Summary of Dissertation Recitals:
A Study of Developing Dance Forms, Women Composers and Performers, and Duets Through Viola and Violin Repertoire

By

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of the requirements for the degree of
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Dedication

This is dedicated to all those who have helped get me to where I am today. I owe so many wonderful people so much and have been extremely fortunate to have wonderful teachers, mentors, and friends. As a tribute of thanks to them, I dedicate this to my students who continually inspire me to be the best version of myself. I hope I give them a fraction of what I have been given from my own teachers and colleagues. From what I can see through my students, the future is in good hands.

Acknowledgements

The journey to this point can easily feel like an un-ending gauntlet of hardships. However, for me, incredible people alongside me helped to keep me grounded, stay positive, and remember that I just need to do my best. Thank you to:

Professor Caroline Coade for being a mentor, a viola teacher, and interview coach anyone would be lucky to have

Professor Danielle Belen, for being an inspiring example of always stepping with your best foot forward

My Committee Members for generously sharing their time and wisdom with me

My friends, especially Megan and Martha who have shown and taught me how to take myself seriously and prepare and apply myself with intention and positivity

My family for believing in me, supporting me, and being incredible friends and role models

Jacob for his endless encouragement, support, and patience through this degree and everything else

My collaborators with whom it was such a pleasure and incredible learning experience to share the stage

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Abstract

In lieu of a written dissertation recital, three recitals were presented. The first, a survey of evolving forms over time, through the lens of viola repertoire, consisted of Heinrich Biber's *Passacaglia* (originally composed for solo violin), Rebecca Clarke's *Passacaglia* for Viola and Piano, John Dowland's song and poem *Flow, My Tears*, Benjamin Britten's *Lachrymae,* and Atar Arad's Caprice No. 9, 'Benjamin.'

The second recital was a celebration of the influence of women's compositions and performances, beginning with *Sonata Pastorale* for Unaccompanied Viola by violist, pedagogue, and composer Lillian Fuchs. This is followed by the influence of Maud Powell, Amy Beach, and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor through *Romance* by Amy Beach and *Deep River* by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and arranged by Maud Powell. The jewel of this recital was a world premier of a commissioned work for Violin and Cello *Nanibaa'* by Navajo singer, guitarist, and composer, Sage Bond. This was followed by an arrangement (by Melissa Coppola) of Florence Price's Andante from the E Minor Piano Sonata and Rebecca Clarke's bewildering Sonata for Viola and Piano, and ended with *Peace* by Jessie Montgomery.

The third and final recital was a tribute to my musical influences throughout my tenure during the doctoral degree at University of Michigan, including performances with Professors Danielle Belen (UM), Caroline Coade (UM), and Jacob Warren (BGSU). Lillian Fuchs' influence also permeated the final recital through the Mozart Duo in G Major for Violin and Viola which Lillian and Joseph Fuchs performed. In the year 1947, their performances of these duos famously inspired Bohuslav Martinu to compose his now-beloved Three Madrigals for Violin and Viola, also performed on this recital. In addition to these works, Edgar Meyer's

Concert Duo for Violin and Double Bass, and Carl Stamitz' Duo No. 1 for Two Violas, were performed.

Dissertation Recital #1: Renaissance Rebirth

November 15, 2024
7:30pm
Watkins Recital Hall

Zola Hightower, viola

Narae Lee, piano
Jacob Warren, double bass

Passacaglia — Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber (1644-1704)

Passacaglia on an Old English Tune — Rebecca Clarke (1886-1979)
Narae Lee, piano

If my complaints, could passions move — John Dowland (1563-1626)
Jacob Warren, Double Bass

Lachrymae, Op. 48 — Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)
'Reflections on a song of Dowland'
Narae Lee, piano

Caprice No. Nine, ‘Benjamin’ Atar Arad (b. 1945)

Passacaglia for Unaccompanied Violin by Heinrich Biber

Heinrich Biber was a virtuoso composer and violinist of the Baroque Era, and left behind an incredible legacy of compositions and extended techniques for string instrumentalists. Living 1644-1704, he spent much of his life involved with Salzburg Court, climbing the ranks all the way to Kapellmeister and then dean[1].

