



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

Emma Schmiedecke, Cello

Doctor of Musical Arts in Cello Performance Recital III

Joonghun Cho, Piano

This recital is in partial fulfilment of the Doctor of Musical Arts in Performance.
Emma Schmiedecke is a student of Joseph Johnson.

Friday, May 31, 2024 at 7:30 pm
Walter Hall, 80 Queen's Park, Toronto

PROGRAM: "THE BRITISH CELLO"

Elegiac Poem for Cello and Piano (1898)

Granville Bantock (1868-1946)

Sonata in D minor, H125 for Cello and Piano (1913-17)

Frank Bridge (1879-1941)

I. Allegro ben moderato

II. Adagio ma non troppo – Molto allegro e agitato –
Adagio ma non troppo – Allegro moderato

INTERMISSION

"On the Other Shore" for Solo Cello (2014)

Charlotte Bray (b. 1982)

Nine Bagatelles, Op. 10 for Cello and Piano (1942)

Elisabeth Lutyens (1906-1983)

I. Molto moderato

II. Adagio

III. Allegretto grazioso

IV. Poco allegro

V. Piacevole

VI. Allegro ma non troppo

VII. Solene

VIII. Commodo

XI. Andante

Sonata in A minor, Op. 5 for Cello and Piano (1887)

I. Allegro moderato

II. Adagio non troppo

III. Allegro vivace e grazioso

Ethel Smyth (1858-1944)

EMMA SCHMIEDECKE, CELLO

Praised for her “huge musicality, depth of interpretation, and technical expertise needed to distinguish oneself in the music profession” (Manhattan International Music Competition), cellist Emma Schmiedecke has established herself as a vibrant interpreter of both the classical and contemporary cello repertoire. A strong advocate for contemporary music, she has worked closely with composers Joan Tower, John Corigliano, George Tsontakis, Ana Sokolovic, Susan Botti, Stacy Garrop, Linda Catlin-Smith, and Kevin Lau, and has performed with the Da Capo Chamber Players, the American Composers Orchestra, Fifth House Ensemble, the Ligeti String Quartet, Against the Grain Theatre Company, Novarumori Ensemble, and the Contemporaneous New Music Ensemble in multiple world premieres. As guest soloist, Emma has performed with the Woodstock Chamber Orchestra, Bergen Philharmonic, and Bravura Philharmonic and has performed in masterclasses for Steven Isserlis, Colin Carr, Raphael Wallfisch, David Geringas, Leon Fleisher, and Arnold Steinhardt, among others. As a chamber musician, she has been mentored by artists including Ida Kavafian, Levon Chilingirian, Daniel Phillips, Barry Shiffman, Duo Concertante, the Gryphon Trio, and the Shanghai Quartet. She has performed as cellist in the American Symphony Orchestra, the Vermont Symphony Orchestra, the Opera Company of Middlebury Orchestra, the Opera Italiana Symphony Orchestra, the Pronto Musica Chamber Orchestra, and the Orchestre Symphonique de l’Agora. Emma has been a visiting artist at The Banff Centre, the Centre d’Arts Orford, the Toronto Summer Music Festival, Domaine Forget de Charlevoix Chamber Music Festival, the Fresh Inc. New Music Festival, the Vermont Mozart Festival, the Atlantic Music Festival, the Heifetz Institute, the Round Top Festival Institute, the Tafelmusik Baroque Summer Institute, the NYU Steinhardt String Quartet Seminar, and the Oxford Cello School in Oxford, England. A dedicated teacher, Emma is a chamber music coach at the Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory of Music and teaches at the Lane School of Music. She was a teaching artist in cello for the Orchestra of St. Luke’s Youth Orchestra & Music Education Program and Sistema Toronto, and has been a chamber music coach at the Phil and Eli Taylor Performance Academy for Young Artists of the Royal Conservatory of Music. Emma attends the University of Toronto School of Music as a doctoral candidate in Cello Performance in the studio of Joseph Johnson and is a teaching assistant in the Department of Strings. She also holds degrees from the Schulich School of Music of McGill University, the Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory of Music, the Bard College Conservatory, and Bard College. Her primary teachers include Peter Wiley, Matt Haimovitz, Yegor Dyachkov, Desmond Hoebig, Andrés Diaz, Sophie Shao, Luis Garcia-Renart, André Emelianoff, Bjørn Bantock, and Jonathan Spitz. She plays a 1918 Italian cello “Tutto” by Puglisi of Catania.

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

Emma Schmiedecke
Doctor of Musical Arts in Cello Performance

Recital III Program Notes - May 31, 2024

“Elegiac Poem” for Cello and Piano (1898) by Granville Bantock

Widely performed during his lifetime but now mostly known only to British musicians, the music of Granville Bantock provides a wealth of material for the cello, the instrument for which he wrote the most solo works in his catalogue. This collection of works includes one unaccompanied sonata, two sonati with piano, five tone poems that can be played either with orchestra or piano (including the *Elegiac* you will hear tonight), and two shorter works with piano entitled *Pibroch: A Highland Lament* and *Hamabdil*, not including chamber works that include cello such as his string quartets. Bantock counted Sir Edward Elgar, Jean Sibelius, and Frederick Delius among his circle of friends, to the point where both Sibelius and Elgar dedicated works to him (Sibelius’s Third Symphony and Elgar’s second *Pomp and Circumstance*), and took over as Chair of Music at the University of Birmingham in 1900 upon Elgar’s departure (rumor has it that the students and faculty preferred Bantock over Elgar!) Ralph Vaughn-Williams wrote in his book *Some Thoughts on Beethoven’s Choral Symphony with Writings on Other Musical Subjects* that, “...what Bantock did not know about the orchestra is not worth knowing”, highlighting Bantock’s outstanding knowledge of orchestral writing. However, after his death in 1946, Bantock, who once enjoyed fame that rivaled the now more often remembered Elgar, faded from the public’s musical consciousness, though there have been recent attempts to resurrect his compositions, such as the inclusion of several of Bantock’s works

during The Proms's 2013 season and recordings by British cellists of his solo works. In *Elegiac Poem* for Cello and Piano, we see a pondering on the many facets of sorrowful remembrance. What Bantock is lamenting, we do not know, yet it presents both sides of what it means to reminisce: joy and melancholy, jubilation and suffering, and that not all elegies end in sadness.

