

WUSTL *MUSIC*

Sunday, March 27, 2022 - 12:00 P.M.
Pillsbury Theatre, 560 Music Center



Maria Crusey,
Honors Cello Recital

Sandra Geary, piano

Program

Suite for Solo Cello (1926)

- I. *Preludio-Fantasia*
- II. *Sardana*
- III. *Intermezzo e Danza Finale*

Gaspar Cassadó
(1897 - 1966)

Sonata for Cello & Piano in G minor,
Op. 5, No. 2 (1796)

- I. *Adagio sostenuto ed espressivo - Allegro molto più tosto presto*
- II. *Rondo: Allegro*

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770 - 1827)

Sonata for Arpeggione & Piano in A minor,
D. 821 (1824)

- I. *Allegro moderato*
- II. *Adagio*
- III. *Allegretto*

Franz Schubert
(1797 - 1828)

Dance of Terror from *El amor brujo* (1915-1921)
(arr. for cello 1938)

Manuel de Falla
(1876 - 1946)
arr. Gregor Piatigorsky
(1903 - 1976)

Program Notes

Gaspar Cassadó, Suite for Solo Cello (1926)

Once an up and coming Catalan cellist and composer, Gaspar Cassadó lacks prominence in Spanish music history because he did not outwardly espouse nationalism during international conflicts. His compositions nonetheless pay homage to his Spanish roots. Cassadó's embrace of Catalan tradition is overt in his Suite for Solo Cello composed in 1926. After its opening prelude, the Suite's movements call upon traditional dances from Catalonia and Spain rather than incorporating German dance styles as in Baroque instrumental suites.

The *Prelude* contains the Spanish sarabande dance rhythm and highlights the expressive range of the cello through melismatic passages and a cadenza-like section featuring artificial harmonics. The frequent use of ornamentation and tendency of phrases to continue over bar lines lend the movement a whimsical and unmeasured feeling. In contrast, the second movement is a rendition of the *sardana*, the national dance of Catalonia and an emblem of Catalan liberty and political freedom. The music of the *sardana* is typically performed by a wind band known as a *cobla*. Cassadó mimics elements of the *cobla* throughout the second movement, ranging from the breathy introductory melody reminiscent of a flute, to the duple meter and steady tempo that reflect the music's historic function as accompaniment to a stable series of dance steps. The final movement of the Suite, *Intermezzo e Danza Finale*, evokes traditional dance rhythms and uses modes common in Spanish dance music. Additionally, the inclusion of pizzicato chords and arpeggiations allude to castanets, guitars, and other instruments that typically accompany Spanish dances.

Despite its display of compositional mastery, the Suite for Solo Cello, along with many other of Cassadó's works, did not reach the level of popularity he likely hoped for during his lifetime. Virtuosi cellist Janos Starker rediscovered and popularized the Suite during the late twentieth century.

Ludwig van Beethoven, Sonata for Cello & Piano in G minor, Op. 5 No. 2 (1796)

In the eighteenth century, cello sonatas generally designated the cello part as "obligato" and limited its musical role to accompaniment and reinforcement of the bass part of the keyboard. Beethoven's Opus 5 cello sonatas were the first works to challenge this convention and capitalize upon the cello as a solo instrument. They now serve as exemplars of the modern cello sonata.

Beethoven's Sonata for Cello and Piano in G minor consists of 2 movements: an *Adagio sostenuto ed espressivo - Allegro molto più tosto presto*, followed by a *Rondo: Allegro*. Within the first movement, the opening *Adagio* features jarring dynamic contrasts as the two initial themes are passed between the cello and piano parts and concludes with prolonged silences that keep the listener on edge. The subsequent *Allegro molto più tosto*

presto features an even greater dynamic range and contrasts brooding, aggressive passages with elegant, dance-like sections in the development. The recapitulation of the movement eloquently harmonizes the main theme and pushes the movement to its conclusion.

The second movement, which offers a stark contrast to the first, begins with a flippant C major refrain in the piano but slips into the key of G major with the entrance of the cello. The cello and piano parts exchange the melody throughout the movement, challenging one another with virtuosic passages. There is a pause in the forward momentum near the end of the movement that is promptly interrupted by a raucous yet jubilant conclusion in the cello part.

Franz Schubert, Sonata for Arpeggione & Piano in A Minor, D. 821 (transcr. for cello) (1824)

Franz Schubert, a prolific composer of some six hundred *Lieder* (i.e., German art songs), also composed symphonies, chamber works, and pieces for solo instruments. Akin to Beethoven, his musical activity bridged the Classical and Romantic periods and thus embodies musical trends from both eras, pairing clear-cut question and answer phrases typical of the Classical era with Romantic qualities like chromaticism and dynamic contrasts.

Such combined influences are embodied in his Sonata in A minor, D. 821. This work was originally written for the arpeggione, a fretted six-stringed instrument (similar to a bowed guitar) that was played in the early nineteenth century. Although it was composed in 1824, the sonata wasn't published until 1871, long after Schubert's death. The work is frequently performed today, mostly in transcriptions for viola or cello.

The first movement of the sonata opens with a haunting minor melody but soon turns to a spirited second theme. These two themes are further explored through transposition and repetition in the development. Within the recapitulation of the movement, the first theme is repeated in A minor, while the second theme appears in A major rather than in the original key of C major. The final coda marks a sudden return to A minor with a variant of the latter half of the first theme, concluding the movement in a solemn fashion.

