

minutes. I was afraid it was too long, but it was quite all right, at least for me.” Koussevitzky’s premiere of the *Concerto for Orchestra* in Boston the following week (which the composer was too weak to attend) greatly helped to fuel the momentum of Bartók’s growing acclaim. The Solo Violin Sonata was the last work that Bartók completed before his death in New York on September 26, 1945. His final two compositions, the Third Piano Concerto and the Viola Concerto, were put into their finished forms by his friend and disciple Tibor Serly.

Rather than using the easily accessible idioms of his other American works, Bartók revived the advanced melodic and harmonic techniques of the Quartets Nos. 3 and 4 and the two Violin and Piano Sonatas for this piece, though here the formal architecture places the most difficult matters in the opening movement and passes on to easier things as the work unfolds. The first movement is a formal hybrid, taking as its main subject a craggy *chaconne* (a set of continuous variations on the theme’s harmonic skeleton — the most famous movement of Bach’s unaccompanied violin compositions follows this procedure) placed into a full sonata structure. A lyrical melody in

swaying rhythms provides contrast as the second theme; the development section is a free continuation of the *chaconne* variations. The movement achieves formal closure with the altered versions of the main and second themes that occupy the recapitulation. The second movement is a fugue on a chromatic subject, a tour de force for both composer and performer, in which the single voice of the violin is made to imply four intertwining polyphonic lines through double-stops, quick shifts of register, and subtle gradations of melodic emphasis. *Melodia* traces an arching, melancholy song in its outer sections, while the hushed central passage, verdant with rustling trills and whispered high notes, is the kind of twittering “night music” that Bartók favored for many of his slow movements. The closing *Presto*, in the form of a rondo, uses as its main theme a murmuring, *moto perpetuo* strain which is interrupted by two extended episodes of folkish character, the first syncopated and dance-like, the second lyrical and nostalgic. All three themes are tumbled together in the energetic coda.

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Wednesday, January 23, 2013 at 7:30PM  
Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall

### CHRISTIAN TETZLAFF, Solo Violin

Eugène YSAÏE  
(1858-1931)

Sonata No. 1 for Unaccompanied Violin  
in G Minor, Op. 27, No. 1  
Grave: Lento assai  
Fugato: Molto moderato  
Allegretto poco scherzando: Amabile  
Finale con brio: Allegro fermo

Johann Sebastian BACH  
(1685-1750)

Sonata No. 3 for Unaccompanied Violin  
in C Major, BWV 1005  
Adagio  
Fuga  
Largo  
Allegro assai

— INTERMISSION —

György KURTÁG  
(b. 1926)

Selections from *Signs, Games and Messages*  
Hommage à J.S.B.  
In memoriam Tamás Blum  
Vivo  
The Carezza Jig  
Doloroso Garzulyéknak  
Zank-Kromatisch

Béla BARTÓK  
(1881-1945)

Sonata for Unaccompanied Violin  
Tempo di ciaccona [chaconne]  
Fuga: Risoluto, non troppo vivace  
Melodia: Adagio  
Presto

*Christian Tetzlaff appears by arrangement with C/M Artists New York.*

*Recordings available on the Virgin Classics/EMI and Hänssler recording labels.*

*Princeton University Concerts is tremendously grateful to Mr. Tetzlaff for agreeing to step in to replace Julia Fischer on short notice.*

## ABOUT CHRISTIAN TETZLAFF

An artist known for his musical integrity, technical assurance and intelligent, compelling interpretations, Christian Tetzlaff is internationally recognized as one of the most important violinists of his generation.

From the outset of his career, Mr. Tetzlaff has performed and recorded a broad spectrum of the repertoire, ranging from Bach's unaccompanied sonatas and partitas to 19th century masterworks by Mendelssohn, Beethoven and Brahms; and from 20th-century concertos by Bartók, Berg and Shostakovich to world premieres of contemporary works. Also a dedicated chamber musician, he frequently collaborates with distinguished artists including pianists Leif Ove Andsnes, Lars Vogt and Alexander Lonquich and is the founder of the Tetzlaff Quartet, which he formed in 1994 with violinist Elisabeth Kufferath, violist Hanna Weinmeister and his sister, cellist Tanja Tetzlaff.

