

The background of the entire poster is a photograph of a mountain range. The mountains are layered, with the closest ones in dark blue and the farthest ones fading into a light blue sky. The overall mood is serene and majestic.

SACRED MUSIC AT COLUMBIA
presents

COLUMBIA BACH SOCIETY

FALL 2023 CONCERT

December 9, 2023

artistic direction by

SOFIA OUYANG CC '24 and **NITYA NIGAM CC '25**

PROGRAM

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Mass in B Minor Kyrie No. 1-2 (1749)

Johanna Mergener, soprano

Ayla Dhar, soprano

MAURICE RAVEL

Mother Goose Suite (1911)

SOFIA JEN OUYANG

Sweet Spontaneous Earth (2023, North American premiere)

HANNAH ISHIZAKI

my eyes will gleam (2023, World premiere)

Maddy Manning-Bi, mezzo-soprano

Renata Prôa, alto

CESAR BRESGEN

O Du Stille Zeit (1950s)

ALEXANDER BORODIN

Prince Igor (1890), **Prologue (No. 1)** and **Polovtsian Dances (No. 17)**

David Newtown, bass

Orchestra Members

Violin I

Vanessa Yang	BC '25
Jessica Wu	CC '26
Sophie Ju	CC '26
Liyu Chen	CC '26
Cindy Zhu	SEAS '24
Elaine Lee	CC '23
Rohil Sabherwal	CC '24
Bryna Patel	BC '24
John John Groger	CC '24
Esme Smith	BC '26

Viola

Amy Wang	SEAS '24
Gabrielle Hrung	BC '25
Sophia Yanney	BC '25
Claire Schnatterbeck	CC '24

Bass

Ananya Sahu	BC '23
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Harp

Maria Shaughnessy	BC '24
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Flute/piccolo

Julianne Chin-Drachman	CC '25
Anthony Lee	CC '24
Nithin Chilakapati	CC '26

Clarinet

Danika Kello	BC '27
Christian Lee	CC '26

Horn

Larry Davis	SEAS '24
Nik Cook	CC '25
Lliam Boss-Harmon	SEAS '27
Jessica Weinfeld	CC '27

Percussion

Reid Metoyer	CC '26
Aidan Gold	Juilliard
Kunal Gala	Juilliard

Violin II

Sarah Shen	CC '24
Ruby Finlayson	BC '24
Anna Argenziano	CC '26
Deena Corkindale	BC '23
Ilan Falcon	SEAS '25
Teja Kausik	BC '27
Krishan Rai	CC '26
Cindy Ruan	BC '24
Ana Mateo-Jerez	SEAS '26

Cello

Colin Guan	CC '26
Eli Trokenheim	CC '27
Rosemary Ho	BC '27
William Zhang	CC '24
Anya Applebaum Licht	BC '27
Nicole Huang	SEAS '27
Andrea Dubbels	CC '24
Suleyman Ahmed	CC '24
Adeline Larsen	BC '24
Rafael Vanuno	GS '27

Oboe/English horn

Forrest Weintraub	CC '24
Yunah Kwon	CC '27
Jacks Pollack	Juilliard

Bassoon

Hiroshi Nakagawa	CUIMC Faculty
Collin Odom	Juilliard

Trombone

Sami Omaish	GS '25
Michael Boisture	CC '25
Lucy Onderdonk	BC '26

Trumpet

Corinna Singer	CC '24
Arielle Hillock	GS '25

Piano/Celesta

Janet Phang	CC '24
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Choir Members

Soprano

Nicole Dao	CC '23
Allie Gualario	CC '25
Riya Gupta	BC '24
Ania Lakritz	CSSW '23
Masha Sokolova	CC '24

Alto

Julia Holder	CC '24
Christine Li	GSAS '23
Renata Prôa	CUIMC PhD
Ava Roche	BC '25
Kelsey Yao	SEAS PhD

Tenor

Ayla Dhar	BC '26
Yeaniivah Jaward	CC '25

Bass

Abednego Delinois	CC '24
Atri Ray	SEAS '25
Chongyuan Hong	CC '24
Phillip Ionkov	CC '26

Notes on the Program

Mass in B Minor Kyrie No. 1-2 (1749)

