



RACHELL ELLEN WONG, GUEST DIRECTOR AND CONCERTMASTER

40TH SEASON

A SEASON LIKE NO OTHER

2024-2025



FRIDAY
APRIL 11, 2025
7:30 P.M.

Sundin Music Hall
Hamline University
ST. PAUL, MN

SATURDAY
APRIL 12, 2025
7:30 P.M.

Mount Olive Lutheran Church
ROCHESTER, MN

Concert 4
**The Wild, the Weird,
and the Misunderstood**

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FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 2025 | 7:30 P.M.

Sundin Music Hall, Hamline University, St. Paul, MN

SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 2025 | 7:30 P.M.

Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Rochester, MN

PROGRAM

ANTONIO VIVALDI (1660–1725)

Il Giustino, RV 717, Act 1, Sinfonia

Allegro | Andante | Allegro

Music for the Theater

MATTHEW LOCKE (1622–1677)

The Tempest, The Second Musick: Curtain Tune

HENRY PURCELL (1659–1795)

Overture from The Virtuous Wife

Minuet from The Gordian Knot Untied

La Furstemberg from The Virtuous Wife

Slow Aire from The Virtuous Wife

Rondeau from The Indian Queen

Hornpipe from The Fairy Queen

MATTHEW LOCKE

Lilk

CARL PHILIPP EMANUEL BACH (1714–1788)

Symphony in B Minor, H 661, Wq 182/5

I. Allegretto | II. Larghetto | III. Presto

—INTERMISSION—

ANTONIO VIVALDI

Concerto Alla Rustica in G Major, RV 151

FRANCESCO DURANTE (1684–1755)

Concerto No. 8 in A Major, La Pazzia

I. Allegro–affetuoso | II. Affetuoso | III. Allegro

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685–1750)

(Arr. by CPE Bach and Wong)

Violin Concerto in D Minor, BWV 1052R

I. Allegro | II. Adagio | III. Allegro



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Rachell Ellen Wong

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and guest director*

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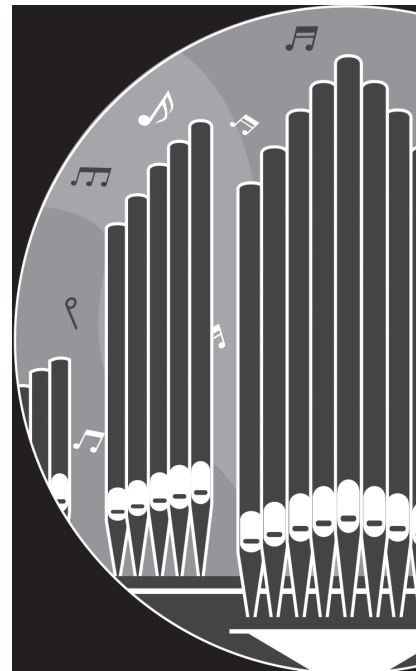
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Sara Thompson

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*principals



Violinist **RACHELL ELLEN WONG** is a unique and vibrant performer who is equally at home in baroque and standard violin repertoire. In 2020, she made history when she was awarded the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant, becoming the only baroque artist to receive the honor. Her exceptional blend of technical virtuosity on gut strings, expressive musicianship, and understanding of period performance practices has garnered international critical acclaim and a dedicated following. Named “most approachable virtuoso” by the *New York Classical Review*, Rachell has appeared as a soloist across six continents and has established herself as one of the leading historical performers of her generation. She has collaborated with esteemed ensembles, among them Academy of Ancient Music, Jupiter Ensemble, Bach Collegium Japan, The English Concert, and Ruckus. Equally accomplished on the modern violin, Rachell made her first public appearance with Philharmonia Northwest at age eleven and has since performed as a soloist with orchestras such as the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and the Seattle Symphony, among others. Rachell also teaches for the Valley of the Moon Music Festival in Sonoma, California.


Rachell’s recent appearances include performances with the New World Symphony, Camerata Pacifica, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Ilumina Festival in Sao Paulo, Reno Chamber Orchestra, The Northwest Sinfonietta, and The Rome Chamber Music Festival. Alongside the exceptional conductor and keyboardist David Belkovski,

Rachell is cofounder of Twelfth Night, a dazzling early music ensemble. Founded in 2021, Twelfth Night’s recent engagements include Carnegie Hall, Cal Performance, Caramoor, Chatham Baroque, Arizona Early Music, San Diego Early Music, Friends of Chamber Music Kansas City, and Early Music Seattle, where the ensemble has a regular presence.

Among her many awards, Rachell was the Grand Prize winner of the inaugural Lillian and Maurice Barbash J.S. Bach Competition. Originally from the Pacific Northwest, Rachell attended The University of Texas at Austin, Indiana University, and The Juilliard School, where she was a Kovner Fellow recipient. Rachell performs on a baroque violin from the school of Joachim Tielke, ca. 1700, and a violin made in 1953 by Carlo de March. She currently resides in New York City with her two bunnies. For more information about Rachell, please visit her website at www.rachellwong.com. ●



Rachell Ellen Wong




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The Wild, the Weird, and the Misunderstood

Program Notes by Rachell Ellen Wong

The Baroque era was a time of fearless experimentation, where composers defied expectations and pushed musical boundaries.

