

Spring 2022

Two Evenings of Performance - Hearing the Unheard: Music by Mazzoli, the Chevalier de Saint-Georges, Coleridge-Taylor, and Lili Boulanger; Joys of Spring: Music by Paris-Carter, Bach, and Dvorak

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Two Evenings of Performance

Hearing the Unheard: Music by Mazzoli, the Chevalier de Saint-Georges, Coleridge-Taylor, and

Lili Boulanger

Joys of Spring: Music by Paris-Carter, Bach, and Dvorak

Senior Project Submitted to

The Division of the Arts

of Bard College

by

Dávid Mihály Bánóczy-Ruof

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

May 2022

Senior Concerts Abstract

Dávid Bánóczy-Ruof

The program of my first senior concert formed almost accidentally, yet a common and important thread quickly emerged. Few, if any, of the names or the pieces on the program have entered into the canon of classical music. With compositions by Missy Mazzoli, the Chevalier de Saint-Georges, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, and Lili Boulanger, I was able to introduce an audience to people who are the *not* status quo dead cishet (cisgender, heterosexual) white male composer.

The performance of the music of such artists was inspired by an urgency that I felt since arriving at Bard, and that became an international necessity during the 2020 covid lockdown. This has been reflected in many aspects of my academic and musical life at Bard, from taking a course on gender and sexuality in Italian opera, to helping to form a concert of Baroque music by women composers.

While the impulses behind this concert may seem progressive, from the moment I had any ideas about a potential music senior project, I really wanted one of my performances to be a standard, conservative violin recital, wearing fancy clothes and performing with an accompanist. I achieved that, and was quite proud of how it went. Especially after performances, I tend to be displeased with how I sounded and fixate on the negative aspects of my playing. Luckily, this performance was one of very few that I felt really happy with, perhaps due to a large, supportive audience, or because of the interesting and unique repertoire on the program.

For my second senior concert, I wanted to find a way to combine all aspects of my undergraduate music studies; specifically, violin performance, conducting, Baroque performance, and the necessity to showcase works by such composers.

Working with James Bagwell, I learned Dvorak's Wind Serenade, Op. 44, and working with Erica Kiesewetter, Renée Louprette, and Marka Gustavsson, I prepared J.S. Bach's E Major Violin Concerto, BWV 1042. Both of these pieces, however, utilized completely separate musical forces—one solely strings, and one solely winds, plus a cello and a bass—so I wanted to find a piece that somehow combined all the moving parts. We were privileged to premiere *Reef (Bird's Eye)* by Sasha Paris-Carter, who currently studies composition at Oberlin Conservatory. They graciously arranged and rewrote the piece for the forces that I had, and added a solo violin part that I could lead the orchestra from.

Through three intense months of outreach, I was able to recruit seventeen really wonderful musicians to perform with me. Every corner of the College was represented, from Conservatory students, to fellow music seniors, to community members, to graduate students. This concert would not have been successful without their generous time and musicianship, and I

am very grateful to all of them. Logistically, this was a huge concert to accomplish, especially in terms of recruitment, and scheduling rehearsals and spaces. I was also out for a few days with covid the week before the concert. However, I think it was very successful, and I look forward to organizing and forming more orchestras to work with in the future.



**DÁVID'S
SENIOR RECITAL I**

featuring **Jaime Blois**, *violin*
and **David Sytkowski**, *piano*

MONDAY
DECEMBER 13, 2021
8 PM
BLUM HALL

WELCOME!

Thank you all so much for being here tonight! It has been so exciting to prepare for this recital. I've been telling people that it's going to be a party, which maybe is sort of funny if you are sitting there in the dark and I'm up here in the light playing my violin, but I think it is still can be a party, or a celebration; celebrating life, celebrating music, celebrating the voices of people that most of you probably have never heard of before, celebrating being here with each other... The programming of this recital happened completely by accident (as it should!), but all of the composers you will hear tonight are from people who have faced huge societal disadvantages because of basic parts of their identities. It was developed in part during Erica Kiesewetter's *Silent Strings* class, which explores similar topics. (Come to the class' concert this Wednesday, December 15, at 8pm in Bard Hall. Some of this music and more will be played there!)

