

**Music Performance:
Summary of Dissertation Recitals**

by

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ABSTRACT

Three recitals were performed in lieu of a written dissertation. The repertoire of these recitals aims to explore many unfamiliar/lesser-performed works. These works include many contemporary pieces written in the 20th and the 21st century, as well as transcriptions of music that are seldom performed on cello. The theme of the first recital is “Pieces for Solo Cello,” and contains unaccompanied cello works by Guy Fouquet, Jean Sibelius, Geon-yong Lee, Roger Sessions, and Henri Dutilleux. The second recital, titled “Romantic Transcriptions,” features Johannes Brahms’ two Clarinet sonatas and Robert Schumann’s *Three Romances*, originally written for oboe and piano. The first piece in the final recital is a work from the romantic era by Adrien-François Servais. The second piece is by Nikolai Kapustin, a classical composer who enjoys the use of jazz idioms. Kapustin’s work bridges the gap between the first and the last piece, the *Suite for Cello and Jazz Piano Trio*, by Claude Bolling, a 21st Century jazz composer who is famous for his crossover compositions.

Recital 1 Program

Tuesday, October 23, 2018

Walgreen Drama Center, Stamps Auditorium

8:00PM

Ha Young Kim, Cello

Improvisation Pour Violoncelle seul (2002)

Guy Fouquet
(b. 1951)

Theme and Variations for solo cello (1887)

Jean Sibelius
(1865-1957)

Song in the Dusk II for Violoncello Solo (1997)

Geon-yong Lee
(b.1947)

Six Pieces for Violoncello (1966)

Prelude
Dialogue
Scherzo
Berceuse
Fantasy
Epilogue

Roger Sessions
(1896-1985)

3 Strophes sur le nom de Sacher (1976-1982)

Unpoco indeciso
Andante sostenuto
Vivace

Henri Dutilleux
(1916-2013)

Recital 1 Program Notes

Pieces for Solo Cello

Guy Fouquet — Improvisation

Guy Fouquet is a renowned Canadian cellist having an extended career as principal cellist of the Montreal Symphony and professor of cello at the Conservatory of Music of Montreal. However, Fouquet as a composer is a great mystery. In fact, it is presumable that *Improvisation* may be the only piece he published. This piece, just as the title suggests, has an improvised quality in its constantly changing meter and rhythm. One can imagine that he was playing spontaneous melodies that came to mind on his cello—improvising, then writing out what he played on paper. While slightly altering notes and rhythms, the continuous restatements of the bold opening theme and the melancholy second theme suggest that the composer is continuously building on his original thematic idea. The two main themes are intertwined within a broad ternary form where segments of the two characters will either be foreshadowed or recalled. For a piece written in the 21st century, *Improvisation* is extremely tonal and easy to comprehend due to its memorable themes and their returns.

Jean Sibelius — Theme and Variations for Solo Cello

At age 22, the young Finnish composer wrote this piece while attending college at the Helsinki Music Institute (now known as the Sibelius Academy). Jean Sibelius went to law school after graduating from high school in 1885. However, nothing could keep him away from music—within the same year, he gave up law to study music at the Helsinki Institute. Sibelius is famed for helping develop Finland's national cultural identity with his music during the country's fight for independence against Russia in the early 1900s. This piece is the first Finnish work composed for solo cello, as well as Sibelius' largest work in variation form. Although the

composer's works are known to be late romantic and early-modern in style, this piece has neo-baroque qualities that can most easily be heard in the first theme and coda. The rest of the piece is extremely virtuosic with extensive demands for fast runs, trills, double stops, and chords that show off the technical capability and range of the cello. Sibelius composed prolifically until 1926 completing seven symphonies, among many other orchestral, chamber, and piano works, as well as countless songs for voice. As a celebrated and accomplished composer of his time, it is shocking that Sibelius stopped composing for the last thirty years of his life. There is evidence that he tried to continue writing during this time, but these attempts mostly failed his high expectations for himself leading him to burn the manuscripts. There is no definite answer as to why he stopped, but it is commonly known that Sibelius simply did not have it in him anymore—that he “ran out of notes.”¹

