

THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE, AND DANCE PRESENTS



VIRTUOSO SERIES CONCERT

**FOREST GREENOUGH, BASS  
AND SPHERE ENSEMBLE**

*Music for Motion*

**APRIL 14, 2025, 7:30 P.M  
ORGAN RECITAL HALL**



**COLORADO STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

SEASON SPONSOR:



**FOREST GREENOUGH, BASS AND SPHERE ENSEMBLE**  
**APRIL 14, 2025, 7:30 P.M | ORGAN RECITAL HALL**

**PROGRAM**

**Romanian Folk Dances**

**Bela Bartok**

Arr. Arthur Willner

**Movement**

**Hozier**

Arr. David Short

**Gilliam Youth Services Center Songs**

With Timothy Horton from Colorado Music Bridge on electric guitar

**Corta-Jaca**

**Chiquinha**

Gonzaga

Arr. Alex Vittal

**Pathétique Sonata, Op. 13**

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

II. Adagio cantabile

Arr. Alex Vittal

**Stride**

**Anna Clyne**

“Stride” written by Anna Clyne is performed by permission of Boosey & Hawkes, publisher.

**INTERMISSION (15 Minutes)**

**Flight of the Bumblebee**

**Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov**

Arr. Alex Vittal

**Movement and Location**

**Punch Brothers**

Arr. Sarah Whitnah

**Mi Chiquita Quiere Bembé**

**Tito Puente**  
Arr. Alex Vittal

**Music for Motion (world premiere)**

**Carter Pann**

- I. Beneath the Wheel
- II. Kleiner Morgenwanderer
- III. Falling
- IV. John's Runaway Yacht Rock Vibes

**SPHERE ENSEMBLE**

**Violin**

Sarah Whitnah

Sponsored by David Alley

Nina Fronjian

Sponsored by the Rosbach-Orth Families

Veronica Sawarynski

Sponsored by Maria Fisher and William Pollak

Evan De Long

Sponsored by Jim and Gretchen Lewis

Mary Evans

Sponsored by Gail and Mike Shimmin

Autumn Pepper

Anonymous Sponsor

Brune Macary

**Viola**

Alex Vittal

Sponsored by the Corson-Rikert Family

Aimée McAnulty

Sponsored by Jon and Renee Zahourek

Ally Stibbards

Anonymous Sponsor

**Cello**

Jake Saunders

Sponsored by Susan Mercure

David Short

**Double Bass**

Forest Greenough

Sponsored by Randy Culver

**Conductor/Voice/Cowbell**

Alejandro Gómez Guillén

**Artistic Team**

Alex Vittal

Executive Director

Alejandro Gómez Guillén

Music Director

Jesse Werner

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## PROGRAM NOTES

Béla Bartók was a musical innovator who, among other things, had an interest in the musical folk traditions of indigenous peoples from across central and eastern Europe. The Romanian Folk Dances, originally for piano, are the culmination of Bartók's work traveling the countryside transcribing folk melodies and reworking them into this highly evocative original work. Movement I starts off with rustic spirit, II is a whimsical oompah dance, III exhibits distant longing, IV ruminates darkly, and V, VI and VII show a progression of increasing frenzy culminating in a breathless romp!

In my arrangement of **Movement by Hozier**, I tried to capture two different elements, one being the spirit and feel of the original, the other a deeper layer in the lyrics. For a song so much about motion, the object of the narrator's focus is an inevitable, slow moving force. While the narrator is commenting on how moved they are, it still takes time for the narrator's 'Atlas' to wake up and for the world to move, but when it finally does, it moves with awe and wonder. -David Short

