

Faculty Recital

“Musical Gems Reset”

Three transcriptions for cello and piano

Jeffrey Solow, cello
Elise Auerbach, piano

Friday, March 11, 2022 • 7:30 PM
Rock Hall Auditorium
1715 N. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19122

Program

Sonate Posthume

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)
arr. Christian Proske

The Lark Ascending

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)
arr. Erin Busch

Concerto in C Major, K. 313

W. A. Mozart (1756-1791)
arr. Jeffrey Solow

- I. Allegro maestoso
- II. Adagio non troppo
- III. Rondo. Tempo di Menuetto

The use of photographic, audio, and video recording is not permitted.

Please turn off all cell phones and pagers.

Two hundred first performance of the 2021-2022 season.

Program Notes

Music seldom sounds better in every respect for being transcribed. For a transcription to be successful it must illuminate some latent character of the music and provide at least some positive qualities to compensate for those that are lost. Ideally, the losses should not overbalance the gains. A transcriber's motive is often to fill a gap in the repertoire of the new instrument; more commonly, though, it satisfies a need in the transcriber/performer's repertoire. Making a successful transcription is not a simple matter and any performer who has tried his/her hand at it most likely discovered that merely transferring music from one instrument to another seldom works: the new version does not feel idiomatic, it lies either too high or too low, or simply sounds wrong. To sound natural and effective, a transcription often requires some creative adaptations. In any event, here we offer three jewels, recut, polished, and placed in a new setting where hopefully they can shine with even greater brilliance!

Sonate Posthume (1897)

Maurice Ravel (arr. Christian Proske)

Maurice Ravel had won the first prize in the Paris Conservatory's piano competition in 1891, but in June of 1895 when his exams did not satisfy the faculty, he was expelled. Re-admitted in 1897, Ravel began studying composition, his real interest, with Gabriel Fauré who appreciated and respected his talent, and Ravel appreciated and revered Fauré. (A comment on YouTube says that in the second voice of his *Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré*, Ravel spells out "I love you Father" in retrograde and inversion. Someone will have to point that out to me.) However, when Ravel failed to win any more prizes, the *Conservatoire's* rule that students who failed to win a competitive medal in three consecutive years were automatically expelled kicked in, and in 1900 he was expelled again. Being a former student, he was allowed to audit Fauré's classes, but he finally gave up on the *Conservatoire* in 1903.

Ravel wrote the first movement of what was intended to be a multi-movement violin sonata in April 1897 and probably performed it soon after his re-admission with violinist Georges Enesco (a note he sent to another student colleague in 1929, violinist Paul Oberdoerffer, contains the opening violin phrase and a dedication "in memory of the 1st performance of the uncompleted first sonata").

Preserved in Ravel's files, the sonata was not published until 1975 under the title *Posthumous Sonata*.

A number of musicologists and critics, who, while appreciating the movement, consider that the composer had not yet found his voice, detecting in it traces of Frederick Delius, César Franck, and Fauré. I would rather pay attention to his biographer Arbie Orenstein who writes that for Ravel, the 1890s were a period “of immense growth ... from adolescence to maturity.” For me this music is thoroughly Ravel and in places uncannily foreshadows his great Piano Trio.

Ravel taught very little, but he did give lessons to a few promising young composers. I was pleased to learn that one of these was Ralph Vaughan Williams, who studied with Ravel for three months in 1907–08, working with him four or five times each week. Ravel declared him to be “my only pupil who does not write my music.” (Famously, he declined to teach George Gershwin on the grounds that such lessons “would probably cause him to write bad Ravel...”) Vaughan Williams recalled that Ravel helped him escape from “the heavy contrapuntal Teutonic manner,” encouraging him to be guided by his own motto “*Complexe mais pas compliqué*”—Complex but not complicated.

The transcriber, *Christian Proske*, is co-principal cellist of the Tonhalle Symphony Orchestra of Zurich, Switzerland.

***The Lark Ascending* (1914)**

Ralph Vaughan Williams (arr. Erin Busch)

Inspired by George Meredith's 1881 poem of the same name and originally written in 1914 for violin and piano, Vaughan Williams subtitled *The Lark Ascending* “A Romance,” a term he liked for shortish, slow compositions and perhaps inspired by Beethoven's two Romances for violin and orchestra. He dedicated it to violinist Marie Hall who played the premier in 1920 (delayed due to the First World War) with pianist Geoffrey Mendham, after which Vaughan Williams reworked it for violin and orchestra. The composer's wife Ursula, wrote that rather than illustrating the poem, he “made the violin become both the bird's song and its flight.”

Vaughan Williams headed the score with these lines from Meredith's longer poem:

*He rises and begins to round,
He drops the silver chain of sound,
Of many links without a break,
In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake.*

*For singing till his heaven fills,
'Tis love of earth that he instils,
And ever winging up and up,
Our valley is his golden cup
And he the wine which overflows
to lift us with him as he goes.*

*Till lost on his aerial rings
In light, and then the fancy sings.*

In response to my request to say something about her transcription, Erin Busch replied: "Honestly, I can't think of anything I'd say for the program note—I just wanted to play it, so I made the transcription. That's really the whole story!" Based on several radio listener polls, *The Lark Ascending* has become one of the most beloved works in all of classical music, but truth to tell, I had never particularly warmed to it. I became a convert, however, upon hearing Erin perform her own transcription.

