### 2022 Preview Notes • Week Three • Persons Auditorium

#### Friday, July 29 at 8 pm



Piano Trio in A-flat Major, Hob. XV:14 (1790)

Franz Joseph Haydn Born March 31, 1732 (Rohrau, Austria) Died May 31, 1809 (Vienna) Duration: approx. 25 minutes Last Marlboro performance: 1966

Haydn composed his Piano Trio in A-flat Major, Hob. XV:14 in 1790, the same year that the illustrious patron of Haydn in Vienna, Prince Nikolaus Esterházy I, died. The prince was succeeded by his son Anton, who hoped to spare money by dismissing the court musicians. No longer able to work for the Esterházy musical establishment (at least not until Anton's successor, Nikolaus II, partially revived it), Haydn accepted a lucrative offer from the violinist and impresario Johann Peter Salomon to visit London and conduct new works for the symphony. Haydn eventually accepted Salomon's offer and departed Vienna for London in early 1791, thus marking an auspicious era in Haydn's compositional life. (After Haydn's first visit to London from 1791-1792, he returned again from 1794-1795; both trips were enormously successful.) It was just in advance of this period, during a moment of instability in the composer's life after the death of the prince and before his journey to England that Haydn composed the Piano Trio in A-flat Major.

The Piano Trio is composed in three movements. The first movement, labeled Allegro moderato, is written in a typical sonata form, featuring a contrast between the delightful Aflat Major of the movement's exposition and recapitulation, and the crystalline E Major that Haydn moves to in the movement's central section, the development. In the second movement, marked Adagio, the A B A form is evident, and the significance of the E Major heard in the Trio's first movement is made clear, as this central Adagio movement is also composed in E Major, though it also features a modulation to the key's relative minor, C# Minor, thus effecting a quite distant harmonic move from the Trio's beginning in A-flat Major. In this middle section, the piano is featured in an extended virtuosic solo passage, accompanied by pizzicato in the two strings. Eventually, the piano concedes this almost cadenza-like B section back to the violin and the material with which the movement began returns. The movement does not conclude with a resolution; it ends instead expectantly with a half cadence that resolves first with the beginning of the Trio's final movement, a lively Rondo form, marked vivace. The Trio then closes with this sparkling final

movement in duple meter that returns the work back to its home key of A-flat Major, effecting with its return to the key area a return as well to the first movement's joyous and buoyant energy.

This is only the second time that Haydn's A-flat Major Piano Trio has been performed at Marlboro. Its first performance occurred in 1966 with none other than festival co-founder and pianist Rudolf Serkin playing alongside violinist Alexander Schneider and cellist Leslie Parnas.

Participants: Filippo Gorini, *piano*; Stephanie Zyzak, *violin*; Judith Serkin, *cello* 



Dark Wood (2001) Jennifer Higdon Born December 31, 1962 (Brooklyn, NY) Duration: approx. 10 minutes Last Marlboro performance: n/a

Jennifer Higdon's *Dark Wood* is a piano quartet that features a slightly different

instrumental configuration than usual: it is written for violin, cello, piano, and bassoon, the warm, woody sound of the bassoon thus taking over the registral space typically occupied by the viola. In her program note for the work, Higdon in fact comments that in writing Dark Wood, she hoped to contribute to creating a broader repertoire of chamber music for the bassoon, which otherwise historically has tended to be featured only in compositions for wind quintet. Higdon writes, "I wanted to create a work that features the bassoon prominently, but also respects it within the framework of a true chamber dialogue (along with its partners, the violin, cello, and piano). Since much of the literature for this beautiful instrument is slow moving, I made the conscious decision to explore its virtuosic abilities. While there is slow music within the piece, there is an emphasis on real 'bite' within the language, rhythm, and tempi." The work's title makes reference to the bassoon's distinctive red-hued color of the maple typically used to build the instrument.