Geon-Yong Lee — Song in the Dusk II

Korean composer and founder of the group *The Third Generation*, Geon-Yong Lee is devoted to creating music that represents the unique identities of Third World countries. Although present day South Korea is not considered a Third World country, after the Japanese Forced Occupation (1910-1945) and the Korean War (1950-1953), the country was constantly struggling to recover. *The Third Generation* was founded in the early 80s and Lee's generation was directly influenced by after-war effects during this time. Lee specifically rejected modernism that was becoming popular in Korea in the 80s, feeling that contemporary trends were confining his musicality. He focused on the beauty of lyricism and creating emotional music rather than sound effects. As a current living composer, his goal is and always has been to share stories of life through his music.

Song in the Dusk II is the second of the two songs, the first having been written for the Clarinet in the same year. Both pieces aim to speak to the hearts of Korean people by expressing an emotion called *Han*. The meaning of this word is a complex combination of sorrow, loneliness, anger, pain, and anguish. Perhaps it can be described as a feeling one gets when being

¹ Mark McKenna, “Who Stopped the Music,” *The Monthly*, last modified November 2012, <https://www.themonthly.com.au/issue/2012/november/1351733081/mark-mckenna/who-stopped-music>.

falsely accused but having to remain silent because justice will never be on their side. Lee illustrates this emotion in his music by imitating the sound of Korean traditional instruments. He explains that this piece is an “image of an old Korean scholar searching for the meaning of life at dusk...”² The music starts with a low held G which continues to be a drone and tonal center throughout the piece. Lee creates oriental sounds by using free meter, grace notes, trills, repeated notes, and unexpected intervals such as minor 2nds, and augmented 3rds. The many long rests that separate sections of this through-composed piece can be interpreted as the silence or pause while one is lost in thought, “searching for the meaning of life.” The piece concludes with a coda-like harmonic passage, which is thought to reflect enlightenment.

Roger Sessions — Six Pieces for Cello

Brooklyn-born composer Roger Sessions went through a variety of different styles before starting to write serial music in 1956. His experience composing neoclassical, tonal, and atonal music contributed to his unique style as a serial composer. Oftentimes, Sessions did not adhere to the rules of traditional Viennese 12-tone technique. While many composers feel that serialism limits their ability to show expressivity in music, Sessions felt that rows enabled freedom within the set of relationships. Sessions did not become a big public figure because his pieces were difficult to listen to and comprehend. However, he was a beloved figure to musicians and professionals who found and understood the expressivity within his complex harmonies and rhythms.

For the *Six Pieces for Cello*, Sessions carefully thought about the possibilities of the cello in technique, range, and color. John Rockwell writes, “The Six Pieces are the most knotty and complex of all these later works, and yet here, too, the communicable emotionality of the music remains in the forefront, especially in the wistful, muted fourth piece and the grave eloquence of the sixth.”³ The second movement *Dialogue*, was dedicated to his son John, and Sessions described that the movement is a friendly conversation between John and himself. *Berceuse* was

² Choon Mee Kim, “East Meets West, Music with Korean Theme,” *The Sejong Cultural Society*, http://sejongsociety.org/2006silkroad/bio_geon-yong_lee.htm.

³ John Rockwell, “Music: Works by Roger Sessions,” *The New York Times*, last modified September 22 1985, <https://www.nytimes.com/1985/09/22/arts/music-works-by-roger-sessions.html>.

written after seeing his granddaughter in a crib. Although Sessions' compositional style is rather unusual to listen to, his music explores many musical colors searching deeply into human emotions.

