

THE  
SCHOOL  
OF  
MUSIC  
THEATRE  
AND  
DANCE

VIRTUOSO SERIES CONCERT:

ROSE WOLLMAN, VIOLA

# Periphery

WITH

RON FRANCOIS, VIOLIN

AND

HYEJI SEO, PIANO

MARCH 2, 2026  
7:30 P.M.

ORGAN RECITAL HALL



COLORADO STATE  
UNIVERSITY



The Bank  
of CSU

**ROSE WOLLMAN, VIOLA**  
**MARCH 2, 2026 - 7:30PM**  
**ORGAN RECITAL HALL**  
**WITH RON FRANCOIS, VIOLIN AND HYEJI SEO, PIANO**

~ Stolen repertoire ~

**Sonata For Two Violins, Op. 56 -**

**Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)**

arr. Rose Wollman

- I. Andante cantabile
- II. Allegro
- III. Commodo (quasi allegretto)
- IV. Allegro con brio

Ron Francois, violin

~ Beautiful music (by people who traditionally write challenging music) ~

**Elegy**

**Elliott Carter (1908-1912)**

**Hymn and Fuguing Tune No. 7**

**Henry Cowell (1897-1956)**

- I. Hymn (Larghetto)
- II. Fuguing Tune (Con moto)

Hyeji Seo, piano

~ Exploring sounds ~

**4 Capricci per viola sola**

**Grażyna Bacewicz (1909-1969)**

arr. Stefan Kamasa

- I. Grandioso

**cuaderno de viaje, 2 piezas para viola**

**Mario Lavista (1943-2021)**

- I. Come un canto in lontananza, flessibile

## **Viola Spaces**

**Garth Knox (b. 1956)**

### VII. "In Between"

## **Flood for Solo Viola**

**Akshaya Avril Tucker (b. 1992)**

~ Non-classical performance practice ~

## **Le Grand Tango for Viola and Piano**

**Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992)**

arr. Brett L. Allen and Rose Wollman

Hyeji Seo, piano

## **PROGRAM NOTES**

This is a program that explored the periphery of standard viola literature. It includes stolen music, rarely-heard composers, and pieces that explore the sound world beyond the traditional canon of classical and romantic music. I have divided tonight into four sections and I hope you enjoy the music (and keep an open mind).

### **Section 1: Stolen repertoire**

Sergei Prokofiev was a Russian composer, prolific in the first half of the twentieth century. He wrote symphonies, ballets, concerti, and operas, as well as music for film. His dramatic flair and unique harmonic language lends itself to storytelling, and it is no wonder that some of his most famous works (Peter and the Wolf, Romeo and Juliet, A Love for Three Oranges) are pieces that support a narrative.

Prokofiev wrote his Sonata for Two Violins in C major, Op. 56 while on vacation. It was a commission from Triton, a French society that supported new chamber music. According to his autobiography, this work was inspired by another composer's attempt at a duo for two violins. Prokofiev writes "Listening to bad music sometimes inspires good ideas... After once hearing an unsuccessful piece [unspecified] for two violins without piano accompaniment, it struck me that in spite of the apparent limitations of such a duet one could make it interesting enough to listen to for ten or fifteen minutes....". Prokofiev does indeed make it interesting, and I would argue his only flaw is not including a viola in the first place.

## Section 2: Beautiful music (by people who traditionally write challenging music)

Elliott Carter was one of the most influential composers of the late 20th century. He lived to be 103, and wrote more than 60 pieces in the last 13 years of his life alone. After an early neoclassical period, Carter began developing his own musical language. He conceived of harmony as sets of pitches, and cataloged every possible combination of various chords (3 note chords, 5 note chords, etc.). His system is reminiscent of serialism, but is a different process unique to Carter. Rhythmically, he explored complex layering as well as metric modulation. Carter was widely celebrated, and won awards including the National Medal of Arts, a Trustees Award from the Grammys, and two Pulitzer Prizes.

Elegy for Viola and Piano was written on the cusp between his early neoclassical period and his mature period. It is lyrical and beautiful, with shifting harmonic sands and delicate interplay between the viola and the piano.

Henry Cowell was an extraordinary figure in the early 20th century modernist movement in the United States (and an inspiration to Elliott Carter). His music, including *The Banshee*, that manipulates the strings of the piano, was a direct inspiration for John Cage's prepared piano works. He wrote cluster chords for piano to be performed with palms, fists, and forearms. He explored polytonality, polyrhythm, and was inspired by non-western music, particularly Gamelan. He incited riots at his performances, notoriously a concert in Leipzig on October 15, 1923 which resulted in an onstage brawl and 20 arrests. Cowell wrote a book, *New Musical Resources*, which John Cage studied and Conlon Nancarrow referred to as having "the most influence of anything I've ever read in music."

