



TOWNMUSIC ²¹/₂₂

In The Room Joshua Roman's Final Season

Town Hall Seattle presents

The Final Cello-bration

2021-22 Town Music Series
Artistic Director, Joshua Roman

Tuesday, June 7, 2022
7:30pm in The Great Hall





Performers

Garrett Arney, *percussion*

Efe Baltacigil, *cello*

Nathan Chan, *cello*

Meeka Quan DiLorenzo, *cello*

Roberta Hansen Downey, *cello, percussion*

Eric Han, *cello*

Charles Jacot, *cello*

Joshua Roman, *cello*

Sarah Rommel, *cello*

Tiffany Choe, *soprano*

Program

<i>Ladainha</i>	Gustavo Tavares (b. 1961)
<i>Mirage: Die tanzende Sonne</i> (Mirage: The Dancing Sun)	Sofia Gubaidulina (b. 1931)
<i>Quartetto</i>	Grażyna Bacewicz (1909–1969)
I. Narrazione	
II. Riflessioni	

<i>Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5</i>	Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887–1959)
I. Ária (Cantilena)	
II. Dança (Martelo)	

INTERMISSION

Entries from the <i>Musical Journal</i>	Joshua Roman (b. 1983)
(live performance world premiere)	
<i>Drive</i>	
<i>Un Amour Lointain</i> (A Faraway Love) commissioned by the ProtoStar Group	

<i>Bachianas Brasileiras No. 1</i>	Heitor Villa-Lobos
I. Introdução (Embolada)	
II. Prelúdio (Modinha)	
III. Fuga (Conversa)	

Program Notes



Tonight, as we bid Joshua Roman a bittersweet farewell after 15 years as Artistic Director of the Town Music series, we also celebrate his extraordinary musical contributions — not just to Town Hall, but to the entire sphere of chamber music. How do we even begin to mark the occasion? The only way we know how: with one final, epic Cello-bration.

Joshua has seen Town Hall, quite literally, through it all: a decade of steady growth (2007-2017); nearly two full seasons of *Inside/Out* (2017-2019); a triumphant return to a newly-renovated building (2018-2019); a year interrupted (2019-2020); and a year of unfathomable isolation (2020-2021). **To be gathered together in the room — this room — is a gift like none other.**

The curation of tonight's program took creativity, sleuthing, and more than a little sweat. "In looking to create the perfect final Cello-bration," says Joshua, "I wanted to do a throwback to something we've done before and to something that's never been done before." A tall order, but Joshua's approach to programming has always been about pushing boundaries and exploring the outer edges of possibility; unsurprisingly, tonight's performance is no exception.

Remarkably, even without new commissions, there are no arrangements on the program. It's all written for cello — a true Cello-bration in every sense. "Now we're really seeing the voice of the cello and its wide range of sounds, uses, emotions, and ways of using it melodically, rhythmically, and texturally all throughout the program," Joshua explains. "Some pieces hold their own little worlds to enjoy and appreciate, and I hope you'll be surprised by the journey."

As an arranger, soloist, and conductor, cellist **Gustavo Tavares** (b. 1961) has been described as "one of the most important Brazilian names in the classical music of our time" (*Correio Braziliense*, 2005). And through his astonishing musical versatility, it's not hard to see why — his work has been performed and recorded by artists like Yo-Yo Ma and the Buenos Aires String Quartet, and he has performed in some of the most famous concert halls and festivals in the world.

Drawing from the traditions of capoeira — the Brazilian martial art infused with fluid, acrobatic dance and music — Tavares offers a reverent nod to his roots with **Ladainha**. Traditionally, the ladainha (litany, in English) is sung at the beginning of a capoeira roda and tells a story or shares a message. Tavares's Ladainha, like any good story arc, builds over time and undulates along as the eight cellos rush in and fade back. Just a few minutes in, listen closely for a hushed moment that gives way to the unexpected. The piece is “clearly written by a cellist,” says Joshua, “the way he uses the cello and the techniques ... the second I heard this piece start, I was trying to find the music.” We're so grateful he did.

Improvisational, longing, and spiritual, **Sofia Gubaidulina's** (b. 1931) work is deeply influenced by the social and political conditions under which she grew up in Soviet Russia. Her music has been called everything from “irresponsible” (for the use of alternative tunings) to “noisy mud” (she was among seven composers blacklisted by the Soviet Composers' Union in 1979). Despite constraints and criticisms, she was recognized and encouraged by renowned composer Dmitri Shostakovich and continued her expression of modernism in the 1950s and '60s. As she grew in fame, so did her fearless pursuit of music that transcends expectations.

