

*The CSUSB Guitar Ensemble, Double Bass Ensemble,
Early Music Ensembles, String Chamber Music
Ensembles, & Collaborative Piano Ensembles in Concert*

Monday, November 20, 7:30pm

Program Notes

All notes written by the ensembles performing this evening.

Suite 1 for Flute, Violin, and Continuo, from *6 Concerts et 6 Suites*, TVW 42:G4, “Prélude”

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

In 1734, during the height of his career, Georg Philipp Telemann composed his *6 Concerts and 6 Suites*. From this set of compositions, we have selected his Suite in G Major to produce a historically informed performance for an audience more accustomed to the sound of modern classical music.

Telemann was considered one of the leading composers in the first half of the eighteenth century. In the final years of the seventeenth century, he began his studies at the Gymnasium Andreanum, where he was presented many opportunities for commissioned works, exposed to the latest theatrical styles of Europe, and familiarized himself with various instruments of the period, like the recorder and viola da gamba. Around 1712, he was hired as the Frankfurt City music director, and later for Hamburg in 1721, where in both positions he was allowed artistic freedom and security to explore his own compositions and endeavors. It is estimated that throughout his career, Telemann composed hundreds of pieces, ranging from church cantatas and chamber works, to operas and orchestral arrangements. Blending the sounds of Europe, primarily the French, Italian, and German styles, he reinvigorated the roles of professional musicians from an intellectual standpoint and influenced great composers and musicians for generations to come.

In this performance of the Suite in G Major, we are working from a performer’s edition of the piece arranged nearly two centuries after Telemann’s passing. Inspired by the accomplished composer and a desire to authentically revive a significant historical work, we have taken special care to distinguish what may have been altered by the editor and have made decisions that have both respected and altered the original composition, beginning first with the choice of instruments. Following the tradition of baroque instrumentation by using what is available, the flute part and basso continuo parts have been adapted for violin and double bass. In addition, the double bass has been converted from a modern setup to what would be more accurate of a gamba instrument of the Baroque period by installing sheep gut strings and

tuning down from A=440 Hz to A=415 Hz. Because the bass is converted from a modern instrument, the adaptation to the baroque playing style provides a unique experience; it is not a specially designed period instrument compared to the violins.

Equipped with period-accurate instruments, performers now must prioritize the nuanced characteristics of a baroque sound. The first step involves the transition away from modern practices like consistent use of vibrato and a sustained weight through the bow. The setup of baroque instruments does not respond well to the production of the modern full sound and vibrato. Instead, tradition and the nature of the instruments call for greater focus on harmony, embellishments, a beat hierarchy, and a swelling or tapered sound on longer notes. What you may hear is a greater emphasis on dissonance to add dramatic effect as phrases transition from one to another. Call and response with shared rhythmic patterns will also be heard, resembling a conversation or discourse. Lastly, the Baroque playing style employs a beat hierarchy, in this case placing importance on beats one and three in the 4/4 meter (instead of on beat two as might be in a dance piece, such as a sarabande).

We hope that the artistry of our performance will transport you to the age of George Philipp Telemann.

Sonata for Bassoon in F Minor, TWV 41:f1, "Triste"

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

George Philipp Telemann did not weather the ever-consuming tide of history well. He was born on March 14, 1681, in Magdeburg, Germany. In his time, he was renowned for being one of the greatest composers alive, but only a few of his pieces have made it to the modern era. Still, he was a good friend of J.S. Bach and was even godfather to one of Bach's children. He experienced international recognition, which was rare for German composers; for example, he was recognized in France, Spain, and Latvia (Stewart). In the twenty-first century, the people who do know of him know him more for his conservative music and chamber pieces, even though he was considered experimental in his time.

During the performance, you'll hear some key musical moments. The harpsichordist starts and ends the piece with a simple breath. The bassoonist plays many different melodies throughout the piece, but the main one starts right at the beginning. The phrase immediately introduces the mood of the music. Notice throughout the piece that the bassoonist never starts on beat one. The harpsichordist provides the downbeat and the bassoonist builds the solo off the basso continuo chord structure. The harpsichordist picks up on this melody and alters it to create tension between the first and second time the bassoon plays it. Pay close attention to the space the harpsichord leaves during the bassoon's sixteenth-note melodies. Listen to how the harpsichordist and the bassoonist communicate throughout the piece, taking breaths together to keep the piece flowing, dancing back and forth with different rhythmic patterns. Both performers create their interpretation of tension as the piece comes to an end. Finally, listen for improvised sections from both performers and consider how they use these unique notes to make this piece their own.

Stewart, Brian Douglas. "Georg Philipp Telemann in Hamburg: Social and Cultural Background and Its Musical Expression (Germany)." Stanford University, Ph.D. diss., 1985.
<http://libproxy.lib.csusb.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/georg-philipp-telemann-hamburg-social-cultural/docview/303417278/se-2>.

