

The Ph.D./D.M.A. Programs in Music

February 20, 2024 6:00 p.m.

Baisley Powell Elebash Recital Hall



Abigail Hong, violin

Partita No. 3 in E Major for Unaccompanied Violin, BWV 1006 (1714-15) J. S. Bach

Preludio (1685–1750)

Loure

Gavotte en Rondeau

Menuet I and II

Bourrée

Gigue

Sonata for Solo Violin in A Minor, Op. 27, No. 2 “Obsession” (1923) Eugène Ysaÿe

Prelude (1858–1931)

Malinconia

Danse des Ombres — Sarabande

Les Furies

Suite Mestiza (2017)

Hailli

Vendedora Cholita

Gabriela Lena Frank

(b. 1972)

Caprice No. 24 in A Minor, Op. 1 (1805-15)

Niccolò Paganini

(1782–1840)

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the D.M.A. degree.
Please switch off your cell phones and refrain from taking flash pictures.

Notes on the Program

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Partita No. 3 in E Major BWV 1006 (1714-15)

Born March 31, 1685, Eisenach, Germany; Died July 28, 1750, Leipzig, Germany

First performance:

Other works from this period: Six suite for Solo Cello (1720); Six English Suites for Solo Keyboard (1720); Fifteen Inventions for Solo Keyboard (1720, 1723)

Approximate duration: 20 minutes

Although neither the composer nor this piece needs an introduction, I feel indebted to both for inspiring in me constant curiosity and admiration for the violin. J.S. Bach is now approaching his 339th birthday but is still so influential to violinists and very frequently heard in concert halls. His *Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin* BWV 1001-1006, is filled with chords, leaps in range, multi-voice melodies, and dissonances that were not often heard from a single instrument in the Baroque era. Now, these solo violin works are the inspiration for many composers writing for the violin to also challenge the limits, if any, of a solo violin. These composers include Jessie Montgomery, Isang Yun, Luciano Berio, and Eugène Ysaÿe.

The E Major Partita opens with a bright and celebratory *Preludio*, a constant and brilliant flurry of sixteen notes. This movement is one of the most popular pieces Bach ever wrote, and he quotes the thematic material in his works later, most notably including his orchestral arrangement as the opening movement of *Cantata No. 29, Wir danken dir, Gott* (We thank you, God). The *Preludio* is followed by a series of characterful dance movements.

EUGÈNE YSAÏE

Violin Sonata No. 2 in A minor, Op. 27 “Obsession” (1923)

Born July 16, 1858, Liège, Belgium; Died May 12, 1931, Brussels, Belgium

Approximate duration: 15 minutes

Praised by Fritz Kreisler, Carl Flesch, and Mischa Elman as “the greatest violinist that ever lived”, Eugène Ysaÿe was well-regarded for possessing the combined qualities of violin virtuosos Vieuxtemps, Wieniawski, Sarasate, and Joachim. Ysaÿe had a particularly long career as a violinist, conductor, teacher, and composer. He was considered a late bloomer in his career, though Ysaÿe was the principal violin of the Benjamin Bilse Orchestra, which became the Berlin Philharmonic during his tenure, in his twenties.

In 1923, Ysaÿe wrote six solo violin sonatas and dedicated a sonata to six violinists from his time: Joseph Szigeti, Jacques Thibaud, Georges Enesco, Fritz Kreisler, Mathieu Crickboom, and Manuel Quiroga respectively. Ysaÿe’s violin playing was known for its virtuosity, expressiveness, and intensive use of vibrato, one of the qualities I admire most about Jacques Thibaud’s playing, who is the dedicatee of this Violin Sonata No. 2. Thibaud is known for his beautiful and lush sound, two qualities not often requested by Ysaÿe in this Sonata.

The first movement *Prelude* is an homage to the first piece on the program, the E Major Partita *Preludio* by J.S. Bach. After two measures of a direct quote from Bach, Ysaÿe interrupts with two measures of his own music with “brutalement” written next to it. The first four notes of his own music is the

beginning of a Dies Irae “Day of Wrath” chant from a Requiem Mass of the Catholic Church. Quotes of Bach’s celebratory E Major are disturbingly surrounded by the Dies Irae chant, a symbol of death and approaching judgment. The second movement, *Malinconia*, seems like an unending walk toward one’s fate on Judgment Day, until the end of the movement finishes with the complete cantus of the Dies Irae. The *Dans des Ombres* comes as an eerie relief, with the theme written as pizzicato, and the six variations that follow change character from one to the next. The dynamite opening of the last movement reflects its title, *Les Furies*, where it seems Judgement has been made. Ysaÿe brings us through different timbres and sound worlds, ending the piece with the largest leaps we have heard yet, perhaps depicting hell and heaven.

