

For Immediate Release



**CEDILLE RECORDS RELEASES WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING OF
MISCHA ZUPKO'S *HARPSICHORD CONCERTO*, PERFORMED BY JORY
VINIKOUR & FRIENDS, JUNE 12**



Scored for harpsichord and string quartet, the piece also features violinists Desirée Ruhstrat and Charlene Kluegel, violist Margaret O'Malley, and cellist David Cunliffe

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS (MAY XX, 2026) — On June 12, Cedille Records will release the world premiere recording of **Mischa Zupko's** highly virtuosic three-movement *Harpsichord Concerto* as a digital single available on all streaming platforms. Composed for harpsichord and string quartet, the work spotlights two-time Grammy-nominated American harpsichordist **Jory Vinikour**, praised for his "sense of spontaneity and security" (*San Francisco Chronicle*). He is joined by a quartet of artists known for their longstanding collaboration, refined ensemble playing, and combination of

technical command and bold interpretive choices: multi-Grammy-nominated violinist **Desirée Ruhstrat**, hailed for her “intensive fire, sleepwalking assuredness, and deeply grounded musical personality” (*Berlin Tagesspiegel*); violinist **Charlene Kluegel**, recognized for her “unsentimental verve, musical feeling, and great technical skill” (*New York Classical Review*); rising Chicago-based violist **Margaret O’Malley**, a multi-award-winning artist; and cellist **David Cunliffe**, “a cellist whose polish gives way to moments of artful recklessness” (*WQXR*).

Originally written for American harpsichordist Bradley Brookshire, who premiered the work with the Corigliano String Quartet at New York’s Merkin Hall in 2003, Zupko’s *Harpsichord Concerto* draws on influences from J.S. Bach’s motor-rhythmic Prelude in C Minor (*Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book I), François Couperin’s French-style ornamentation, and Domenico Scarlatti’s bright and percussive keyboard writing. Traveling through three movements, the concerto is naturally propelled by writing that fits the harpsichord’s traditional format, and is brought into contemporary tonality through the reshaping of older musical styles into a modern expression.

In the first movement, “Preamble,” the harpsichord deploys a continuous 16th-note pattern, reminiscent of Bach’s C-minor Prelude, while the strings enter with sustained notes that support the harmony. As the harpsichord shifts harmonically, the strings lag and fall out of alignment, gradually creating wildly different textures between the two parts. The second movement, “Whispers,” incorporates French techniques, with the harpsichord performing ornate trills characteristic of Couperin’s compositional style. Creating a colorful, impressionistic texture, the harpsichord is distanced from the string quartet, becoming a voice of longing, against the quartet as a voice from the beyond. The final movement, “The Dance,” is inspired by the Baroque tradition of such endings and Scarlatti’s upbeat keyboard writing. Opening with a ritornello that recurs several times throughout the movement, the theme is developed through interventions by the string quartet, creating striking contrasts with the straightforward presentation of the dance theme, including breaking into a tango.

The *Harpsichord Concerto* marks Zupko’s third release on Cedille Records, Vinikour’s fourth, Ruhstrat and Cunliffe’s 14th, and Kluegel and O’Malley’s first. The work was made possible by a grant from the Fromm Music Foundation.

ABOUT MISCHA ZUPKO

Mischa Zupko writes music for performers who seek depth, risk, and mastery, creating immediate and emotionally powerful experiences for audiences. His commissions, recordings, and collaborations with many of today’s leading soloists and chamber musicians reflect a voice shaped by urgency, depth, and artistic fearlessness. His work has been described as “harrowing and gripping” (*Classical Voice North America*), “a powerhouse of the evening” (*Chicago Tribune*), and “music that simply asserts itself with force and eloquence” (*Positive Feedback*). He has received favorable reviews in *The New York Times* and *L.A. Times* and is a prominent figure in Chicago’s new music scene. Zupko’s music has been commissioned and performed by major ensembles, including the Grant Park Orchestra and Chorus, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Pacific Symphony, the New York Youth Symphony, the Civitas Ensemble, the Fulcrum Point New Music Project, Eighth Blackbird, and the Lincoln Trio. Additional support has come from the Fromm

