20 April, Friday, 5pm, YST Concert Hall

SENIOR RECITAL:

HSIAO, CHIA-CHIEN, VIOLA

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J.S Bach Cello Suite No.2 in D minor, BWV 1009

- Prelude
- Allemande
- Courante
- Sarabande
- Menuet 1
- Menuet 2
- Gigue

Intermission

A. Bax Sonata for Viola

Molto Moderato,
Allegro energico ma non troppo presto
Molto lento.
J.S Bach Cello Suite No.2 in D minor, BWV 1009

J.S Bach born in 1685 in Eisenach, Germany, dead in 1750. Composed in 1717-1723, the historian believes that the cello suites were composed earlier than the violin suites. The first manuscript was finished by Bach’s second wife- Anna Magdalena, the title of the six suites were Suites a Violoncello Solo senza Basso. The interesting part is, these suites didn't write for the “new cello” which means cello played between legs, at first, it is composed for an instrument play on the shoulder. This piece is not so famous until the 1900s, the legendary cellist Pablo Casals began the study this suite and recorded the first recording, this masterpiece starts to perform in public.

The order of the suite is from the simple to complex, and it was written due to the ancient dance suite, Prelude, Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Minuets, and Gigue. To make the suite in a standard dance type, Bach composed the piece based on the dance accent and style. Prelude is a short introduction to the following dance movements of the piece, it shows the key and sets of the character of the whole suite but it is not a part of the baroque dance. Allemande is a French dance originated in the 1600s, the characteristic includes play in 4/4, double upbeat and play in moderate tempo, refer to the dance, the dancer formed a group of two and walked the length of the room with three steps and balance on one foot.

Courante originated from Italy and France. The French style usually wrote in 3/2 or 6/4 spelled as courante in a slower tempo and the Italian type is faster spelled as Corrente, for both Italian and French, the major accent is on one. Sarabande is a Spanish dance in triple meter, it first mentioned in Central America, it’s popular during 16 and 17 century. The characteristic for Sarabande includes slow tempo, in triple time and accent on both one and two. For the dance, it mostly done by women, considered as a highly sexual pantomime.

Gigue is an Italian dance in fast tempo always appears at the end of the suite. It usually plays in 3/8 or in 6/8 time. It often accents on the third beats. As a dance style, it never a court dance but the nobility danced on a social occasion.
A. Bax Sonata for Viola

Sir Arnold Edward Trevor Bax was an English composer, poet, and author. His works include songs, choral music, chamber pieces, and solo piano works, but he is best known for his orchestral music.

The viola sonata was dedicated to Lionel Tertis in 1929 while Arnold Bax was a student in London Royal Academy. Lionel Tertis was one of the faculty in Royal Academy, and he encouraged young composers to write more viola piece. Arnold Bax was influenced by Lionel Tertis's enthusiasm and quality of playing, therefore he wrote a sonata, trio, and fantasy with his music in mind.

The sonata is in three movements, start with Molto Moderato, follow by Allegro energico ma non troppo presto and end with Molto lento. Some research indicates that his sonata may have been one of his last tributes to the escapist Celtic wonderland of his youth and its sad fate. He had to confront reality, maybe that's why the first theme comes back at the end of the third movement, back to reality.

The first movement, scherzo-like movement, was influenced by a folk dance A.Bax saw in Ireland, the spirit of the ceilidh at its most uninhibited is present in many of his scores. The second movement is a fast rhapsody, the rhythmic feeling and wild shows the high technique and cooperation between soloist and pianist.

The third movement, Lento, stretched the tension from the beginning of the movement, is quieter but more painful. The music immediately transforms us into to his world as the music slowly emerges from the opening to the superbly glowing climax. The whole piece is poetic and achieves a quiet but intense beauty, hope you enjoy the concert!