Bowman, Robin. "Telemann." *The Musical Times* 118, no. 1611 (1977): 404–6.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/959031>.

***Burlesque de Quixotte*, TWV 55:G10, "Overture" and "Son Attaque des Moulins à Vent"**

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

Georg Philipp Telemann is regarded as one of the most prolific composers of the Baroque period and the leading German composer of the late Baroque. Born in 1681, he was fortunate to have a musical upbringing; Telemann "studied voice and keyboard officially, was self-taught on the recorder, violin, and zither, and learned composition through transcription" (Zohn). Despite family opposition and entering Leipzig University to study law, his musical talents and ambitions led him into his first official music position in which he "founded a 40-member student collegium musicum that gave public concerts, entertained visiting dignitaries and provided music for the Neukirche [Lutheran church in Leipzig, Germany]" (Zohn). From here, Telemann obtained an appointment as music director of the Opernhaus auf dem Brühl before receiving an invitation to become Kapellmeister for Count Erdmann II of Promnitz. This began a string of several court appointments throughout his expansive compositional career.

The work we are presenting tonight is his *Burlesque de Quixote*, a suite for strings and continuo inspired by Miguel de Cervantes' work, *Don Quixote*. While writing the suite, Telemann pulled in French musical elements, specifically in the opening overture. Common characteristics of French-styled overtures include a beginning section made of a "combination of a slow tempo (usually marked *grave* or *lent*) with dotted rhythms, often called *saccadé* (meaning 'jerked')" (Waterman and Anthony). This practice included over-dotted rhythmic figures, emphasizing the longer beat and further shortening the shorter beat. This style of writing can be heard within the opening bars of the overture, with the violin leading in a descending passage of over dotted rhythms before being joined in a rhythmic unison by the rest of the ensemble. Due to the nature of this practice, common adjectives used to describe this music include: majestic, heroic, festive, and pompous. These descriptors likely originate from such overtures' associations with the ceremonial or royal processions of Louis XIV (Waterman and Anthony). Other important characteristics of these pieces include "fugal style writing, faster tempi, imitation, and often homophonic writing" (Waterman and Anthony). These characteristics can be heard in the second section of the overture—in the quick succession of entrances from the strings, each entering in a series of sixteenth notes and often rhythmically doubling the other voices before the melodic material expands. However, Telemann skews away from the traditional French overture in his entrances, with each new voice entering a third below the previous. (It was tradition for the entrances to occur at perfect intervals, such as octaves, fifths, or fourths.) Telemann further separates himself from tradition by modifying the statements of each section, guiding the ensemble into a recapitulation of the opening Largo before repeating the second section again, and then finishing with a final statement of the Largo section.

Telemann often titled his compositions with care, even when naming specific movements of his works. He wanted his titles to convey meaning, either contextual or emotional (Zohn). For instance, the title of the third movement of this *Don Quixote* suite roughly translates to “his attack on the windmills.” This quick movement illustrates the narrative Telemann was attempting to create. The strings, aside from the first violin, are nearly always playing in tutti. This style supports the melody in the first violin, in its drive and direction. The melody often runs up to a high note that resolves quickly into the next phrase. Over in under a minute, this “windmill” movement provides a quick, powered image of the eponymous towers.

Waterman, George Gow, and James R. Anthony. “French overture.” *Grove Music Online*. 2001. Accessed 1 Oct. 2023.

<https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.libproxy.lib.csusb.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000010210>.

Zohn, Steven. “Telemann, Georg Philipp.” *Grove Music Online*. 2001. Accessed 27 Sep. 2023.

<https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000027635>.

The Last Hour of My Life

By the Rivers of Babylon

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Transcribed for four guitars by Giovanni de Chiaro

J.S. Bach’s prolific compositional output included more than four hundred vocal chorales, of which these are two. He took pre-existing melodies and added three lower vocal parts to create a four-part texture. These chorales are considered models of counterpoint and harmonization. These particular arrangements assign one individual vocal line to each guitar player.

Brazilliance

Laurindo Almeida (1917-1995)

Laurindo Almeida was a Brazilian guitarist and composer, one of the pioneers of *Bossa Nova* music. He was also a classical guitarist who blended many traditions together in his compositions. His recordings and collaborations include legends of the jazz genre such as Stan Kenton, Bud Shank, and Stan Getz. *Brazilliance* is a composition for three guitars which captures the rich harmonies and chromaticism of the *Bossa Nova* style. It was originally recorded by the Falla Guitar Trio and is featured on the album *Guitar Player Magazine Recording Series: Legends of Classical Guitar*.