Henri Dutilleux — *Trois Strophes sur le nom de Sacher*

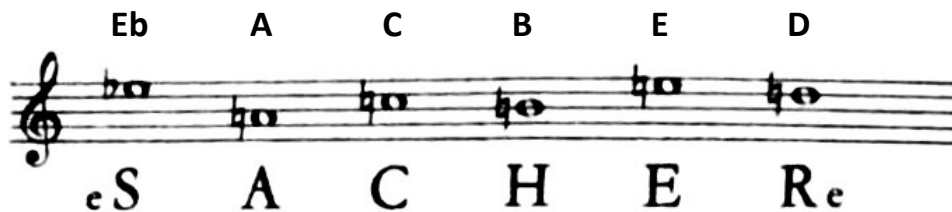


Figure 1 'SACHER' Hexachord

Paul Sacher was a great Swiss patron of the arts who founded and conducted the Basle Kammerorchester in 1926. As an immensely wealthy man, he commissioned many major works from great composers such as Bartok, Stravinsky, and Carter among many others. In celebration of Sacher's 70th birthday, famed Russian cellist Mstislav Rostropovich commissioned 12 composer-friends of Sacher to write a piece for solo cello. Rostropovich created a hexachord with the spelling of SACHER (Figure 1) and asked the composers to base the music on this motive. The original plan was to commission a theme by Benjamin Britten, then to have all other composers compose a variation in order to put together one complete piece. However, all commissioned composers ended up writing much more substantial works.

The *Trois Strophes sur le nom de Sacher* is a three-movement work by French composer Henri Dutilleux. Known to be a hyper-perfectionist who only published 24 works during his lifetime, Dutilleux took 7 years to complete this work. His music draws upon French traditions while also being affected by the music of Bartok and Stravinsky. Dutilleux was fascinated by concepts of time and memory, oftentimes even quoting works of other composers. The *Trois Strophes* quotes Bartok's *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* at the end of the first movement. The connection between these pieces run deeper than Dutilleux's admiration for

Bartok, as *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* was in fact commissioned by Sacher and premiered by the Basle Kammerorchester. Dutilleux uses serialism techniques in his compositions but refused to associate himself with any school of composition. In this piece, Dutilleux treats the SACHER hexachord as a motif that reappear throughout all three movements rather than following any standard rule of serialism.

Recital 2 Program

Saturday, December 1, 2018

Walgreen Drama Center, Stamps Auditorium

5:30PM

Ha Young Kim, Cello

Narae Joo & Joong Hun Cho, Piano

Clarinet Sonata, op. 120, no. 1 (1894)

Allegro appassionato
Andante un poco Adagio
Allegretto grazioso
Vivace

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

Narae Joo, piano

Three Romances, op. 94 (1849)

Nicht schnell
Einfach, innig
Nicht schnell

Robert Schumann
(1810-1856)

Joong Hun Cho, piano

Intermission

Clarinet Sonata, op. 120, no. 2 (1894)

Allegro amabile
Allegro appassionato
Andante con moto—Allegro

Johannes Brahms

Narae Joo, piano

Recital 2 Program Notes

Romantic Transcriptions for Cello

Before delving into the details of the pieces on this program, it would be meaningful to consider the relationship between the two composers themselves.

Johannes Brahms and Robert Schumann were both deeply in love with the same woman, Clara Schumann—for Brahms, helplessly in love is perhaps a more suitable description. Their relationship is the most famous love triangle in the music world. Robert Schumann was a friend and a mentor to Brahms, and their relationship first began when Brahms went to visit the Schumann couple in Düsseldorf in 1853. Upon hearing about Robert's attempted suicide a year later, Brahms rushed back to Düsseldorf to be with the family during this difficult time. After this shocking event, Robert asked to be taken to a mental asylum. Brahms' sincere concern for the Schumann family is depicted in one of Clara's letters, in which she wrote: "Brahms is my dearest and truest support; he has not left me since the start of Robert's illness, but has accompanied me in all my trials, has shared in all my suffering."⁴

Brahms remained to live in the Schumann house with Clara and the children, and also acted as an intermediary for Robert and Clara. Unfortunately, Robert was forbidden to see Clara; Brahms, however, was free to visit the hospital. Tragically, Clara was only able to see Robert two days before his death in 1856. Despite Brahms' affection for Clara, they maintained a platonic relationship which lasted a lifetime.