THANK YOU!

A huge thank to Erica Kiesewetter for all the support and help during my entire time at Bard, for making sure that tonight would be a success, and for helping to figure out all the small details. Another huge thank you to my board, James Bagwell, Erica Kiesewetter, and Renée Louprette, for all the support, countless scheduling emails, and for being my Bard parents. Thank you to Jaime Blois and David Sytkowski for the amazing musicianship and all the extra rehearsals. Thank you to James Mongan for the help in ensuring that this recital could happen. Thank you to Calvin Batista-Malat for filming tonight. And finally, a huge, huge thank you to all my friends and family for the unwavering love, for being there, and for coming out on this dark Monday night during finals. Without any of you, none of this would be possible.

Dávid Bánóczy-Ruof

violin



Missy Mazzoli
(b. 1980)

Dissolve, O my Heart

Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-
Georges
(1745-1799)

Sonata No. 2 for Two Violins

I. —

II. Aria con Variazione

with Jaime Blois, violin

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor
(1875–1912)

Violin Concerto in G minor, Op. 80

I. Maestoso - Vivace

with David Sytkowski, piano

Lili Boulanger
(1893–1918)

I. Nocturne

II. Cortège

with David Sytkowski, piano

The first chord of New York-based composer Missy Mazzoli's *DISSOLVE, O MY HEART* is one of the greatest chords in the entire violin repertoire: it is taken from the opening notes of the mammoth Chaconne by J.S. Bach. Mazzoli writes that the piece "has its roots in a late-night conversation over Chinese food and cupcakes with violinist Jennifer Koh," who recorded it for her *Bach and Beyond* project, which approaches Bach "through the lens of contemporary music." The title of the piece comes from an aria ("Zerfließe, mein Herze, in Fluten der Zähren") from Bach's *St. John Passion*. In 2018, together with *Shrek: The Musical* composer Jeanine Tesori, Mazzoli became the first woman to have an opera commissioned by the Met Opera, and has performed, and she has written music for the hit Amazon series *Mozart in the Jungle*. Her piece for violin and electronics, *Vespers*, was nominated for a Grammy in 2019.

The Chevalier de Saint-Georges is one of the most fascinating characters in 18th century France. Born in Guadeloupe to a white man and a 16-year old enslaved by his wife, the Chevalier de Saint-Georges was enrolled by his father in a Parisian fencing and horsemanship academy when he was 13, where he quickly became a star fencer. He was among the first people to enlist in the Revolutionary Army, and became a colonel for the *Légion franche de cavalerie des Américains et du Midi*, Europe's first regiment whose ranks were solely composed of people of color. (Alexander Dumas' father was the regiment's second-in-command early in his military career.)

But, as if masterful fencing and military careers were not enough, the Chevalier de Saint-Georges was also a successful composer, conductor, and violinist, having written over a dozen violin concertos, violin sonatas, string quartets, and at least six operas. He was one of France's main advocate of the *sinfonia concertante*, and composed at least eight. Mozart, after visiting Paris and hearing the Chevalier de Saint-Georges' music, composed his *Sinfonia Concertante for Violin and Viola*, K. 364. The Chevalier de Saint-Georges also organized and conducted orchestras, like the *Concert de la Loge Olympique*, which, under his direction, commissioned Haydn's beloved *Paris symphonies*. However, his musical success was limited by racist attacks. For example, in 1776, the Paris Opéra was searching for a new music director, and the Chevalier de Saint-Georges was the obvious pick, but three white divas penned a letter to Marie Antoinette—who is sometimes rumored to have had an affair with the composer—that "their honor and delicate conscience could never allow them to submit to the orders of a mulatto," and he was forced to withdraw his name from consideration. As a result of this scandal, King Louis XVI took the Opéra back from the city.

His six *SONATAS FOR TWO VIOLINS* were likely composed for himself, but were not published until after his death.