As Higdon notes, *Dark Wood* is a work of contrasts, though it remains consistent in its virtuosity: the piece opens with the biting quality Higdon references in her note, starting with puncturing staccato in the bassoon. Soon the piano and the strings join in with pizzicato and virtuosic metallic flourishes, as the strings play *ponticello*, adding to the dissonant, almost ominous texture. The secondary thematic material allows the bassoon to highlight its tender side, whose emergence from a dense, accented

texture provides a period of harmonic and lyrical respite in the middle of the work. *Dark Wood* concludes with a return with a frenetic finale, featuring trills and fast chromatic scales in the bassoon.

Dark Wood was commissioned in 2001 by St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble (New York City) and was premiered the following year. This evening's performance is the first time not only that Dark Wood has appeared on a Marlboro program, but is in fact the first time that Jennifer Higdon's music has been performed at the festival.

Participants: Jacob Thonis, *bassoon*; Joseph Lin, *violin*; Nathan Chan, *cello*; Ieva Jokubaviciute, *piano* 



Quatre poèmes, Op. 5 (1904) Charles Martin Loeffler Born January 30, 1861 (Berlin, Prussia) Died May 19, 1935 (Medfield, MA) Duration: approx. 18 minutes Last Marlboro performance: 2008

Already as a young boy, Charles Martin Loeffler had moved multiple

times throughout Europe. Born in Berlin, his father, a writer and engineer, moved the young family between Berlin, Paris, the Alsace region, and Smila (a town in Ukraine ruled at the time by the Russian government in Kyiv), as well as Hungary and Switzerland. Persecuted by the Prussian State for his progressive, republican views, Loeffler's father was eventually imprisoned and even tortured, dying just before his release when his son Charles was only twelve years old. The peripatetic nature of Loeffler's early life, forced upon him and his family by State violence, made a strong impression upon the composer, who continued to travel widely during his lifetime and, rejecting his Prussian birth, professed to feel more comfortable within French culture and language, even claiming to have been born in the Alsatian town of Mulhouse. After beginning the violin at age nine, Loeffler went on to study with Joseph Joachim in Berlin and, after moving to Paris, studied both violin and composition at the Paris Conservatoire. Loeffler emigrated to the United States in 1881, living first in New York City, where he performed with the city orchestra led by Leopold Damrosch. A year later, he moved to Boston, where he performed as concertmaster of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and became close friends with significant artistic figures such as John Singer Sargent, Eugène Ysaÿe, and George Gershwin, with whom Loeffler traded works of dedication (the third movement of the Quatre poèmes is dedicated to Ysaÿe, the first to Mme. J. Montgomery Sears).

Loeffler was an admirer of French fin de siècle culture, and particularly French symbolism, an affinity that can be observed in the Quatre poèmes for voice, viola, and piano, which set texts by Baudelaire (the first movement) and Verlaine (movements two through four). A violist himself, Loeffler writes splendidly for the instrument, allowing the similar tessituras of the viola and mezzo-soprano to illuminate one another. Loeffler puts the darker registral colors of the instruments to great effect in his sensitive setting of the likewise often dark, decadent poetic worlds of French symbolists. The work opens with an extended introduction for the viola and piano in which one can hear intimations of the poetry to be set, Baudelaire's "La Cloche fêlée," from his collection Fleurs du mal (Flowers of Evil) (1857-1868): a distant bell can be heard tolling in the piano's left hand. The second movement, a setting of Verlaine's "Danson la gigue!" ("Let's Dance the Gigue!"), is as jaunty as its title suggests, providing a lively contrast to the first song. A slow, plaintive tone returns in the setting of Verlaine's "Le son du cor s'afflige vers les bois" ("The horn sounds its distress call near the woods"). Loeffler's treatment in this third movement is rapturous, reflective of Verlaine's transcendent depiction of the natural world, an autumnal, evening landscape. The work concludes with the more upbeat "Sérénade" ("Serenade"), in which the viola is treated as a guitar, strumming an accompaniment to a voice that, "like the voice of a dead man [sings] from the depths of his grave." Loeffler's Quatre poèmes have only been performed three times at Marlboro over the course of the festival's history; thus, this evening's performance represents a rare opportunity to hear this under-appreciated composer.

