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presents

The Recital Series

Adam W. Sadberry,
Flute

Nathan Cheung, Piano

Sunday, March 5, 2023, 2 PM
Raitt Recital Hall

To Bough and To Bend and *Thought Partners* will be on view in
The Frederick R. Weisman Museum of Art through Sunday, March 26, 2023.
There is no admission charge.

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PROGRAM

HOOVER **Winter Spirits**

COLEMAN **Wish**

STILL **Mother and Child**

BACH **Partita in A Minor for Unaccompanied Flute, BWV 1013**
Allemande
Corrente
Sarabande
Bourrée anglaise

— INTERMISSION —

FRANCK **Sonata for Piano and Flute**
Allegretto ben moderato
Allegro
Recitativo–Fantasia
Allegretto poco mosso

STILL **Summerland**

Program subject to change.

Please turn down or turn off all hearing aides.

Although heard as one work of art, many musical works have three or more movements or sections. A short pause often follows each movement, and during these pauses silence is needed to preserve the flow of the piece. But applause is truly music to a musician's ear at the end of a work, so we hope you will clap to your heart's content after the final movement.

Winter Spirits

KATHERINE HOOVER

Born December 2, 1937, Elkins, West Virginia

Died September 21, 2018, New York City

Flutist, composer, and teacher Katherine Hoover studied first at the Eastman School of Music and later studied privately with William Kincaid, who was for many years principal flutist of the Philadelphia Orchestra. She then taught at the Manhattan School of Music and at Columbia University. While Hoover did compose some works for orchestra, most of her compositions are for chamber ensembles and for wind instruments. Several of her works for flute incorporate musical materials of Native American peoples, notably her *Kokopeli* of 1990.

Hoover composed *Winter Spirits*, for unaccompanied flute, in 1997. The composer has left a concise introduction to *Winter Spirits*: “There is a picture by the marvelous artist Maria Buchfink of a Native American flute player; from his flute rises a cloud of kachinas and totem spirits. This piece has also risen from his notes, and it is indeed influenced by Native American music. The idea of the flute invoking beneficial spirits, be they kachinas or any others, is a very natural one. Such spirits are an accepted and valued part of life in most of the world, and the flute has been used to honor and invite their presence for countless ages.” (Katherine Hoover)

Wish: Sonatine for Flute and Piano

VALERIE COLEMAN

Born 1970, Louisville

Flutist and composer Valerie Coleman earned degrees from Boston University and Mannes College of Music, and she studied flute privately with Julius Baker and Doriot Anthony Dwyer. In 1997 Coleman was one of the co-founders of Imani Winds, and she played flute in that quintet for twenty-five years. She is currently on the faculty of Mannes School and College of the Performing Arts. As a composer, she has had works performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and the symphonies of Boston, Pittsburgh, and Atlanta; Coleman’s *Umoja* was the first work by a living African-American female composer ever performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Coleman composed *Wish: Sonatine for Flute and Piano* in 2015. The piece was inspired by the poem “Wish” by the British-Guyanese poet Fred D’Aguiar, which imagines an alternative reality, one in which he could turn the clock back and see sailing ships delivering new crops to Africa rather than bringing slaves to the New World. That poem is printed in the score, but *Wish*—which spans about a dozen minutes—should be understood not as a musical setting of the poem but rather as an independent and sometimes quite dramatic musical response to D’Aguiar’s longing for a different reality.

Mother and Child

WILLIAM GRANT STILL

Born May 11, 1895, Woodville, Mississippi

Died December 3, 1978, Los Angeles

William Grant Still grew up in Little Rock, Arkansas, where his mother was a schoolteacher. Still left college to pursue a career in music, and—after service in the navy during World War I—moved to New York, where he worked with W.C. Handy, Paul Whiteman, and Artie Shaw. He also studied composition with two teachers who could not have been more unlike each other: the conservative Boston composer George Chadwick and the visionary Edgard Varèse. In New York Still played the oboe in theater orchestras and was attracted to the ideals of the Harlem Renaissance, but in 1934 he moved to Los Angeles, which would be his home for the rest of his life. In Los Angeles he worked first as an arranger of film scores but later devoted himself entirely to composition and conducting. Still was a trailblazer in many ways. He was the first Afro-American to conduct a major orchestra (the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl in 1936) and the first to have an opera produced by a major opera company (*Troubled Island*, by the New York City Opera in 1949). His catalog of works includes nine operas, five symphonies, numerous other orchestral works, and music for chamber ensembles and for voice.

Still was passionately committed to African-American causes throughout his life, and his *Suite for Violin and Piano*, composed in 1943, celebrates the work of three African-American artists. The *Suite* was—like *Pictures at an Exhibition*—inspired by art in other forms, but where Mussorgsky was inspired by paintings and sketches, Still was inspired by the work of three African-American sculptors. The suite's second movement, *Mother and Child*, is heard at this concert in an arrangement for flute.