⁴ Georg Predota, "At the Center of the Musical Universe Robert and Clara Schumann," *Interlude*, March 26 2018, <http://www.interlude.hk/front/center-musical-universe-robert-clara-schumann>.

Johannes Brahms – Clarinet Sonatas Op. 120, No. 1 and No. 2

Having felt exhausted in all his creative ideas, Brahms retired from composing in 1890. His decision, however, was short-lived; when he heard clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld perform in Meiningen in 1891, Brahms was so captivated by the beautiful tone of the instrument that he decided to start composing again. This incident reawakened his inner musical senses, resulting in a close friendship with Mühlfeld. He wrote four wonderful chamber works for the clarinetist, all of which are now considered masterpieces of the clarinet repertoire: the Trio in A minor for clarinet, cello and piano Op. 114 (1891), the B minor Quintet for clarinet and strings, Op. 115 (1891), and the two clarinet sonatas (1894). Before the public premiere of these two pieces in 1895, they had already been performed privately for Georg II, Duke of Saxe-Meiningen in September 1894, and for Clara Schumann in November 1894, by Mühlfeld and Brahms himself.

Brahms greatly admired the compositional technique of the Classical masters such as Beethoven, Mozart, and Haydn. This can be seen in his extensive use of traditional forms, including sonata-form, variation form, rondo, and ternary form. In fact, much of the power of his music lies in his ability to explore deeply romantic thematic ideas, with rich harmonies and complex rhythmic motives, all within traditional classical frameworks. Additionally, he uses thematic contrast to great effect; he is able to develop large narrative structures with the smallest motivic fragments, developing them in an infinite variety of ways throughout each movement.

The first sonata consists of four movements. The first movement is in sonata-form and begins with a four bar *poco forte* mysterious piano theme. The clarinet (or cello in this case) enters thereafter, taking over the melody. This F minor movement passes through many key areas, creating a sense of anxiety in the mood despite the beautiful legato line of the first theme. The second movement is known to be one of Brahms' most beautiful works. Although the main theme is simply an ornamented descending line, Brahms varies his treatment of the melody throughout its various repetitions. Both the second and third movements are in ternary form, and the fourth movement is an altered rondo form. It is interesting to note that despite the sonata being in the key of F minor, all movements except the first are in major keys. This tendency towards major keys lasts until the end of the work, which ends with dazzling F major arpeggios and chords.

The first movement of the Sonata No. 2 in E-flat major is also in sonata-form. The warm, affectionate quality of the first movement greatly contrasts to that of the previous sonata. The *Allegro appassionato* second movement is not a typical *simplice* trio, nor is it a stormy scherzo. On the other hand, the theme of the movement is rather paradoxical, seeming at first to be in a strong minor character, then quickly changing to suggest a hopeful feeling in the very next bar. Although the intensity of this movement is unquestionably *appassionato* in character, this passion seems to be illustrated more as if it were a memory rather than something vividly present. The finale of this three-movement work is in variation form, the theme itself being very simple in harmony and rhythm, with a light, lilting rhythm. The first five variations have the same major quality as the theme but are varied in their rhythmic treatment. For instance, the first variation has dotted figures followed by even notes, and the fourth has successive 32nd notes. In the *allegro* (6th variation), Brahms takes the dotted motif of the first variation to a vigorous minor key before transitioning to the *Più tranquillo* (7th variation) section to build to a powerful finish.

Robert Schumann – Three Romances for Oboe and Piano, Op. 94

1849 was a time of prolific writing for Schumann, but it was also when he was experiencing dreadful effects of his psychotic melancholia. His mental health significantly influenced his music, which can be seen in the Three Romances. This was the only work Schumann wrote for oboe, and is said to have been written for the love of his life, Clara Schumann, as a Christmas present. The work consists of three short pieces, all of which are in ternary form (A-B-A). Each piece explores dramatic changes in mood and character, reflecting the two conflicting natures of Schumann's personality, one being rather introverted and introspective (Eusebius), the other being fiery and passionate (Florestan).