Born in Hamburg in 1966, music occupied a central place in his family and his three siblings are all professional musicians. Mr. Tetzlaff began playing the violin and piano at age six, but pursued a regular

academic education while continuing his musical studies. He did not begin intensive study of the violin until making his concert debut playing the Beethoven Violin Concerto at the age of 14 and attributes the establishment of his musical outlook to his teacher at the conservatory in Lübeck, Uwe-Martin Haiberg, who placed equal stress on interpretation and technique. Mr. Tetzlaff came to the United States during the 1985-86 academic year to work with Walter Levin at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and also spent two summers at the Marlboro Music Festival in Vermont.

Mr. Tetzlaff has been in demand as a soloist with many of the world's leading orchestras and conductors, establishing close artistic partnerships that are renewed season after season. Mr. Tetzlaff has performed with the orchestras of Chicago, Cleveland, Boston, Philadelphia, New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Toronto, among many others in North America, as well as with the major European ensembles including the Berlin Philharmonic, London Symphony, Orchestre de Paris, Vienna Philharmonic, Rotterdam Philharmonic and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam.

Highlights of Mr. Tetzlaff's 12/13 season

His health declined enough to make public appearances impossible after 1943. His chief disappointment, however, was the almost total neglect of his compositions by the musical community. At the end of 1942, he lamented, "The quasi boycott of my works by the leading orchestras continues; no performances either of old works or new ones. It is a shame — not for me, of course." It is to the credit of ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers) that they provided money for the health care that enabled Bartók to continue composing to the very end of his life.

During the last months of Bartók's life, there were a few signs that his fortunes were improving. Performances of his works, which had been woefully infrequent since his arrival in America in 1940, were occurring with more regularity, and in early 1943, he received a commission for an important composition — the *Concerto for Orchestra* — from Sergei Koussevitzky, music director of the Boston Symphony. An ASCAP-sponsored stay at a sanatorium at Saranac Lake in upper New York State fortified Bartók's strength enough so that he could work on the new orchestral piece, over which he labored doggedly until the score was finished on October

8th. Later that month, back in New York City, he was able to attend a well-received concert by the brilliant Yehudi Menuhin at Carnegie Hall that included his Violin Concerto and Violin Sonata No. 1. Shortly thereafter, Menuhin, long a champion of Bartók's music, proposed to the composer a commission for an unaccompanied violin sonata. Bartók was concerned that his health would make writing the piece difficult, but when ASCAP arranged for him to take a rest cure that winter at Asheville, in the mountains of western North Carolina, he accepted Menuhin's offer. On January 30, 1944, Bartók wrote to his old friend the violinist Joseph Szigeti, "At present, I feel in the best of health, no fever; my strength has returned. I take fine walks in the woods and mountains; actually, I climb the mountain (of course, only with due caution). Last March, my weight was 87 pounds; now it is 105. I grow fat. I bulge. I explode. You will not recognize me." The salubrious surroundings allowed Bartók to finish the Sonata by March 14th. When the work was premiered at Menuhin's Carnegie Hall recital on November 26, 1944, in the presence of the composer, the audience applauded it, the critics carped, and Bartók allowed, "It was a wonderful performance. The Sonata has four movements and lasts about twenty

steady tread of a funeral procession that rises to a shrill cry before ending with an attenuated but deeply expressive lament. The pointillistic *Vivo* was composed for solo cello in 1961 and arranged for violin in 1992. *The Carenza Jig*, modeled on the lively dance that is a staple of traditional Irish and Scottish music, was named for the young daughter of a family Kurtág visited in Cornwall, England in 1989. *Doloroso Garzulyéknak* (“Sad Song for the Garzulys”) (1992) was written in honor of the physician Ferenc Garzuly, a prominent music patron in Budapest and for years the director of the city’s annual Bartók Festival, and his wife, the noted Hungarian ceramist Maria Geszler-Garzuly. *Zank-Kromatisch* (“Chromatic Quarrel”) (1987) draws remarkable contention both harmonically and melodically from a single instrument.

