



Mercedes-Benz
OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

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Stewart Goodyear

PIANO RECITAL



Sunday, November 6, 2022 at 2:00 PM

PAVILION, PERFORMING ARTS CENTER SAN LUIS OBISPO

STEWART GOODYEAR

(b. 1978)

Acabris! Acabras! Acabram!

*Commissioned by the Eli and Phil Taylor Foundation
in honor of Canada's 150th Anniversary.*

JOSEPH BOLOGNE

(1745-1799)

Adagio in F minor, G. 219

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

(1685-1750)

French Suite No. 5 in G major, BWV 816

- Allemande
- Courante
- Sarabande
- Gavotte
- Bourrée
- Loure
- Gigue

INTERMISSION

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

(1770-1827)

33 Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli, op. 120

*Join us in the Main Lobby following the performance for a complimentary
wine reception and CD signing with Stewart Goodyear.*



For artist biographies, sponsor recognition and more
information, text the word PROGRAM to (805) 608-3457.

STEWART GOODYEAR (b. 1978)

Acabris! Acabras! Acabram! (2016) NOTES FROM THE COMPOSER



This work is a poem for piano inspired by the French Canadian folktale, "The Flying Canoe", which tells a story of lumberjacks working in the center of a very large forest. The piece starts with the grueling repeated rhythms of the lumberjacks cutting

mammoth trees, watching them crash into the snow, hauling the trees from one place to another, longing to see the women they had left behind.

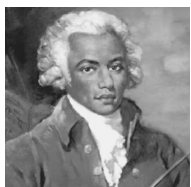
On New Years Day, the snow is so thick that the lumberjacks could not do any work. As they wished to see their loved ones that day, Baptiste, one of the lumberjacks, decided to make a pact with the devil: If the devil would make the canoe fly wherever Baptiste wished, the lumberjack would not say Mass for a year. However, if Baptiste did not return the canoe before dawn of the next day, the devil would own the lumberjack's soul. Before dawn, Baptiste and his companions would not be allowed to say the name of God or fly over a church, otherwise the canoe would crash.

Only a few of the lumberjacks agreed with Baptiste's plan, and with Baptiste saying the magic words, "Acabris! Acabras! Acabram!", the canoe flew into the air with the lumberjacks paddling through the sky.

When the lumberjacks arrived home, the women were filled with joy to see them, and there was a celebration. When it was close to dawn, the lumberjacks remembered that they had to return the canoe, but they found Baptiste inebriated, lying under a table. Fearing that he would say the name of God, the men bound and gagged him into the canoe, paddling away. Baptiste woke up from his drunken stupor, loosened the ropes and gag and shouted: "Mon Dieu, why did you tie me up?" At the name of God, the canoe nose-dived, plunged towards the ground and hit the top of a large tree. The men tumbled out of the canoe and fell down into the darkness. The lumberjacks were never heard from again.

JOSEPH BOLOGNE (1745-1799)

Adagio in F minor, G. 219 (pub. 1800)



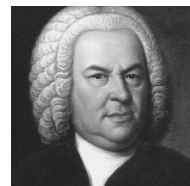
It is not often—in performances of eighteenth-century repertory—that we encounter music by the son of a slave. However, Joseph Bologna's mother Anne (called "Nanon") belonged to George Bologna, a planter in Guadeloupe (a group of Caribbean islands controlled by France). Under the French Code Noir, as the child of an enslaved woman, Joseph was himself a slave. We do not know if George personally gave Joseph and Nanon their freedom, but he moved them to Paris in 1753, where—under the 1315 edict of King Louis X—any enslaved person who set foot on French soil would be freed. In any event, when George was ennobled in 1757, Joseph was given the title "Chevalier [knight] de Saint-Georges" as well.

George certainly provided for his son in other ways: not only had Joseph received music training from an early age, but he also took fencing lessons and became a master swordsman in France.

Still, music was foremost in his heart: he conducted orchestras, performed as a violin virtuoso, and composed a wide variety of works, including operas. Sometime before his death, he dedicated a large collection of pieces to the Comtesse de Vauban, including the poignant *Adagio in F minor*.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750)

French Suite No. 5 in G major, BWV 816 (1723)



Johann Sebastian Bach was a famous organist, but he was no slouch as a harpsichordist, either. He wrote hundreds of keyboard works, both for his own enjoyment and as training pieces for his students. Many of his compositions exist in numerous

manuscript copies (a laborious task in an era before Xerox machines!), and they reflect his suggestions and changes as he instructed various pupils.

Some of the pieces that received heaviest use were the six French Suites that Bach wrote during his years in Cöthen (1717–1723), probably the happiest period of his life. Their "French" nickname was not Bach's; rather, subsequent observers noted that they were "written in the French taste"—meaning they were pleasingly tuneful with limited complexities. The dances within these suites had originated all over Europe (and even in the Americas), but by Bach's time, certain conventions had become standard in Germany. A typical suite employed a "core" set of four dances: an *allemande* as the opener, followed by a *courante* and *sarabande*, and a *gigue* as the conclusion. Composers often inserted additional dances within that framework, so in the fifth suite, Bach also treats listeners to a *gavotte*, a *bourrée*, and a *loure*.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

33 Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli, op. 120 (1819-1823)



In 1819, a shrewd Viennese printer, Anton Diabelli, promoted his fledgling publishing company by sending a melody to all of Austria's leading composers and inviting each of them to contribute one variation apiece to a "patriotic anthology." The theme that Diabelli distributed was a simple waltz melody that he had composed himself. Over time, about fifty composers accepted the invitation; among them were Schubert, Czerny, an 11-year-old Liszt (his first publication), and one of Mozart's sons, Franz Xaver.

Beethoven was at first dismissive of what he called the "cobbler's patch" tune, but then his attention was caught by the subtle potential within Diabelli's waltz theme. In an initial burst of inspiration, he scribbled down some nineteen variations of the melody. Other projects intervened, but in 1823 Beethoven returned to his earlier variations, reworking them and adding fourteen more. Diabelli was still collecting anthology contributions when Beethoven's packet of thirty-three (!) variations arrived; almost immediately, Diabelli published them as an independent album (issuing the multi-author version later). Beethoven's mammoth solo effort expanded the waltz's attributes in all directions, sometimes stretching the original tune almost to the breaking point. This would be Beethoven's final set of piano variations; it also stands as his masterpiece.