



**YUKI
NUMATA
RESNICK**

***FOR
KO.***

I've had Bach on the brain for as long as I can remember.

This Bach obsession, as you might call it, has led me to juxtapose J.S. Bach and new music on solo recital and chamber music programs since 2007. *For Ko.* is the result of my years of preoccupation with this composer and the immense influence he has had on artists and listeners alike.

The journey to this point has been a long one. There have been times where I've been overwhelmed with self-doubt and criticism. But for the most part, making this record has been a journey of discovery and exploration, and a formation of new artistic partnerships and friendships.

It is with this sentiment I see *For Ko.* as a step towards a new-found artistic freedom for myself, humbly grounded in Bach's formidable legacy.

Thank you to the University at Buffalo for funding the commissions of the four new works featured on *For Ko.*, and for funding the production of this album.

Thank you to Scott Devendorf for creating this incredible art that far surpasses anything I could have imagined. I have always admired your art from afar so it is truly an honour to have you take on the visual direction for this album.

Thank you to Caleb Burhans, Clara Iannotta, Matt Marks and Andrew Greenwald for entrusting me with your music and for being such willing participants on this journey; *For Ko.* has been, at times, an intimidating undertaking, but your friendships and your art have kept me on course.

Thank you to Chris Jacobs, for your discerning ear, your generosity of time, and your willingness to listen to hours upon hours of solo violin playing. I wouldn't wish that on my worst enemy, and yet you took the task on with patience, tenacity, and humour.

Thank you to Clarice Jensen, my producer, cheerleader, teacher, and confidante. Playing music with you as always been inspiring and smile-inducing — it was a privilege to have you in the studio for this project and to stretch our artistic and personal friendship in new ways. Here's to many more days of making new music together, and even more nights filled with bourbon and rye!

Thank you to Kyle, Ko, Yumi, my Mom and my Dad for being my home. To Kyle, you rein me in when life gets too wild and you propel me forward when I'm too grounded. We have taken on a crazy adventure together and your steadfastness, patience, and unwavering love have made the ride thus far an extraordinary one.

To Ko, this is for you.

Where do you begin with Bach?

This is the question Yuki Numata Resnick asked herself while a student at the Eastman School of Music. Like Shakespeare to theater, Bach is so central to the Western art music canon that he is impossible to avoid, yet almost as difficult to make one's own. Too many people have played Bach already, too well. Preferring to leave all that historical baggage behind — for the time being at least — Numata Resnick instead turned her attention to contemporary music. Yet Bach continued to prey on her mind. Over time, she found her way back, seeing him now through what she had learned playing new music. The idea for this album was planted at the same time: to create a dialogue between old and new by commissioning a series of works that would sit alongside, and indeed within, one of those great contributions on which Bach's daunting reputation is based, the Partita No. 1 in B minor.

The Partita belongs to a set of six pieces for solo violin (three partitas and three sonatas) Bach completed in 1720. At this time solo instrumental music, without an accompaniment, was extremely rare, and Bach's collection was little understood by his contemporaries. In the 18th century it circulated only as study material, and was not published until 1802. Today those six pieces are considered among the highest pinnacles of the solo violin repertory: virtuosic, highly stylized, and dense in interpretive nuance. A partita, as Bach used the term at least, was a suite or collection of dances based around a common bassline or melody. Usually there were four, in the order Allemande, Corrente (or Courante), Sarabande, and Gigue, but Bach rarely adhered precisely to rules like these. Here he replaces the Gigue with a Bourrée, switching a fast dance in triple time for one in double time. His four dances are closely related by their underlying harmonic structure. Each is also divided into two halves (each repeated), which are themselves further related to each other. Finally, Bach adds a Double to each dance, yet another variation and elaboration of the original.

With Bach's suite already full of internal reflections, Numata Resnick adds one more layer with her four new commissions, one to follow each of the doubles and based upon their respective dances. The four new pieces break Bach's tightly integrated structure apart. Bach holds no less baggage for composers than for performers, but Caleb Burhans, Clara Iannotta, Matt Marks, and Andrew Greenwald have found ways around this by abstracting Bach's originals, to take them in four entirely different directions.

Burhans' *Remembrance* is, on the surface at least, closest to its model, alluding to the sixteenth-note figurations of the Allemande-double, Bach's love of expressing harmony through melody, and glimpses of the underlying harmony itself of Bach's original. Yet although so much of it seems at first like Bach, even more has been nudged sideways in very un-Bachlike fashion. First the repeating sixteenth-note starts to drop the occasional beat, unbalancing the rhythm in a way that Bach never would. Then the harmonic changes destabilize too: where Bach would have changed harmony with every bar, sometimes Burhans repeats the chord but voices it differently. The harmony itself is not quite right either; it begins in the wrong place and never asserts its ground in the way that Bach's always does. Finally the music is structured not as a single, unidirectional progression, but as a series of loose loops, in which short phrases periodically return, without ever sounding like points of arrival or departure. Overall this is a kind of Bach heard through the fog of memory, with certain elements correctly recalled while others are misremembered completely.