### **Sonata for Solo Violin**

BÉLA BARTÓK (1881-1945)

*Composed in 1944.*

*Premiered on November 26, 1944 in New York City by Yehudi Menuhin.*

**B**éla Bartók came to America in April 1940, sick of body and afflicted of spirit. He had been frail all his life, and the leukemia that was to take his life five

years later had already begun to erode his health. Adding to the trial of his medical condition was the Second World War raging in Europe, a painful torment to Bartók’s ardent Hungarian patriotism. Upon leaving his homeland, he not only relinquished the native country so dear to him, but also forfeited the secure financial and professional positions that he had earned in Budapest. Compromise in the face of Hitler’s brutality, however, was never a possibility for a man of Bartók’s uncompromising convictions. “He who stays on when he could leave may be said to acquiesce tacitly in everything that is happening here,” he wrote on the eve of his departure. “This journey [to America] is like plunging into the unknown from what is known, but unbearable.” Filled with apprehension, he made the difficult overland trip to Lisbon, then sailed to New York.

Sad to say, Bartók’s misgivings were justified in one of the unhappiest chapters in American music. His financial support from Hungary was, of course, cut off, and money worries aggravated his delicate physical condition. He held a modest post as a folk music researcher at Columbia University for several months, but that ended when funding from a grant ran out.

in North America include appearances with the New York Philharmonic, the Pittsburgh, New World and Montreal Symphonies, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra and a three-concert chamber music project at the 92nd St. Y in New York City. European highlights include return visits to the Berlin and London Philharmonics, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris and the London Symphony.

Christian Tetzlaff was a “Perspectives” artist at Carnegie Hall during the 2010-11 season, an initiative in which musicians are invited to curate a personal concert series through collaborations with other musicians and ensembles. Mr. Tetzlaff’s “Perspectives” included an appearance with the Boston Symphony playing concertos by Mozart, Bartók and the New York premiere of a new concerto by Sir Harrison Birtwistle; a play/conduct performance with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s; a performance with the Ensemble ACJW led by Sir Simon Rattle; a concert with the Tetzlaff Quartet; and a duo-recital with violinist Antje Weithaas. He also led a

Professional Training Workshop for young violinists and pianists, culminating in a young artist concert.

Tetzlaff’s highly regarded recordings reflect the breadth of his musical interests and include solo works, chamber music and concertos ranging from Haydn to Bartók. His recent recordings include Szymanowski Violin Concerto No. 1 with the Vienna Philharmonic led by Pierre Boulez for Deutsche Grammophon; the complete Bach Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin for the Musical Heritage and Hänssler labels; the Schumann and Mendelssohn Violin Concertos with Frankfurt Radio Orchestra and Paavo Järvi for Edel Classics; and Schoenberg String Quartet No. 1 and Sibelius Quartet Op. 56 with the Tetzlaff Quartet on the AVI label.

Tetzlaff currently performs on a violin modeled after a Guarneri del Gesu made by the German violin maker, Peter Greiner. In honor of his artistic achievements, *Musical America* named Mr. Tetzlaff “Instrumentalist of the Year” in 2005. More information can be found at [christiantetzlaff.com](http://christiantetzlaff.com).