This program highlights works that challenge conventions, whether through vivid depictions of the natural world, daring harmonic choices, or sheer rebelliousness. From the brilliance of Antonio Vivaldi to the theatrical magic of Henry Purcell, from the stormy intensity of C.P.E. Bach to the wild energy of Francesco Durante, these pieces invite us to experience the Baroque era as a time of audacity, innovation, and boundless imagination.

ANTONIO VIVALDI (1660–1725)

Sinfonia from *Il Giustino*, RV 717

Vivaldi's opera *Il Giustino* (1724) tells a fantastical tale of fate, love, and heroism. Written for the 1724 carnival season in Rome, this sinfonia sets the stage for adventure with dramatic dynamic contrasts and virtuosic violin runs over a galloping pulse in the rest of the orchestra.

The second movement, an andante, is both intimate and slightly unsettling. The violins sing an eerie, delicate melody over a steady heartbeat-like pulse in the lower strings. The piece closes with a triumphant final allegro, showcasing Vivaldi's masterful blend of operatic drama and instrumental brilliance.

HENRY PURCELL (1659–1795)

AND MATTHEW LOCKE (1622–1677)

Music for the Theatre

The Restoration period in England saw a flourishing of incidental music for the stage, a precursor to opera. Matthew Locke's *The Tempest* (1674) is among the earliest English operatic works, and his *Curtain Tune*, written to accompany the raising of the curtain, builds in grandeur to evoke an approaching storm.

This storm leads us to Henry Purcell's overture to *The Virtuous Wife*, a stately introduction that exudes grandeur. Next follows the minuet from *The Gordian Knot Untied* and then back to "La Furstemberg" from *The Virtuous Wife*. "La Furstemberg" was a tune widely recognized by both musicians and non-musicians of the time. Purcell's theatrical works are

masterpieces of harmony: listen for "blue notes," unexpected dissonant harmonies.

The rondeau from *The Indian Queen* features one of Purcell's most lush and beautiful melodies, while the hornpipe from *The Fairy Queen* bursts with infectious energy, inspired by the lively rhythms of the English folk dance. Finally, *Lilk*, a whimsical miniature by Locke, provides a playful conclusion to this selection of English stage music.

C.P.E. BACH (1714–1788)

Symphony in B Minor, Wq 182/5

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, arguably the most radical of J. S. Bach's sons, rebelliously rejected certain compositional rules of the time in favor of music that was highly expressive yet unpredictable. His Symphony in B Minor (1773), written for Baron Gottfried van Swieten, is a striking example of what would become a few decades later the musical effect *sturm und drang*, categorized by sudden dynamic contrasts and unexpected pauses.

The first movement (allegretto) is restless and unsettled, constantly shifting in energy. The second (larghetto) offers a brief sense of calm before the final presto propels forward with relentless intensity. W. A. Mozart greatly admired C.P.E. Bach, once saying: "He is the father, we are the children," which testifies to the profound influence C.P. E. Bach had on the next generation of composers.

ANTONIO VIVALDI

Concerto *Alla Rustica* in G Major, RV 151

This brief yet electrifying concerto for orchestra, titled *Alla Rustica* (in the rustic style), captures the raw, untamed energy that defines much of Vivaldi's music. Written at the height of his career, the piece demands collective virtuosity from the entire orchestra. We will be performing only the first movement, a breathless, perpetual-motion frenzy, which serves as a thrilling segue into the madness of the next work.

FRANCESCO DURANTE (1684–1755)

Concerto No. 8 in A Major, *La Pazzia*

Francesco Durante (1684–1755) was a key figure of the Neapolitan School, known primarily for his sacred music and influential teaching. Unlike many of his contemporaries who focused on opera, he devoted himself to church music, but his instrumental works reveal a flair for the dramatic. He taught at several Naples conservatories, shaping the next generation of composers, including Pergolesi, Jommelli, and Paisiello.

Durante's *La Pazzia* (the madness) lives up to its name, shifting unpredictably between moments of wild, unrestrained emotion and passages of serene calm. The second movement, though tender and beautiful, carries an underlying sense of unease, as if something ominous is inevitable. The final allegro is marked by erratic phrasing and sudden shifts, reinforcing the chaotic energy suggested by its title.

J.S. BACH (1685–1750)

Violin Concerto in D Minor, BWV 1052R

Originally composed as a harpsichord concerto, this work has been reconstructed for violin, a topic of ongoing debate among scholars. While no violin manuscript survives, some believe the piece was originally conceived for the instrument and later

adapted for harpsichord during Bach's Leipzig years. Certain passages, such as the use of bariolage (rapid string crossings), fit the violin particularly well. The surviving orchestra parts, written by C.P.E. Bach further demonstrates the possibilities for reconstruction and adaptation inherent in this composition.

The first movement bursts with virtuosic brilliance; a powerful orchestral unison driving the relentless energy forward. The introspective adagio begins once again with the orchestra in unison before transforming into an operatic aria-like passage, with the violin soaring expressively above. The final allegro is a fiery showcase of technical mastery, maintaining unyielding momentum that leaves both performer and audience breathless.



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