The Black-British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, who was named after and should not be confused with the White-British poet Samuel Taylor-Coleridge, was called "far away the cleverest fellow going amongst the young men" by Elgar. He studied under Sir Charles Villiers Stanford at the Royal College of Music where Ralph Vaughn-Williams, Gustav Holst, and others were his peers. (His daughter, Avril Coleridge-Taylor, also a

composer and conductor, writes that Holst played trombone and Vaughn-Williams the triangle for a concert of Coleridge-Taylor's music in March 1896 that garnered the interest and support of an editor at the Novello & Co. publishing company.) In 1900, he was the youngest delegate to the First Pan-African Conference held in London, where he met the poet Paul Laurence Dunbar, who he developed a lasting professional relationship with and collaborated on operas with. With these new American connections, he spent time touring the United States, considered emigrating to the United States, and was even received by Teddy Roosevelt at the White House. While in New York, his reputation as the Black Mahler was coined. Coleridge-Taylor first heard the Fisk Jubilee Singers in 1896 while they were on tour, which introduced him to African-American spirituals, and inspired him to draw upon American and Sierra Leonean music like Bartók with Hungarian music or Dvořák with Bohemian music. However, his compositions were never as successful as his white colleagues'. For example, his oratorio, *A Tale of Old Japan*, was premiered in Croydon, where he lived, but he was not allowed to conduct and even had to pay for his own ticket to the premiere. Financial and personal stress likely led to his early death in 1912, from pneumonia brought on by exhaustion.

His VIOLIN CONCERTO was commissioned by the philanthropists and arts patrons Carl and Ellen Stoeckel for the American violinist Maud Powell and the Norfolk Music Festival. It was not well received by the Stoekels, however, and had to be rewritten before the parts were sent by boat across the Atlantic. These parts have been lost—a common myth is they were sent on the Titanic—so, shortly before his death, Coleridge-Taylor had to rewrite them. Both the American and British premieres, however, were great successes, rightfully so, for a concerto that should belong in the standard canon of violin concertos.

Despite Lily Boulanger's short life, her compositional output rivals that of her better known sister, the brilliant teacher, composer, conductor, and pianist Nadia Boulanger. As a young child, she was very close to her father, who passed away when she was only six, an event which informed much of her musical output. Boulanger entered the Prix de Rome twice. The first time, in 1912, she collapsed while performing, but she returned the following year and won, becoming the first woman to earn the prestigious prize. She was constantly sick, after developing pneumonia as a two-week old that weakened her immune system. She died from tuberculosis when she was 24.

She wrote the NOCTURNE for violin or flute and piano over the course of two days that she took off from her studies and from her preparations for the Prix de Rome. It quotes phrases from Wagner's *Tristan*, and, very obviously, Debussy's *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*, both composers that Boulanger was greatly influenced by. Joyous pieces in her oeuvre are rare, and the CORTÈGE is one of few of them. She composed it during her residency at the Villa Medici after winning the Prix de Rome, while recovering from a case of measles that nearly killed her that she caught from her sister. The word *cortège* describes a procession, either funereal or victorious and courtly.

DÁVID BÁNÓCZI-RUOF (DAH-vid BAH-NO-tsee RUE-off) is a senior at Bard College, studying violin with Erica Kiesewetter and conducting with James Bagwell. A graduate of the Mannes School of Music's pre-college division and of Green Meadow Waldorf School, David studied violin with Khullip Jeung in New York City and Jörg Heyer in Frankfurt, Germany, and conducting with Scott Jackson Wiley. David has performed in the United States and Europe, including Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall in 2014, at the Narnia Festival in Italy in 2016, and 2021 touring the Hudson Valley with Jazz and Classics for Change as part of their *Young Artists Series*. At Bard College, David co-founded the Bard College Community Orchestra's annual Midsummer's Eve concert with Erica Kiesewetter, and made a conducting debut with music by Mendelssohn. This past year, David was principal second of the Bard Baroque Ensemble and has performed with the Bard College Community Orchestra. In November 2021, David won the Community Orchestra's Concerto Competition and will be performing the Coleridge-Taylor Violin Concerto at the Fisher Center at Bard on April 25, 2022. In addition to studying music, David is the Lead Assistant House Manager at the Fisher Center, and can be found wandering the Hudson Valley by bike and by foot. David's favorite color is a blue that doesn't exist.

