9-11-2009

Guest Artist Recital: Zuill Bailey, cello

Zuill Bailey

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ITHACA COLLEGE CONCERTS 2009-10

Zuill Bailey, violoncello
Awadagin Pratt, piano

Ford Hall
Friday, September 11, 2009
8:15 p.m.
Spiegel im Spiegel (1978)  Arvo Pärt  
(b. 1935)

Sonata for cello and piano in D minor, Op. 40  Dmitri Shostakovich  
(b. 1906-1975)

Allegro non troppo  
Allegro  
Largo  
Allegro

INTERMISSION

Variations Concertante, Op. 17  Felix Mendelssohn  
(b. 1809-1847)

Sonata for cello and piano in F Major, Op. 99  Johannes Brahms  
(b. 1833-1897)

Allegro vivace  
Adagio affettuoso  
Allegro passionato  
Allegro molto

Zuill Bailey records exclusively for Telarc Records.  
Awadagin Pratt recordings are available on EMI Classics.

Management for Mr. Bailey:  
Colbert Artists Management  
111 West 57th Street  
New York, NY 10019

Management for Mr. Pratt:  
CM Artists New York  
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pagers.

Born in the Soviet Republic of Estonia on 11 September 1935, Pärt received instruction in piano, music theory, and literature in a children’s music school. Beginning in 1954 he studied composition in the college music program in Tallinn under Harri Otsa; after a two-year interruption for compulsory military service, Pärt returned for the academic year 1956–7 and worked with Veljo Tormis. Accepted into the Tallinn Conservatory in the fall of 1957, Pärt worked with Heino Eller (1887–1970), who had studied composition with Aleksandr Glazunov (1865–1936) and violin with Leopold Auer (1845–1930). While still a student, Pärt secured work as a recording engineer with Estonian Radio; he composed music for the theater and numerous films. During the 1960s, Pärt composed “a rich series of works using serial and collage techniques” (Hillier, 32) By 1976, after studying early music and Gregorian chant, Pärt began to compose “using a tonal technique of his own creation which he calls ‘tintinnabuli’ (after the bell-like resemblance of notes in a triad)” (Hillier, *Grove Music Online*).

During the exodus of Soviet Jews in the 1970s, Pärt applied for exit visas for his family (Pärt’s wife was Jewish). On 18 January 1980, Pärt, his wife and their two sons, boarded the train in Tallinn for Vienna. The following year they moved to Berlin, where they presently reside. Since 1980, Pärt has written primarily for chorus or small vocal ensemble.

*Spiegel im Spiegel* (Mirror in the Mirror), written for violin and piano and then transcribed for cello, was the last work that Pärt completed before leaving his native Estonia; it is dedicated to the Russian violinist and conductor Vladimir Spivakov (b. 1944). The piece is rooted in F major by the piano, which begins by repeating the F₃ chord melodically six times. The cello uses A as its main pitch and builds an additive melodic sequence around it (a note below A, a note above; two notes below A, two notes above, etc.) The additive melodic process continues until it reaches nine scalar pitches slowly moving up into A and down into A. The scale passages to and from the A are mirror patterns. Each time the cello plays the A, the F₃ chord is played six times in the piano. Against each of the other cello pitches, the piano repeats a three-note arpeggio that begins a third above the cello pitch and ends an octave above the cello pitch. Throughout the piece, the piano is similar to a perpetuum mobile. The musical effect of *Spiegel im Spiegel* is an austerity of mood and an economy of gesture as the motion into the A and the stable F₃ triad that accompanies it is tilted first one way, then the other.

**Dmitry D. Shostakovich. Sonata for Cello and Piano, op. 40**

The cello sonata was written during August & September 1934 and completed on 19 September, just before Dmitry Dmitriyevich’s twenty-eighth birthday. It is dedicated to the cellist Victor Kubatsky (1891–1971), founder of the Stradivarius Quartet and (merely) the principal cellist of the Bolshoi Theater Orchestra. Kubatsky and Shostakovich premiered the sonata on 25 December 1934 in Leningrad. The sonata, published in 1935 in Leningrad, “received a hostile reception. People didn’t understand it and were somewhat disappointed” (Wilson, 104), but gradually it attracted adherents. Ironically, Shostakovich and Kubatsky were in Arkhangel’sk for a performance when Dmitry Dmitriyevich read the defamatory unsigned article
“Muddle Instead of Music” in Pravda, the Communist Party newspaper, which described his opera Lady MacBeth as “musical chaos.” After having played to full houses for two years, what had been a jewel of the Soviet stage was summarily banned. “Shostakovich was now a marked man, in every sense of the word” (Taruskin, 366).