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750)

The Mass in B Minor is considered to be the summation of Johann Sebastian Bach's art and one of the greatest masterpieces of Western sacred music. The Mass, as one of the most complex, sweeping, and comprehensive religious musical works, was one of the final musical projects in Bach's life. The mass begins with the traditional Kyrie, sung in Greek — *Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison* (God have mercy, Christ have mercy). The opening Kyrie is a large Baroque fugal chorus for five-part chorus and full orchestra, with explorations into intricate and complex contrapuntal movements. In the Christe, the duet that follows, Bach uses a simpler style, with less ornamented melodic lines and more straightforward instrumentation.

— California Bach Society

Mother Goose Suite (1911)

MAURICE RAVEL (1875-1937)

Whimsical, imaginative, and nostalgic, Maurice Ravel's "Mother Goose Suite" is a suite of children's tale pieces, with each of the five movements illustrating a different fairytale. Originally a suite for piano four hands, Ravel later arranged it for orchestra.

Movement 1, *Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty*, is gently alluring and almost hypnotic, with seemingly simple melodies on flute and French horn subtly transformed over time and across different wind instruments, landing eventually on a delicate iteration on muted violin strings.

Movement 2, *Little Tom Thumb*, tells the story of Tom Thumb, who leaves a trail of breadcrumbs to find his way back through the forest, but the crumbs get eaten by the birds, leaving Tom lost. Under the dreamy, impressionistic atmosphere we hear a persisting undertone of sadness and sentimentality that almost, but never quite, erupts into open air.

Movement 3, *Laideronnette, Empress of the Pagodas*, is inspired by the idea of the "Orient" in late 19th century Europe and depicts the little statues on pagodas come to life and play music as their Empress enters the water to bathe. The movement is playful, full of colors and energy, giving

you the impression that the entire orchestra is ignited into a living, pulsating organism.

Movement 4, *Conversations of Beauty and the Beast*, captures the blossoming love between Beauty and the Beast in a charming waltz, and movement 5 *The Fairy Garden* is an accumulation of all the fairytales and the characters. The strings slowly rise from the ground, culminating eventually to an ending full of richness, grandeur, and magic.

— Sofia Ouyang

Sweet Spontaneous Earth (2023, North America premiere)

SOFIA JEN OUYANG (2001 -)

From scientific, religious, and philosophical prescriptions to industrial exploitation, humans have repeatedly imposed upon the natural world. Yet, Cummings says, Nature answers us “only with spring”.

There is something so vibrant and animating about this poetic answer.

I thus write this choral piece, as a response, reaction, and reflection upon Cummings’ poem: a celebration of the beauty and spontaneity of nature, and a hopefulness and optimism in a future human-nature relationship, one that is healthy and reciprocal. One that is *resonant*.

“Sweet Spontaneous Earth” fuses Chinese traditional, Western choral, and jazz musical idioms, all of which are sound worlds and musical traditions near and dear to my heart. I hope they ring a bell for fellow peers and audience members, as we are all individuals who appreciate music and who are embedded in an entangled world.

— Sofia Ouyang

my eyes will gleam (2023, world premiere)

HANNAH ISHIZAKI (2000 -)

“my eyes will gleam” is a piece for Mezzo-Soprano and Alto soloists, choir, and orchestra, using the English translation of Alejandra Pizarnik’s poem, “When Eagerness Sets In.” I drew inspiration from the exploration of vowel timbres and how they can be emulated through different acoustic instruments, such as a muted trombone or the sound of an oboe versus a clarinet.

The piece unfolds as a dialogue of vowel sounds within the orchestral landscape, gradually leading to vocal parts building the poem from syllables into the complete text. “my eyes will gleam” is the inaugural part to a larger, multi-movement project aimed at writing a full requiem. This piece is dedicated to the memory of my teacher, Mr. Hong-Guang Jia.