Mirage: The Dancing Sun explores an incredible range of sounds, never shying away from complex, layered textures that are particularly well suited for performance in The Great Hall. “One of the things I love is how good it sounds when you're quiet,” says Joshua. “The closeness of the stage to the audience is especially good for things that are soft and delicate. The Gubaidulina octet is extremely creative texturally and relies on a lot of extended techniques that really pop in The Great Hall.”

A child prodigy, Polish composer and violinist **Grażyna Bacewicz** (1909-1969) studied violin, piano, and theory starting at age five. She developed her well-known neoclassical composition style in the 1930s while studying in Paris under Nadia Boulanger, one of the most influential musical composition instructors of the 20th century. After a car accident left her with serious injuries in 1954, Bacewicz became focused on her compositional career. Her style began to shift in the late 1950s as avant-garde approaches to composition gained momentum in Poland, experimenting with sonorism, 12-tone techniques, and aleatoricism.

In **Quartetto**, fragmented sounds weave a narrative that fluctuates in texture, leaping and spiraling through the musical space. Of the piece Bacewicz wrote, “Bringing together four cellos attracted me with the richness of its sound matter. When working on the piece, finished in the autumn of 1963, I came to the conclusion that an ensemble of four cellos is an inexhaustible treasure for a contemporary composer.”

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) is one of the most celebrated, significant composers of 20th-century Brazilian music. His neo-classical *Bachianas Brasileiras*, a massive set of nine suites (with two for cellos), were composed between 1930 and 1945. As the title demonstrates, the pieces are grounded in a study of Bach — a fusion of harmonic Baroque complexities combined with the energy of Brazilian folk and contemporary music of the time. The resulting works are a classic, beautiful blend of cultures and traditions.

Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5 is written for cellos with a soloist soprano; the inclusion of voice offers the chance to bring someone else in for a moment, and what better way than through the Seattle debut of soprano Tiffany Choe. Often separated out and performed alone, the first movement's Aria is considered to be Villa-Lobos' best-known work. Joshua describes it as "one of the most beautiful melodies ever ... out of everything I've been obsessing over, this is the melody that keeps coming back to my head."

Joshua Roman's (b. 1983) pieces are from the *Musical Journal*, a project he began during and in response to the global pandemic. With a commission and mandate from the ProtoStar Group to capture the unique moment, he set forth to musically represent the raw emotions that defined collective experiences around the globe. Each journal entry was based on a period of time — much like a written diary or journal — but was originally recorded with just one cello, straight into the mic. "It's a process that really allows me to sit with a feeling and immediately go to the sound. Without the mediation of paper, there's so much that's possible," says Joshua, reflecting on the experience.

Drive explores the tension and overwhelm of leaving a space of isolation. The piece stems from the experience of driving halfway across the U.S. as demonstrations, political tensions, and forest fires swept the country. Driving through the desert, in motion for the first time in months, Joshua found a sense of beauty and possibility in the endless expanse of sky and land: "It was the first time I felt a sense of hope that wasn't fake — it came from a place rooted in action and conviction, not just fantasy. *Drive* taps into that sense of frustration and tension, making space for hope to rise up."

A Faraway Love was born from an image of separation and isolation that came to Joshua in the summer of 2020. He explores how closeness can exist and even grow between two connected beings despite physical distance. He plays with stillness, setting the tempo for the experience of isolation with cosmic, intimate cello.

In a fitting finale, Joshua and company revisit Villa-Lobos with ***Bachianas Brasileiras No. 1***, taking us on a journey to the true heart of the cello. All at once moving, buoyant, and powerfully exuberant, it exudes an energy that celebrates the incredible range and emotion of the instrument.

A note from Joshua

Thank you for being with us tonight In The Room. If there's anything I'll carry with me, it's the energy and spirit of Town Hall's memorable audiences. This room sounds good with no audience in it, but it sounds even better when you are all here with us. Thank you for joining us in this remarkable space that feels, more than anything, *real*. Hopefully, it will continue to bring that same joy for many years to come.

I'd like to thank Betty Carter, Brian and Lynn Grant, Charles Sitkin †, Deborah Person, Eunice Nakao and Roy Tribelhorn, J.J. Jacoby and Erik Neumann, Lynly Beard, Maryanne Tagney and David Jones, Moya Vazquez, Robert Schramke †, Roger Klorese and David Haney, Sharon Griggins, Sheena Aebig and Eric Taylor, Susan and Eric Benson, Susan Winokur and Paul Leach, Yoshi and Naomi Minegishi, Edie Lackland, and the Nesholm Family Foundation. This incredible group of long-time donors consistently showed up In the Room to follow their musical passions and help me grow over the last fifteen seasons.