Heinrich Biber's powerful Passacaglia hails from his final work in his series of sixteen sonatas commonly known now as the Mystery Sonatas, composed circa 1674. They are each based on the Mysteries of the Rosary, and the Passacaglia (Number 16), specifically, is inspired by Michael, the Guardian Angel[2]. Biber was a highly exploratory composer and performer, famous for his enamoring sound effects, depicting everything from gun shots and canons, to chickens and frogs. As ever, Biber experimented with these works. He reveled in his investigation of various levels of Scordatura (changing the performers' system of tuning). This characteristic, while creative and fun, has often been construed as a logistical nightmare and has unfortunately led to the works seldom being performed. Only the first and last sonatas are not Scordatura.

In this Passacaglia, originally written for solo violin, Biber showcases a repeated walking baseline, a descending tetrachord, and ornaments it with varying degrees of tension[3]. Sometimes the baseline is well-hidden, slithering through thickets of triple and quadruple stops,

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[1] Holman, Peter. "Mystery Man. Peter Holman Celebrates the 350th Anniversary of the Birth of Heinrich Biber." *The Musical Times* 135, no. 1817 (1994): 437–41. https://doi.org/10.2307/1003253.

[2] Tuttle, Raymond, and Michael De Sapio. "Mystery Sonatas." *Fanfare: The Magazine for Serious Record Collectors* 42, no. 2 (November 2018): 245–47. https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=132142931&site=ehost-live&scope=site

[3] Brewer, Charles E.. *The Instrumental Music of Schmeltzer, Biber, Muffat and Their Contemporaries*. Oxford: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011. Accessed March 26, 2025. ProQuest Ebook Central.

while other times it is celebrated and sung at the forefront surrounded by flurries of rapid scales. The tetrachord is repeated over 60 times, but who's counting……?

Passacaglia on an Old English Theme by Rebecca Clarke

Rebecca Clarke was a magnificent English violist and composer of the twentieth century. She spent much of her life in England where she studied and performed. By 1923, she had worked closely with incredible artists such as Arthur Rubinstein, Lionel Tertis, Georg Szell, Pablo Casals, and many others[4]. She was a founding member of many award-winning chamber ensembles (an uncommon accomplishment for a woman living in the twentieth century!), and made her way performing and composing. She had an insatiable creative curiosity and adventurous spirit, and often expressed interest in other cultures' art and music.

Rebecca Clarke's ethereal Passacaglia on an Old English Tune was inspired by the music of Thomas Tallis (1500-1585) and is attributed to him. It takes the traditional ideal of a Passacaglia and twists it, sometimes painfully and oddly, into a modern harmony. This work was written in 1944, during which time she was visiting Chicago. However, World War II prevented her from returning to the UK and she was forced to resort to a nanny job (which by all accounts, she loathed). The compositional process of this work brightened her spirits and she composed this, her Dumka (for violin, viola, and piano), and two chorals within a short period of time[5]. This Passacaglia is a wonderful example of skillful ability to slink effortlessly between modern tonalities and those of the Renaissance period. This can be recognized by the juxtaposition of chromaticism and phrases with exclusively open intervals such as fourths, fifths, and unisons. It

[4] Bynog, David M. "THE VIOLA IN AMERICA: TWO CENTURIES OFPROGRESS." Notes (Music Library Association). Ann Arbor, Mich., etc: Music Library Association, 2012. doi:10.1353/not.2012.0070
[5] Curtis, Liane. "A Case of Identity: Rebecca Clarke." Musical Times (London, England : 1957). London: Musical Times Publications, Ltd, 1996.

is no shock, considering Clarke was a remarkable violist herself, that this work beautifully illustrates the full range of the instrument's ability.

Flow My Tears by John Dowland

John Dowland was an English traveling poet, thinker, composer, singer, and lutist. He lived 1563-1626 and traveled all across Europe, quickly reaching the 17th-century version of a global superstar[6]. He wrote many of his works down (which was just beginning to be commonplace at this time), so much of his compositional legacy remains an inspiration to musicians today thanks to this documentation. Flow My Tears was originally a lute instrumental work and the tune takes the form called a Pavan (a slow dance in duple meter as part of a procession), originally known as Lachrimae Pavan[7]. The melody begins with a falling scalar motion, which was meant to depict the first tear drop falling[8]. In keeping with tradition of Dowland's performance style, much of this arrangement for viola/violin and double bass is improvised. It begins and ends with a somber, matching drone. A modernized text, as seen in our arrangement:

Flow, my tears, fall from your springs!
Exiled for ever, let me mourn;
Where night's black bird her sad infamy sings,
There, let me live forlorn.

Down vain lights, shine you no more!
No nights are dark enough for those
That in despair their last fortunes deplore.
Light doth but shame disclose.