— Hannah Ishizaki

About the Composer

Hannah Ishizaki is a composer and sound artist based in New York City. Her music seeks to foster connections between musicians and the audience through the explorations of the physicality of music performance. Ishizaki finds inspiration in the process of composition, leading her to experiment with a wide range of instruments and sound generating methods—from acoustic instruments in an orchestra to digital sensors to rocks and zippers. Immersed in the world of collaboration, Ishizaki has worked with dancers, actors, filmmakers, and visual artists, to connect the seemingly unconnected and create innovative and multidisciplinary projects. Recently, Ishizaki was named one of five 2023 Hildegard commission winners, which is presented by National Sawdust and generously supported by The Onassis Foundation and the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation.

Ishizaki’s work has been recognized throughout the United States and internationally and has been commissioned by musicians and organizations such as Midori Goto, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, and the Dresden Musikfestspiele. Ishizaki is currently pursuing a PhD in Music Composition at Princeton University. She studied with Andrew Norman for composition and Areta Zhulla and Ronald Copes for violin at the Juilliard School, where she was the first composer to receive a Kovner Fellowship.

O Du Stille Zeit (1950s)

CESAR BRESGEN (1913-1988)

As an organist and choir director as well as a composer, Bresgen’s church music has had a lasting effect in the German-speaking world and beyond. Although originally intended as a general hymn, *O Du Stille Zeit* has become ubiquitous as a German Christmas carol. Set to words by the Romantic poet Joseph von Eichendorff (1788-1857), Bresgen’s stirring

melody has seen multiple iterations, including a four-part arrangement by Gottfried Wolters (1910-1989) and the six-part version by Marcus Schmidl (b. 1971) performed today. This arrangement's rich harmonies expertly evoke the calm of night and instill a sense of deep peace in the listener.

— Nitya Nigam

Prince Igor (1890), Prologue (No. 1) and Polovtsian Dances (No. 17)

ALEXANDER BORODIN / Александр Бородин (1833-87)

“To me, opera without drama is unnatural”, professed Alexander Borodin in a letter to his wife, upon hitting a stump in his work on the opera *Prince Igor*. Borodin, a chemist by training but most notably remembered as a composer, was a member of the “Mighty Five”, a group of late-19th-century composers dedicated to the creation of a uniquely Russian style of music. Borodin's flair for the dramatic, combined with his seamless melding of Russian folk-tune-inspired melodies with Eastern lyricism, made for his magnum opus *Prince Igor*. While the opera remained unfinished upon his death in 1887, it was completed by Alexander Glazunov and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (a fellow member of The Five).

Premiered in 1890, *Prince Igor* tells the story of the 12th-century campaign of Olgovich prince Igor Svyatoslavich against Cuman (“Polovtsian”) invaders. After a 10-minute orchestral overture, the opera boldly opens with a triumphant *Prologue*, which occurs on the verge of Prince Igor's departure for his campaign against the Cumans and their Khans. His subjects sing his and his son's praise to an uplifting melody supported by buoyant harmonies evoking Romantic nationalism.

The second act of *Prince Igor* closes with the *Polovtsian Dances*, the musical climax of the opera, which is often performed as a stand-alone piece. The *Dances* feature an interplay between the light, floating melodies of the Polovtsian maidens (“Gliding Dance of the Maidens”) and the bold, warlike chanting of the men (“Wild Dance of the Men”), culminating in celebratory “General Dances”. Traditional Russian Romanticism and Eastern influence come together to make for a dramatic conclusion to the opera's second act, in Borodin's signature fashion.

— Nitya Nigam

Selected Texts and Translations

BACH, Mass in B Minor, Kyrie no. 1 and 2

Requiem Mass (Christian liturgical text)

Kyrie eleison

Lord, have mercy

Christe eleison

Christ, have mercy

ISHIZAKI, my eyes will gleam

Where Eagerness Sets In by Alejandra Pizarnik

When it does arrive my eyes will gleam
with the light of the one I mourn for
meanwhile it breathes a rumor of flight
into the heart of all things

BREGEN, O Du Stille Zeit

O Du Stille Zeit by Joseph von Eichendorff

O du stille Zeit,

Kommst, eh wir's gedacht.

O you quiet time,

You come, as we have imagined.

Über die Berge weit,

Gute Nacht!

Over the mountains far,

Good night!

In der Einsamkeit,

Rauscht es nun so sacht.

In the loneliness,

It rustles now so gently.



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