Sargent Johnson (1887-1967) overcame a difficult childhood—he was sent to several orphanages, and he and his brothers were separated from their sisters when they were all very young. Johnson eventually made his home in San Francisco, where he worked as both sculptor and painter. He created a number of works titled *Mother and Child*, so the exact inspiration for this movement is uncertain. Still's movement has invariably been compared to a lullaby, but this lullaby does not remain soothing and quickly grows to an animated passage before winding down to its quiet conclusion.

Partita in A Minor for Unaccompanied Flute, BWV 1013

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Born March 21, 1685, Eisenach

Died July 28, 1750, Leipzig

This unique work exists under several different titles. It is usually called a *partita*, as it is based (for the most part) on the four-movement sequence that is the foundation of the baroque instrumental partita or suite: allemande-corrente-sarabande-gigue. But here these four movements also conform generally to the slow-fast-slow-fast sequence of the Italian *sonata da chiesa*, and this music is sometimes classified as a *Sonata in A Minor*. Bach's manuscript, densely written on the back of the manuscript of one of his sonatas for unaccompanied violin, is of no help, for it lacks a title.

The *Partita* dates from 1718, when Bach was serving as kapellmeister to Prince Leopold on Anhalt-Cöthen. This was the period when the composer—then 33 years old—was beginning his sequence of sonatas and partitas for unaccompanied violin, and the *Partita in A Minor* shows some relationship to those magnificent works. Yet it is vastly more difficult to write unaccompanied music for the flute than the violin: the violin can play chords and so suggest a harmonic foundation for the music, something the flute—a purely linear instrument—cannot do. This music was composed for transverse flute rather than recorder, and it appears to be Bach's first work for this instrument.

The *Partita in A Minor* consists of four dance movements, and the first three of these are in binary form. The opening *Allemande* has become famous (“infamous” might be a better word) because it is so difficult for the flutist. Lasting over three minutes, it consists of a steady, unbroken sequence of sixteenth-notes. On the violin, this would not be a problem (Bach wrote several such movements for violin), but on the flute—where the performer might want to take an occasional breath during those three minutes—this is supremely challenging music, and performers must determine those spots where they can duck in a breath. The *Corrente* is swirling, bright music (that title means “running” in Italian), while by contrast the *Sarabande* is dark and dignified. Bach changes the sequence of the baroque suite by replacing the expected concluding *Gigue* with a movement he called *Bourrée anglaise*. Why he considered this music in any way “English” remains a matter of some debate, but it provides a spirited and athletic conclusion to the *Partita*.

Sonata for Piano and Flute

CESAR FRANCK

Born December 10, 1822, Liege

Died November 8, 1890, Paris

Composed in 1886, this sonata is one of the finest examples of Franck's use of cyclic form, a technique he had adapted from his friend Franz Liszt, in which themes from one movement are transformed and used over subsequent movements. This sonata—originally composed for violin but heard at this concert in an arrangement for flute—is a particularly ingenious instance of this technique: virtually the entire sonata is derived from the quiet and unassuming opening of the first movement, which then evolves endlessly across the sonata. Even when a new theme seems to arrive, it will gradually be revealed as a subtle variant of one already heard.

The piano's quiet fragmented chords at the beginning of the *Allegretto ben moderato* suggest a theme-shape that the flute takes over as it enters: this will be the thematic cell of the entire sonata. The piano has a more animated second subject (it takes on the shape of the germinal theme as it proceeds), but the gently-rocking flute figure from the opening dominates this movement, and Franck reminds the performers constantly to play *molto dolce, sempre dolce, dolcissimo*.

The mood changes completely at the fiery second movement, marked *passionato*, and some critics have gone so far as to claim that this *Allegro* is the true first movement and that the opening *Allegretto* should be regarded as an introduction to this movement. In any case, this movement contrasts its blazing opening with more lyric episodes, and listeners will detect the original theme-shape flowing through some of these.

The *Recitativo–Fantasia* is the most original movement in the sonata. The piano's quiet introduction seems at first a re-visiting of the germinal theme, though it is—ingeniously—a variant of the *passionato* opening of the second movement. The flute makes its entrance with an improvisation-like passage (this is the fantasia of the title), and the entire movement is quite free in both structure and expression: moments of whimsy alternate with passionate outbursts.

After the expressive freedom of the third movement, the finale restores order with pristine clarity: it is a canon in octaves, with one voice following the other at the interval of a measure. The stately canon theme, marked *dolce cantabile*, is a direct descendant of the sonata's opening theme, and as this movement proceeds it recalls thematic material from earlier movements. Gradually, the music takes on unexpected power and drives to a massive conclusion.

