

Programme Notes

Diploma of The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music

cello performance

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Suite No. 4 in E-flat major, Prelude, BWV 1010

Cello Sonata No. 3 in A major, Opus. 69

Sonata in G minor, Opus. 65

Prayer (No.1) From Jewish Life

J. S. Bach

L. V. Beethoven

Frederic Chopin

Ernest Bloch

Suite No. 4 in E-flat major, BWV 1010
Prelude

J. S. Bach
(1685 – 1750)

Johann Sebastian Bach composed The Six suites for unaccompanied cello during the period 1717–1723, when Bach served as a Kapellmeister in Köthen. The original manuscript of the suites was lost. However, Bach's second wife, Anna Magdalena's handwritten copy is existent. According to a recent study, the suites were not written for cello held between the legs. At that time, cello seems to be played on the shoulder like a violin. Some musicians try playing the suites on period instruments like viola da spalla that has 5 strings.

The suites were thought of as study pieces for a long time. When Pablo Casals was 13 years old, he found Bach's cello suites in a music shop in Barcelona, Spain. He studied the suites by himself. Casals recorded all six suites in 1939 and the suites became popular soon. The suites have been transcribed for numerous instruments. The suites have been performed by many renowned cellists. But Casals' original recording is still respected today.

The suites consist of six movements each. Six movements are 1. Prelude, 2. Allemande, 3. Courante, 4. Sarabande, 5. Minuets(Bourrees or Gavottes), 6. Gigue. These are music for dance except for Prelude. The Prelude consists of two part. It is composed of a combination of arpeggiated chords instead of melody. There is a scale passage like cadenza at the last of the former half. In the latter half of the Prelude, there is a passage including double stops that bring an excitement to the Prelude. At the last, there is a scale like passage and it ends with tonic chord.

Cello Sonata No. 3 in A major, Opus. 69 (1808)
Allegro ma non tanto

L. V. Beethoven
(1770 –1827)

Beethoven was borne in Bonn, Germany. He moved to Vienna in 1792 and studied with Haydn. He gained a reputation as a virtuoso pianist soon. Around 1796, he began to lose his hearing. In 1802, he sent a letter to his brother writing his thought of suicide. In face of deterioration of his hearing, Beethoven composed many admired works and established as a master. He lived in Vienna until his death.

Beethoven's career is divided into 3 periods, early, middle, and late. Beethoven wrote 5 Cello Sonatas. Cello Sonata No. 1 and No. 2 were written in the early period. Cello Sonata No. 3 was written in the middle period. Cello Sonata No. 4 and No. 5 were written in the late period. Cello Sonata No. 3 was written in 1808. He composed Piano Trio No. 5 ('Ghost'), Piano Concerto No. 5('Emperor'), Symphony No. 5 and Symphony No. 6('Pastoral') around 1808. Beethoven dedicated the Cello Sonata No. 3 to Baron Ignaz von Gleichenstein who was an amateur cellist and helped Beethoven. In 1812, Beethoven's pupil Carl Czerny and cellist Joseph Linke gave a performance in public. The Cello Sonata No. 3 is the best-known work of cello sonatas. The sonata has been performed and recorded by many famous cellists.

The first movement of Cello Sonata No. 3 is written in sonata form. The opening is presentation of the first theme played by the cello alone. After the cello solo, piano enters and plays 1st theme again. 2nd theme is played in E major. The recapitulation presents first theme.

Sonata in G Minor, Opus. 65
Allegro moderato

Frederic Chopin
(1810 –1849)

Chopin is called as the poet of the piano, because Chopin's compositions are almost for solo piano. But he also wrote music for the other instruments. There are two piano concertos, one piano trio, some songs and three works for cello. He seems to be interested in cello since he was a teenager. He wrote the Polonaise C major Op.3 and Trio Op.8 for cello in 1829. Chopin was just 19 years old.

Chopin composed four sonatas. They are three piano sonatas and one cello sonata. Cello sonata was written in 1845-1846 at George Sand's house and published in 1847. It was only a few years before his death. At the time, Chopin had trouble with relationship with George Sand. His health began to deteriorate. The cello sonata was dedicated to Auguste Franchomme. He was a Chopin's close friend and supported Chopin well. The cello sonata was the last work of Chopin published in his lifetime. Chopin performed the sonata with Auguste Franchomme in a public concert in Paris on 16 February 1848. It was Chopin's last public concert. Chopin suffered from poor health through his life and died in Paris in 1849.

The sonata is in four movements. Piano part is on an equal footing with cello in the sonata. First movement is in sonata form and has two themes. After first theme played by piano, cello makes an entrance and plays the same first theme. Second theme is in B flat-major. The recapitulation presents secondary theme instead of the first theme.

Prayer (No.1) From Jewish Life

Ernest Bloch
(1880 –1959)

Ernest Bloch was born in Geneva on July 24, 1880 and studied music in various European cities. He became a professor at the Geneva Conservatory in 1911. Then he moved to the United States in 1916 and he got a teaching position in 1917. He taught at the Mannes School of Music in New York City, the Cleveland Institute of Music, the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and the University of California, Berkeley. In 1930, Bloch returned to Switzerland but he came again to the U.S because of the rise of Nazi Germany. In 1941, Bloch moved to Agate Beach, Oregon. He spent the last twenty years of his life there.

Bloch has been referred to as a ‘Jewish composer’. His music reflects Jewish culture. He wrote some works that have Jewish titles. *Rhapsodie Hébraïque* for Cello and Orchestra(‘Schelomo’) is one of his best known work. He wrote 8 works for cello (1 cello sonata, 3 cello suites, 2 cello concertos, 2 works for cello and piano).

The Jewish Life Suite for Cello and Piano was written in 1924. The Concerto Grosso No. 1 was also composed in that year. He acquired American citizenship too. Bloch was Director of the Cleveland Institute of Music at that time. The suite was dedicated to cellist Hans Kindler who premiered *Schelomo* in 1917. He composed the suite using traditional Jewish musical material. Harmonic minor scale is used effectively.