

STUDENT RECITAL

Dominique Archambeau, *viola*  
Madeline Anderson, *piano*

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 5, 2021 at 5:30 PM

Voxman Recital Hall

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PROGRAM

Cello Suite No. 6 in G Major, BWV 1012

J.S. Bach  
(1685 – 1750)

*Prelude*  
*Allemande*  
*Courante*  
*Sarabande*  
*Gavottes 1 & 2*  
*Gigue*

Suite No. 2 for Solo Viola, op. 131d

Max Reger  
(1873 – 1916)

*Con moto*  
*Andante*  
*Allegretto*  
*Vivace*

*BRIEF INTERMISSION*

Viola Concerto

Jennifer Higdon  
(b. 1962)

*I.*  
*II.*

This program is being presented by Dominique Archambeau in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctor of Musical Arts degree.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750) composed the *Six Suites for Solo Cello* in Cöthen around 1720, but the works gained mass popularity in the 1930s through the performances of cellist Pablo Casals. All six suites open with a improvisatory-like Prelude and then follow a set of dances, each presenting differing rhythms, characters, meters, and tone colors. The Sixth Suite was originally composed for a violoncello piccolo, which was a small Baroque cello with five strings that comfortably accommodated the wide range of pitches throughout the piece. The viola transcription changes the original key of D major to G major so that it is more technically suitable on a four-stringed instrument without thumb position. The foremost character of *Suite No. 6* is joy and triumph.

Max Reger (1873 – 1916) coins a compositional methodology which combines chromatic harmonic language with common practice Baroque and Classical formal procedures. The *Suites for Solo Viola, op. 131d* are a collection of three solo viola works that largely emphasize Reger's neo-Classical approach, despite the apparent idolization and loose, modern reimagining of J.S. Bach's compositional style. Perhaps inspired by Bach's *Cello Suites*, Reger composed three minimally scored works for solo viola, where the harmonies are propelled through chromatic melodies and double-stops throughout the condensed quasi-Sonata forms. The overarching formal trajectory of the second Suite mirrors that of the familiar Classical style: fast, slow, scherzo (or minuet), fast. The key relationships between the four movements are symmetrical: D major to A major, and G minor to D major. Regardless of the neo-classical structural elements, the thematic material reflects the late-Romantic style.

Jennifer Higdon (b. 1962) is an award-winning contemporary composer best known for her instrumental music—specifically, her concertos. Over the last decade she has become one of the most-performed contemporary composers around the world, according to The League of American Orchestras, but she credits finding her affinity for composing to chance: unlike most musicians, Higdon did not become actively involved with music until later in her teenage years when she decided to teach herself flute. Growing up in the South, Higdon's childhood exposed her to primarily country and rock music, which has consequently influenced her distinct compositional soundscape and is reflected in her *Viola Concerto*. She therefore aimed to incorporate American jazz-like rhythms, rhythmic and melodic emphases on traditional “strong beats,” and melodies and harmonies that feature open-fifths. In an exploration of major viola repertoire, Higdon noted that much of the standardized solo viola pieces are melancholic and dark. To combat this, she intended for her Viola Concerto to be bright and uplifting. The *Viola Concerto* won a Grammy Award in 2018 for the category of Best Contemporary Classical Composition.