The first romance, *Nicht schnell* (not fast), is very lyrical in its melodic treatment, portraying Schumann's complex inward disposition through heart-wrenching themes and melodies. The second piece, *Einfach, innig* (simple, heartfelt), is in A major, very pure and almost childlike in its main theme, contrasting from the A minor of the first movement. The B

section of this romance is the most contrasting of the three; the music suddenly increases in tempo and Schumann adds unexpected sforzando pianos to the music, creating a powerful sense of turbulence and agitation. The third romance has the same marking as the first (*Nicht schnell*), but is more somber in mood and lively in rhythm than the previous two A sections. The B section of the third piece is much more tranquil, reminiscent of the A sections of the previous two romances.

Recital 3 Program

Thursday, April 11, 2019

Walgreen Drama Center, Stamps Auditorium

8:00PM

Ha Young Kim, Cello

Narae Joo & Ji Hyang Gwak, Piano

Jacob Warren, Double Bass

Andrew Grossman, Percussion

Souvenir de Spa, op. 2 (1844)

Adrien-François Servais
(1807-1866)

Narae Joo, piano

Nearly Waltz (1999)

Nikolai Kapustin
(b. 1937)

Ji Hyang Gwak, piano

Intermission

Suite for Cello and Jazz Piano Trio (1984)

Claude Bolling
(b. 1930)

Baroque in Rhythm
Concertante
Galop
Ballade
Romantique
Cello Fan

Jacob Warren, double bass
Andrew Grossman, percussion
Narae Joo, piano

Recital 3 Program Notes

Classical to Jazz

Adrien-François Servais – *Souvenir de Spa*, Op. 2

“Paganini of the cello,” Belgian cellist and composer Adrien-François Servais was one of the most influential virtuosos of the 19th century. He greatly contributed to the development of cello technique with both performance and composition. He is also thought to be the first cellist to use an endpin for the instrument. Servais composed prolifically but only wrote music that included the cello. His most common compositional genre was the fantasia for solo cello—the *Souvenir de Spa* is one of his sixteen fantasias for the instrument. Servais combines the style of the fantasia (very improvisatory-like) with variation form to allow romantic freedom and expressivity, as well as to show off the cellist's exquisite skill. Although many of his fantasias are based on themes from famous operas, this piece is based on Servais' own musical ideas. However, many of its musical idioms remind listeners of Italian opera. His talent as a performer and composer greatly appealed to his contemporaries because of his romanticism and brilliant virtuosic technique.

Souvenir de Spa has a concerto-like opening with an orchestral/piano introduction that presents the main theme followed by a solo cello recitative. The music fluctuates between improvisatory and thematic material. Then, one would expect to hear a clear theme played by the solo instrument as in a traditional variation form. However, instead Servais takes the freedom to immediately present the next variation, *Moderato assai*. This playful variation is interrupted yet again with a recitative-like passage, which leads to the next variation, *Cantabile espressivo*. Numerous character shifts within sequential materials remind the listeners of an operatic duet.

The *Allegro non troppo*, and the succeeding *Allegro* are the two variations that truly justify Servais' nickname, “Paganini of the cello.” These variations are saturated with

challenging bow strokes, articulations, characters, as well as octaves and chords, which Servais was able to demonstrate with impeccable ease. The music then relaxes into a slower, more expressive *Andantino* which ends with a cadenza followed by a series of chords creating the illusion that the piece is coming to a close. However, a half cadence leaves the variation open-ended, and the music continues with a delightful polonaise variation (Polish dance music). This variation passes through many different textures, characters and rhythms, showing great virtuosity and ability on the cello. The music builds up to a storm of notes and harmonies, then suddenly lightens up in the coda where the music quickly builds for the last time to a flourishing finish.

