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News

Recording release date: September 9, 2022

**Rachel Barton Pine Plays Florence Price's
Violin Concerto No. 2 with Jonathon Heyward
Conducting the Royal Scottish National Orchestra
on Updated Edition of Landmark Album
September 9 on Cedille Records**

**'Violin Concertos by Black Composers Through the Centuries'
marks 25th anniversary of Pine's pioneering album of works
by Classical and Romantic composers of African descent**

**New release reprises violinist's 1997 Cedille recording of concertos
by Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges; José White Lafitte;
and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor**

Chicago-based violinist Rachel Barton Pine plays 20th-century American composer Florence Price's Violin Concerto No. 2 with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, conducted by Jonathon Heyward, on her new Cedille Records album *Violin Concertos by Black Composers Through the Centuries*, available September 9, 2022.

The new release marks the 25th anniversary of Pine's pioneering 1997 *Violin Concertos by Black Composers of the 18th and 19th Centuries* on Cedille.

In addition to Pine's 2022 recording of the Price concerto, the new album includes reissues of three performances from the earlier program, which Pine recorded with the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras' Encore Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Daniel Hege: Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges' Violin Concerto in A major, Op. 5, No. 2; José White Lafitte's Violin Concerto in F-sharp minor; and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's Romance in G major for Violin and Orchestra (Cedille Records CDR 90000 214).

The 25th anniversary edition substitutes Price's concerto, recorded in January 2022, for J.J.O., Le Chevalier de Meude-Monpas' Concerto No. 1 in D major. Recent research indicates the 18th-century French

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composer probably was not of African descent, Pine writes in her introductory essay, in which she discusses the genesis of the original project and the initiatives it spawned.

The album booklet includes extensive program notes by Mark Clague, who wrote the liner notes for the original recording. Clague is professor of musicology and associate dean at the University of Michigan's School of Music, Theatre & Dance in Ann Arbor.

Life-Changing Album

“Sometimes an album can change your life,” Pine writes, citing *Violin Concertos by Black Composers of the 18th and 19th Centuries* (Cedille Records CDR 90000 035) as a personal example.

That project, she says, “opened my eyes to the lack of awareness of and access to the repertoire and history of Black composers,” while generating “an outpouring of requests” for more information about the composers and where to obtain their music.

Subsequently, the violinist's Rachel Barton Pine Foundation created its Music by Black Composers (MBC) initiative in 2001 to encourage awareness of, access to, and programming of the music of Black classical composers, which Pine calls “a primary focus of my research and advocacy efforts for over 20 years.”

MBC has collected more than 900 works by 450-plus Black composers from the 18th–21st centuries. Among many other activities, MBC publishes educational materials and offers numerous resources including free, public directories of more than 150 historic composers and over 300 living ones.
musicbyblackcomposers.org.

Unique Personalities

Immersed in the musical milieus of their eras, the four composers heard on the album created compositions that “confront the classical tradition and extend it, revealing a unique creative personality,” Clague writes. Each “gives voice to a multifaceted personal experience, offering a statement of individual humanity.”

Composer-violinist Saint-Georges (1745–1799), whose image graces the album cover, was born on the island of Guadeloupe to a noble French plantation owner and an enslaved African woman. Educated in France, he became a celebrated violinist, renowned conductor, and influential composer. He was among the

first in France to write string quartets; his *symphonies concertantes* for two violins and string orchestra inspired Mozart.

His three-movement Concerto for Violin in A major, No. 2 (ca. 1775), displays a “virtuosic emphasis on the upper register” that “extends five pitches higher than any of Mozart’s (exactly contemporaneous) violin concertos,” Clague writes. He took advantage of recent developments in bow design “to emphasize fleeting and precise passagework.”

Saint-Georges was also renowned for his swordsmanship. Pine says, “I believe that some of the more extreme demands he places on the bow arm must have been inspired by his prowess as a fencer!”

A composer and widely touring concert violinist, White Lafitte (1836–1918), born in Cuba, was the son of a white French businessman father and an Afro-Cuban mother.

Written in a rare key for a violin concerto, his Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in F-sharp minor “is by far the most virtuosic work in this recording,” Clague writes, citing frequent double stops, “often in parallel octaves, and rippling arpeggios that traverse the entire range of the violin in just a few beats.”

The son of an Englishwoman and a Black father from Sierra Leone, composer-violinist Coleridge-Taylor (1875–1912) was born in Hoborn, near London. His single-movement Romance in G major, Op. 39, “eschews technical display in favor of lush harmonic and melodic beauty,” Clague says. Pine calls the Romance a “gorgeous” work “that rivals those of Dvořák and Beethoven.”

Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, Florence Price (1887–1953), the only composer on the album who didn’t play the violin, was active in her adopted hometown of Chicago until her death. In 1933, she became the first African American woman to have a full-length work performed by a major orchestra when the Chicago Symphony played her Symphony No. 1 in E minor.

Price’s Violin Concerto No. 2 was among a trove of unpublished works discovered in 2009 in her former summer cottage outside St. Anne, Illinois.