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[6] Grapes, Dawn. *John Dowland: a research and information guide.* Oxford University Press, 2020. DOI: 10.4324/9781315098579

[7] Holman, Peter. *Dowland, Lachrimae (1604)*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999. https://hdl-handle-net.proxy.lib.umich.edu/2027/heb07589.0001.001. PDF.

[8] Rooley, Anthony. "1612—John Dowland and the Emblem Tradition." *Early Music* 41, no. 2 (2013): 273–80. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43307432.

Never may my woes be relieved,
Since pity is fled;
And tears and sighs and groans my weary days, my weary days
Of all joys have deprived.

From the highest spire of contentment
My fortune is thrown;
And fear and grief and pain for my deserts, for my deserts
Are my hopes, since hope is gone.

Hark! you shadows that in darkness dwell,
Learn to contemn light
Happy, happy they that in hell
Feel not the world's despite[9].

Lachrymae by Benjamin Britten

Benjamin Britten was a preeminent composer, conductor, and pianist of the twentieth century. He came from a musical household, with much encouragement and guidance from his mother, a classical music enthusiast. She had four children (Barbara, Bob, Beth, and Benjamin). She declared that they were all given names beginning with B, because she wished there to be a fourth B in classical music: Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, and the fourth would be Britten[10]. Benjamin showed early signs of musical talent in both piano and composition. He also studied viola with Frank Bridge at the age of 12! He had an insatiable curiosity for development of tonality and wanted to join the Second Viennese School, but was dissuaded from doing so.

[9] Dowland, John. Yixi Lin, 2024.
Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0
[10] Matthews, David. *Britten*. Haus Publishing, 2013. https://doi.org/10.2307/jj.10984415.

His Lachrymae is a self-proclaimed, "reflection," on themes by John Downland[11]. He was careful to not utilize the definition, "theme and variations," as the structure of the work is entirely backwards from this. It is an experiment on a retrospective idea of theme and variation. The work begins from textures and harmonies that are rather far from the original John Downland theme. It is not until the final 12 measures, that the listener understands that the whole work has led to and toyed with that moment. It was written in 1950, at a time when solo viola compositions were on the rise and viola soloists were beginning to be at the forefront of cultural society, with great concertizing artists such as Lionel Tertis, Rebecca Clarke, and William Primrose.

It was premiered in the same year by Britten and William Primrose (for whom it was composed). English composers of the twentieth century frequently held Renaissance and Baroque composers in high regard, and highlighted them and their themes in their own music with a modern twist. Britten was no exception and, in this work, was inspired by the music and text of John Downland. Lachrymae is inspired mainly by two works by John Dowland: Flow My Tears, and If Complaints Could Passions Move. Lachrymae also displays a brilliant myriad of extended techniques such as fast pizzicato, and quasi ponticello.

Caprice Number 9, "Benjamin," by Atar Arad

Israeli violist and composer, Atar Arad made a notable and versatile career for himself, winning first prize in the Geneva International Music Competition, continuing on to be the violist for the stunning Cleveland Quartet, then having a fruitful pedagogical career teaching at Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. He began composing later in life, and now, in his

[11] J. O. C. "The Aldeburgh Festival." *The Musical Times* 91, no. 1289 (1950): 280–280. https://doi.org/10.2307/933687.

spare time, he can be found in his basement tinkering with the viola, experimenting, and expanding the technical boundaries of the instrument. He published this set of 12 caprices in 2014. Each caprice is named after and influenced by a great viola work, except for Number Twelve, which is an unnamed mystery. Some speculate that it is written for his daughter, or perhaps for his life partner, Mimi. However, I theorize that it is one for himself. This caprice, Number Nine, is named Benjamin for Benjamin Britten, of course. Naturally, Atar is on a first name basis with all these viola composers. The caprice is a study on the bariolage stroke toying with the theme found in the Lachrymae.

Dissertation Recital #2: Nanibaa'

January 10, 2025
8:00pm
McIntosh Recital Hall

Zola Hightower, viola and violin

Narae Lee, piano
Sarina Zhang, cello

Sonata Pastorale for Unaccompanied Viola — Lillian Fuchs (1901-1995)

I. Fantasia: Maestoso; Allegro
II. Pastorale: Andante Semplice; Allegro

Romance — Amy Beach (1867-1944)

Narae Lee, piano

Deep River — Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912)
Arr. Maud Powell

Narae Lee, piano

Nanibaa’ — Sage Bond (b. 1996)

Sarina Zhang, cello

Andante adapted from Piano Sonata in E Minor — Florence Price (1887-1953)
Arr. Melissa Coppola