**ON TONIGHT'S PROGRAM...**

Creating and re-creating works for unaccompanied violin are monumental challenges for composer and performer alike. Four strings and a pound or so of meticulously crafted wood activated by a three-ounce bow tautly strung with hair from a horse's tail seems an unpromising mechanism for addressing the sublime, but musicians from the time of the *passacaglia* that Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber included in his *Mystery Sonatas* in the 1670s to 20th-century compositions by Prokofiev, Bartók, Cage and Bright Sheng have confirmed the expressive and stylistic possibilities that it offers. Christian Tetzlaff's recital includes works for unaccompanied violin by four masters of the genre — a sonata by Bach, the acknowledged summit of this repertory, sonatas by Belgian virtuoso Eugène Ysaÿe and Hungarian composer/pianist Béla Bartók, and a set of miniatures by the Romanian-Hungarian contemporary composer György Kurtág.

**Sonata No. 1 for Unaccompanied Violin  
in G Minor, Op. 27, No. 1**  
EUGÈNE YSAÏE (1858-1931)

*Composed in 1924.*

Eugène Ysaÿe (ee-sy-uh) was one of the most beloved musicians in the decades surrounding the turn of the 20th century, a violinist revered by his peers and lionized by audiences, a teacher of immense influence, a conductor of international repute, and a composer of excellent skill. His father was a theater conductor and violinist in his native Liège, Belgium, and it was with him that Eugène began his study of the instrument at the age of four. Three years later, the boy was

admitted to the Liège Conservatory and there won a prize for his playing, but he had a falling out with his teacher, Désiré Heynberg, and quit the school. In 1872, Ysaÿe was back at the Conservatory as a pupil of Rodolphe Massart, under whose tutelage he flourished sufficiently to receive a scholarship for study with Henryk Wieniawski at the Brussels Conservatory from 1874 to 1876. In 1876, Ysaÿe learned that Henri Vieuxtemps had recovered sufficiently from a recent stroke to accept a few students, and he moved to Paris to receive that virtuoso's instruction for the next three years. Ysaÿe toured Germany in 1879, winning praise from the great Joseph Joachim and being named concertmaster of Benjamin Bilsé's orchestra, the predecessor

1958, Kurtág went to Paris to study with Messiaen and Milhaud, but an equally important influence on him at that time were his sessions with the psychologist Marianne Stein, whose deep understanding of the artistic temperament helped to unlock his creativity. He composed his Op. 1, the String Quartet No. 1, upon his return to Hungary and dedicated the score to her. From 1958 to 1963, Kurtág worked as a coach and tutor at the Bartók Secondary School of Music in Budapest, and occupied a similar position with the National Philharmonic from 1960 to 1968, helping to train such outstanding Hungarian musicians as Zoltán Kocsis, András Schiff and the first Takács String Quartet. In 1967, Kurtág was appointed to the faculty of the Budapest Academy of Music, where he taught piano and chamber music until his retirement in 1986; in 1993 he moved to southwestern France to be near his son's family. He has served as Composer-in-Residence with the Berlin Philharmonic (1993-1995) and with the Vienna Konzerthaus (1995-1996), and has been recognized with the Erkel Prize (1954, 1956, 1969), Kossuth Prize (1973), Order of the Star with the Golden Wreath from the Hungarian Government (1986), Monaco's Prix de Composition Musicale (1993), Austria's State Award for European

Composers (1994), Kossuth Prize for Life's Work (1996), Munich's Siemens Music Award (1998), membership in the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts (1987) and West Berlin's Academy of Art (1987), and the prestigious Grawemeyer Award from the University of Louisville (2006).

*Signs, Games and Messages (Jelek, Játékok és Üzenetek* in Hungarian) is a collection of several dozen greatly varied musical aphorisms for string duo and trio and solo violin, viola, cello, double bass, clarinet, bassoon, oboe and flute composed between 1987 and 2005 that includes style studies, technical etudes, character pieces, homages to friends, colleagues and other composers, and random musical thoughts. The Armenian violinist Movses Pogossian, a friend of Kurtág who has recorded many of the *Signs, Games and Messages*, noted that these miniatures encompass a "unique world of naked nerves, meticulous detail and symphonies that may last under one minute." The *Hommage à J.S.B.* [Johann Sebastian Bach] (1998) implies within its widely spaced *cantabile* melody the multiple voices for which Bach's solo violin partitas and sonatas provided the model and inspiration. *In memoriam Tamás Blum*, written upon the death of that Hungarian conductor in 1992, moves with the sad,



player Louis Marchand fled town rather than be beaten in a contest arranged by a local nobleman.) Though Bach may have found models and inspiration in the music of his predecessors, his works for unaccompanied violin far surpass any others in technique and musical quality.