The single-movement work with contrasting sections “is cast in the composer’s mature, modernist musical style,” Clague writes. “Price weaves together two primary musical themes within a skillfully contrapuntal and expressively chromatic idiom.”

Recording Team

All works except the Price concerto were recorded by producer James Ginsburg and engineer Lawrence Rock June 3–5, 1997, in the Chapel of St. John the Beloved, Arlington Heights, Illinois. The Price was recorded by producer Ginsburg and engineer Hedd Morfett-Jones on January 7, 2022, in Scotland’s Studio, Glasgow.

Rachel Barton Pine on Cedille Records

Violinist Rachel Barton Pine is Cedille Records’ best-selling artist. She regularly solos with leading orchestras including, in 2022, the Chicago and Vienna Radio Symphonies and Grant Park Orchestra. She has also performed on *The Today Show*, *CBS Sunday Morning*, and NPR’s *Tiny Desk*.

Her discography of 40 albums includes 21 for Cedille as orchestral soloist, recitalist, and chamber musician in repertoire spanning the Renaissance to the 20th century. Her *Violin Lullabies* topped *Billboard*’s Traditional Classical Albums chart. Her recording of Brahms and Joachim violin concertos with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Carlos Kalmar led to her lifetime loan of the “ex-Soldat” Guarneri “del Gesu” violin. Her Cedille catalog is online at cedillerecords.org/artists/rachel-barton-pine.

In addition to running the Music by Black Composers initiative, her Rachel Barton Pine Foundation assists young artists. Website: rachelbartonpine.com

Jonathon Heyward

Conductor Jonathon Heyward was just named music director designate of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. 2022 marks his second year as chief conductor of the Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie. He has guest conducted a host of major orchestras in the UK, Europe, and the US. Website: jonathonheyward.com

Royal Scottish National Orchestra

Formed in 1891, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra is one of Europe’s leading symphony orchestras. Led by Music Director Thomas Søndergård, the orchestra performs regularly across Scotland and has made recent tours to the USA, China, and Europe. Its discography of more than 200 releases includes winners of a *Gramophone* award, two *Diapason d’Or* awards, and eight Grammy nominations. More at rsno.org.uk.

Daniel Hege

Conductor Daniel Hege served for 11 seasons as music director of the Syracuse Symphony and in June 2009 was appointed music director of the Wichita Symphony. In 2015 he became principal guest conductor of the Tulsa Symphony and in May 2018 was appointed music director of the Binghamton (NY) Philharmonic. He has held assistant and associate conducting posts with the Baltimore and Kansas City Symphonies, among others, and has guest conducted the symphony orchestras of Detroit, Seattle, Indianapolis, and other major cities. More information at csmartists.com/artists/daniel-hege.htm.

Encore Chamber Orchestra of the CYSO

The Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras' (CYSO) Encore Chamber Orchestra was founded in 1994 by Daniel Hege, its then-music director, as a specialized training and performance orchestra for CYSO musicians who aspire to be career professionals. The 1997 version of the Encore Chamber Orchestra heard on *Violin Concertos by Black Composers Through the Centuries* consisted of some of the CYSO's finest then-current members plus young CYSO alumni who had gone on to professional performing careers. The CYSO is currently led by Allen Tinkham, its music director since 2001. Website: cyso.org

Cedille Records

Launched in November 1989 by James Ginsburg, Grammy Award-winning Cedille Records (pronounced say-DEE) is dedicated to showcasing and promoting the most noteworthy classical artists in and from the Chicago area. The label's catalog of more than 200 front-line albums brims with attractive, off-the-beaten-path repertoire from the Baroque era to the present day. Works from the classical canon, when they do appear, are usually heard in particularly imaginative pairings.

Cedille has recorded more than 180 Chicago artists and ensembles, with over 80 making their professional recording debuts on the label. Its catalog includes the world premieres of more than 400 classical compositions.

Violin Concertos by Black Composers Through the Centuries is available on CD, as MP3 and hi-resolution FLAC downloads, and on all major streaming platforms.

An independent nonprofit enterprise, Cedille Records is the label of Cedille Chicago, NFP. Sales of physical CDs and digital downloads and streams cover only a small percentage of the label's costs. Tax-

deductible donations from individual music-lovers and grants from charitable organizations account for most of its revenue.

Cedille's headquarters are at 4311 N. Ravenswood Ave., Suite 202, Chicago, IL 60613; call 773-989-2515; email: info@cedillerecords.org. Website: cedillerecords.org.

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*Violin Concertos by Black Composers
Through the Centuries*
Rachel Barton Pine, violin
Cedille Records CDR 90000 214

Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges: Violin Concerto
in A major, Op. 5, No. 2 (23:44)
José White Lafitte: Violin Concerto in F-sharp minor (21:32)
Samuel Coleridge-Taylor: Romance in G major for Violin
and Orchestra, Op. 39 (12:32)
Encore Chamber Orchestra,
Daniel Hege, conductor

Florence Price: Violin Concerto No. 2 (14:42)
Royal Scottish National Orchestra,
Jonathon Heyward, conductor