Summerland

WILLIAM GRANT STILL

Born May 11, 1895, Woodville, Mississippi

Died December 3, 1978, Los Angeles

In 1934 William Grant Still moved to Los Angeles, which would be his base for the rest of his life, and two years later he would be the first African-American to conduct a major American orchestra when he led a performance by the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl. Between those two events—in 1935—Still composed a brief three-movement work for solo piano for his wife, Verna Arvey. Titled *Three Visions*, it is the depiction of a soul's journey after death, from its raucous opening movement through the second—a depiction of heaven—and on to a final vision of spiritual radiance. The second movement, which Still titled *Summerland*, has become one of his most popular compositions: across its four-minute span Still creates an atmosphere of serenity and peace that audiences have found not just beautiful, but reassuring. *Summerland* has been performed in a number of arrangements, and it is heard on this recital in an arrangement for flute and piano.

— Program notes by Eric Bromberger



Named an artist to watch in *The Washington Post's* list of 23 classical music and performers to watch this year. Adam W. Sadberry is paving a distinctive career with his citizenry, creativity, and vibrancy both on and off stage. As a winner of Concert Artists Guild's 2021 Victor Elmaleh Competition, he is making his debuts with Chamber Music Detroit, Newport Classical, Scottsdale Performing Arts, Macon Concert Series, Strings Music Festival, Pro Musica: San Miguel de Allende, Northeast Kingdom Classical, Glema Mahr, Dumbarton Concerts, and more. Adam is tremendously excited to make his debut at Merkin Hall in NYC during March 2023 where he will premiere a composition by Dameun Strange that is inspired by Adam's late grandfather and unsung hero of the Civil Rights Movement, L. Alex Wilson.

Adam's commitment to the citizenry is reflected through his collegiate work. He is on faculty at the University of Minnesota (Twin Cities) for the spring 2023 semester, and he has upcoming residencies at Lawrence University and Northern Michigan University, the latter of which includes a performance of Mozart's D Major Flute Concerto with the Marquette Symphony Orchestra. Adam also has engagements at Indiana University (Bloomington), Pepperdine University, and Georgia Southwestern State University, and has previously given masterclasses at Oakland University, University of Memphis, Rhodes College, and the Harmony Project (Los Angeles). Adam's work revolves around identity, his grandfather's legacy, and mindfulness that is informed by Alexander Technique. His most popular lectures are *Using Your Identity to Create a Relevant Voice in Music and Musical Journalism: Continuing a Legacy Through the Flute*.

Adam has a strong foundation in orchestral playing along with his solo and educational work. He has played principal flute with St. Louis and Detroit Symphony Orchestras, and his former positions include acting principal flute of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra and Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, flute and piccolo with the Des Moines Metro Opera, and orchestra fellow with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. He has also performed with the Minnesota Orchestra, Seattle Symphony Orchestra, Sphinx Symphony Orchestra, and the New World Symphony. Adam can be heard playing on the soundtrack of Disney's *The Lion King* (2019) and in the Hollywood Bowl's Juneteenth Celebration (2022) that included artists such as Chaka Khan, Ne-Yo, Billy Porter, Questlove, and Earth, Wind, and Fire.

"I chose this repertoire to share a wide range of humanity through music," said Adam W. Sadberry. "The two pieces by women composers Valerie Coleman and Katherine Hoover offer visions into the worlds of Africans who were fighting for their lives in the Middle Passage and the spirituality of American Indigenous people. William Grant Still's pieces *Mother and Child* and *Summerland* paint portraits of love between one of the most famous archetypal duos and of William Grant Still's concept of heaven. The Bach Partita features four movements of music based on dances from around the world, and Franck's sonata for piano and flute offers four movements of lush romanticism that seem to center the ups and downs of love. As a whole, the program reflects aspects of life that I find myself reflecting on more and more these days."



Nathan Cheung is known for his versatility as a soloist, collaborator, composer, and improviser. These roles are fueled by a life-long passion to discover artistry and accessibility—to understand the power of great music and tap into its potential to resonate with people from all walks of life. His education has aided him significantly in strengthening these endeavors, culminating in degrees from Stanford University (BA Music with honors, concentrations in Piano Performance and Composition) and the Eastman School of Music (DMA, MM, Piano Performance and Literature; MM, Accompanying and Chamber Music). His primary instructors during his studies were Natalya Antonova, Nelita True, Jean Barr, and Thomas Schultz. Dr. Cheung claimed the 1st prize in the 2019 Los

Angeles International Piano Competition and has won top prizes in other international competitions including the Seattle International Piano Competition, Wideman International Piano Competition, Lewisville Lake Symphony International Competition, and Thousand Islands International Piano Competition. He is also a winner of the Aspen Concerto Competition, the American Prize concerto division, the Music Teachers Association of California Solo Competition, and the concerto competitions at both the Eastman School and Stanford University.



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Coming up Next at the Center for the Arts:

Maria loudenitch, violin

Described as “phenomenally musical,” (Daily Journal), violinist Maria loudenitch has received first prizes in the Ysaye International Music Competition, the Tibor Varga International Violin Competition, and the Joachim International Competition. She has performed solo engagements with both national and international orchestras, as well as at various summer festivals and academies.

Sunday, April 2, 2023 • 2 PM

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