

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Six Suites for Unaccompanied Cello

Johann Sebastian Bach was one of the leading German composers of the Baroque Period (1600-1760). His skill in form, counterpoint, rhythmic adaptation and harmonic and motivic organization enriched the established style of German compositions at the time.

Among Bach's most revered works is the *Six Suites for Unaccompanied Cello*, composed between 1717 and 1723. Each suite is organized with 6 movements, all containing a Prelude, Allemande, Courante, Sarabande and Gigue. The only difference being that the Suites 1 and 2 have two Minuets after the Sarabande whereas Suites 3 and 4 have two Bourees and Suites 5 and 6 have two Gavottes.

Suite 1 is in the key of G Major is one of the most recognizable and frequently played of the suites. Consisting mostly of arpeggiated chords, this suite is regularly heard on television and in films. Like the other five suites, Suite 1 has been transcribed for many instruments, including violin, viola, double bass, piano, marimba, horn and trombone. Although the suites are played on a variety of instruments, we can all agree that they are best played on the instrument for which they were originally written.

Alfred Schmittke (1934-1998)

Sonata No. 1 for Violoncello and Piano (1978)

Alfred Schnittke was a Soviet and Russian 20th Century composer who paved the way for a new way of writing called polystylism (integrating past and present musical styles). Although he is considered a composer from the Soviet Union, his love for music sparked while he was living in Vienna. "I felt every moment there," Schnittke wrote, "to be a link of the historical chain: all was multi-dimensional; the past represented a world of ever-present ghosts, and I was not a barbarian without any connections, but the conscious bearer of the task in my life." It was in Vienna where Schnittke established a spiritual and professional discipline for his future musical endeavors.

Like many of his predecessors, Schnittke and his music were often viewed suspiciously by the Soviet bureaucracy, especially after he tried to compose a piece for viola. In fact, his first symphony was banned by the Composers' Union and in 1980 he was banned from travelling outside of the USSR. The frustration that this caused Schnittke is apparent in many of his compositions. This is extremely apparent in Sonata No. 1 for cello and piano, which maintains a frustrated and angry character throughout the entire second movement. Schnittke shows his frustration at the end of the third movement as well when he ends the piece unresolved with cello playing a c and c# drone.

Antonín Leopold Dvořák (1841-1904)

Silent Woods Op. 68

Antonín Leopold Dvořák was a Czech composer who loved trains and employed aspects of folk tunes, especially rhythms, in his compositions. Dvořák began his musical career at the age of 6 as a student of violin. At the age of 13, Dvořák was sent to his uncle in Germany to develop his musical talents. During his time in Germany, Dvořák took organ, piano, violin and composition lessons from his teacher Anton Liehmann. Although Dvořák was one of the leading composers of the Romantic era, he didn't become popular until 1877 when he won a prize, and was recognized by Johannes Brahms.

In 1883, Dvořák composed a piano cycle called *From the Bohemian Forrest Op. 68*, which consists of six movements. Although originally written for the piano, Dvořák wised up and arranged the fifth movement, *Silent Woods*, for the cello.

Like the other movements, *Silent Woods* is a lyrical piece, marked in the beginning as *Lento e molto cantabile*, to create a dreamy, song-like theme. The *Lento* section, in D \flat major, is followed by a c# minor *Intermezzo*, which is faster, passionate and more desperate than the first theme. The *Lento* theme is then reprised giving the piece an ABA form and ends the piece with the dreamy state from which it started.

Corrine Casey Bean
Senior Cello Recital
With Sun-Min Kim

Suite No. 1

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

From *Six Suites for Unaccompanied Cello*

Prelude

Allemande

Courante

Sarabande

Minuet I, II

Gigue

Sonata No. 1 for Violoncello and Piano (1978)

Alfred Schnittke (1934-1998)

Largo

Presto

Largo

Sun-Min Kim, Piano

From the Bohemian Forrester, Op. 68

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

No. 5 Silent Woods

Sun-Min Kim, Piano