I'd also like to extend special thanks to the Town Hall Seattle Board for supporting me for a decade and a half, and our most consistent partners Second Inversion, KING FM, and Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra. And to all of the performers and composers, from Seattle and beyond, who have graced our stages and made me look good over the years, thank you.

Peace, love, and cello,

Joshua



Bios



Garrett Arney is passionate about developing the genre of percussion music and has inspired many composers and musicians through creative collaboration and workshops. As a cofounder of the group arx duo, Garrett has worked with many composers including Steven Mackey, Jonathan Bailey Holland, Robert Honstein, and many more to bring new works to life. As a past member of Ensemble Connect, Garrett performed the Carnegie Hall premiere of Steven Mackey's *Micro-Concerto*, as well as many other performances through New Work City. He also served as a teaching artist for schools and community centers throughout the Five Boroughs. A native of Michigan, he studied at Michigan State University, Peabody Conservatory, and Yale School of Music and has held guest faculty positions at several institutions. He is the Co-Artistic director of his nonprofit, Arx Music Association, and travels around the country and on multiple continents performing with his duo partner, Mari Yoshinaga.



Turkish cellist **Efe Baltacıgil** comes from a musical family and started with the violin at age five, and the cello at seven. After graduating from Mimar Sinan University State Conservatory in Istanbul, he attended the famous Curtis Institute of Music and studied with Peter Wiley and David Soyer. He won the Philadelphia Orchestra Associate Principal cello position at the age of 23, the Young Concert Artist audition, and the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant in 2006. In 2012, he made his Philadelphia Orchestra concerto debut followed by Berlin Philharmonic debut with the conductor Sir Simon Rattle. He has performed alongside Pinchas Zukerman at Carnegie Hall and has participated in Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Project. Efe Baltacıgil currently holds the principal cello position in the Seattle Symphony Orchestra. He is a founding member of the East Coast Chamber Orchestra as well as a member of the prestigious Marlboro Music Festival in Vermont. In his free time, he enjoys sailing, windsurfing, and volley pong.



Nathan Chan could emulate the styles of conductors like Seiji Ozawa, Herbert von Karajan, and Leonard Bernstein at a remarkably early age and made his conducting debut at age three. He began formal music lessons with cellist Irene Sharp at age 5, and later studied with Sieun Lin at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Nathan received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Economics at Columbia University and his Masters of Music with Richard Aaron at The Juilliard School. He has performed as a soloist with the San Francisco Symphony, the Royal Philharmonic, Albany Symphony, Reno Philharmonic, and Hong Kong Chamber Orchestra. He also participated in the Emmy-award winning NPR program

From The Top and NPR's *Performance Today with Fred Child*. In 2009, he was featured in the three-part British documentary, *The World's Greatest Musical Prodigies*. Chan is Seattle Symphony's Assistant Principal Cello.



Meeka Quan DiLorenzo began her cello studies at age six with Suzuki teacher Beth Goldstein and has since studied under Julie Feldman, Irene Sharp, Stephan Geber, and Richard Aaron. A graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music, DiLorenzo has been a prizewinner in several national and international competitions. An avid chamber musician, she has performed with members of the Juilliard and Cleveland quartets and has received invitations to the Aspen, Ravinia, Taos, Kingston, Sun Valley, and Kneisel Hall music festivals. She held the title of Associate Principal Cello of the Utah Symphony for five seasons before joining the Seattle Symphony in 2009, where she now holds that title once more.



Roberta Hansen Downey grew up in Seattle and Tacoma. She earned her Bachelor of Music at the University of Southern California where she studied cello with Gabor Rejto, and continued her cello studies with Cordelia Wikarski-Miedel. She was a winner of the Northwest Young Artist Competition and the Don Bushell Concerto Competition. She joined the Northwest Chamber Orchestra in 1978, and subsequently joined the Seattle Symphony in 1982. After her first six seasons with the Orchestra, Roberta took time off to earn her Master's Degree in Performance at the Eastman School of Music. She is a frequent guest artist on the Second City Chamber series in Tacoma.