JAIME BLOIS is a first-year student at Bard Conservatory studying violin with Carmit Zori. Before college, she studied with Gregory Fulkerson in addition to being a member of the Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra with Benjamin Zander and a string quartet at the Rivers School Conservatory in Boston under the coaching of BSO violist Danny Kim. Jaime is from Wallingford, Connecticut where she was also a member of the Hartt School of Music's Youth Division and concertmaster of the local community Cheshire Symphony Orchestra. Outside of music, she is interested in politics and social justice issues and is pursuing a second degree in sociology at Bard.

David Sytkowski, pianist and vocal coach, is a Visiting Artist in Residence at Bard College, where he is Director of Music for both Opera Workshop, Musical Theater Performance Workshop, coaches singers, and teaches private piano.

In September 2019, he made his Joe's Pub debut in *Under The Influence* with legendary cabaret artist Justin Vivian Bond. This led to Auntie Glam's Happy Hour, a weekly livestream during the initial COVID-19 shut down that New York Times critic Zachary Woolf proclaimed one of "The Best of the Year's At-Home Divas" in December 2020.

As principal music coach for the Bard Summer-Scape festival for six years, he has prepared Korngold's *Die tote Stadt* and *Das Wunder Der Heliane*, Rubenstein's *Demon*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tsar's Bride*, Dvorak's *Dimitrij*, Mascagni's *Iris*, Smyth's *The Wreckers*, and Weber's *Euryanthe*.

Other recent engagements include the New York premiere of Gregory Spears's *Fellow Travelers* for the PROTOTYPE festival in January 2018, Virgil Thomson and Gertrude Stein's *The Mother of Us All* for the reopening of the Hudson Opera House in Fall 2017 with R.B. Schlather, Berkshire Opera Festival's inaugural production of *Madama Butterfly*, Hindemith's *The Long Christmas Dinner* and Von Schillings's *Mona Lisa* with American Symphony Orchestra. He frequently appears as a symphony pianist and collaborator at venues such as Carnegie Hall, Weill Recital Hall, Jazz at Lincoln Center and the Fisher Center for the Performing Arts.

JOYS OF SPRING

a senior concert



Dávid Bánóczy-Ruof, violinist and conductor, with the Bard Chamber Orchestra

7:30 PM
Sunday, May 1, 2022
László Z. Bitó '60 Conservatory Building

Joys of Spring

a senior concert



Sasha Paris-Carter
(b. 2003)

Reef (bird's eye)

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Violin Concerto in E Major, BWV 1042
I. Allegro
II. Adagio
III. Allegro assai

— 15 Minute Intermission —

Antonín Dvořák
(1841-1904)

Serenade, Op. 44
I. Moderato, quasi marcia
II. Minuetto
III. Andante con moto
IV. Finale: Allegro molto

Violin I

Isabel Chin Garita
Ella Menees

Violin II

Ana Aparacio
Hattie Wilder Karlstrom

Viola

Jessica Ward

Cello

Verity Scheel
Sarah Martin

Harpsichord

Mary Douglas

Oboe

Kamil Karpiak
Clare Herzog

Clarinet

Russell Urban-Mead
Chloe Dufeu

Bassoon

Alex Buckman
Daphne Creamer

Horn

Liri Ronen
Sabrina Schettler
Erica Agnew

Thank you to:

James Bagwell, for being on my board, for the enthusiasm about this project, and for many conducting lessons

Renée Loupette, for being on my board, for help with coaching and Baroque practices, and for organizing the harpsichord

Erica Kiesewetter, for being on my board, for the constant support and advice, and for being my Bard parent

Marka Gustavsson, for jumping in and giving me violin lessons

Andrés Peltier-Salazar, for leading rehearsals when I was out sick

Ann Gabler, for help organizing and booking the space

James Mongan, for help with the posters and with the logistics

Marc Mancus, for help setting up the space and the livestream

Anya Swinchowski, for the photo

Steffanie Finn, for help with the poster

The student and administrative staff of both the Conservatory and the Music Program

The wonderful musicians who are on stage today

My friends and family, for their constant support and sacrifices

...without all of you, none of this would be possible.