Participants: Marie Engle, *mezzo-soprano*; Samuel Rhodes, *viola*; leva Jokubaviciute, *piano* 



Piano Trio in C Minor, Op. 101 (1886) Johannes Brahms Born May 7, 1833 (Hamburg, Germany) Died April 3, 1897 (Vienna, Austria) Duration: approx. 21 minutes Last Marlboro performance: 2015

Brahms' C Minor Piano Trio Op. 101

is the third of the three works that Brahms composed in the genre (the B Major Piano Trio was technically finished after the C Minor, though begun over thirty years earlier), and was written during a period of intensive productivity for Brahms in the realm of chamber music. In 1886, in addition to completing the Trio, Brahms composed the second cello sonata (in F Major), the second violin sonata (in A Major) and started work on the third violin sonata (in

D Major). Brahms worked on the Op. 101 Trio while he was vacationing during the summer in Hofstetten, Switzerland, and it was premiered the same year of its composition in Budapest, on December 20, 1886 by the violinist Jenő Hubay and cellist David Popper, with Brahms himself at the piano.

The Trio is composed in a classical four-movement structure and, in contrast to the two earlier, more expansive piano trios, is relatively compact, taking on average only about twenty-one minutes to perform. The first movement, labeled Allegro energico, is in C Minor and is written in a guite economical sonata form. The work begins dramatically with *forte* C Minor chords in every instrument, marked sforzando in the strings. After a majestic first theme, if still marked by a certain turbulence of the work's introduction, the secondary theme seems almost to float upon a cloud. The strings play in unison, two octaves apart and are marked f, ma cantando (forte, but singing), while the piano supports their long, singing lines with arpeggios. The second movement is marked Presto non assai (presto, but not very presto) and remains in C Minor. The movement deviates slightly from traditional four-movement sonata form: instead of composing a traditional scherzo and trio, Brahms chose the form of an intermezzo, and the movement does indeed have a transitory, diversion-like quality. At the opening of the movement, the muted strings accompany

in rhythmic unison the piano, as it articulates a melody that seems to constantly be out of breath. The movement's middle material turns almost impish, as the strings, again in a supportive role, accompany the piano's accented chords (marked "agitated, but always piano") with upward moving, pizzicato arpeggios, which they pass off to each other. The movement concludes with a return to its opening material, closing in the home key of C Minor, but with no resolution of the agitation with which the movement began. The third movement, marked Andante grazioso, is introduced with an extended, unaccompanied duet between the cello and violin. The serenity of the long melodic lines lends this movement a lullaby-like quality, a stunning moment of repose in C Major before the Allegro molto (very fast) final movement. Despite the final movement's stormy C Minor opening, the C Major introduced in the Trio's third movement returns at the conclusion of the work, as it closes triumphantly in the major key.

Tonight's performance of the Piano Trio in C Minor, Op. 101 is the tenth time that the work has been featured on a program at Marlboro.

Participants: Evren Ozel, *piano*; Joseph Lin, *violin*; Sayaka Selina, *cello* 

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#### Saturday, July 30 at 8pm



Fünf Duette, Op. 14 (1894) **Max Reger** Born March 19, 1873 (Brand, Germany) Died May 11, 1916 (Leipzig, Germany) Duration: approx. 14 minutes Last Marlboro performance: 1975

Max Reger composed his Fünf

Duette für Sopran und Alt mit Klavierbegleitung (Five Duets for Soprano and Alto with Piano Accompaniment) in 1894 and dedicated the work to his second cousin, the composer Hans Koessler. This relatively early work was composed during a period in which Reger composed primarily chamber and vocal music, and in the *Fünf Duette* one can hear Reger's skillful and imaginative treatment of the two voices in his setting of the five texts he chose for the collection. While each duet sets a poem by a different author, a common theme of night and darkness can be found amongst them.