Francisca Edwiges Neves "Chiquinha" Gonzaga was born October 17, 1847 in Rio de Janeiro during the Brazilian monarchy and slave regime years. Her mother was a mestiza daughter of a slave and her father a military man of noble family. Music was young Gonzaga's passion and her instrument the piano. But at age 16, her father arranged her marriage to a naval officer, who disapproved of her music-making. After having three children together, he asked Chiquinha to choose between him and music. Her reply? "Well, sir, my husband, I do not understand life without harmony." She left him, causing a scandal and her own father to disown her. She threw herself into Rio's music scene, starting work on what would, over a lifetime, become a catalog of more than 2,000 compositions, from Brazilian popular music genres to operas and theater works. Gonzaga was the first Brazilian woman to succeed as a pianist and composer, the first woman to conduct a professional orchestra, the composer of the first song dedicated to Carnival, and the first female pianist of the Brazilian popular music genre of choro. She was also the founder of the Brazilian Society of Theater Authors, put into place to copyright and protect works by Brazilian artists. In 1914, for the premiere of Corta-Jaca at the presidential palace, the first lady joined Chiquinha on guitar, playing an excerpt from the song. Bringing popular Brazilian music into the "cultured" halls of the presidential palace caused a considerable scandal at the time. In my arrangement, I stitched together multiple layers of accompaniment to build a rhythmically vibrant foundation for Gonzaga's melody and harmony to ride upon. The contrasting middle section includes percussive effects inspired by traditional Brazilian drums. - Alex Vittal

**Ludwig van Beethoven's Grande Sonate Pathétique in C minor, Op. 13**, was written in 1798 when the composer was 27 years old and was published in 1799. It was immediately popular, and was an important success for Beethoven, selling well (it was republished seventeen times during Beethoven's lifetime), and helping to establish his reputation as a composer. It has remained one of his most celebrated compositions to this day. The second movement, Adagio cantabile, has one of the most famous 8-bar melodies of western music. We have the pleasure of hearing it played several times throughout the movement to allow the emotions it creates to fully sink in and have their effect.

Described as a "composer of uncommon gifts and unusual methods" by the New York Times and as "fearless" by NPR, GRAMMY-nominated Clyne is one of the most in-demand and widely performed composers today, working with orchestras, choreographers, filmmakers, and visual artists around the world.

Stride draws inspiration from Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13, commonly known as Sonata Pathétique (the second movement of which we just played), which is in three movements: I. Grave – Allegro di molto e con brio, II. Adagio cantabile, III. Rondo: Allegro.

"I chose a few melodic, rhythmic and harmonic fragments from each movement and developed these in the three corresponding sections of Stride. The title is derived from the octave leaps that stride in the left hand in the first movement of Sonata Pathétique. I was immediately drawn to the driving energy of this bass movement and have used it as a tool to propel Stride." - Anna Clyne

**Flight of the Bumblebee** is an orchestral interlude written by Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov for his opera The Tale of Tsar Saltan, composed in 1899–1900 and is intended to musically evoke the seemingly chaotic and rapidly changing flying pattern of a bumblebee. The piece closes Act III, Tableau 1, during which the magic Swan-Bird changes Prince Gvidon Saltanovich (the Tsar's son) into an insect so that he can fly away to visit his father (who does not know that he is alive). This new arrangement by Alex Vittal evokes all the magic of the original and invites our musicians to play the challenging music most bee-utifully!

In an interview with Spinner Magazine, Punch Brothers' Chris Thile remarked that the song **Movement and Location** was inspired by the Hall of Fame baseball pitcher, Greg Maddux - "[This] song is about Greg Maddux. [But] it's also obtusely about the impact that seemingly

disparate elements have on each other...Greg Maddux, to me, is one of the great artists of our time. If you listen to him in interviews, he sounds like an idiot savant, "I'm just trying to make good pitches!" He had an extreme amount of movement on his pitches, and he also could control that movement. But to me, the lines are totally blurred...the lines are blurred between the pursuit of excellence in your field and the pursuit of a satisfying relationship." When focused on results, pursuit of excellence can easily turn into obsessive and fruitless goals of perfection, in which we lose the battle by forgetting to live. But in this song, Chris Thile advocates for striving for excellence, simply for the thrill of it.