Nikolai Kapustin – Nearly Waltz

Surprisingly, Russian pianist and composer Nikolai Kapustin was classically trained and does not consider himself a “real” jazz musician. Perhaps this is a reasonable statement because Kapustin is known to dislike improvising; however, upon listening to his music it is difficult to determine into which musical genre he truly falls. Having been exposed to and influenced by jazz during his teenage years, Kapustin fell in love with the genre and combined it with his skill as a classical virtuoso. His music contains jazz idioms such as glissandi, complex rhythms, and harmonies within formal classical structures. This piece is part of a group of three short pieces along with *Elegy Op.96*, and *Burlesque Op. 97*, all of which are in simple binary form.

Nearly Waltz is best described by its humorous title. A traditional waltz is in triple meter, but the meter in this particular piece alters between 5/4 and 3/4. Due to Kapustin’s complex rhythms and hemiolas, even the triple meter sections can cause confusion for the listeners. Despite the rhythmic complexity, there is a general dance-like, light feel to the piece, making the melody and the overall effect of the piece sound like a “nearly” waltz.

Claude Bolling – Suite for Cello and Jazz Piano Trio

French composer and jazz pianist, Claude Bolling, achieved fame through his unique style of combining classical and jazz music. After hearing Bolling's early compositions, renowned flutist Jean-Pierre Rampal asked him to write a piece for flute. Bolling then composed a *Suite for Flute and Jazz Piano Trio*, which became very successful and inspired him to do a series of "crossover" collaborations with classical musicians (similar suites for guitar, trumpet, violin, etc.). The cello suite on today's program was written for famed cellist Yo-Yo Ma, who is known for his interest in eclectic styles and genres as well as his diverse collaboration.

A "suite" is a series of dance movements made famous by J.S. Bach of the Baroque period. It is clear that Bolling had Bach's style in mind when composing this 6-part piece. Bolling's suites have baroque elegance combined with modern swing, and in this particular suite that synthesis of style is most prevalent in part 1, *Baroque in Rhythm*. The music begins as if it were a movement from a Bach cello solo suite. The piano enters thereafter creating a fugue, further connecting this music to Bach. The melodic material seems like it is in baroque style, but the supporting harmonies are far from baroque. The music becomes more and more jazz-like culminating with the entrance of the bass and drums. This new instrumentation creates a sound and texture that was unimaginable in the beginning of the piece.

Concertante begins with a calming series of sequences that explore different harmonies. The long search for grounded harmonic and melodic material comes to an end when the other instruments enter and the music shifts to "jazz swing." However, the sequential material returns in different melodic and textural forms. Bolling also introduces "Blues/Blues swing" and adds more virtuosity to the music near the end of the movement.

Galop is a dance traditionally named after the rhythm created by the steps of a fast running horse. Although the dance is typically in 2/4 time, Bolling starts in 3/4 and changes meter constantly to 2/4 and back. Although the movement is not easily danceable, it certainly illustrates the movement of horses with the beginning rhythm. Both this movement and the next movement, *Ballade*, have cadenzas which suggest a concerto-like style for a brief break from the exciting jazz instrumentation.

Romantique is the first movement in the suite that does not start with cello solo. The piano introduces the main theme, which is lyrical as the title of the movement suggests. The many sections of this movement vary in character, pulling the listeners on a roller coaster of emotions at times reminding them of a Broadway musical, or a suspenseful or tragic movie. The different emotions portrayed in this beautiful movement is what makes *Romantique* undeniably captivating.

Cello Fan is the most exciting movement of the six. In one section of this movement, Bolling writes out the chord progression on the music like a jazz standard. This is the only time in the suite that Bolling does this. During this part, the melody stops, and the piano and cello outline the harmonic progressions—as if Bolling is showing the foundation of the music before adding the fancy, dazzling melody and beat. The entire piece ends in a rather classical way for the cello—an ascending C major arpeggio—while the piano continues with its jazzy harmonies, creating a fitting end to this crossover piece.

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