Though the three violin partitas, examples of the *sonata da camera* (“chamber sonata”) or suite of dances, vary in style and structure, the three solo sonatas uniformly adopt the precedent of the more serious “church sonata,” the *sonata di chiesa*, deriving their mood and makeup from the works of the influential Roman master Arcangelo Corelli. The sonatas follow the standard four-movement disposition of the *sonata da chiesa* — slow-fast-slow-fast — though Bach replaced the first quick movements with elaborate fugues and suggested a certain dance-like buoyancy in the finales. The opening *Adagio* of the Sonata No. 3 in C Major, whose somber mood and dotted-rhythm tread recall the style of the French Overture, serves as a broad preface to the stupendous *Fugue* that follows. Bach borrowed the theme for this elaborate and precisely planned movement (his audacity at composing a fugue for just the four strings of a solo violin is justified by the superbly satisfying result that he

achieved) from the Pentecost antiphon *Veni Sancte Spiritus* (“Come Holy Ghost”), a favorite melody of his which also appears in two Chorale Preludes (BWV 651 and 652), the Cantatas Nos. 59 and 175, and the motet *Der Geist hilft unsrer Schwachheit auf* (BWV 226). The touching *Largo*, modest in its expression and dimensions, provides a foil for the grandeur of the preceding *Fugue*. The closing *Allegro assai*, in two-part dance form, eschews double-stopping in favor of a *moto perpetuo* unfolding of briskly moving melodic material.

#### Selections from Signs, Games and Messages for Solo Violin

GYÖRGY KURTÁG (born in 1926)

*Composed 1987-2005*

György Kurtág was born on February 19, 1926 in Lugo, a town whose territory had been ceded to Romania by Hungary following World War I. Kurtág took piano and composition lessons in Timisoara before entering the Budapest Academy of Music in 1946, where he earned diplomas in composition (his teachers included Sándor Veress and Ferenc Farkas), piano (Pál Kadosa) and chamber music (Leo Weiner). He became a Hungarian citizen in 1948. In 1957-

of the Berlin Philharmonic. After concertizing in Scandinavia and Russia with pianist Anton Rubinstein, Ysaÿe settled from 1883 to 1886 in Paris, where he formed close ties with Franck, Chausson, d’Indy, Saint-Saëns, Debussy and other of the city’s leading musicians: Franck’s Violin Sonata was a wedding gift for him (Ysaÿe first played the piece at the ceremony on September 28, 1886, and gave its public premiere three months later in Brussels); Chausson’s *Poème and Concert* for Violin, Piano and String Quartet were dedicated to him; Debussy composed his String Quartet for Ysaÿe and originally conceived the *Nocturnes* as a solo vehicle for him. From 1886 to 1898, Ysaÿe served as professor of violin at the conservatory in Brussels, where he also established the Ysaÿe String

Quartet (for which ensemble Saint-Saëns wrote his Quartet No. 1) and founded the orchestral Concerts Ysaÿe, both of which were principally dedicated to promoting new French and Belgian music. Increasing commitments for tours as violinist and conductor required him to leave the Conservatory in 1898, though he continued to live in Brussels until the outbreak of World War I in 1914. Following his debut in the United States in 1894, Ysaÿe’s American prestige equaled that which he enjoyed in Europe, and he was named music director of the Cincinnati Symphony in 1918; he conducted that ensemble for four years before being succeeded by Fritz Reiner. In 1922, he returned to Europe to revive the Concerts Ysaÿe and resume his tours. Declining health caused by diabetes

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and an affliction of his bowing arm began to limit his activities in his later years, however, and in 1929, he was forced to have a foot amputated. He was able to conduct a few more programs the following year (his last appearance as a conductor was on November 13, 1930, with cellist Pablo Casals as soloist), but he was unable to lead the premiere of his only opera, *Piére li houïeu* (to his own libretto in the Walloon dialect), on March 4, 1931 in Liège. He died in Brussels two months later. In 1937, Queen Elisabeth of Belgium, a long-time violin student of his, inaugurated an annual violin competition in Brussels — the *Prix International Eugène Ysaÿe* (rechristened the Queen Elisabeth Competition after World War II) — in his honor.