In the late 1930s Cowell served four years in San Quentin State Prison for a "morals" charge, convicted of homosexual acts with several men. He emerged from this notoriously brutal prison on parole in 1940 and was pardoned by the governor in 1942. The experience changed him. Personally he was much more timid, and his compositions became much more conservative. It is after this ordeal that Cowell wrote his 18 Hymn and Fuguing Tunes. Each is for a different instrumentation and inspired by the American sacred music style of fuguing tunes. (Not to be confused with a fugue, a fuguing tune begins as a melody sung in four parts, breaks off into four separate parts, and comes together again at the end.) His harmonic language is much more tonal and rhythms are simple, but you can hear echos of the fearless boundary-pusher that once was.

### Section 3: Exploring sounds

Grażyna Bacewicz was a Polish composer and violinist, living in the first half of the 20th century. She was the third of four children from a musical family, and composed and performed with her siblings from an early age. She studied violin and composition at the Warsaw Conservatory, and then composition with Nadia Boulanger. She was concertmaster of the Polish National Radio Symphony but fled to Lublin during the war. A car accident in 1954 ended her performing career, and she became a prolific, full-time composer. Her music is evocative and stylish, and as a player, I appreciate her understanding and mastery of the violin. This caprice is a joy to perform!

Mario Lavista was a Mexican composer and writer. He studied at the National Conservatory in Mexico City, as well as in France (including courses with Nadia Boulanger). Lavista was interested in improvisation, electronic music, and extended techniques. *Cuaderno de viaje* (travel notebook) is a two movement work for solo viola that employs only natural harmonics (the points on the string that sound various notes in the overtone series). This gives the piece an ethereal, crystalline quality that sets it apart from the rest of the program.

Garth Knox wrote his collection of short pieces *Viola Spaces* to explore extended techniques on the viola. Some are “usual” extended techniques like harmonics and ponticello, and some include Knox’s signature boundary-pushing like 9 finger pizzicato and “up, down, sideways, round” which uses multi-dimensional bowing on the string. Garth Knox is one of the most celebrated violists specializing in new music. He was the violist of the Arditti Quartet and Pierre Boulez’s *Ensemble intercontemporain*, and is one of the pioneers of the recent performer-composer renaissance among violists. No. 7 “In Between” explores quarter tones, the notes between the piano keys.

Akshaya Avril Tucker writes that she draws inspiration from the music and dance traditions of South Asia and explores meditative, gestural and effervescent soundscapes, especially in her works for strings. I first encountered her music at a Brooklyn Rider concert and googled her at intermission to see if she had written anything for viola. *Flood* is a piece that explores anxiety. It was written in 2021 during the Covid 19 pandemic, and the music evokes floods of emotion, like water, that threaten to engulf the listener. She employs the sonic capabilities of the viola to the fullest, including harmonics, ponticello, left-hand pressure changes, scratch tones, and a surprise technique that is a bit outside my comfort zone (you’ll know it when you hear it, believe me). This is a very powerful piece, and one that sums up this set of sonic exploration in a beautiful way.

#### **Section 4: Non-classical performance practice**

Astor Piazzolla is a composer straddling two worlds. He is steeped in the rhythms and timbers of traditional Argentine Tango, and is a bandoneon player by training. He also studied composition with Nadia Boulanger and Alberto Ginastera, giving him a solid foundation in classical music. Piazzolla wrote *Le Grand Tango* for the eminent Russian cellist Mstislav Rostropovich. Rostropovich, however, had never heard of Piazzolla, and the score sat ignored in a pile along with countless other pieces that composers sent Rostropovich every year. Eventually, thankfully, Rostropovich premiered it, and now it is often played by both cellists and violists.

Piazzolla, because of his dual citizenship (if you will) as a Tango and classical composer, managed to annoy both groups. Tango purists rejected his style, claiming (rightly, perhaps) that he was not writing Tango and actually writing Tango-inspired Jazz or something. Classical players, generally unfamiliar with Tango style, struggle to perform his music in a compelling way and Piazzolla's notation does not help us figure it out. No one will deny that Mstislav Rostropovich is one of the greatest musicians of the 20th century, and yet you might mistake his Piazzolla for Shostakovich. I have had the pleasure of working on this piece with several Tangueros (including my husband), and it is a satisfying challenge to figure out how to get a viola and piano to sound like a Tango band!

## BIOGRAPHIES:

Hailed as “innovative” and “stylish” by the Chicago Classical Review, violist **ROSE WOLLMAN** has performed in venues around the world including Carnegie Hall, the Krannert Center and Constitution Hall (US), Suntory Hall (Japan), and KKL (Switzerland). Rose is a champion of new music as well as a fledgling composer. She has spent her career commissioning and performing new pieces, working with groundbreaking composers such as Pierre Boulez, Augusta Read Thomas, Garth Knox, Don Freund, Atar Arad, David Dzubay, Gabriela Ortiz, and Mario Lavista.