Narae Lee, piano

Intermission

Viola Sonata — Rebecca Clarke (1886-1979)

I. Impetuoso
II. Vivace
III. Adagio

Narae Lee, piano

Peace — Jessie Montgomery (b. 1981)

Narae Lee, piano

Sonata Pastorale for Unaccompanied Viola by Lillian Fuchs (1901-1995)

Lillian Fuchs was an exemplary violinist, violist, composer, and pedagogue of the twentieth century. She was the first woman to be a permanent member of a professional string quartet in the United States, and she was the first person ever to record all of Bach's Six Cello Suites on the viola. Fuchs came from a musical family, composed of both professional and amateur musicians. She and her brother, Joseph, concertized together regularly and were the inspiration for a number of works written for viola and violin, including Bohuslav Martinů's Three Madrigals. She studied violin with renowned chamber musician Franz Kniesel and joined the Juilliard School faculty in 1971 (despite being invited to do so many years earlier), and later Mannes School of Music[12].

Fuchs' Pastorale Sonata for Unaccompanied Viola was composed in 1956 for Rosalie J. Leventritt. The Leventritt family was a wealthy music-adoring family whom Fuchs met on one of her many volunteer engagements at the New York Hospital, performing for patients[13]. Rosalie Leventritt later hosted Ms. Fuchs' weekly chamber workshops, which would eventually become the birthplace of Isaac Stern's and Pinchas Zuckerman's viola careers, among many others[14]. The Pastorale Sonata consists of two contrasting movements: Fantasia and Pastorale.

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[12] Pinnolis, Judith S. "Fuchs, Lillian." In *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed., edited by Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik, 304-305. Vol. 7. Detroit, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007. *Gale eBooks* (accessed March 31, 2025). https://link-gale-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/apps/doc/CX2587506927/GVRL?u=umuser&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=c489a956.

[13]Sills, David. "Lillian Fuchs: One Great Life." Journal of the American Viola Society, Vol. 12, no. 1, 1996 Journal of the American Viola Society Volume 12 No. 1, 1996

[14] Schwarz, Boris, and Elizabeth Perten. "Fuchs, Lillian." In *The Grove Dictionary of American Music*. : Oxford University Press, 2013. https://www-oxfordreference-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780195314281.001.0001/acref-9780195314281-e-3032.

The first movement juxtaposes virtuosity and lyricism, showcasing her tremendous compositional ability to combine strength and tranquility, which quickly transition one to the other, often causing a jarring effect. The second movement, Pastorale, highlights a sorrowful and introspective melody. In this movement, Fuchs experiments with modal mixture and phrase length, bringing into question the very notion of what pastorale means. This uneasy pastorale is suddenly contrasted by a deluge of flurrying triplets interrupted, again, suddenly by memories of earlier passages from the first and second movements in reverse order, before reaching a final culmination of virtuosic fireworks.

Romance by Amy Beach (1867-1944)

Amy Beach was a leading American pianist and composer of the turn of the twentieth century. She was a prodigious pianist and had soloed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra before she had her eighteenth birthday[15]. She had a flourishing concertizing career both as a soloist and chamber musician, and when she married Harry Beach, she halted her performing career, and began a series of self-instructive years in music composition. She had perfect pitch and associated each pitch with a certain color and/or emotion. She was a champion composer of a wide variety of genres and instrumentations, forging successes in everything from masses and symphonies, to parlor songs. She is famed for being the first American female composer to have a work professionally and publicly performed (just before Florence Price).

[15] Block, Adrienne Fried. *Amy Beach, Passionate Victorian: the Life and Work of an American Composer, 1867-1944.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. https://hdl-handle-net.proxy.lib.umich.edu/2027/heb05613.0001.001. PDF.

Beach's Romance for Violin and Piano was composed for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, during which time the Women's Musical Congress was also being held in Chicago[16]. It is dedicated to Maud Powell, with whom Amy Beach shared many traits and anecdotes. For example, both had been child prodigies on their respective instruments, both had soloed with Theodore Thomas' Orchestra (later known as the Boston Symphony Orchestra), and both had generated thriving performing careers at a time of great difficulty for women in performing arts.

Maud Powell and Amy Beach premiered the work to great acclaim, and it is said that the audience loved it so much that the performance had to immediately be repeated, during which Maud Powell's manuscript fell off the music stand, which had no effect on the performance except to add a bit of drama[17]. Beach's Romance transports listeners to a Brahmsian paradise displaying a rich and warm tapestry of harmonies and melodies. It beautifully showcases the virtuosity of pianist and violinist alike.

