera (1916–83)
Allegro deciso
Adagio passionate
Presto mormoroso –
Allegro con fuoco

ASCENSO HACIA LO PROFUNDO (2022)
Santiago Cañón Valencia (b. 1995)
Composed 1897, arranged 2012; 14 minutes
arranged by Christian Proske for cello and piano

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

SONATA IN A MAJOR, OP. POSTH.

Bach had a 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 publish the works.

In the Suites, Bach’s overriding concern is 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 from the core of the traditional 18th century suite. In each case, the dances are

Ravel wrote four sonatas, and this single movement is the earliest of them. He wrote it in 1897 while a composition student at the Paris Conservatoire, then filed it away. It was first published in 1975, his centennial year, as a Sonate posthume. A decade or so ago, however, a musical autograph by Ravel, came up for auction, referring to the single movement as an ‘unfinished sonata.’ So, this infrequently performed but attractive and already distinctively Ravel-like 11-page fragment could best be viewed as the opening movement of an incomplete violin sonata. A published cello transcription was made by Christian Proske in 2012. The Sonata’s brief, lyrical and rhythmically elusive theme, first heard on solo cello, foreshadows that of the later Piano Sonata.


With Italian and Catalan parents, Argentinean composer Alberto Ginastera also identified with both South American and European traditions. He was comfortable with traditional European forms like the sonata, toccata and variations in addition to writing music that evokes an Argentinean landscape, or even aspects of the ancient, pre-Columbian world of South America. The four-movement Cello Sonata was composed four years before his death when the politics of his home country led him to live in Geneva. The sonata’s opening movement begins with a rhythmically driven motto perpetuo, possibly deriving in spirit if not the letter of Argentinean creole male dances. This ‘prima parte’ section is repeated and contrasted with a more mysterious, distant ‘seconda parte,’ strummed at times like a guitar, while also suggesting the traditional contrasts of a sonata form structure. A ferocious coda ties a bow on the movement’s many motifs.

The Adagio passionate is the focal point of the sonata, beginning with a reflective soloilouquy for each instrument, followed by a self-quotiation in which both instruments join in recreating Ginastera’s setting of the word ‘Amor’ found in his Third Quartet (for soprano and string quartet). The same phrase is additionally found as the love motif in his 1964 opera Don Rodrigo. The fleeting scherzo-like third movement is Ginastera’s evocation of Bartók’s night music: mysterious, subdued, full of glissandi and delicate writing in the upper reaches of both instruments. From the mid-point, the score plays out as a mirror, or retrograde version of itself. The explosive finale is a virtuoso tour de force from both instruments, drawing from several imperative dance rhythms and the melodic theme of the karnavalito, of Kechua origin.
Santiago Cañón-Valencia writes: "When writing Ascenso Hacia lo Profundo (Ascent towards the depths), I wanted to ditch the stereotype of the cello being merely a melodic instrument and explore the idea of making something that felt more complete and immersive. Borrowing inspiration from very contrasting genres of music both close and far from the classical spectrum, this is a piece that focuses on soundscapes, patterns, rhythm and colors in order to create a sonic journey for the listener."

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