About the Music

During the early days of the pandemic, when other people were escaping the drudgeries of a suddenly-closed world by growing sourdough starters or learning how to quilt, Sasha Paris-Carter looked back to their time visiting family in Australia. A year before, they were able to visit the Great Barrier Reef, and composed REEF (BIRD'S EYE) in memory of it and of their Australian grandfather, who died before they were born. In a recent FaceTime with Paris-Carter, they said, "composition is a way to exaggerate and feel euphoria for who I am." We were talking about queerness, and the ways that queerness and identity is "injected... into music," but the same thing could be extended to family and memory. Memory can be euphoric.

Having studied voice for many years (they currently study composition at Oberlin Conservatory), they tend to compose mostly for vocal ensembles; Reef was their first piece for a larger ensemble. When I asked Paris-Carter if they had any tips or suggestions on how to play the piece, they simply answered, "just make sure you sing." While looking for music to perform in this concert, I had a pretty specific set of wants. I wanted a piece that combined the forces of the Bach with the forces of the Dvorak (two completely separate ensembles, save for a single cellist), a piece that was around ten minutes long, a piece not by a dead straight white man, and a piece with a solo violin part that was simple enough that I could lead an orchestra from it. I asked around on social media for suggestions, and Paris-Carter, who I know from when we both studied at Mannes Prep, reached out with Reef, willing to revise it for the instrumentation that I needed. Reef became Reef (Bird's Eye).

A lot of the Australian folk tradition is white folk music, often pentatonic and modal, imported by Irish immigrants like Paris-Carter's ancestors. In their performance notes, they write that the main theme of the piece "is an original folk tune, similar to folk music my grandfather would have loved." They note that they "have always been told how important and joyous both music and swimming were to his life." Paris-Carter uses tone and technique to paint small fish darting (the glissandi in the strings), turtles swimming (a five-note theme that is passed among different instruments of the orchestra), and shifts of the coral's color as the sun shines on it (harmonic modulations of the main theme). In rehearsals, the piece was nicknamed the Coral Chorale because of these subtle and slow harmonic shifts.

As with a lot of music by Johann Sebastian Bach, the composer's original manuscript of the VIOLIN CONCERTO IN E MAJOR, BWV 1042 is lost. A 1760 copy by Johann Friedrich Hering is the first and most important extent source of the concerto, and the source which most modern editions are based on. Hering had worked closely with Papa Bach's son, Carl Philipp Emanuel, during his time in Berlin, possibly as a student of the younger Bach, and likely copied a manuscript belonging to him.

Given the concerto's stylistic similarities to the Brandenburg concerti, especially in the Italianate first movement, scholars tend to assume that the piece was written while Bach was Kapellmeister in the court of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Köthen, a position which he held from 1718 until 1723. Around fifteen years later, when in Weimar,

Bach arranged this concerto, along with eight others, for harpsichord and orchestra in his 1738 BWV 1052-1059 collection.

As well as being an excellent organist, C.P.E. Bach tells us that “in his youth and until the approach of old age, [Bach] played the violin cleanly and penetratingly.” Given the wide range of violin repertoire he composed, from his solo violin sonatas and partitas, to his sonatas for violin and harpsichord obbligato, to countless concertante moments in his orchestral suites and cantatas, to this concerto and its two siblings, one in A minor (BWV 1041) and one for two violins in D minor (BWV 1043), it is clear that Bach not only worked with some great violinists, but was one himself.

The first movement is in an ABA form reminiscent of the first movements of concerti of Vivaldi and other Italian composers, and of the da-capo aria developed in early Italian opera. Like a singer performing an aria, the solo violin responds to the tutti sections with virtuosic flourishes and embellishments. The middle movement, in a slow three, begins with a deep, throbbing motif in the cello and harpsichord. The solo violin never fully joins the rest of the orchestra, but rather sings above it. Opinions on the tempo of this movement are very divided. Some musicians, especially the violin masters of yesteryear, perform this movement passionately slow, while other musicians, especially those performing historically accurately, play this movement with lots of motion and air. While preferring a slower and weightier version, we’ve tried to find a happy medium here. The final movement is a stately rondo with light eighth notes in the orchestra. It is perfectly constructed, with 16-measure tutti and solo sections, except for the final embellished solo section, which is 32 measures, twice as long.