When I was checking out violin performances with piano on YouTube (to hear how pianists dealt with the very long sustained chords of the orchestral version), I was struck by two comments. One was encouraging: "I definitely prefer the violin and piano arrangement of *Lark Ascending* to that of a full orchestra." The other, sad: "I used to hear Larks as a child in the skies at my parents, sadly the Larks are not there anymore. I close my eyes and think of my childhood in the fields."

Concerto in C Major, K. 313 (1778) W. A. Mozart (arr. Jeffrey Solow)

It is most unfortunate that Mozart did not have any wealthy or close friends who were cello virtuosi; thus, cellists have a gaping hole in their concerto repertoire. The four horn concertos (and several unfinished ones) were written for his horn player friend since childhood, Joseph Leutgeb. Other concertos were written on commission: the bassoon concerto for aristocratic amateur bassoonist Thaddäus Freiherr von Dürnitz; the clarinet concerto (actually basset clarinet) for Anton Stadler, a virtuoso basset horn player; and Giuseppe Ferlendis, oboist at the Court Chapel of Salzburg, was the recipient of his oboe concerto. (He also gave a copy of it to the Mannheim court oboist Friedrich Ramm, who had been appointed to the court orchestra at age 14(!), and for whom he later composed his delightful oboe quartet.) His violin concertos and most of his piano concertos were written for himself. (We have no idea why he wrote some pieces, such as his masterpiece for string trio, the Divertimento in Eb, K. 563.)

In 1777, a wealthy Dutch amateur flutist, Ferdinand De Jean, commissioned from Mozart a package of works consisting of four flute quartets and three flute concertos, of which he only completed 3 quartets and 2 concertos. Apropos for the theme of my program, notes for a 2016 Philadelphia Orchestra performance of this concerto, the first of the two and originally in G major, described it as “a sparkling jewel.” (Also apropos, the second concerto, in D major, was an arrangement by Mozart himself from his earlier oboe concerto in C, and for that reason De Jean did not pay him for it!) In a letter to his father justifying his procrastination in satisfying De Jean’s commission, Mozart lamented: “I could, to be sure, scribble off things the whole day long, but a composition of this kind goes out into the world, and naturally I do not want to have cause to be ashamed of my name on the title page. Moreover, you know I am quite powerless to write for an instrument which I cannot bear.” So, I like to think that Mozart would have enjoyed hearing a cello version!

About the Artists

ELISE AUERBACH's wide-ranging interests and expertise span the spectrum of the collaborative pianist.

Ms. Auerbach has appeared with singers and instrumentalists in such venues as Weill Recital Hall, Alice Tully Hall, and the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. Other performance highlights include orchestral appearances with the Delaware and Temple University Symphonies, live broadcasts on Cincinnati Public Radio WGUC, premieres of new works for keyboard, and numerous recitals throughout the region. She has participated in and performed at festivals in Japan, Italy, Canada, and the United States, and toured twice in Germany as part of the Ribbeck/Auerbach violin and piano duo.

Ms. Auerbach frequently serves as music director and pianist for productions by local opera companies, and was on staff for the Russian Opera Workshop. She has been a coach and teacher in the Vocal Arts department at Temple University's Boyer College of Music and Dance for more than 20 years, and joined the piano staff at the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia in 2015. A devoted chamber musician, she is a founding member of Philalea, a Philadelphia-based chamber ensemble. Ms. Auerbach holds degrees from Temple University and the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music. Her teachers have included Leota Palmer, Harvey Wedeen and Susan Starr, and she studies the Taubman Approach with Robert Durso.

Cellist **JEFFREY SOLOW's** compelling playing has enthralled audiences throughout North America, Europe, Latin America and Asia as soloist, chamber musician and teacher. Born and raised in Los Angeles, he studied with Gabor Rejto and earned a degree in Philosophy *magna cum laude* from UCLA while studying with and then assisting the legendary Gregor Piatigorsky at USC.

His winning the Young Concert Artists International Auditions launched a career that has encompassed performances of more than 40 different solo works with orchestras including the Los Angeles Philharmonic (also at the Hollywood Bowl), Japan Philharmonic, Prime Philharmonic (Korea), VNOB Symphony (Vietnam), Seattle Symphony, Milwaukee Symphony, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and the American Symphony (with whom he also recorded). He has also presented recitals throughout the US and in Europe, Japan, Korea, China, Central and South America, and has been guest artist at many national and international chamber music festivals. His recordings, two of which have been nominated for Grammy Awards, can be found on the Columbia, ABC, New World, Centaur, Delos, Kleos, Capstone, Everest, Music Masters and Telefunken labels. Since live concerts have begun again he completed his 10th cycle of Bach's Suites for solo cello at Bargemusic in NYC.