Rose was the founding violist of the Petar Jankovic Ensemble and the Larchmere String Quartet with whom she released albums, including a premiere recording of Stephan Krehl’s String Quartet for the NAXOS label. Rose’s 2022 solo album, *Loop: Ligeti’s Inspiration & Legacy*, explores György Ligeti’s Sonata for Viola Solo through the lens of baroque and newly composed music. Her album, *Breaking Glass Ceilings: Music by Unruly Women* with pianist Dror Baitel, explores the legacy of female composers in the 20th and 21st centuries. *Partita Party* is a new composition and recording in collaboration with Atar Arad and three other violists. It was released in October 2024 and was the second release on her record label SBOV Music (Sounds Better on Viola).

Rose has performed with the Lucerne Festival Academy Orchestra, the Pacific Music Festival Orchestra, the Kaleidoscope Chamber Orchestra, and the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra. She served as principal violist of the Evansville Philharmonic and the Cape Cod Symphony. She has collaborated with diverse artists such as Atar Arad, Michael Kannen, James Dunham, Rachel Barton Pine, choreographer Elizabeth Shea, tango pianist and composer Julián Peralta, tango bassist Pablo Aslan, and Latin jazz percussionist Michael Spiro.

Rose is Assistant Professor of Viola at Colorado State University and serves on the board of the American Viola Society. She holds a D.M. from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music as well as degrees from the New England Conservatory of Music and the University of Illinois. Her primary teachers are Atar Arad, Carol Rodland, Masumi Rostad, Rudolf Haken, and Julia Adams. For more information visit [www.rosewollman.com](http://www.rosewollman.com).

**RON FRANCOIS** has performed in venues across the United States, Canada, Europe, and Mexico as a soloist, chamber musician and orchestral player. His performances have consistently won the acclaim of notable musicians. “...A fantastic violinist...a big talent,” said Abram Shtern — concertmaster of the Kiev State Opera and professor at the Kiev Conservatory.

Francois' playing is "...extremely musical. Francois plays with great sensitivity and warmth," said concert violinist Daniel Heifetz "...A wonderful musician...sensitive ensemble player and a brilliant violinist," said Michael Tree from the Guarneri String Quartet.

Founder of the Duo Francois with pianist Silvana Santinelli, the duo was recently awarded the Silver Medal in the 'Duo' and 'Emerging Artists' categories at the Global Music Awards. This prize was awarded for the 2017 release of the Duo Francois' first CD entitled "Mexico City Blues" on the Itinerant Classics label.

Most recently, Mexico City Blues was nominated as a semi-finalist at the American Prize Music Awards in the category of Chamber Music- Professional Division. The finals take place in Spring 2019.

From 2008-2012, Ron Francois served as the violinist for the Mendelssohn Trio and performed numerous concerts in Europe and the United States with this group and in 2010, the *Denver Post* named the Mendelssohn Trio one of Colorado's top chamber music groups. As a member of the Canadian Chamber Orchestra, IMusici de Montreal, Francois toured extensively in Canada and the U.S.A. Francois appears on two CD's with this group on the Chandos Label.

Ron François has also collaborated with some of the world's finest musicians including Boris Garlitsky, former concertmaster of the London Philharmonic Orchestra; Martin Chalifour, concertmaster of the Los Angeles Philharmonic orchestra; Arkady Fomin of the Dallas Symphony; and the Borromeo String Quartet to name a few.

Ron Francois' most influential mentors were concert violinist Daniel Heifetz; Arnold Steinhardt and John Dalley from the Guarneri String Quartet; Elizabeth Adkins, former concertmaster of the National Symphony; David Salness of the Audubon Quartet; Zvi Zeitlin; and Charles Castleman from the Eastman School of Music.

As a teacher and pedagogue, Ron Francois has been in demand since 2004. He has presented numerous masterclasses in Canada, the United States, Mexico, and China. In 2013, he won the "Outstanding Service Award for Teaching" from the American String Teacher Association, Colorado chapter.

Since 2002, Ron Francois has served as the string area coordinator and is a professor of music at Colorado State University.

A Korean-born pianist, **HYEJI SEO** has been praised for her cantabile lyricism and sincere, passionate musicality. As a versatile artist, she excels both as a soloist and a collaborative pianist, captivating audiences across the United States, Europe, and Asia.