The first duet, Nacht, sets the poem "Ich wandre durch die stille Nacht" ("I wander through the silent night)" by the German Romantic poet Joseph von Eichendorff. Evoking the nocturnal, though rhapsodic mood of the poem, Reger opens this movement, marked Adagio, with an undulating rumbling in the lowest register of the piano. The alto enters, similarly in her lower range, with a measured, syllabic articulating of the text, reflecting the silent wandering of which the poet speaks. In the following movements, Reger sets Goethe's beloved poem "Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh'" ("O'er all the hill-tops is quiet now"), which was set by both Schubert and Fanny Mendelssohn earlier in the century. Marked Andante sostenuto, Reger's sensitive text setting is put on display, and he lends a Barcarolle-like texture to the work with the piano's delicately rocking accompanimental figure. The nocturnal theme of the Fünf Duette continues in the third song, which sets the poem "Tausend goldne Sterne glänzen" ("A thousand golden stars shine") by the little-known midnineteenth-century German poet Daniel Johannes Saul. Here, the night is alive with the ecstatic sparkling of the stars, which can be heard in the piano's high-register, virtuosic arpeggios. After a setting of a traditional Tuscan poem in the fourth movement, which Reger matches with a jaunty musical setting with gestures toward folk music and echoes of Schubert's Die schöne Müllerin, the work closes with a return to the darker poetic material with which the work began, as the vocalists warn, "Oh do not ask," pleading their audience not to question their sorry

lot as humans, but, as the final line of the poem commands, "accept it silently and question not."

This evening's performance of Reger's *Fünf Duette* is a rarity: this is only the fourth time that the work has been performed at Marlboro. It was first featured relatively early in the festival's history, being performed three times in quick succession, in 1967, 1972 and 1975, tonight's performance thus representing the first time the piece has been heard at Marlboro since.

Participants: Yvette Keong, soprano; Marie Engle, mezzosoprano; Lydia Brown, piano



Six Etudes en forme de Canon, Op. 56 (Arr. C. Debussy) (1845/1891) **Robert Schumann** Born June 8, 1810 (Zwickau, Germany) Died July 29, 1856 (Bonn, Germany) Duration: approx. 16 minutes Last Marlboro performance: 2010

The Six Etudes en forme de Canon, Op. 56 were first composed in 1845 by Robert Schumann for himself and his wife, the pianist and composer Clara Schumann, as exercises for the couple to play together. Originally entitled Studien für Pedalflügel. Sechs Stücke in kanonischer Form ("Studies for Pedal Piano: Six Pieces in Canonic Form"), the Op. 56 were composed for an unusual and specialized instrument, the pedal piano, which was essentially a piano with a pedal board that was designed to fit under a nineteenth century standard grand piano, similar to the kind of pedal mechanism used for an organ. The Schumanns had acquired the instrument in order to practice their organ playing, and thus the "Studies" in the original title, and "Etudes" of Debussy's arrangement can be taken quite literally: these were pieces composed for the purpose of practice and development of technique. They also can be understood as compositional exercises, as they display expert contrapuntal technique and use a musical form and language that harkens back to the Baroque and thus an era that produced the most robust repertoire for the organ. Debussy, a consummate pianist and advocate for the piano duo, turned his attention to Schumann's canons in 1891. While Schumann's original work can be performed either by one person upon one pedal piano or two people on one instrument, Debussy expressly composed his arrangement of the work for two pianos, in large part because the short-lived pedal piano had, by 1891, long gone out of fashion: it was by the late nineteenth century no longer possible to even access the instrument. A fascinating historical document and representation of the Baroque through multiple voices

and eras, tonight's performance of the *Six Etudes en forme de Canon* is only the sixth time that the work has been performed at Marlboro since the founding of the festival.