Mr. Solow's numerous editions are published by Breitkopf, International Music Company, Peters, Presser, Latham, Ovation and Henle Urtext, and the *London Cello Society Newsletter*, *Strad* magazine (London), *Strings* magazine, and *American String Teacher* have published his articles and reviews. He was editor of the *Newsletter* of the Violoncello Society, Inc. of NY and served as VCS president, and he is a past president of the American String Teachers Association. Recognized worldwide as an outstanding teacher, Jeffrey Solow has presented master classes throughout the United States as well as in Switzerland, Austria, Korea, Guatemala, Norway, France, Argentina, Canada, at the Beijing, Shanghai, Sichuan, Nanning and WuHan conservatories in China, and at the Chiang Kai-Shek National Library in Taiwan. He has been professor of cello at Temple University since 1989 and was recently presented with the Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching.

Boyer College of Music and Dance

The Boyer College of Music and Dance offers hundreds of events open to the public each year. Students have the unique opportunity to interact with leading performers, composers, conductors, educators, choreographers and guest artists while experiencing a challenging and diverse academic curriculum. The Boyer faculty are recognized globally as leaders in their respective fields. Boyer alumni are ambassadors of artistic leadership and perform with major orchestras, opera and dance companies, teach at schools and colleges and work as professional music therapists, choreographers and composers. Boyer's recording label, BCM&D records, has produced more than thirty recordings, three of which have received Grammy nominations.

boyer.temple.edu

The Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts

The Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts consists of the Boyer College of Music and Dance, School of Theater, Film and Media Arts, the George and Joy Abbott Center for Musical Theater and the Temple Performing Arts Center. The School of Theater, Film and Media Arts engages gifted students with nationally and internationally recognized faculty scholars and professionals. A hallmark of the School of Theater, Film and Media Arts is the Los Angeles Study Away program, housed at historic Raleigh Studios. The George and Joy Abbott Center for Musical Theater engages visiting performers, guest artists, set designers, playwrights and other Broadway professionals. The Temple Performing Arts Center (TPAC), a historic landmark on campus, is home to a state-of-the-art 1,200 seat auditorium and 200 seat chapel. More than 500 concerts, classes, lectures and performances take place at TPAC each year.

arts.temple.edu

Temple University

Founded as a night school by Russell Conwell in 1884, Temple University has evolved into an international powerhouse in higher education and a top-tier research institution with roughly 40,000 undergraduate, graduate and professional students. As the largest university in one of the nation's most iconic cities, Temple educates diverse future leaders from across Philadelphia, the country and the world who share a common drive to learn, prepare for their careers and make a real impact.

Temple University 2021-2022 Season Upcoming Events

Saturday, March 12 at 2:30pm

CGYM Master Class Series: Soovin Kim, violin faculty, New England Conservatory
Music Prep YouTube channel

Tuesday, March 15 at 3:00pm

Master Class: Ana María Martínez, soprano
Rock Hall Auditorium

Tuesday, March 15 at 7:30pm

Faculty & Guest Artist Recital: Phillip O'Banion & Friends, percussion
Rock Hall Auditorium

Wednesday, March 16 at 4:00pm

Master Class: Nathalie Joachim, flute
Rock Hall Auditorium

Wednesday, March 16 at 7:30pm

Master's Recital: Dylan Band, jazz saxophone
Klein Recital Hall

Thursday, March 17 at 4:30pm

Rite of Swing Jazz Café: Brian Morris Quintet
Brian Morris, saxophone; Banks Sapnar, trumpet; Neil Podgurski, piano; Mike Boone, bass; Mekhi Boone, drums
Temple Performing Arts Center Lobby

Thursday, March 17 at 5:30pm

Final Doctoral Recital: Chen Chen, cello
Rock Hall Auditorium

Thursday, March 17 at 7:00pm

MFA Thesis Concert - *Anchored*
New work by Uriah Huffman & Elise Mele
Tickets are free but registration is required.
Presented virtually

Temple University 2021-2022 Season Upcoming Events

Thursday, March 17 at 7:30pm

Collaborative Piano Recital: Andrew Samlal
Rock Hall Auditorium

Friday, March 18 at 1:00pm

Music Studies Colloquium: Danielle Soler, “Electronic Music and Style”
Presser 142

Friday, March 18 at 2:00pm

Master Class: Lester Lynch, baritone
Rock Hall Auditorium

Friday, March 18 at 7:30pm

Master’s Recital: Jared Lampshire, jazz saxophone
Klein Recital Hall

Friday, March 18 at 7:30pm

Guest Artist Recital: Matthew Holm, percussion
Rock Hall Auditorium

Saturday, March 19 at 2:30pm

CGYM Master Class Series: Marcy Rosen, cellist
Music Prep YouTube channel

Sunday, March 20 at 7:30pm

19th Annual Concert at the Kimmel Cultural Campus
BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 9, Op. 125
Tickets: \$20-35 general admission, \$10 students/senior citizens
Available at the Kimmel Center Box Office, 215.893.1999 or
kimmelculturalcampus.org
Verizon Hall, Kimmel Cultural Campus
300 S. Broad Street, Philadelphia