GABRIELA LENA FRANK (Born 1972 in Berkeley, CA)

***Suite Mestiza* (2017) I. Hailli, II. Vendedora Cholita**

First Performance: Movses Pogossian, November 21, 2017, Schoenberg Hall, UCLA

Commissioned through New Music USA’s New Music Connect program

Approximate duration: 10 minutes

Gabriela Lena Frank is 48 years old, currently composer in residence with the Philadelphia Orchestra. She was born in California to a Peruvian/Chinese mother and a father of Lithuanian/Jewish descent. She received the prestigious Heinz Award recognizing her work in breaking gender, disability, and cultural barriers in the classical music industry, and for her work as an activist on behalf of emerging composers of all demographics and aesthetics. She is also a climate activist and co-authors a column on climate action within the music industry for [Chamber Music America Magazine](#).

“I firmly believe that only in the United States could a Peruvian-Chinese-Jewish-Lithuanian girl born with significant hearing loss in a hippie town successfully create a life writing string quartets and symphonies.” - Frank

The title of this piece, *Mestiza*, is a woman of mixed race or ethnic ancestry, especially in Latin America, mainly of mixed American Indian and European descent. Having recently relocated to Lausanne, Switzerland, I find myself grappling with the question when asked about my roots, whether I feel them stronger as a Korean or American.

Composer Note:

Inspired by the mixed-race cultures of Andean South America, *Suite Mestiza* for solo violin draws directly on sights and sounds from trips to Perú taken with my mother as traveling companion. As joint personal journeys of remembrance and identity (my mother as a Peruvian born Chinese-Indian-Spanish “costeña” or coastal native who would emigrate to the States upon marrying my father; and me as the American-born Latina), experiences that might be deemed rather ordinary instead have a miraculous cast for us. Some of these are portrayed in the following movements of this violin suite composed for my friend and colleague, Movses Pogossian, a musician of infinite skill and humanity:

I. *Hailli* (Prayer): Inspired by the lyrical religious songs with Quechua texts, the native non-Spanish language of Peruvians.

II. *Vendedora Cholita* (Little Indian Sellar Woman): A musical portrait of the teasing yet poignant voice of an Indian seller-woman at an outdoor and bustling mountain market.

NICCOLÒ PAGANINI

Caprice No. 24, Op. 1 (1805-1815)

Born October 27, 1782, Genoa, Italy; died May 27, 1840, Nice, France

First performance: N/A

Other works from this period: Grand Sonata in A Major for Violin and Guitar (1803); Six Sonatas for Violin and Guitar, op. 2 (1805); Six Sonatas for Violin and Guitar, op. 3 (1805); Duo merveille for Solo Violin (1808)

Approximate duration: 5 minutes

A solo violin recital would nearly be incomplete without mention of Niccolò Paganini, the 19th century violin magician and wizard, rumored to be the devil, a con artist, an escaped convict, seducer, and even a murderer. It's difficult to know what is true, especially when Paganini allowed very little of his life to be 'on record'. He did not allow any of his own violin music to be written down or published from a performance he gave, with the exception of these 24 Caprices. Paganini claims he wrote these Caprices when he was a teenager in Parma, Italy, and it is possible he allowed these pieces to be published finally in 1820 to prove that no one else could play them.

Thank you to my family — Sun, Grace, and Cody. Thank you to Mark Steinberg, my brilliant and kind teacher, who is talented in many things including roasting delicious coffee beans. Thank you to so many friends for listening to countless run-throughs and mock auditions this past year. It has been a blessing in disguise to have spent so much time with this music on my recital today during my first wintry months in Lausanne. Thank you for being here!

About the Artist

Born in Philadelphia, Korean-American violinist **Abigail Hong** graduated from The Juilliard School in 2022, where she studied with Catherine Cho and was awarded a Benzaquen Career Grant. She was also the Presser Foundation Scholar of her undergraduate class at The New England Conservatory, where she studied with Soovin Kim. Abigail has been a Doctoral Fellow at the City University of New York since 2022 where she studies with Mark Steinberg.

She won top prizes at the Fischhoff and Plowman International Chamber Music Competitions with the Ivani Quartet, whose main mentors were the Cleveland and Borromeo Quartets. Abigail taught at City College Academy of the Arts, Harvard University Quad Program, and the Music Advancement Program at Juilliard from 2019-2022.

She has performed in the Berlin Philharmonie, Musikverein, Concertgebouw, Konzerthaus Berlin, Festpielhaus Baden-Baden, Paris Philharmonie, KKL Luzern, Kölner Philharmonie, and many others, as well as at numerous festivals including Gstaad Menuhin, Donaueschingen, Berliner Festspiele, Norfolk, Taos, Music@Menlo, Pablo Casals in Prades, and as Concertmaster of the Verbier, Lucerne, and Spoleto Festival Orchestras. She regularly plays with The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and San Francisco Ballet Orchestra. Abigail joined the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra this year. Abigail plays a 1996 Mario Miralles violin and Benoit Rolland bow on generous loan.