Deep River transcribed by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1895-1978) *Arr. Maud Powell*

Deep River is a tune far older than Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, or Maud Powell. The first written documentation scholars have come across is charted by the Fisk Jubilee Singers in 1877, who codified and documented many African American Spirituals and other folk genres in the

[16] Block, Adrienne Fried. *Amy Beach, Passionate Victorian: the Life and Work of an American Composer, 1867-1944.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. https://hdl-handle-net.proxy.lib.umich.edu/2027/heb05613.0001.001. PDF.

[17] Chicago Times, July 7, 1893. Festival jubilate, Op. 17, *a large choral work with orchestra conducted by Theodore Thomas.*

United States during the mid-19th century[18]. It is found in literature and has been the inspiration for shows, radio hours, plays, and even an opera. Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's rendition, which was later arranged by Maud Powell, includes a fiery piu mosso section in E minor between slow, rhapsodic passages which rotate around the pentatonic scale, alternating between a melodious E major motif and darker C# minor theme. Powell's recording with pianist, George Falkenstein, was the first recorded rendition of Deep River in 1911[19]. Samuel Coleridge-Taylor was an English composer of African descent (his father was West African)[20]. He was a highly sought-after composer and violinist who studied both composition and violin at the Royal College of Music with Charles Stanford (teacher of Rebecca Clarke, Ralph Vaughn-Williams, and Holst, among others).

Nanibaa' by Sage Bond (b. 1996)

Nanibaa' is a duo for violin and cello written by guitarist, vocalist, and composer Sage Bond. Sage is a friend of mine with whom I have taught on the Navajo Reservation in Crownpoint, New Mexico. I have learned a lot from her and other Indigenous artists about the shortage of representation of Navajo music, particularly in the classical world. We hope to encourage other young women in the arts. Sage had a friend growing up named Nonabah and described always loving the name and later learned that names ending in "baa'" carried strength.

[18] Shirley, Wayne D. "The Coming of 'Deep River.'" *American Music* 15, no. 4 (1997): 493–534. https://doi.org/10.2307/3052384.
[19] Shirley, Wayne D. "The Coming of 'Deep River.'" *American Music* 15, no. 4 (1997): 493–534. https://doi.org/10.2307/3052384.
[20] Young, Percy M. "Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, 1875-1912." *The Musical Times* 116, no. 1590 (1975): 703–5. https://doi.org/10.2307/960032.

She writes that, “in Navajo culture, these names were bestowed upon female warriors, women that went to battle. Nanibaa’ roughly translates to ‘little woman warrior.[21]’”

Bond wrote this duo with her performers in mind and wants the women who hear and play this piece to feel empowered and just as strong as Nanibaa’. The piece incorporates unusual extended techniques as a result of her compositional process (she composes on her acoustic guitar), beginning with a pick slide, which string players can emulate by sliding a bow back and forth between the bridge and the fingerboard.

The piece also showcases triplets, which Bond says imitates the galloping effect of riding into battle. When asked about any impact Bond would like the audience to take away, she responds, “The purpose of bestowing a name like Nanibaa' was not only to recognize strength, but to restore resilience of the Navajo language. As she goes out into the world, many people will say her name and they will be speaking Navajo.[22]”

Andante adapted from Piano Sonata in E Minor by Florence Price (1887-1953)

Arr. Melissa Coppola

Florence Price was an American composer, organist, pianist, and pedagogue. She lived 1887-1953, similarly to Maud Powell (1867-1920) and Amy Beach (1867-1944). Price was the first African-American woman to have a large work performed by a professional American symphony orchestra. The great grand-daughter of a slave, she was born in Little Rock, Arkansas,

[21] Bond, Sage. “Interview on Nanibaa'.” January 7, 2025.
[22] Bond, Sage. “Interview on Nanibaa'.” January 7, 2025.

at a time and place when 50% of black men were illiterate[23]. She had a phenomenal high school teacher, Charlotte Andrews, who held herself and her students (including young Price and William Grant Still!) to a high standard of education for the entirety of her 70 plus years of teaching. Andrews was the first black woman from Arkansas to attend college[24].

Florence Price's Piano Sonata in E Minor contains three movements: Andante-Allegro, Andante, and Scherzo: Allegro. It was composed in 1932 and won the Rodman Wanamaker Prize, a prestigious award which she also won for her Symphony No. 1. The second movement, Andante, is a rondo in 4/8 time and is a celebration of thirds. It was arranged for piano and viola by Melissa Coppola to highlight the warmth, richness, and sustain which the viola offers.