Participants: Janice Carissa & Cynthia Raim pianos



Piano Trio in B Major, Op. 8 (1853-4; rev. 1889) Johannes Brahms Born May 7, 1833 (Hamburg, Germany) Died April 3, 1897 (Vienna, Austria) Duration: approx. 34 minutes Last Marlboro performance: 2018

It is sometimes guipped that the Piano Trio in B Minor is at once Brahms's first piano trio and his last. Initially written when Brahms was only twenty years old, his first piano trio was the one to which he returned at the age of 56, making revisions so significant that its second form is regarded by some as his fourth and final piano trio. In a letter to Clara Schumann, Brahms wrote, "With what childish amusement I whiled away the beautiful summer days you will never guess. I have rewritten my B Major Trio.... It will not be as wild as before—but will it be better?" Interestingly, Brahms, famous for his self-criticism and propensity for destroying works that did not measure up to his own stratospheric standards, let both versions of the trio circulate after his revisions, which offered a unique glimpse into the maturation of his compositional process.

As in his other piano trios, Brahms includes a fourth movement. In this case, the added movement is the *Scherzo*, which suffered the fewest revisions in 1889 and whose presence augments the scope of the piece beyond expectations inherited from the classical age. Also unexpected, the trio begins in the title key of B Major with an open, comforting melody but alternates modality from movement to movement such that when it arrives at the fourth movement, the piece tumbles to its end in B Minor. This turn in modality is not unheard of in Brahms's output: his third symphony and the G Major Violin Sonata, Op. 78, both conclude in the minor despite otherwise finding their home in their identifiably major namesake keys.

Though shortened in its revised form, the piece still enjoys references to *Lieder* by Schubert, in its third movement, and Beethoven and even some Hungarian folk influences in its fourth and final movement.

Brahms' B Major Piano Trio has been a popular work at Marlboro: it was first performed at the festival in 1955, only four years after Marlboro Music's founding, and tonight's performance is the sixteenth time that the work has appeared on a festival program!

Participants: Jonathan Biss, *piano*; Rubén Rengel, *violin*; Peter Myers, *cello* 

## 2022 Preview Notes • Week Three • Persons Auditorium

#### Sunday, July 31 at 2:30pm



Along the Field (1927, rev. 1954) **Ralph Vaughan Williams** Born October 12, 1872 (Down Ampney, England) Died August 26, 1958 (London, England) Duration: approx. 16 minutes Last Marlboro performance: 2016

Ralph Vaughan Williams is among the most well-known British composers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and he has been no stranger at Marlboro, where works of his have been programmed twenty-three times over the course of the festival's history. Born in 1872 in the Cotswold village of Down Ampney (Gloucestershire, England) into a wealthy family with strong moral views and a progressive social life, Vaughan Williams grew up believing in the importance of making music as available as possible to all people, regardless of class. Musically, Ralph Vaughan Williams was not a prodigy: after learning the violin and piano at preparatory school in the village of Rottingdean, he switched to viola while attending the Charterhouse School and later studied organ. In 1890, a month before his eighteenth birthday, Vaughan Williams entered the Royal College of Music, where he studied composition with Hubert Parry, an important English composer and pedagogue, who taught at the Royal College alongside Frank Bridge, Gustav Holst, and John Ireland. In 1892, Vaughan Williams entered Trinity College, Cambridge, where he studied history, thus receiving a broad education. He continued his compositional studies, however, later moving to the continent in order to study with Max Bruch in Berlin and Maurice Ravel in Paris. It was during this period, in 1903-1904, that Vaughan Williams began collecting folk-songs, following the example of a recent generation of folk music enthusiasts that included the likes of Cecil Sharp and Lucy Broadwood. Of vital importance to the development of this style for Vaughan Williams was his learning of an English folk song in 1903, "Bushes and Briars." Vaughan Williams' encounter with folk song had a profound and permanent impact upon him, influencing the texture, contours, and melodies of his works, including the eightmovement song cycle Along the Field.

Relying simply on a singular vocal line and solo violin for *Along the Field*, Vaughan Williams chose to set to music a group of poems by the English poet Alfred Edward Housman (1859-1936). Having already set some of Housman's lyrics in earlier works, Vaughan Williams was

well acquainted with his poetry. For *Along the Field*, Vaughan Williams chose three poems from the collection *A Shropshire Lad* and three further texts were taken from Housman's *Last Poems*, which Housman composed in 1922. With this work, Vaughan Williams achieves a miracle of expression, the violin ranging from the rhapsodic embellishments to the ghostly double stopping to a variety of different techniques and the voice strongly combines emotional feeling, lyricism, and folk qualities. Despite the significance of folk music to Vaughan Williams', one can hear echoes of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* and, in the violin writing, his teacher Ravel's compositions for that instrument.