Though he was famed internationally as a supreme master of the violin (in his book on *The Art of Violin Playing*, the noted scholar and performer Carl Flesch called him “the most outstanding and individual violinist I have ever heard in my life”), Ysaÿe also composed a sizeable number of original works, most of them for his own instrument. He was never formally trained in the discipline, but he had a natural talent for composition that manifested itself in a Romantic virtuoso style in his early works (notably eight violin concertos which were

never published and are virtually unknown) and in the utilization of progressive techniques in his later creations. His single composition for the stage, the opera *Piére li houïeu* (“Peter the Miner”), remains in manuscript, though about a dozen works for violin and orchestra have enjoyed a number of performances and recordings. His smaller pieces for violin and piano are regular recital items, but his most admired compositions are the six Sonatas for Unaccompanied Violin (Op. 27), which he was inspired to compose after hearing Joseph Szigeti play a Bach solo sonata in 1924. These Sonatas are in an advanced stylistic idiom influenced by the modern music of France, and call for feats of technical mastery that rival those required by the Solo Caprices of Paganini.

The Sonata No. 1 in G Minor, dedicated to Szigeti, is modeled on Bach’s three such works for unaccompanied violin. It opens with a deeply expressive *Grave* whose mood of stern solemnity is heightened by considerable chromaticism and harmonic piquancy. The three-voice *Fugato* that follows is a virtuoso feat of both composition and execution. The dance-like third movement serves as a stylistic and expressive foil to the Sonata’s otherwise stern countenance. The finale borrows

its propulsive triple rhythms from the gigue and its technical requirements from the furthest reaches of the instrument’s capabilities.

### **Sonata No. 3 for Unaccompanied Violin in C Major, BWV 1005**

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH  
(1685-1750)

*Composed before 1720.*

Bach composed the set of three sonatas and three partitas for unaccompanied violin before 1720, the date on the manuscript, probably while serving at the court of Anhalt-Cöthen. Though there is not a letter, preface, contemporary account or shred of any other documentary evidence extant to shed light on the genesis and purpose of these pieces, the technical demands that they impose on the player indicate that they were intended for a virtuoso performer: Johann Georg Pisendel,

a student of Vivaldi; Jean Baptiste Volumier, leader of the Dresden court orchestra; and Joseph Spiess, concertmaster of the Cöthen orchestra, have been advanced as possible candidates. After the introduction of the basso continuo early in the 17th century, it had been the seldom-broken custom to supply a work for solo instrument with keyboard accompaniment, so the tradition behind Bach’s solo violin sonatas and partitas is slight. Johann Paul von Westhoff, a violinist at Weimar when Bach played in the orchestra there in 1703, published a set of six unaccompanied partitas in 1696, and Heinrich Biber, Johann Jakob Walther and Pisendel all composed similar works. Many of these composers were active in and around Dresden. Bach visited Dresden shortly before assuming his post at Cöthen, and he may well have become familiar at that time with most of this music. (Bach’s reputation as a peerless keyboard virtuoso preceded him on his visit to Dresden in 1717: the French organ and harpsichord

## COMING UP...

The East Coast Chamber Orchestra (“ECCO”) performs on Tuesday, February 12 at 7:30PM. They will be inviting amateur string players to join them on stage for a community reading of Britten’s *Simple Symphony*. There are just a few spots remaining. If you are interested in participating, call the Concert Office at 609-258-2800.