The first movement, Allegro non troppo, is cast in sonata form. The exposition presents two lyrical themes, the first in d and the second in b. The exposition closes with an ostinato that permeates the development. The recapitulation omits the primary theme, but P returns in the coda; the movement closes with the ostinato material. The second movement is a lively waltz in which there is the constant reiteration of the motive, which is treated with the ironic humor that pervaded Shostakovich’s music during the first decade of his creative career. The Largo, an elegiac aria, begins and ends with con sordino cello. The fourth movement, a rondo with dazzling virtuosic outbursts, has a gradual diminuendo to the closing cadence, and then ends abruptly with an outburst that is akin to a slap in the face; it is a wonderful example of Shostakovich’s satire that “arose out of a play of incongruities.” (Taruskin, 365).

**Felix Mendelssohn. Variations Concertante, op. 17**

In 1804 Mendelssohn’s father Abraham (1776–1835), in partnership with his brother, established the Berlin banking firm J. & A. Mendelssohn, which survived until its liquidation by the Nazis in 1938. In the same year, he married Lea Salomon (1777–1842) and they had four children: Fanny (1805–47), Felix (1809–47), Rebecka (1811–58), and Paul (1812–74). The children were raised in an atmosphere that emulated the ideal classical education: ancient and modern languages, mathematics, drawing, gymnastics, swimming—and, above all, music. Felix studied piano, violin, organ, and, in 1819, Felix and Fanny began theory and composition lessons with Carl Friedrich Zelter (1758–1832), a composer and conductor of the famed Berlin Singakademie. Within six years, Mendelssohn had “composed his first indisputable masterpiece, the Octet op. 20,” (Todd, Grover Music Online). On 30 Jan 1829, when Mendelssohn was twenty, he finished his Variationes concertantes, op. 17, for piano and violoncello, which he dedicated to his brother Paul, an accomplished cellist. Mendelssohn traveled to London in April 1829, where, on 15 June, his Variationes concertantes was premiered.

The Variationes concertantes is a set of sectional variations with a theme and eight short variations that conclude with a lengthy coda. The theme, which has two different phrases that are stated first in the piano and then in the cello, is truncated in all but variation 7. The variations feature changes in tempo, texture, mode (variation 7 is in the parallel minor), articulation, character, dynamics, and timbre (the cello plays pizzicato throughout variation 5). The technical demands of this set of variations are virtuosic for both the cello and the piano and build to a climax in the coda.

**Johannes Brahms. Sonata No. 2 for Cello and Piano, op. 99**

“He spent his summers at various small resorts or hideaways, working out his music in his head during his habitual early morning walks” (MacDonald, 292). The summer of 1886, his first at Thun in Switzerland, was remarkably productive: Brahms wrote
his Second Cello Sonata in F, op. 99, the Second Violin Sonata in A, op. 100, the Piano Trio in c, op. 101, and several songs for opuses 104 and 105. The Second Cello Sonata was written for his friend Robert Hausmann (1852–1909), a gifted musician and the cellist of the Joachim Quartet. The second sonata, which “stands in graphic contrast to the E minor Sonata of over twenty years earlier” (MacDonald, 331), was premiered by Hausmann and Brahms on 24 November 1886 in Vienna.

The first of the four movements, an Allegro vivace cast in sonata form, begins with a piano tremolo that permeates the movement as it is transformed into cello cross-string tremolos at the close of exposition, the development, the recapitulation, and the coda. The disjunct and syncopated cello line is built on a rhythmic motive that pervades the movement. The development begins in the distant key of f# minor (the Neapolitan relationship) and as the movement comes to a subdued close, the piano plays an augmented chordal version of the opening theme. The Adagio affettuoso opens in the distant key of F major, and the contrasting section of this ABA’ form is in f minor. The movement is replete with imitation and double counterpoint between the cello and piano.

The scherzo (Allegro passionate) is in f minor and its first thematic idea is “cousin to that of the Finale of the Third Symphony” (MacDonald, 332). The Trio, in the parallel major, is less rhythmically complex (no two against three) and the singing melody resides solely in the cello. The Allegro molto finale is a five-part rondo that opens with a mezza voce refrain. The second episode is in b minor and the refrain returns in the piano in Gb major (enharmonic of F#) to summarize the duality of F and its Neapolitan relationship throughout the sonata, as well as the juxtaposition of the major and minor modes. As Edward Hanslick wrote in the *Musikalisches un Litterarisches: Kritiken und Schilderungen* (1889),

in the Cello Sonata, passion rules, fiery to the point of vehemence, now defiantly challenging, now painfully lamenting. How boldly the first Allegro theme begins, how stormily the Allegro flows! It is true that the passion subsides into quiet mourning in the Adagio and fades away, reconciled, in the finale. But the beating pulse of the earlier sections still reverberates, and pathos remains the determining psychological characteristic of the whole (149).

Mary I. Arlin
29 August 2009

Sources


The Artists

A multifaceted musician of consummate virtuosity, Zuill Bailey's rare combination of compelling artistry, technical finesse, and engaging personality has secured his place as one of the most sought-after cellists today.

In summer 2009, Bailey joins the Nashville Symphony for Dvorak's Cello Concerto with Danail Rachev and performs at Alaska's Sikta Music Festival, where he was recently appointed music director-designate. He plays a recital of the Bach Cello Suites at Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, appears at the Australian Festival of Chamber Music, and returns to Maverick Concerts. He is joined at Ravinia by frequent recital partner, pianist Simone Dinnerstein, for an all-Beethoven program, celebrating the August 25 release of their two-disc recording of the complete Beethoven sonatas on Telarc International.