[23] Brown, Rae Linda and Guthrie, Ramsey. "The Heart of a Woman: The Life and Music of Florence B. Price." Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2020. doi:10.5406/j.ctv1379743

[24] Ege, Samantha. "Composing a Symphonist: Florence Price and the Hand of Black Women's Fellowship." Women & Music (Washington, D.C.). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2020. doi:10.1353/wam.2020.0010.

Sonata for Viola and Piano by Rebecca Clarke (1886-1979)

Rebecca Clarke lived a long and full life 1886-1979. She was born in Harrow, England to an English mother and American father. She was the first woman to study composition with Charles Stanford at the Royal College of Music, and went on to have a versatile performing career, being the first woman in a professional orchestra, and being a member of numerous award-winning chamber ensembles (mostly all-women)[25]. This all occurred before and during her prolific composing career. It was for Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge's 1919 Composition Competition that Clarke wrote her now-renowned sonata for viola and piano. All the competing works were performed by pianist Harold Bauer and violist Louis Bailly to an audience which remained unaware of the composer of each piece. Clarke's sonata tied (twice!) with Ernst Bloch's Suite for Viola and Piano and ultimately the deciding vote went to Coolidge to select a winner, and she chose Bloch's Suite.

However, the audience and jury members so loved Clarke's sonata that they demanded to know its creator and were astonished and aghast to find that it was composed by a woman. Clarke, the ever good-humored self-doubter, would cherish this astonishment and would laugh and write about it for the rest of her life[26].

The work consists of three movements. The first, Impetuoso, foregrounds experimentation with flourishing pentatonic and whole tone scales, juxtaposed with proud melodies intertwined with modal color textures commonly found in her French musical

[25] Bynog, David M. "THE VIOLA IN AMERICA: TWO CENTURIES OFPROGRESS." Notes (Music Library Association). Ann Arbor, Mich., etc: Music Library Association, 2012. doi:10.1353/not.2012.0070
[26] Curtis, Liane. "A Case of Identity: Rebecca Clarke." Musical Times (London, England : 1957). London: Musical Times Publications, Ltd, 1996.

inspirations of Ravel and Debussy. The second movement, Scherzo, is a light and vibrant showcase of differing musical articulations and textures, such as glissandi (even in the piano part), pizzicato, and harmonics. The finale, Adagio, begins with a somber statement which is passed back and forth between the piano and viola. This theme evolves into a more virtuosic and exciting fanfare, then into a recalling of themes from the previous two movements, before ending with a sudden exhilaration.

Peace by Jessie Montgomery (b. 1981)

Peace by Jessie Montgomery was composed in May of 2020, only one month after the directive to self-quarantine in the United States was given, due to COVID-19. Montgomery writes that this piece was her attempt at finding what truly made her happy as she experimented with treating sadness as a necessary part of the human experience, and not something exclusively negative[27]. It was commissioned by Victoria Robey OBE for violinist Elena Urioste and pianist Tom Poster as part of #UriPosteJukeBox. The work glides through uplifting passages in D Major, highlighting the F#, then trudges through chromaticism where the tonal center is somewhat difficult to place. In the opening the piano part struggles between lingering on F# or F♮, and the viola enters on a resounding F# which provides the listener with a glimmer of hope. The work continues through searching chromaticism and modal mixture before reaching a soft contentment brought by the ascending scalar pattern in the piano part, gliding well above the viola's low melody.

[27] Montgomery, Jessie. 2020. https://www.jessiemontgomery.com/work/peace-violin-piano/

Dissertation Recital #3: Duos

March 18, 2025
8:00pm
McIntosh Recital Hall

Zola Hightower, violin and viola

Caroline Coade, viola
Jacob Warren, double bass
Addison Hightower, viola
Danielle Belen, violin

Duo for Violin and Viola, K. 423 — Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

I. Allegro
II. Adagio
III. Rondeau-Allegro

Caroline Coade, viola

Concerto Duo — Edgar Meyer (b. 1960)

I. First Movement

Jacob Warren, Double Bass

Intermission

Duo No. 1 for Two Violas — Carl Stamitz (1745-1801)

I. *Allegro*
II. *Andante*
III. *Rondo-Minore*

Addison Hightower, Viola

Three Madrigals for Violin and Viola — Bohuslav Martinů (1890-1959)

I. *Poco Allegro*
II. *Poco Andante*
III. *Allegro Moderato*

Danielle Belen, Violin

Duet for Violin and Viola K. 423 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) composed the beloved String Duo in G Major, K. 423 in 1783. The work initially was to be completed by Mozart's friend, Michael Haydn who fell ill shortly before a deadline so Mozart stepped in to compose the final two works (which would later be known as K. 423 and K. 424) of six total works to be gifted to Archbishop Colloredo[28]. Scholars ascribe the style of this piece to Michael Haydn in keeping with what Haydn had already composed for Archbishop Colloredo. It consists of three movements.