Foundation, Barlow Endowment, and Gilmore International Keyboard Festival. His works have been presented at Carnegie Hall, Ravinia, the Moscow Conservatory, and major festivals, including Aspen. His recordings reflect a balance of virtuosity and emotional immediacy. His Cedille release *Eclipse* (2016), featuring Wendy Warner and Sang Mee Lee, was widely praised, and a forthcoming album will feature Timothy McAllister, Civitas Ensemble, and ~Nois Saxophone Quartet. His honors include first prize in the Pacific Symphony's American Composers Competition, multiple ASCAP Morton Gould Awards, and the Aspen Music Festival's Jacob Druckman Prize. Zupko teaches at DePaul University and serves as Artistic Advisor to Nova Linea Musica. MischaZupko.com

ABOUT JORY VINIKOUR

Harpsichordist Jory Vinikour performs repertoire ranging from Bach to Poulenc, appearing as a soloist with leading orchestras, including the Cleveland Orchestra, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, and the Philharmonic of Radio France. He has collaborated with distinguished conductors such as Stéphane Denève, Martin Haselböck, Armin Jordan, and Marc Minkowski, and appears regularly in recital series and festivals worldwide. His debut recording on Sono Luminus, featuring the complete harpsichord works of Jean-Philippe Rameau, earned a 2013 Grammy nomination for Best Classical Instrumental Solo; his *Toccatas* (Modern American Music for Harpsichord) received the same honor two years later. His recording of Bach's *Partitas* (2016) was widely acclaimed. He made his Cedille Records debut with *J.S. Bach: The Sonatas for Violin & Harpsichord* (2018), with Rachel Barton Pine, followed by *20th Century Harpsichord Concertos* with the Chicago Philharmonic (2019) and *L'Unique: Harpsichord Music of François Couperin* (2020). A double-CD set of sonatas by Domenico Scarlatti will be released on Aparté in 2027. Vinikour made his Ravinia Festival recital debut in 2019 and returned in 2023. Other appearances include Printemps des Arts de Monte Carlo, Carnegie Hall Presents, the Library of Congress, Salle Cortot, and the Valletta Baroque Festival. A sought-after collaborator, he has performed with singers including Anne Sofie von Otter and Vivica Genaux. Recent engagements include appearances as conductor/soloist with major orchestras across the U.S., Europe, and Asia. In June 2026, he conducts Charpentier's *David et Jonathas* with Chicago's Haymarket Opera Company. JoryVinikour.com

ABOUT DESIRÉE RUHSTRAT

Multi-Grammy-nominated violinist Desirée Ruhstrat is recognized as a soloist, chamber musician, and educator. She made her solo debut at age seven in Chicago's Orchestra Hall and her professional debut at 12 with Lukas Foss and the Milwaukee Symphony. In 2024, she performed the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the Ravinia Festival. Ruhstrat is a founding member of the Lincoln Trio, which has performed at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall, Lincoln Center, and major festivals worldwide. The Trio's recordings have received multiple Grammy nominations, including *Trios from Our Homelands* (Cedille, 2017), *Fantasías de Buenos Aires* (Acqua, 2024 Latin Grammy nomination), and James Whitbourn's *Anneliese* (Naxos, 2014). In 2015, she co-founded the Black Oak Ensemble. Their debut album, *Silenced Voices*, was named among the *Chicago Tribune's* "Top 100 Recordings of 2019," and their follow-up, *Avant l'orage*, reached No. 1 on Billboard's Traditional Classical Albums chart. She serves on the

faculties of Northwestern University, the Merit School of Music, and Midwest Young Artists Conservatory.