Schubert likely called upon his expertise in vocal composition when composing the second movement. Despite its brief duration, it features sweeping musical gestures and arch-like phrases that lend it a vocal quality. This lyrical attribute is further reinforced through the concluding cadenza-like passage in the cello part that seamlessly melds into the final movement.

The third movement, in ABACBA form, commences with a rendition of the first movement's opening theme, but now in a major key and incorporating an expansion of the dotted figure to a dotted-quarter eighth rhythm. This revised melody contrasts starkly with the B theme that is a rapid and aggressive barrage of sixteenth notes punctuated with soaring arpeggiated passages. The contrasting C theme has a pastoral quality with a jaunty melody

and allusions to the opening theme. The final return of the A theme reveals chromatic elaboration within the melodic line and closes with an arpeggiated ascent that recalls the end of the first movement, to round out the work.

**Manuel de Falla, *Dance of Terror* from *El amor brujo* (1915-1921)
arr. for cello by Gregor Piatigorsky (1938)**

Manuel de Falla was one of Spain's most prominent musicians and a driving force in the promotion of Spanish nationalism through music in the twentieth century. Born in Andalusia, Falla was exposed to both traditional Andalusian music and gypsy folk music during his childhood, and these influences are evident in his compositions. Falla's musical works are saturated with rhythms and melodies of Spanish dances and other music yet are independent enough to showcase his distinct compositional style.

Falla's skillful incorporation of his Spanish heritage in his music is exemplified in his one-act stage work, *El amor brujo*. Originally written for the renowned flamenco dancer Pastora Imperio (1887-1929), the composition features songs, spoken dialogue, and dances that tell the story of Candela, a gypsy who is haunted by the apparition of her deceased husband, who had been unfaithful. Within the stage work, Candela dances the *Danza del terror* (*Dance of Terror*) each night in an effort to ward off her dead husband's spirit; the magical and ritualistic nature of the dance is reflected in Falla's composition.

In 1938, Piatigorsky created an adaptation of the *Dance of Terror* for cello. It opens with percussive alternation between bowed and pizzicato double stops in the cello part before settling into a statement of the first theme. The first theme features a skittering melody with incessant repetition of pitches in rapid succession, stark dynamic contrasts, and sighing figures that lead to the second theme, which is characterized by its chromatic neighboring pitches and elaborative ornamentation of the initial motif. The second theme is followed by a return of the bowed and pizzicato double stops that open the piece, leading into the second statement of the main theme. The third and final theme emerges in the cello part from a descending glissando in the piano and includes elements of the first and second themes, specifically, rapid repeated pitches and extensive neighbor note motion. The ending of the piece is infused with terror through a series of frantic rhythms passed between the cello and piano parts before closing with a sweeping upward glissando.

Biographies



Maria Crusey is a senior who is double majoring in Cognitive Neuroscience and Music. Her musical career began with piano lessons at age 4, but she promptly picked up cello after being (literally) fired by her childhood piano instructor. Prior to attending WashU, Maria served as Principal Cellist of the Dayton Philharmonic Youth Orchestra and participated in the Cincinnati Young Artists program. Maria's primary teachers include Mr. Kenneth Kulosa and Dr. Mark Hofeldt.

Maria currently serves as Principal Cellist of the WashU Symphony Orchestra, performs as a cellist in student chamber ensembles, and is regularly contracted for performances at weddings and corporate events. Additionally, Maria has performed in masterclasses for Sébastien Hurtaud, Dr. Alan Rafferty, Dr. Sarah Kim, and The Ariel Quartet.

Apart from playing cello, Maria works as a research assistant in the Peelle Lab at the WashU School of Medicine and serves as president of the WashU Women in STEM club. Maria will matriculate into law school this fall and plans to pursue a graduate degree in music after obtaining her J.D.



Sandra Geary, pianist, is a native of County Cork, Ireland and has received piano performance diplomas from the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity College, London; the Cork School of Music, Ireland; and a Bachelor of Music degree from the St. Louis Conservatory of Music.

On the piano faculty of Washington University, she also accompanies the WashU choir. She has been the Bach Society of St. Louis' accompanist for the past 29 years and also is the accompanist for Webster University Opera studio. Ms. Geary is a vocal coach for the OTSL Artist-in-Training program and has been a vocal coach for Union Avenue Opera Crescendo Young Artist program. She has collaborated in voice master classes given by Nathan Gunn, Stanford Olsen, Kevin Short, Erie Mills, Mary Ann McCormack, and Jennifer Johnson Cano.

Sandra regularly accompanies recitals, auditions, and competitions in the St. Louis area.

Thank You

I would like to thank Ken Kulosa for being an incredibly dedicated teacher over the past 4 years. His diligent and caring instruction has made me not only a better cellist but also a better person. I would also like to thank Sandra Geary for being an amazing accompanist for both this recital as well as competitions and juries throughout my musical involvement at WashU. I would like to thank my ensemble instructors, Amy Greenhalgh and Darwin Aquino, for allowing me to contribute to the WashU Symphony Orchestra both in and out of the concert hall. I would also like to thank my music theory and history instructors and advisors, Dr. Pesce, Dr. Olson, Dr. Steinbeck, Dr. Snarrenberg, and Dr. Stefaniak, for equipping me with the knowledge to pursue my Honors capstone. Additionally, thank you again to Dr. Pesce, Ken Kulosa, and Amy Greenhalgh for serving on my Honors committee and for your assistance in completing the written and performance components of the capstone. Finally, I would like to thank my family, especially my parents, for your never-ending support of my musical passions all of these years. From enrolling me in cello lessons and buying me my first instrument to the countless hours spent at rehearsals, competitions, and listening to me practice, you will never know how much it means to me.

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