Her recent debut album, *Melodies from East Asia* (Navona Records, 2025), has received acclaim from various publications. Interlude.hk described her playing as “*both delicate and confident, delivering nuanced interpretations while maintaining a consistent artistic voice,*” while iReview.kr noted that her performance “*transcends time and space... Seo’s virtuosity draws out the eloquence inherent in each piece...shaping the character of the pioneering album with consistent logic...shine when thoughtfully interpreted, offering audiences a fresh, engaging, and heartfelt musical experience.*” The album has also been featured on public radio in Virginia, Massachusetts, Florida, Kansas City, and has garnered favorable international reviews.

The album includes a world-premiere work commissioned by the Korean Society of Women Composers and reflects her dedication to culturally rich and diverse repertoire by underrepresented composers. And this shares a core value of her concert series ‘The Music We Write’ that she founded in 2023 to promote underrepresented music.

As an active presenter and performer, regularly sharing her work at national and international events. Upcoming events include a lecture presentation at the Colorado State Music Teachers Association (CSMTA) Conference, as well as performances and teaching at universities in U.S. Her recent guest invitations include Wuhan Conservatory of Music (China), the Opening Concert of NCKP (National Conference on Keyboard Pedagogy), and Gangneung-Wonju National University (Korea). She also appeared at the College Music Society, Regional and National Conference in Washington D.C., the Music by Women International Festival in Mississippi, and the Women Composers Festival of Hartford.

Seo made her New York debut in 2016 at the prestigious Carnegie Weill Recital Hall, a milestone in her career. She has since been invited to perform in distinguished venues such as the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts in Philadelphia, Miller Theatre, and William Stewart Memorial Shell in Michigan. Her performances have taken her to numerous cities across Colorado, Michigan, Illinois, Mississippi, North Carolina, Wisconsin, Arizona, and South Korea.

She has earned international acclaim, winning first prizes in the American Protégé International Piano and Strings Competition, the International Music Competition ‘Brussels’ Grand Prize Virtuoso, and the International Piano Association Competition. She was also

recognized at the Ise-Shima International Piano Competition in Japan and the Bradshaw & Buono International Piano Competition in the U.S. Seo has served as an adjudicator for the MTNA Colorado Competition and the International Keyboard Odyssey & Festival.

Seo has appeared as a soloist with orchestras at Seoul National University, Sookmyung Women's University, and Western Illinois University as a competition winner. She was featured at the Piano Gala Concert for the 110th Anniversary of Sookmyung Women's University and has performed in the Triumph Music Festival Gala Concert, the EOULIM Concert Series, and the Young Artist Debut Concert in Seoul, sponsored by *Music Education News*.

As a dynamic and sought-after collaborative pianist, Seo has worked with renowned musicians and performed at major events including the 56th International Horn Symposium, the 53rd International Double Reed Society Conference, the Colorado Flute Fair, and Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp. Her collaborative experience spans instrumental, vocal, choral, symphonic, chamber, and operatic repertoire. She has served as a coach and pianist at the Encore Series in Todi, Italy, and has worked with institutions such as Michigan State University and Western Illinois University.

Community engagement is at the heart of her work. Seo is especially dedicated to supporting underserved communities and students with disabilities. She has presented on piano pedagogy for young musicians with autism at the MTNA Collegiate Chapters Symposium and is a registered teacher with the MusicLink Foundation, providing lessons to local students in financial need. Currently, she is serving as Vice President, pedagogy program event chair, at Fort Collins MTA.

Seo holds a Doctor of Musical Arts in Piano Performance and a Master's in Collaborative Piano from Michigan State University, as well as Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Sookmyung Women's University and Western Illinois University. She was supported throughout her studies by prestigious scholarships and assistantships, including the Ralph Votapek Scholarship and the Dixon Collaborative Pianist Award.

Her primary teachers include Kyungmi Kim, Hyesoo Jeon, Tammie Walker, Zhihua Tang, and Deborah Moriarty. She has also worked with esteemed artists such as Hae Sun Paik, Alan Chow, Zhe Tang, Robert Roux, Michael Lewin, Klaus Schilde, Sontraud Speidel, Aviram Reichert, Alain Jacquon, and Laurent Cabasso.

Currently, Seo serves as assistant professor of Practice in Collaborative Piano Faculty at the School of Music, Theatre, and Dance at Colorado State University, where she teaches class piano and chamber music while continuing to inspire students and audiences through her artistry, teaching, and advocacy for inclusive, meaningful music-making. Please visit her webpage at <https://hyejiseopiano.com/> and listen to the entire album '*The Melodies from East Asia*' at <https://www.navonarecords.com/catalog/nv6746/>.

# LEVEL UP.

## The NEW CSU<sup>TM</sup> Visa<sup>®</sup> Debit Card.



Show your Rams pride everywhere you go with the all-new CSU Visa<sup>®</sup> Debit Card – free with any FNBO checking account. New design. Raised detail. Premium finish.



The Bank of CSU

[fnbo.com/csu](https://fnbo.com/csu)

Member FDIC