In the summer of 1879, Johannes Brahms wrote that Antonin Dvořák’s SERENADE, OP. 44, “is probably the best of Dvořák that I’m acquainted with. Good ensembles have to blast it out lustily.” Brahms was introduced to Dvořák’s music as part of the jury for the Austrian State Prize, which Dvořák entered annually from 1874 through 1877, and won in 1874, 1876, and 1877. It is in part due to Brahms that Dvořák can owe his international fame. Also impressed by his set of 23 *Moravian Duets*, Brahms encouraged his publisher, Simrock, to produce an edition of the *Duets*. Simrock also commissioned Dvořák to write something similar to Brahms’ popular *Hungarian Dances*, and was given, in late 1878, the first set of *Slavonic Dances*, Op. 46, originally for piano four hands. These two pieces were major successes, especially in Germany. Writing for the *Nationalzeitung* in Berlin just before Dvořák’s German breakthrough, music critic Louis Ehlert said that “a heavenly naturalness flows through this music.” In gratitude, Dvořák dedicated the serenade to Ehlert when it was published for the first time, once again by Simrock, about a year later in 1879.

While visiting Brahms in Vienna in December 1877, Dvořák heard the Vienna Philharmonic perform Mozart’s B-flat Major Serenade, the *Gran Partita* Serenade. He was apparently so inspired by the piece that, upon arriving back in Prague, he composed his own Serenade in only fourteen days. The instrumentation is strikingly similar—especially in the use of string instruments. Dvořák employs both a cello and a bass part. (Due to

scheduling difficulties, this version is performed without a contrabassoon or bass. Dvořák seems to have been open to the inclusion of certain instruments with less important parts, like the bass or contrabassoon. After receiving the manuscript, his editors at Simrock suggested publishing the contrabassoon part—a less common instrument—as a tuba part. Dvořák disapproved, writing, “In the absence of a contrabassoon, I think it would be better to write: ‘Contrabassoon ad libitum.’ The tuba would really spoil the delicate coloring of the winds. So, if you have the bassoon, you should play it, if you don’t, you can do without it.”)

Though it does not explicitly draw upon any folk melodies, aspects about the piece are often compared to Bohemian music. It opens with a dignified march, and is followed by a Minuet and its subsequent Trio. Some scholars compare the Minuet to a sousedská, a swaying dance in three that Dvořák also used in his Slavonic Dances. The trio has been likened to a furiant, a fast dance playing between two- and three-beat measures. The third movement is very clearly inspired by the third movement Adagio in Mozart’s *Gran Partita*, and lets the oboes and clarinets soar lyrically over a barrel organ-like rhythm in the horns. Finally, similar to the last movement in Dvořák’s String Serenade, the lively last movement quotes the first movement to thematically bring the music full circle.

Dávid Bánóczi-Ruof (DAH-vid BAH-NO-tsee RUE-off) is a senior at Bard College, studying violin with Erica Kiesewetter and conducting with James Bagwell. A graduate of the Mannes School of Music’s pre-college division and of Green Meadow Waldorf School, Dávid studied violin with Khullip Jeung in New York City and Jörg Heyer in Frankfurt, Germany, and conducting with Scott Jackson Wiley. Dávid has performed in the United States and Europe, including Carnegie Hall’s Weill Recital Hall in 2014, at the Narnia Festival in Italy in 2016, and touring the Hudson Valley with with Jazz and Classics for Change as part of their *Young Artists Series* in 2021. At Bard College, Dávid co-founded the Bard College Community Orchestra’s annual Midsummer’s Eve concert with Erica Kiesewetter, and made a conducting debut with music by Mendelssohn. Dávid has also performed with the Bard Baroque Ensemble, and members of the Bard Conservatory and The Orchestra Now. In addition to studying music, Dávid is the Associate House Manager at the Fisher Center, and can be found wandering the Hudson Valley by bike and by foot. Dávid’s favorite color is a blue that doesn’t exist.