The first movement, Allegro, begins with a bombastic quadruple stop in the violin part and a double stop in the viola part. This is a glimpse into what will provide the perception of fullness to this work. In other compositions, having only two string instruments playing in a classical style has the potential to be very thin sounding. However, Mozart's utilization of double stops as well as conversational passing of the melody and accompaniment lends to a full wash of musical gestures. Lest one forgets Mozart's love for opera, the melodies in K. 423 are lyrical and very vocal, with the main theme foregrounding leaps which gradually increase in size, over an underlying current of weaving eighth notes.

The second movement is a slow Adagio, emphasizing juxtaposition of movement and stagnation, with very long and sustained pitches being held while moving lines highlight the incredible length of the long notes. It showcases the technique and individuality of each performer as it offers short cadenza-like passages which are passed back and forth.

The third movement, Rondeau-Allegro, begins with the rondo theme which is soft and simple with underlying eighth note momentum. This theme is passed from the violin part (in

[28] Andrikopoulos, Angela M. "A Transcription of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Violin and Viola Duo in G Major (K. 423) for Two Cellos with Commentary on the use of Cello in Selected Chamber Works by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Luigi Boccherini, and Jan Šťastný." Order No. 3570094, University of Hartford, 2013. https://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/transcription-wolfgang-amadeus-mozarts-violin/docview/1371041090/se-2.

which it is delicate) to the viola part (in which it is bombastic), before a flurry of triplet notes set a virtuosic scene before eventually tapering back into the rondo theme. The work ends with the highest iteration of the rondo theme, but rather than passing this theme to the viola as he had done before, Mozart interjects with jarring double stops in the viola, and the violin follows this lead with cascading triplets culminating in surprising dynamic contrast ending as it began, with a G major quadruple stop in the violin part and a double stop in the viola, with exactly the same voicing and instrumentation as the beginning.

Concert Duo by Edgar Meyer

Double bassist Edgar Meyer (b.1960) composed his Concert Duo for Violin and Double Bass in 1998 as part of his album Short Trip Home. This album highlights Meyer's compositional love for bluegrass, classical, fiddle traditions, jazz, and especially finding creative combinations of these genres[29]. Meyer has often spoken to the techniques he learned from playing these different types of music. He is a double bass player who possesses famous technical ability, cleanly executing demanding passages. He is a groundbreaking virtuoso in many genres, including classical and bluegrass. The Concert Duo was composed for Meyer himself and violinist Joshua Bell and it highlights elements of classical, and bluegrass composition styles. The first movement begins with a slow dolce introduction before the double bass introduces rhythmic momentum. This rhythmic vitality eventually becomes a hallmark of the movement, as it highlights bowing rhythms and techniques found in traditional fiddle music. Meyer's rhythmic motif is occasionally juxtaposed with a lyrical and sweet melody offset in the two parts by a single eighth note. The slight displacement creates the effect of a mysterious yet very beautiful and unusual echo. Between these moments are solos composed with the premier performers (Bell and Meyer) in mind. This movement requires unique technical ability of the performers,

[29] Meyer, Edgar. *Concert Duo: about the music.* Boosey and Hawkes, 1998.

especially the double bass player as there are a handful of passages which are extremely fast and difficult.

Duette No. 1 for Two Violas by Carl Stamitz

Carl Stamitz (1745-1801) was a violinist, violist, composer, and conductor born in Mannheim and was educated at the Mannheim Court. Carl Stamitz was known to tour much of Europe with his younger brother, Anton, a fellow violist and composer[30]. Although it is not documented that they played this work, it is highly likely that it was among their touring rotation. As with many successful musicians of his time, Stamitz earned the position of professor and Kapellmeister at the university in Jena. Stamitz was also a highly influential composer of the Mannheim techniques, advancing cohesive dynamics, utilizing his knowledge of conducting large ensembles. He was one of the first composers and conductors to codify bowings across sections of string players, and he applied them according to the shape of dynamics he wanted.