Iannotta focuses on a different aspect of Bach's music entirely. Starting from the premise that the Double to the Corrente is composed largely of scales running up and down, and that if these were played fast enough (superhumanly fast) they would sound as glissandos, she began by working with glissandos alone. Originally Iannotta kept close to their original rhythmic proportions and directions but, finding this too constricting, began admitting some of her own

preferences. In particular she added a range of noise effects, using circular paperclips attached to the strings and a range of bow pressures. Nevertheless, although *Dead Wasps In The Jam Jar* sounds little like Bach, it hints at his phrasing and melodic contours; heard alongside the Partita it acts like a strange echo chamber, a resonant shell with almost everything inside removed. The short piece is also divided in two (at the 1:40 mark), mirroring the repeating form of Bach's original. Each half begins and ends the same, with the two endings varied only in the type of sustained noise effect used: the first half ends with slow and heavy bow pressure, resulting in a broken, crackling sound; the second adds a series of tinkling, metallic scrunches produced by tapping a thimble on the strings.

Marks follows an even wilder flight of fancy. Apparently beginning with a repeat of Bach's Sarabande (although played "aggressively" according to the score), his piece is sharply interrupted by a peculiar story about an inventive monkey named Trunket. As the story is told – as though "reading a fairy tale or fable to a group of children" – the violin plays a variety of accompanying roles, sometimes providing onomatopoeic effects (the sound of Trunket driving up and down the town, for example), sometimes musical atmosphere. Bach often disappears into the remote distance, but is recalled at changes of scene or breaks in the timeline, like a TV theme tune. At the end, as the story winds to its conclusion, the music looks forward towards the Bourrée, instead of back to the Sarabande.

Our journey through Bach ends with Greenwald's take on that concluding Bourrée, although it owes much, in its way, to the Allemande with which we began. Of all the dances in the Baroque suite, the Allemande – a stately double-time movement – was the most elaborately stylized. Bach's suite begins with a fine example: quasi-improvisatory and so heavily ornamented it's sometimes hard to make out the rhythms of the underlying dance. Greenwald applies an entirely different kind of ornamentation in his Bourrée, but the effect is similar. He divides the player's movements between two staves: one for the bow (right hand) and the other for the fingers (left). Unlike traditional musical notation this means that the two hands can be controlled independently, with various actions of the bow in particular coming into conflict

with those of the fingers (i.e., pitches). By composing bow movements in three dimensions – as well as the usual "up" and "down" across the string are movements literally up and down above the string, and horizontal "cranking," turning the bow around the point where it meets the string – Greenwald is able to splice growling, splintered, glitchy textures into faint echoes of Bach's original harmonies, creating a quite startling hybrid of ancient and modern. Rather than tasteful decorations, this is an application of distortion and disruption, a patina of urban grit and grime. Is this an update for the 21st century, or have we, like Numata Resnick herself, simply started to hear Bach differently?

— Tim Rutherford-Johnson, © 2016

Tim Rutherford-Johnson is a writer on new music. His history of contemporary music since 1989, *Music After The Fall*, will be published by University of California Press in 2017.

**CALEB BURHANS: CALEBBURHANS.COM | BURNING HANDS (ASCAP)
CLARA IANNOTTA: CLARAIANNOTTA.COM
MATT MARKS: MATTMARKSMUSIC.COM
ANDREW GREENWALD: ANDREWGREENWALD.NET**

**INNOVA DIRECTOR: PHILIP BLACKBURN
OPERATIONS DIRECTOR: CHRIS CAMPBELL
PUBLICIST: STEVE MCPHERSON
INNOVA IS SUPPORTED BY AN ENDOWMENT FROM
THE MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION.**

**RECORDED AT THE UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO'S LIPPES CONCERT HALL
RECORDING ENGINEER: CHRISTOPHER JACOBS
PRODUCER: CLARICE JENSEN
DESIGN / PHOTOGRAPHY: SCOTT DEVENDORF, DISTANT STATION LTD.**

**YUKI
NUMATA
RESNICK
SOLO
VIOLIN**

J.S. BACH VIOLIN PARTITA NO. 1 IN B MINOR, BWV 1002:

1.	I. ALLEMANDA	4:38
2.	II. DOUBLE	2:38
3.	CALEB BURHANS, <i>REMEMBRANCE</i>	5:38
4.	III. CORRENTE	2:02
5.	IV. DOUBLE	2:47
6.	CLARA IANNOTTA, <i>DEAD WASPS IN THE JAM-JAR</i>	3:22
7.	V. SARABANDE	2:42
8.	VI. DOUBLE	1:54
9.	MATT MARKS, <i>TRUNKET'S SARABANDE</i>	11:09
10.	VII. TEMPO DI BOREA	2:15
11.	VIII. DOUBLE	2:05
12.	ANDREW GREENWALD, <i>BOURÉE</i>	6:36
	TOTAL TIME:	45:46



INNOVA IS THE LABEL OF
THE AMERICAN COMPOSERS FORUM.
INNOVA.MU

©+© YUKI NUMATA RESNICK, 2016.
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
YUKINUMATA.COM