Whether we hope to solve the mystery of a legendary baseball pitch, execute a flawless run on the violin, create a beautiful phrase on the cello, combine the perfect balance of color and light in a painting, or foster a meaningful relationship - living with this intentionality and passion in all aspects of our lives, focusing on the 'thrill' rather than the result, allows us to transcend the mundane and cultivate lives with meaning, depth, beauty, and fulfillment. I've personally always been inspired by Punch Brothers' music and virtuosity, but also especially the meanings and intentions behind Chris Thile's lyrics. The driving sixteenth notes in this song rarely let up, and create a sense of constant motion forward, towards whatever it is that we might be seeking. - Sarah Whitnah

While the music that has come to be termed "salsa" originated in Cuba (with extensive west African influences), Puerto Ricans have been among its strongest supporters. One New York-reared puertorriqueño who soared to the top of the salsa world in the 1950s was timbale player/vibraphonist Tito Puente. **Mi Chiquita Quiere Bombé** appeared on his celebrated 1958 album, *Dance Mania*, in the early era of his five-and-a-half decade long career. The song is a cha-cha-chá with an attractive melody and rhythm that will make you want to dance, and features our Music Director Alejandro Gómez Guillén on lead vocals and cowbell. Background vocals are sung on the refrains by the rest of the band. The ending section breaks into an energetic and rhythmically complex Bombé, a drum, rhythm, dance style, and religious ceremony practiced by the Yoruba people of West Africa, whose diaspora in the Americas due to slavery has had a profound influence on Cuban music. The extensive percussion section of the original has been distilled down mainly to the 3rd viola, 1st cello, and cowbell parts. We hope you feel Puente's exuberant and flamboyant spirit in this song!

Composer/pianist Carter Pann has written for and worked with musicians around the world. Awards include a Charles Ives Fellowship, a Masterprize seat in London and five ASCAP awards over the years. His numerous albums encompass solo, vocal, chamber, orchestral and wind ensemble music. Pann was a Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Music in 2016. He

loves a good game of chess or poker with his students and friends and currently teaches and conducts the Boulder Altitude Directive contemporary music ensemble at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

“Lately, the inspiration to commit musical ideas to any kind of permanence has come from the artists for whom I’m lucky enough to write. The musicians themselves become the fuel that keeps me burning. When I heard Sphere perform in the Spring of 2024, they presented a program of many brilliant arrangements by Alex Vittal and others, followed by Tchaikovsky’s celebrated Serenade for Strings. At that time, my piece had already been commissioned by Christine Harbison, but I had no concrete ideas just yet. After hearing and watching them perform Tchaikovsky’s serenade I came to grips with just how privileged and lucky I was... that anything and everything was fair game. I could feel my own engine start to rev up even as I walked to my car after that concert. **Music for Motion** strives to show off these 13 fluent and flexible musicians in the best way possible. Each of these four movements is set to a different kind of motion (by tempo and character).

**I. Beneath the Wheel** takes its name from the tragic novel by Hermann Hesse. This book, like *Damien* and his others, imprinted itself on my memory as an admonition against arrested development at a young age. Ominous at first, the twisted motif wends its way through more elegant and lighter moments, however there is a Slavic-type despondency (with a question) at the conclusion.

**II. Kleiner Morganwanderer (Little Morning Wanderer)**, like the seventeenth piece from Robert Schumann’s *Album for the Young*, depicts a young boy on a morning excursion through the woods. There is both innocence and confidence in this music, and even some marching.

**III. Falling** is sad but hopeful music. A continuous series of sinking and ever-drooping chorale phrases with unfulfilled promises of breaking its own spell combine to make music of great heartache. Grand, non vibrato “Cathedral music” appears as an antidote to the multitude of valleys and depressions, only to conclude on the very lowest note of the lowest instrument.

**IV. John’s Runaway Yacht Rock Vibes** fuses two ideas into one: 70s and 80s soft rock dance music with John Adams’ older brand of minimalism (from nearly the same period). Like mixing two colors together, the result here was always something I thought about exploring in the future. And here we are!” -Carter Pann

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