Sarabande from Suite from Holberg's Time

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

Arranged for Double Bass Trio by Todd Parish (b. 1971)

Edvard Grieg is a Norwegian composer and is considered to be one of the great innovators and visionaries of the Romantic era. This sarabande is part of a larger work known as the *The Holberg Suite*, Op. 40, a work that is subtitled "Suite in Olden Style." Some of Grieg's other widely recognized orchestral works include *In the Hall of the Mountain King* from his *Peer Gynt*, Suite No.1, and his Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16.

Edvard Grieg came from a very musical family. He was taught by his mother to play piano and was later encouraged by a family friend to enroll in the Leipzig Conservatory. Although the conservatory taught him well in the technical aspects of music, in his own words he renounced the conservatory environment for its lack of individuality and consequently began to compose his own music in his own style. Finding inspiration in Copenhagen, Grieg composed some of his most famous works, like the Piano Concerto previously mentioned. With popular composers and esteemed orchestras debuting his works, Grieg rapidly gained prominence, impressing audiences and composers like Tchaikovsky who commended his beauty, originality, and warmth.

Utilizing his knowledge on the piano, Grieg created many works that still hold cultural significance today. Although this sarabande was originally written for piano and later adapted for string orchestra, the edition we are playing today is arranged for a double bass quartet. While it is simplified, it still pays careful attention to the masterpiece's original intentions. With the richness of the lower register and a slower tempo allowing for greater emphasis on harmony, the performance makes for a unique demonstration of the double bass. Stretching the range of the double bass, this piece presents a three-part harmony and demonstrates the sarabande's telltale emphasis on the second beat to create a performance that feels like an elegant dance. Be sure to listen for the unison themes and contrasting tonal dissonances that makes this sarabande so beautiful.

Bassman's Blues

Marlon Martinez (b. 1991)

Marlon Martinez' *Bassman's Blues* is a double bass quartet that highlights the genre-blurring nature of Martinez' work as an active jazz and classical musician in Los Angeles. The composition is a celebration of historic black American traditions, jazz and blues, executed with classical bowing techniques. The primary blues theme is an exploration of the twelve-bar blues form, and is followed by a repeated groove or "riff" that closely resembles the "shout" in big band jazz. Martinez bookends the composition with a cyclical harmonic progression in the introduction and coda. The swing rhythms and unexpected harmonic complexity reflect Martinez' desire for musical motion in his compositions. Dance is at the heart of his music, and it is fitting that the double bass is an instrument known for laying the rhythmic and harmonic foundation of historic dance styles.

Bagatelles for Two Violins, Cello, and Harmonium, Op. 47, B. 79, "Allegretto Scherzando"

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

Antonín Dvořák was a Czech composer who mentored under Johannes Brahms (a prestigious pianist from the Romantic period), leading Dvořák to his success and popularity as a nineteenth-century composer before his passing in 1904. Dvořák's difficult and impoverished beginnings did not halt his vision for music. At a young age, family and friends noticed his talent quickly. This led him to pursue and earn a solidified education in music at an organ school in Prague. However, money always seemed to be an issue. Wherever Dvořák went, he always received the short end of the stick. That changed when he applied for a scholarship for talented musicians who struggled financially, and this gave him an opportunity to continue composing under the supervision of Brahms. He then was offered a very promising job opportunity in the United States: to work at a new music conservatory in New York as the lead educator; he resided in the States for some time, picking up on the culture of nineteenth-century American life and deriving inspiration from Native American and African folk music. He continued to compose in the States, publishing notable works that obviously increased his popularity. Dvořák's major and most influential work was his Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95 (the *New World Symphony*), valorized by music scholars and performers alike.

Dvořák's *Bagatelles for Two Violins, Cello, and Harmonium* provides flourishes for those with a light heart. The movements were written originally for a harmonium: a small reed organ (keyboard) instrument meant for in-home use (it is comparable to an upright accordion). However, our interpretation of this piece will include a Steinway grand piano, modifying the original sound of the piece by introducing a wide acoustic resonance. When listening, notice the presence of strong cadences and chord progressions throughout, dictating a wide range of chord qualities and resonances. The music's moods are apparent in every context of the score. One should listen for the cellist's and pianist's pulse while the violins lay a pleasurable melody throughout, phrasing critical pivot points that modulate the score's musical direction.

Fun fact: Antonín Dvořák wrote the piece with the harmonium due to his lack of funds, as he was unable to purchase an acoustic piano for his compositions. The aforementioned scholarship rewarded him with enough funds to eventually purchase a new piano as well as some composition paper.

Dvořák, Antonin. "Music in America." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, February 1895.

Krehbeil, H E. "Antonin Dvořák." *The Magazine of Music* 9, no. 10, October 1892.