This Duette for Two Violas is no exception, in that Stamitz uses Mannheim techniques known as, “the rocket,” and, “the sigh,” as well as hocketing rhythms, and dynamic contrasts. This is part of what gives the work a rich texture. The Mannheim rocket is a collective crescendo across the entire orchestra. Some scholars identify the crescendo as being accompanied by ascending arpeggiation[31]. The Mannheim sigh is tremendously prolific in this duet. This is when

[30] Gerard, Eva. "Women’s Contributions to Viola Repertoire and Pedagogy in the Twentieth Century: Rebecca Clarke, Lillian Fuchs, and Rosemary Glyde." Order No. 27539729, City University of New York, 2019. https://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/women-s-contributions-viola-repertoire-pedagogy/docview/2308259386/se-2.

[31] Potur, Oana Vasilica. "The History and Pedagogy of Viola Duos from the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries." Order No. 3705906, The Florida State University, 2015. https://proxy.lib.umich.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/history-pedagogy-viola-duos-late-eighteenth-early/docview/1709429530/se-2.

the performers employ more weight and time to the first notes of a slur; essentially scalloping a slur.

The first movement of this work, a sparkly Allegro, is in cut time and the two voices trade the operatic melody before coming together, effectively alternating between homophonic and polyphonic textures. The second movement is a slow Andante in C Minor. Stamitz showcases a variety of textures and shapes, by alternating subito and gradual dynamics. The final movement, Rondo, is the first movement felt in three. In this movement, Stamitz foregrounds irregular phrase lengths in alternating voices to highlight hemiolas. This rhythmic and structural irregularity comes to a climax with an additional Minore accompanying the final Rondo movement in A Minor. This Minore showcases polyrhythms, with one viola in triple time while the other is in duple meter.

Three Madrigals for Violin and Viola by Bohuslav Martinů

Czech composer Bohuslav Martinů (1890-1959) had experimented with counterpoint, French surrealism, the ever-prominent Nationalism movement, jazz, and (his favorite) neo-Classicalism when he heard an up-and-coming touring duo of Fuchs siblings perform Mozart's duos for Violin and Viola. He was mesmerized by both their performance, and the pieces themselves. A few short weeks after this concert, Martinů fell off a balcony and was bedridden in order to heal his broken bones. It was during this time, in 1947, that he composed the Three Madrigals for Violin and Viola, inspired by the memory of Lillian and Josef Fuchs' performance of the Mozart duos[32].

[32] Kruse, S., & Kruse, P. T. (2003). Remembering Joseph and Lillian Fuchs. American String Teacher, 53(4), 58-67. https://doi-org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/10.1177/000313130305300408 (Original work published 2003)

The work is composed of three movements. The first movement, Poco Allegro, incorporates hocketing rhythms and musical gestures requiring incredible technical prowess. The violin and viola parts are treated as equal in this movement. However, Martinů recognizes and highlights the dark warmth and richness of the viola more, and the virtuosity of the violin more. In this movement, it is readily apparent that Martinů was fond of the neo-Classical movement, with his use of articulations, specifically dots. Martinů often incorporates dots at the ends of slurs, which is Martinů's way of urging string players to scallop slurs the way they traditionally would when playing Classical repertoire.

The second movement displays a rich tapestry of textures and colors. Martinů achieves this by employing extended techniques such as muting, playing ponticello, and bariolage. The movement, Poco Andante, begins with uneasy harmonies, G Minor #7 to G Minor 7. Much of the second movement is played on a trill or fast alternation between two pitches in each part, giving the work a fuzzy feeling, with no real melody to speak of. Scalar passages slither in and out of the two parts until a culmination of bariolage in the violin part, resembling a cimbalom, which finally slinks into a prayer-like motif at the end of the movement, resolving into a heavenly ending to a movement fraught with discomfort.

The final movement, Allegro, is a triumphant exclamation of joy, with fast fiddle motives, numerous double stops, mordents, and hocketing rhythms, displaying a wide variety of virtuosity of the performers. Much of this movement is a play on the main rhythmic motif of the first movement of an eighth note followed by two sixteenth notes, with a brief interjection of an homage to the second movement trills and bariolage. The movement reaches a pinnacle to end with an exciting flurry of repeated double stops. The Finale is a testament to Martinů's ability to

push the technical boundaries of both the violin and viola, and the excitement at the end is a true manifestation of his joy in hearing Lilian and Joseph Fuchs.

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