Eric Han is a Korean-born Canadian cellist who made his concerto debut with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra at the age of 14. Following his debut, he had many engagements with Toronto Sinfonietta, Toronto Chamber Players, and Symphony by the Sea in Boston. Eric studied with David Hetherington at the Glenn Gould School and holds a Bachelor of Music from the Colburn School of Music under the tutelage of Ronald Leonard. He has performed with many of the world's leading musicians including Joseph Silverstein, Roberto Diaz, Ani and Ida Kavafian, Cho-Liang Lin, Chee Yun, and many more. He collaborated with world-renowned conductor Sir Andrew Davis to record a live performance of the Elgar cello concerto on the Yamaha Canada label. He has performed in many of the world's prestigious halls and at major music festivals, and has been the recipient of many awards in Canada and the U.S. Eric has joined the Seattle Symphony Orchestra as their 4th chair cellist and is acting principal cellist for Seattle Opera Company.



Charles Jacot found a passion for playing orchestral music while living in the Chicago area, hearing many Chicago Symphony Orchestra performances during the Solti years and playing several seasons in the Chicago Civic Orchestra. He studied with Chicago Symphony members Alois Trnka and CSO Principal Frank Miller. Charles studied with Hans Jorgen Jensen at the University of Houston, earning a Bachelor of Music degree and graduating summa cum laude. During his time in Houston, Charles was Assistant Principal cello in the Texas Chamber Orchestra. He was also a winner in the Oklahoma City Young Artist Competition, as well as a two-time participant in the Gregor Piatigorsky Seminar in Los Angeles. Charles later earned his Master's degree at the Juilliard School where he studied with Harvey Shapiro. He currently resides in Seattle, where he is a member of the Pacific Northwest Ballet Orchestra and a frequent sub for both the Seattle Opera and Seattle Symphony, with whom he has participated in several recordings in the past decade.



Joshua Roman is a cellist, accomplished composer, and curator whose performances embrace musical styles from Bach to Radiohead. Before setting off on his unique path as a soloist, Roman was the Seattle Symphony's principal cellist — a job he began at just 22 years of age and left only two years later. He has since become renowned for his genre-bending repertoire and wide-ranging collaborations. Roman was named a TED Senior Fellow in 2015, and his live performance of the complete Six Suites for Solo Cello by J.S. Bach on TED's Facebook Page garnered 1.8M live viewers, with millions more for his Main Stage TED Talks/Performances. Recent highlights include performing standard and new concertos with the Colorado, Detroit, Jacksonville, Milwaukee, and San Francisco Symphonies. In addition to his other orchestral appearances, Roman has collaborated with the JACK, St. Lawrence, and Verona Quartets as well as with established artists such as Andrius Žlabys, Assad Brothers, and Yo-Yo Ma. Joshua has been the Artistic Director of the Town Music series with Town Hall Seattle for the past 15 years, ending his tenure with the 2021-2022 season.



Cellist **Sarah Rommel** began her musical studies on piano at age nine and cello at age twelve. She recently received her Master's Degree from the USC Thornton School of Music in Los Angeles studying under the tutelage of Ralph Kirshbaum. She is a top prizewinner of the 2014 George Enescu International Cello Competition and has been the recipient of several awards and grants, including a Williamson Foundation Grant, Frank Huntington Beebe Fund Grant, and Jack Kent Cooke Young Artists Award, which led to a subsequent appearance on NPR's *From the Top*. Sarah has given solo recitals at Caramoor's Evinin Rising Stars Showcase and at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, in addition to performances in Philadelphia, New York City, Boston, Chicago, Seattle, France, Italy, England, and Romania. Rommel was a founding member of the cello quintet SAKURA and has appeared with the Chameleon Arts Ensemble and SHUFFLE Concert. She has also recently toured with the East Coast Chamber Orchestra (ECCO) and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. Sarah is currently based in New York City and Seattle.



Soprano, **Tiffany Choe** is a Korean American soprano born and raised in Southern California. She received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in vocal performance from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music under the tutelage of Kevin and Heidi Grant Murphy. She is the recipient of the Georgina Joshi Fellowship for the 2021-2022 school year. She has been in 11 productions with the IU Opera Theater, most recently seen as Mimì in their production of *La Bohème*. She was also seen as Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Constance in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Rosalia in *West Side Story*, Laoula in *L'Étoile*, and Magda in Puccini's *La Rondine*. She is excited to be joining the Marion Roose Pullin Opera Studio for the 2022/2023 season. She will be singing the role of Pamina in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* with Arizona Opera in the spring of 2023. Tonight's performance is her Seattle debut.

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