

**“Splendors of Italian Baroque” April 12 – 15, 2018 Artist Biographies**

**Jonathan Godfrey, Concertmaster**



A founding member of Mercury, violinist **Jonathan Godfrey** has served as Concertmaster and violin soloist since the orchestra’s inception. A graduate of Rice University, Mr. Godfrey is currently Assistant Concertmaster of the Houston Grand Opera and Houston Ballet Orchestras.

Mr. Godfrey has performed with many ensembles including the Houston Symphony, the Houston Bach Society, the IRIS Chamber Orchestra, and the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra. He has also served as Concertmaster of the Sinfonietta Cracovia, The Houston Grand Opera Orchestra, The American Radio Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra X, and the Pacific Music Festival Orchestra. He has concertized in the US and abroad, performing solo and chamber music

recitals in Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Houston, Interlochen, and Kansas City, as well as Guanajuato, León, Monterrey, and Santiago, Mexico; Yokohama, Kyoto, Matsumoto, Sapporo, Date, and Tokyo, Japan; and Quito and Ambato, Ecuador.

A music educator as well, Mr. Godfrey has taught for twenty years, including positions on the violin faculty of both the Interlochen Arts Camp and the Rocky Mountain Summer Conservatory. Mr. Godfrey plays on the first of a set of instruments to be made specifically for Mercury by violinmaker Dorian Barnes. This instrument was generously donated to Mercury by the Kirchner family.

**Oleg Sulyga, violin**



A native of Moscow, Russia, violinist **Oleg Sulyga** is a member of Mercury, Houston Grand Opera Orchestra, Houston Ballet, the Bach Society of Houston, and is also a frequent chamber musician.

A former member of the world-renowned ensemble, "The Moscow Virtuosi", Mr. Sulyga has performed with the Chicago Symphony, the National Symphony, and the Houston Symphony orchestras as an orchestral musician. As a chamber musician, he has performed with principals of the Wiener Philharmoniker and The Kopelman Quartet. Music festival credits include Ravinia, Prague Spring Festival, Pacific Music Festival, Colmar International Music Festival, and the Schleswig-Holstein Festival, to name a few.

Oleg Sulyga began his music education in Moscow Central Music School, later continuing at SMU in Dallas, in Paris, France and at the University of Houston under the guidance of professor Emanuel Borok.

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## Beiliang Zhu, cello



Cellist Beiliang Zhu has given solo recitals at the Bach Festival Leipzig, Boston Early Music Festival, the Seoul Bach Festival, and the Helicon Foundation, among others. She has performed with internationally acclaimed artists and ensembles including William Christie, Masaaki Suzuki, Monica Huggett, Paul O'Dette, Stephen Stubbs, Alexander Weimann, the Boston Early Music Festival Orchestra, the Early Music Vancouver Orchestra, the Juilliard Baroque, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Trinity Wall Street Orchestra, and Musica Angelica.

Beiliang seeks artistry in a wide range of repertoire and different roles as a modern cellist, baroque cellist, and violist da gamba. Posts held include the principal cellist position of Mercury Houston and section cellist with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra as an undergraduate. Awards include 1st prize and the Audience Award at the XVIII International Bach Competition in Leipzig 2012 (Violoncello/Baroque Violoncello), the first string player to have done so on a baroque instrument; Harvard Musical Association's Arthur Foote Prize; 2nd prize, the Holland America Music Society International Competition; the Eastman Cello Concerto Competition; and the American Bach Soloists Academy's 2010 Henry I. Goldberg Young Artist Prize.

Beiliang Zhu holds a Bachelor of Music Degree and Performer's Certificate from the Eastman School of Music and a Master of Music from the Juilliard School in Historical Performance with Phoebe Carrai (Baroque cello) and Sarah Cunningham (Viola da Gamba). She is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts in Violoncello under the guidance of Steven Doane, and a Master of Arts in Ethnomusicology at the Eastman School of Music.