Sonata in D minor, H125 for Cello and Piano (1913-1917) by Frank Bridge

Written during the World War I years, this sonata is a reflection of Frank Bridge's frustration and despair over the futility of war and sorrow at a world that was sorely broken. Unique in that it is only two movements as opposed to the classical three-movement sonata structure, both incorporate a tension-filled soaring lyricism that contrasts with moments of fast-fingered turmoil, ending in a coda that quotes the beginning bars of the first movement and brings the piece full circle. Some critics have compared the melodic inspiration of the first movement to the music of Sergei Rachmaninoff and the second movement's to fellow Englishman Arnold Bax's compositions. This sonata was widely played and eventually recorded by Mstislav Rostropovich and Benjamin Britten, a former student of Bridge, who became a champion of his teacher's work after Bridge's death. He said in a 1960 interview, "He really taught me to take as much trouble as I possibly could over every passage, over every progression, over every line...[Bridge] demanded scrupulous attention to good technique, the business of saying clearly what is in your mind." Britten even went so far as to compose a piece titled *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge*, Op. 10 for String Orchestra in 1937 for the Salzburg Festival as an homage to his mentor, though it is Britten, not Bridge, who is remembered more today as a pioneer of mid-20th century British music.

“On the Other Shore” for Solo Cello (2014) by Charlotte Bray

Commissioned by the London Sinfonietta as part of their “Sinfonietta Shorts” series, the world premiere of this piece for solo cello was given by the orchestra’s principal cellist, Tim Gill, on September 23, 2015 at Kings Place in London. At just over three minutes, it is a short meditation on the idea of, “observing something from afar whilst not able to get close to it”, as written by Ms. Bray in the program notes preceding the work. It also has to do with the connection between one that gives and one that receives, and how what is transmitted between the two entities fades in and out, from strong beacon to obscured shadow. The piece makes use of extended techniques for the instrument, and Ms. Bray, being a cellist herself, is very specific about where she wants certain pitches played and on which string, which sometimes contradicts a cellist’s natural choices. This also gives the piece a sense of exploration as the cellist reaches for notes that are not where they seem to be, echoing the sentiment of and inspiration for the work.

Nine Bagatelles, Op. 10 for Cello and Piano (1942) by Elisabeth Lutyens

Daughter of famous British architect Sir Edwin Lutyens, Elisabeth Lutyens was born and raised in London and became an early advocate of the twelve-tone system in Britain, a part of Europe hesitant to break away from its Romantic tradition of composition. In 1922, she left England to study at the École Normale de Musique de Paris and returned to finish her studies at the Royal College of Music. She juggled composing with two marriages and being a mother to three children - Rose, Tess, and Conrad - who often recall their mother’s “totally

uncompromising” nature when it came to music and was, “...a unique individual cursed with a difficult and discontented temperament but blessed with an acerbic wit and a great sense of fun.” She often saw herself as a rival to Benjamin Britten, already mentioned as a student of Frank Bridge, who received attention for his music that she thought she deserved and was denied in part because of her gender. She quipped that, “I am fifteen years behind any man. If Britten wrote a bad score they’d say, ‘He’s had a bad day.’ If I’d written one it was because I was a woman.” Eventually becoming known for her avant-garde compositions, which were not always received well in her native England, these *Nine Bagatelles* total just eight minutes in length, the longest at one minute and twenty seconds, the shortest at twenty nine seconds. They act almost as little vignettes through which Lutyens has the listener experience the many facets of her version of the avant-garde, always giving the audience a hint of melodic material before swiftly turning down a more eccentric path.

Sonata in A minor, Op. 5 for Cello and Piano (1887) by Ethel Smyth

Dedicated to the famous cellist Julius Klengel, this early composition of Ethel Smyth’s is a prelude to a composing life filled with adventure and barrier-breaking by a steadfast woman ahead of her time. Taught piano and theory as a middle-class English teenager, she became so obsessed with her lessons that her father stopped them, deeming her dedication to them unsuitably intense. In protest, Smyth refused to attend church, social functions, and eventually meals until her father agreed to send her to Leipzig to study music more extensively. He eventually acquiesced, and it was in Germany studying with Heinrich von Herzogenberg that she had the opportunity to meet and get to know Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Grieg, Reinecke, and other

famous composers and musicians of the day. She was the first woman to have an opera staged at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City with *Der Wald* (The Forest) in March 1903 and would not be joined by another woman until Kaija Saariaho's *L'Amour de loin* was staged in 2016, 113 years later. Known as a political activist as well as a musician, Ethel Smyth was given the title "Dame" not just for her musical endeavors but for being one of Britain's leading suffragettes during the first part of the 20th century. This early sonata bears quite a similarity to the works of the aforementioned Brahms; written when Smyth was just 29 years old, it makes use of the cello's wide register with hearty melodies and tonal colors as well as remaining true to traditional sonata form.