In the 2009-10 season, Bailey will play recitals at Ithaca College and at Caramoor with pianist Awadagin Pratt, and at the Washington Performing Arts Society and the Artist Series at Florida State University with pianist Orion Weiss. Other recitals include dates in California, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, and Utah. He performs the Brahms Double, Dvorak, Elgar, and Shostakovich concerti and Strauss's Don Quixote with the symphonies of Asheville, Napa Valley, Waterloo/Cedar Falls, and Wheeling, and the National Philharmonic at Strathmore, among others. International dates include performances of the Beethoven Triple Concerto with the Israel Philharmonic and the Perlman-Schmidt-Bailey trio (pianist Navah Perlman and violinist Giora Schmidt).

An avid chamber musician, Zuill Bailey regularly performs with the Perlman-Schmidt-Bailey trio, and with pianists Awadagin Pratt and Simone Dinnerstein. Bailey has appeared in concert with such renowned musicians as Lynn Harrell, the Juilliard String Quartet, Itzhak Perlman, and Janos Starker. Recent festival appearances include returns to the Santa Fe and Montreal Chamber Music festivals, the Bard Music Festival, Maverick Concerts, and performances at the Ravinia, Vail Valley, Chautauqua and Wintergreen festivals.

Among his generation of concert artists, pianist Awadagin Pratt is acclaimed for his musical insight and intensely involving performances that receive tremendous audience response and press attention throughout the United States.

Born in Pittsburgh, Awadagin Pratt began studying piano at the age of six. Three years later, having moved to Normal, Illinois, with his family, he also began studying violin. At age 16 he entered the University of Illinois, where he studied piano, violin, and conducting. He subsequently enrolled at the Peabody Conservatory of Music, where he became the first student in that school's history to receive diplomas in three performance areas: piano, violin, and conducting.
In 1992 Pratt won the Naumburg International Piano Competition and two years later was awarded a 1994 Avery Fisher Career Grant. He has played numerous recitals throughout the United States, including performances in New York at Lincoln Center; in Washington, D.C., at the Kennedy Center; in Los Angeles at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion; and in Chicago's Orchestra Hall. His many orchestral performances include appearances with the New York Philharmonic, Orchestra of St. Luke's, Minnesota Orchestra, and the Pittsburgh, St. Louis, National, Detroit, and New Jersey symphonies.

Major summer festival engagements include Ravinia, Blossom, Wolf Trap, Caramoor and Aspen, the Hollywood Bowl, and the Mostly Mozart Festival in Tokyo. Pratt is also the artistic director of the Next Generation Mozart Festival, a two-week chamber music festival in Lancaster, Pennsylvania; tours with the Dedalus String Quartet; and appears with cellist Zuill Bailey in duo recitals throughout the United States.

Awadagin Pratt has been the subject of numerous articles in the national press, including Newsweek, People magazine, USA Weekend, Newsday, Emerge, and Mirabella. He was named one of the "50 Leaders of Tomorrow" in Ebony magazine's special 50th anniversary issue and has been featured on National Public Radio's Performance Today, St. Paul Sunday Morning, and Weekend Edition. On television, Pratt has performed on the Today show, Good Morning America, and Sesame Street, been profiled on CBS Sunday Morning, and was one of the featured soloists on PBS's "Live from the Kennedy Center: A Salute to Slava." He also performed twice at the White House at the invitation of President and Mrs. Clinton.

**Concert Calendar**

**September**

11  8:15  *Ithaca College Concerts 2009-10* (admission charge)
    *Guest Recital: Zuill Bailey, violoncello*
    *and Awadagin Pratt, piano*

12  10:00 *Master Classes: Zuill Bailey, violoncello*
    *and Awadagin Pratt, piano*

15  7:00  Faculty Recital: Nicholas Walker, string bass

20  2:00  *Founder's Day Concert in the Park*
    *Wind Ensemble; Stephen Peterson, conductor*
    *4:00  Faculty Recital: Pablo Cohen, guitar*

21  7:00  Chamber Orchestra; Jeffery Meyer, conductor

24  8:15  Faculty Recital: Michael Titlebaum, jazz saxophone

27  7:00  Faculty Recital: Wendy Herbener Mehne, flute

**October**

1   7:00  Harpsichord Recital: Goldberg Variations

3   Noon  *Faculty/Guest Recital: Paige Morgan*
    *and Anna Hendricksen, oboes*
    *8:15  Symphony Orchestra; Jeffery Meyer, conductor*
    *and Sheherazade*

**Ithaca College Concerts 2009-10**

(admission charge)

September 11  Zuill Bailey, violoncello
    and Awadagin Pratt, piano

February 13  Theodora Hanslowe, mezzo-soprano

March 26  Cameron Carpenter, organ