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Bach, Ragas and Wu-Wei

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REPERTOIRE AND SAMPLE PROGRAMS

Solo Cello

A juxtaposition of the complete Bach Preludes with Korde's Eastern Preludes, or "Alaps." Approximately 45 minutes in length.

Johann Sebastian Bach

Preludes of Suite No. 1 in G Major, BWV 1007 and No. 2 in D minor, BWV 1008

Shirish Korde

Alap from "Lalit"

Johann Sebastian Bach

Preludes of Suites No. 3 in C major, BWV 1009 and No. 4 in Eb Major, BWV 1010

Shirish Korde

"Anusvara - 1st Prism" for cello solo

Johann Sebastian Bach

Preludes of Suites No. 5 in c minor, BWV 1011 and No. 6 in D major, BWV 1012

Cello and Tabla

A juxtaposition of three Bach Preludes with Korde's evocative "Anusvara" for cello solo and the vibrant and rhythmically rich world of Korde's "Lalit." Approximately 40 minutes in length

Johann Sebastian Bach

Prelude of Suite No. 2 in D minor, BWV 1008

Shirish Korde

"Anusvara - 1st Prism" for cello solo

Johann Sebastian Bach

Prelude of Suite No. 3 in C major, BWV 1009

Shirish Korde

"Lalit" for cello and tabla (optional vibraphone)

Johann Sebastian Bach

Prelude of Suite No. 6 in D major, BWV 1012

Cello, Tabla and Vibraphone

This program maintains the proportions and flow of two complete suites from the Bach cello suite cycle and draws us into the East with Shirish Korde's evocative "Anusvara." Korde's masterful "Lalit" complements the program with the rich sound palette of the vibraphone and rhythmic vigor of the table. Approximate length of 70 minutes.

Johann Sebastian Bach

Suite No. 1 in G major, BWV 1007

Prelude – Allemande – Courante – Sarabande – Minuet I & II – Gigue

Shirish Korde

"Anusvara"

- intermission -

Johann Sebastian Bach

Suite No. 5 in c minor, BWV 1011

Prelude – Allemande – Courante – Sarabande – Gavotte I & II – Gigue

Shirish Korde

"Lalit" for cello, tabla and vibraphone

About the Repertoire

ANUSVARA, which in Sanskrit literally means "after-sound", has several meanings and connotations. It is closely associated with certain yogic traditions of meditation which strive for a state of "mindfulness" conducive to reaching a heightened state of spiritual awakening. Anusvara for Solo Cello is based on the exploration of the North Indian Raga "Rohini" (consisting of the pitches E, F#, G#, B and C). The beautiful arc of the raga is unfolded over a Tanpura drone, which is ever present. The melodic fragments gradually expand upwards, slowly climbing through the different registers toward the culmination point, which is followed by a relatively quick decent to the final tonic in the lowest register.

LALIT for cello and tabla is shaped after a typical North Indian classical raga performance – a meditative alap, played by the cello in an improvised manner over the Tanpura drone, is followed by two fast Gats (fixed compositions) where the tabla joins the cello. Lalit is a tribute to great Indian Bansri master Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia whose many powerful performances were very much in the composer's mind. The cello version of this piece is dedicated to Jan Müller-Szeraws. An alternate version, which includes vibraphone instead of the Tanpura drone, keeps the same cello part and follows the shape of the original, but is enriched by the extensive sound palette of the vibraphone.

The cycle of J.S. BACH'S SUITES FOR VIOLONCELLO SOLO, BWV 1007-1012 is the cornerstone of the solo cello repertoire and contains some of the best-known pieces in all classical literature. Bach is probably the most universally admired composer of the Western tradition. In his preface to Albert Schweitzer's Bach biography, the great French organist Charles Marie Widor calls Bach ... "the most universal of artists who expresses in his works the most pure religious sentiment, which is one and the same for all humans no matter of their differences of nationality or religion"... Written in turbulent times at the beginning of the 20th century, Widor eloquently ends his preface by stating that "what we admire together, revere together and understand together, unites us."