Piano Quartet in G Major, Op. 35, “Allegro ma non troppo”

Fredrich Seitz (1848-1918)

As an accomplished German composer of the Romantic period and acclaimed concertmaster of the Dessau Court-Orchestra, Fredrich Seitz displayed his musical artistry through his several string compositions. Although he mainly wrote for the violin, his mastery of the various string instruments is exemplified in his Piano Quartet in G-Major, Op. 35, of which we will be performing the first movement. Composed in 1909 and just nine years before his passing, the piece captures a lifetime of experiences from a musician whose compositions are celebrated as a part of standard repertoire today.

Interestingly, the first publication of the piece was not originally for a standard piano quartet, but instead for two violins, cello, and piano. Due to the rarity of this configuration, he was advised to adapt the second violin part for viola (“Friedrich Seitz”). This resulted in a more well rounded sound that was more accessible. Although this particular piece does not call for significant virtuosity, its essence provides a sense of dynamic instrumentation and a strong narrative characteristic used by many accomplished Romantic composers (Shore and Nypaver).

The piece begins with a jubilant melody in unison, displaying the different ranges of all the instruments in octaves. This melody returns several times throughout the piece not simply as a recapitulation of the main theme, but explored in different key areas with varying characteristics through the development. Seitz particularly enjoys playing with tempos, constantly pushing and pulling speeds, allowing room for sweeter expression in the more lyrical passages. He also establishes a call and response, where the strings or the piano state a phrase then pass it off to another. Seitz also provides rhythmic interest by clashing note values, such as stacking triplet and duplet sections that give the impression that the music is galloping. The employment of these techniques together encapsulate the essence of a lively conversation or dance.

“Friedrich Seitz, Piano Quartet in G Major, Op. 35.” Edition Silvertrust. Accessed November 12, 2023.

<http://222.editionsilvertrust.com/seitz-piano-qt.htm#:~:text=Seitz%20originally%20composed%20the%20quartet,by%20a%20standard%20piano%20quartet.>

Shore, Jenica, and Alisha Nypaver. “Romantic Era Music.” *Study.com*. Last updated July 5, 2022.

<https://study.com/learn/lesson/romantic-era-music-facts-characteristics-composers.html>.

Piano Quartet in E-flat Major, Op. 35, “Andante Cantabile”

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

Robert Alexander Schumann was born on June 8, 1810, in Zwickau, Germany. He began his musical education at the age of six, studying piano. He married the daughter of his piano instructor; the daughter’s name was Clara Weick. Both Robert and Clara were talented musicians who inspired each other deeply. The year 1842 is considered to be Schumann’s chamber music year. He was influenced by

the works of Mozart and Beethoven. Schumann's Quartet in E-flat Major premiered in Leipzig, Germany, on December 8, 1844. The work is in the customary four movements usually found in Romantic chamber works. The third movement, "Andante Cantabile," is a perfect example of a Romantic movement with the soft duet between the cello and violin. The middle section takes a strong cue from Beethoven by deepening the romantic into the sacred with a spare hymn that hallows with its graceful simplicity.

Adding strings to piano to create a chamber ensemble was not in fashion until the nineteenth century. The idea of a piano quartet stems from the string quartet, which was considered an essential genre during the late Classical and early Romantic eras. Mozart was one of the first composers to devise the idea for a piano *quintet* in the eighteenth century. The piano *quartet* was even less common and is thought of as the little sister of the piano quintet. Schumann's piano quintets and quartets were the kindling for the wildfire that would start a trend for piano quintets in the Romantic era. This led to many, many other composers writing and imitating Schumann's pieces, including Johannes Brahms.

As you listen to Schumann's chamber composition for piano and strings, notice how the melody is passed equally between the instruments. Schumann wrote this heartfelt third movement to present an idealistic view on life, which is later contrasted with "reality" of the fourth movement. Although he is attempting to immerse the audience in a dream state, Schumann uses the melodic line to add hints of that later reality. As you hear the main melody pass between the strings, pay attention to how it follows a pattern of yearning leading tones that fall down, instead of resolving a half-step up. The piece reaches a dramatic six-flat key signature section that offers equally dramatic musical lines that work against each other through rhythm. The piece culminates in a repeat of the first section that ends with a brief whisper of the fourth movement.

Abraham, Gerald E.H. "Robert Schumann - Legacy." Updated 2019. Accessed September 17, 2023.
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Robert-Schumann/Legacy>.

Christiansen, Kai. n.d. "Piano Quartet in E-Flat Major, Op. 47 - Robert Schumann." Accessed September 17, 2023.
<https://www.earsense.org/chamber-music/Robert-Schumann-Piano-Quartet-in-E-flat-major-Op-47/>.

Daverio, John. *Robert Schumann: Herald of a "New Poetic Age."* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Howard, Orrin. "Piano Quartet in E-Flat, Op. 47, Robert Schumann." *LA Phil*. Accessed September 22, 2023. <https://www.laphil.com/musicdb/pieces/2798/piano-quartet-in-e-flat-op-47>.

Stowell, Robin. *The Cambridge Companion to the String Quartet*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008.