



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
SENIOR RECITAL

William Masters, cello
John Cozza, piano

Cello Suite No. 4 in E-flat Major, BWV 1010

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

1. Prélude
2. Allemande
3. Courante
4. Sarabande
5. Boureés I & II
6. Gigue

Cello Sonata No. 5 in D Major, Op. 102

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

1. Allegro con brio
2. Adagio con molto sentimento d'affetto
3. Allegro-Allegro fugato

INTERMISSION

Cello Concerto in A Minor, Op. 129

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

1. Nicht zu schnell
2. Langsam
3. Sehr lebhaft

*This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Bachelor of Music in Cello.
William Masters is a student of Kyle Stachnik.*



MONDAY, 7:00 P.M.
OCTOBER 26, 2026
CAPISTRANO HALL 151

PROGRAM NOTES

October 26, 2026 - William Masters

J.S. Bach - Cello Suite No. 4 in E-flat Major:

A true colossus of the cello world, J.S. Bach's Suite No. 4 for Solo Cello creates a cathedral of sound at a scale few other works for cello can match. The Prélude alone, as you will probably notice, is in itself a marathon for the cellist as it requires spidering around the instrument in a myriad of challenging jumps and shifts, while the bow scoops out notes at the very bottom of the cello's range before leaping back to the top.

Bach composed this work after his move to the town of Leipzig in 1723, starting a period of extreme productivity; in his first five years there, Bach composed over 200 choral cantatas, his esteemed *St. John* and *St. Matthew Passions*, and many instrumental works, the cello suites among them. The key of E-flat was traditionally reserved for music depicting the most majestic of subjects, and the grandeur of Bach's 4th Suite is no exception.

Following the Prélude are the five dance movements, but there is a weightiness to these "dances" that distinguish them from their lighter counterparts in the other suites, as if in the midst of a dance there is something important being said. Even the lightest of the dances, the Courante and the Boureés, seem to get sidetracked by this solemn mood during at least one point or another, while the Allemande and Sarabande create a reflective space, feeling as if they are lifting the listeners to some higher sphere. The Gigue (jig) perhaps finally shatters the regal, almost religious mood of the suite, launching into a full-on sprint to the end. With only a few spots to catch one's breath, the Gigue offers a transition back to earth with a rollicking close to the work—and a final workout for the player!

Ludwig van Beethoven - Cello Sonata No. 5 in D Major:

Beethoven's Cello Sonata No. 5 in D Major was his last chamber music work written for piano. Composed in 1816, the sonata was written at the beginning of Beethoven's "Late Period" of composition, characterized by a degree of introspection, greater complexity, and a hearkening back to earlier eras of music, especially evident in the sonata's ambitious fugue finale. By this time, Beethoven was nearing almost complete deafness, so his compositions began to take on a very conceptual nature, as he had to imagine more and more in his head how the music should sound, often to the great difficulty of the musicians trying to bring his music into reality.

The opening of the sonata is grand and joyous, with great leaps in the piano before the cello takes over to lead into a warm, lyrical opening theme. Unlike the other two movements, the first movement still contains a thread of the "hero's journey" one can find throughout Beethoven's works. Whether the hero is merely strolling through idyllic countryside like in the opening, or ambushed on the road later on, one can picture a narrative following the protagonist's adventures across the movement. As the end approaches, there is a sense of hushed suspense before a victorious outburst marks the hero's triumph and the end of the movement.

We take a sharp turn from victory as the second movement—the emotional heart of the work—begins. Beethoven had a great deal to say in this Adagio, which has a length equal to the other two movements combined. This part of the work in particular can have extremely different meanings depending on the listener, evoking feelings of remorse, contemplation, hope, turmoil, longing, or resignation among many others. The darker opening winds its way through several emotions before the sun begins to shine through. The middle section has the feeling of some idealized memory or a similar reprieve from the brooding opening. The gloom returns though, and the music seems to get softer and softer until the listener is left suspended before the cello quietly begins the fugue.

A masterful piece of musical clockwork, the fugue weaves together its opening snippets of music into mind-bending combinations, playing them backwards, upside-down and every which way, with all of them fitting together like the gears in a well-crafted watch. Except for a few moments of pause sprinkled throughout, the fugue churns on until the piano and cello climb together and end the fugue—and sonata—with a bang.

Robert Schumann - Cello Concerto in A Minor:

Though it is one of the most valued and beautiful members of the cello concerto canon today, Schumann's Cello Concerto in A Minor was written off throughout most of the 19th and 20th centuries as a fragmented and strange product of his mental decay at the end of his life. It did not help matters that Robert Schumann did indeed finish his last revisions to the concerto two days before his infamous suicidal dive off a Düsseldorf bridge in 1854, and subsequent committal to an institution. The piece languished, misunderstood for decades until it started to gain a loyal band of supporters in the 20th century.

The pathos of the work evokes the extreme anguish of Schumann's last years. The opening melody begins tenderly enough, but then starts incorporating rapid shifts between the low and high ranges of the cello, bridged by ascending breathless arpeggios before plummeting downwards again. This extensive opening theme paints a haunting portrait of Schumann's inner state, who at the time was visited by a constant cycle of visions containing angels, demons, and wild animals, either singing the most beautiful melodies he had ever heard, or chanting harsh songs that threatened to "hurl him into hell."

After the vast emotional spectrum of the first movement, the next two major sections promise some greater stability. The second starts out calmly enough with a touching, contemplative theme for the cello. However, this does not last long as the orchestra—or in this case the piano—casts a shadow on the serenity by playing a snatch of the cello's haunting opening theme. This starts a mounting conflict between the cello and the piano as the soloist tries to regain the earlier sense of calm, only to unravel and tumble directly into the finale.

The final section is a mischievous, slightly manic dance with increased trade-offs between the cello and the piano. The movement teeters between light, quicksilver passages and heavy, Germanic statements before proceeding into an ending that begins hushed, almost ominous. Slowly but surely though, the darkness lifts, the tempo quickens, and the cello launches into a rapid, boisterous conclusion to the work.

From its beginnings as a "fragmented" and "strange" work of art, the concerto's great poignancy at last won out; it was an important part of Schumann's farewell to both his life and sanity, and is now one of the most beloved works written for cello.