ABOUT CHARLENE KLUEGEL

Hailed for her “unsentimental verve, musical feeling and great technical skill” (*New York Classical Review*), violinist Charlene Kluegel is known for a versatility that transcends traditional classical boundaries. An award-winning performer, she has collaborated with members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Cuarteto Casals, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Chicago Lyric Opera, and Third Coast Percussion, as well as with artists including Jason Vieaux, Marta Aznavoorian, and Robert McDuffie. She has appeared as a soloist and chamber musician at venues and festivals including Vienna’s Musikverein and Ehrbar-Saal, the Ravinia and Grand Teton Music Festivals, the Kennedy Center, and the Banff Centre. Kluegel served as first violinist of Chicago’s Fifth House Ensemble and is cofounder of Duo FAE; their 2025 Albany Records release received widespread acclaim. A committed advocate for new music, she has premiered works by Dan Visconti, Julia Adolphe, Steven Snowden, and Stacy Garrop. She teaches at Carthage College and the Mostly Modern Festival.

ABOUT MARGARET O’MALLEY

Margaret O’Malley received her Master’s degree in Viola Performance at Rice University’s Shepherd School of Music (2026, studio of Ivo van der Werff). Previously, she studied at The Juilliard School (under Misha Amory and Heidi Castleman) and, during summers, at the Meadowmount School of Music, Aspen Music Festival and School, and Bowdoin International Music Festival. Originally from Illinois, Margaret has been recognized for her solo and chamber music performances on both violin and viola by Chicago’s Musicians Club of Women (Awards Competition), the Rembrandt Chamber Musicians (High School Chamber Music Competition), the DuPage Symphony Orchestra (Young Artist Auditions), and the ENKOR International Music Competition. She has soloed with numerous orchestras in the Chicago area, including the Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra and the Oistrakh Symphony of Chicago.

ABOUT DAVID CUNLIFFE

Grammy- and Latin Grammy–nominated cellist David Cunliffe has built a career spanning major concert halls in Europe and the Americas, chamber music, and a commitment to new music. A native of England, he studied at the Royal Northern College of Music and the International Menuhin Music Academy in Gstaad, where he performed with Camerata Lysy under Yehudi Menuhin. A founding member of the Lincoln Trio, Cunliffe has performed at Carnegie’s Weill Hall, Alice Tully Hall, the Ravinia Festival, and venues worldwide. The Trio has toured extensively across the United States, Europe, Asia, and South America, and performed at the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial for President Barack Obama. Their Cedille recordings have received critical acclaim, including a 2017 Grammy nomination for *Trios from Our Homelands* and a 2024 Latin Grammy nomination for *Fantasías de Buenos Aires*. Cunliffe has appeared with the BBC Philharmonic and BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and is a founding member of the Black Oak Ensemble. He serves on the faculty of the New Music School in Chicago.

ABOUT 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. A nonprofit record label, Cedille's mission is to produce and disseminate audiophile recordings presenting the finest classical music performers and composers in and from Chicago. The recordings further the careers and legacies of these Chicago artists as Cedille invests not only in the recordings but also in the artists represented on them. 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, including world premieres of well over 400 classical compositions. Works from the classical canon, when they do appear, are usually heard in particularly imaginative programs. Cedille never removes albums from its catalog, and each recording is a permanent documentation of the artists' work. With more than 180 Chicago artists and ensembles, over 80 making their professional recording debuts on the label, Cedille brings the area's most significant classical music artists to a worldwide listening public. Cedille recordings are available on CD, as MP3 and hi-resolution FLAC downloads, and on all major streaming platforms. Learn more about Cedille Records and explore the label's catalog at cedillerecords.org.

***Harpsichord Concerto* by Mischa Zupko**

CEDILLE RECORDS — 3030

Jory Vinikour, harpsichord
Desirée Ruhstrat, violin
Charlene Kluegel, violin
Margaret O'Malley, viola
David Cunliffe, cello

MISCHA ZUPKO (b. 1971)

Harpsichord Concerto (15:02)

- 1 I. Preamble (2:49)
- 2 II. Whispers (4:52)
- 3 III. The Dance (7:16)

TT: (15:02)

WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING

Produced by James Ginsburg and engineered by Bill Maylone, Mischa Zupko's Harpsichord Concerto was recorded on November 11, 2025, at the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts at the University of Chicago.

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