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News

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CD release: Oct. 30, 2012

JENNIFER KOH BRINGS 'BACH & BEYOND' TO CD

Cedille Records Releases First Installment In Novel New Series with Noted Violinist

***Album includes solo violin works by Bach, Ysaÿe,
Saariaho, and Mazzoli***

Violinist Jennifer Koh brings her groundbreaking “Bach and Beyond” concert concept to CD this month with *Bach & Beyond Part 1* (Cedille Records CDR 90000 134).

The disc is the first in a three-part series of studio recordings based on Koh’s innovative, multi-season recital project illuminating the enduring influence of J.S. Bach’s large-scale solo violin masterpieces. In concert and on CD, Koh’s “Bach & Beyond” programming juxtaposes Bach’s sonatas and partitas from 1720 with unaccompanied violin works by later composers — including newly commissioned pieces.

The album was released digitally October 2 and will be available on CD October 30.

On *Bach & Beyond Part 1*, Koh plays Bach’s Partita No. 3 in E Major, BWV 1006; Eugène Ysaÿe’s Sonata No. 2, Op. 27 (1924); Kaija Saariaho’s *Nocturne* (1994); Missy Mazzoli’s *Dissolve, O My Heart* (2010) — a world-premiere recording — and Bach’s Partita No. 2 in D Minor, BWV 1004.

In her preface to the CD liner notes, Koh writes, “The Bach & Beyond project presents the Bach works I have long loved in communion with contemporary music by composers I am dedicated to.”

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On *Bach & Beyond Part 1*, Koh leads a musical journey from light to darkness and back again, a trajectory she says “epitomizes our struggle to achieve transcendence.”

From Bach to Mazzoli

Bookended by Bach’s Second and Third Partitas for solo violin, the CD program “is not unlike a very large-scale suite,” writes Alison Ames in the CD notes.

The seven-movement Partita No. 3 in E Major, which opens the CD, is Bach’s “shortest and perhaps most exuberant work for solo violin,” Koh writes.

The Belgian composer Ysaÿe (1858–1931) wrote his Sonata No. 2, Op. 27, to play to the strengths of violin virtuoso Jacques Thibaud, to whom it’s dedicated. The piece quotes directly from the jaunty prelude of Bach’s Third Partita. The rest is based largely on the austere melody of the *Dies Irae* of the requiem Mass.

Like Ysaÿe, Finland’s Saariaho (b. 1952) opens her *Nocturne* with the familiar notes of Bach’s Partita No. 3. A *Fanfare* magazine review of the first (and only other) recording of *Nocturne* said the piece “swirls and skitters around selected pitches, couched in a variety of tonal effects.” Saariaho dedicated it to the memory of Polish composer Witold Lutoslawski. *Nocturne* had its premiere in Helsinki in 1994.

The Los Angeles Philharmonic commissioned Mazzoli’s *Dissolve, O My Heart* for the “Bach & Beyond” project. The title comes from an aria in the *St. John Passion*, but Mazzoli (b. 1980) says it “has many potential interpretations.” Koh gave the world-premiere performance in 2011 at the Philharmonic’s Green Umbrella Series at Disney Hall. *Los Angeles Times* critic Mark Swed wrote, “Mazzoli’s daunting ghost was the D minor Chaconne [of Bach’s Partita No. 2]. She began with Bach’s chord, then went her own way in a beautifully structured score.”

Koh closes the album with Bach’s Partita No. 2 in D Minor, whose last movement is the celebrated Chaconne.

Bach & Beyond Part I was produced and engineered by Judith Sherman in sessions at the American Academy of Arts and Letters in New York City in November 2011 and January 2012. It's Koh's seventh recording for Cedille Records.

Jennifer Koh and 'Bach & Beyond'

Jennifer Koh's "Bach and Beyond" recitals have been called "thoughtful and engaging" (*San Francisco Chronicle*), "one of the top [local] classical performances of the year" (*Detroit Free Press*), and "a daring and intelligent thematic menu played with uncommon taste, flair and expressive acuity" (*Cleveland Plain Dealer*). Scotland's *Edinburgh News* described her concert as "a fascinating musical journey."

Koh launched "Bach and Beyond" in 2009 in commemoration of the 325th anniversary of Bach's birth and has since performed the recitals worldwide. She is performing the second recital program through 2013. She'll tour the third and final program from 2013 to 2015. The *Bach & Beyond* CD programs will diverge in some respects from the corresponding concert programs because Koh recorded a number of the concert works on previous Cedille albums.

The *New York Times*, in its review of Koh's 2011 landmark, marathon concert of all six Bach unaccompanied violin sonatas and partitas, said, "By refusing to specialize in a particular corner of the violin repertory, and leaping freely among several, Jennifer Koh has built a following that draws on , and ideally brings together, several of the music world's style-conscious enclaves."

Her website is www.jenniferkoh.com.

Cedille Records

Grammy award-winning Cedille Records (pronounced say-DEE) has been dedicated to showcasing the most noteworthy classical artists in and from the Chicago area since its launch in late 1989.

The audiophile-oriented label releases albums as physical CDs, “lossless” FLAC downloads, and MP3 downloads. All are available directly via its website, www.cedillerecords.org. In spring 2011, Cedille began offering new releases as better-than-CD-quality 24-bit FLAC downloads. Earlier albums are available as CD-quality 16-bit FLAC downloads. In early 2012, Cedille began offering extra-high-quality 320 Kbps MP3 file downloads of new releases. Earlier titles are available as 256 Kbps MP3s (same as the new iTunes standard).

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Bach & Beyond Part 1
(Cedille Records CDR 90000 134)

J. S. Bach: Partita No. 3 in E Major, BWV 1006 (21:16)
Eugène Ysaÿe: Sonata No. 2, Op. 27 (12:59)
Kaija Saariaho: Nocturne (4:48)
Missy Mazzoli: Dissolve, O My Heart (8:13)
J.S. Bach: Partita No. 2 in D Minor, BWV 1004 (30:57)

Jennifer Koh, violin