Tonight's performance of *Along the Field* represents a rare opportunity to hear this under-programmed work. This is only the fourth time that *Along the Field* has been performed at Marlboro.

Participants: Patrick Bessenbacher, tenor; Leonard Fu, violin



Rondo in A Major, D. 951 (1828) **Franz Schubert** Born January 31, 1797 (Vienna, Austria) Died November 19, 1828 (Vienna) Duration: approx. 12 minutes Last Marlboro performance: 1997

Over the course of his short life,

Schubert composed many works for four-hand piano performance; indeed, of the central canonic composers, Schubert wrote the largest number of piano duets and four-handed works, significantly expanding and lending formal ingenuity to the genre. Of his four-handed compositions, of note are two that were composed in the final year of Schubert's life: the darker in temperament and formally more Classical *Fantasy in F Minor* (D. 940) and the sublime Rondo in A Major (D. 951), which was composed just weeks after the premiere of the Fantasy in May, 1828. Schubert wrote the sunnier A Major Rondo in a very short period of time, beginning and completing it during the month of June, only five months before his untimely death in November of that year.

Marked Allegretto quasi andantino, as its title suggests the Rondo in A Major takes the form of a sonata-rondo. The Rondo opens with an almost folk-song-like melody, sung by the *primo* voice in the middle range and supported by the *secondo* an octave lower with its gentle, sixteenth-note accompaniment. After the exposition that presents the primary and secondary themes, a central

episode follows, which takes on the properties of a development. In an expansion of the classical sonatarondo form, Schubert adds a brief intermezzo following this developmental section, before closing the work with an extended coda, in which material from the opening of the Rondo is reprised.

Despite its significance in Schubert's life and the piano four-hand repertoire, this afternoon's concert is only the second time that the A Major Rondo has been performed at Marlboro. Its previous appearance on a Marlboro program occurred in 1997, when it was performed by Jonathan Biss and András Schiff.

Participants: Jonathan Biss & Mitsuko Uchida, pianos



Piano Trio in E Minor, Op. 90, B. 166 ["Dumky"] (1890-1) Antonín Dvořák Born September 8, 1841 (Nelahozeves, contemporary Czech Republic) Died May 1, 1904 (Prague) Duration: approx. 31 minutes

Last Marlboro performance: 2013

The Piano Trio in E Minor, Op. 90, often simply referred to by its moniker, "Dumky," is the fourth and final piano trio that Dvořák wrote, and, alongside his String Quartet No. 12 ("the American"), perhaps one of his most popular works of chamber music. The Trio takes its name from the particular form used throughout the entirety of this sixmovement work. Dumky is the plural form of dumka, a term introduced into Slavic languages from the Ukrainian. Additionally, the term *dumka* is in fact a diminutive of the Duma, a kind of epic ballad that expressed a song or lament of captive people. It was during the nineteenth century that composers from various Slavic countries began to write works that integrated the dumka into other classical forms. Dvořák was particularly fond of the dumka, using the form in other compositions including his Dumka for Solo Piano, Op. 35 (1876); the Slavonic Dance No. 2, Op. 46 (1878); his String Sextet in A Major, Op. 48 (1878); and the Piano Quintet, also in A Major, Op. 81 (1887). Dvořák composed the Piano Trio in E Minor between 1890 and 1891 at the end of an extensive engagement with the form, and it was premiered in Prague in April 1891, with the violinist Ferdinand Lachner, cellist Hanuš Wihan, and Dvořák himself at the piano. The piece was received so positively that Dvořák programmed it for the forty-concert farewell tour throughout Moravia and Bohemia, which he undertook before moving to the United States to lead the National Conservatory of Music of America in New York City. While Dvořák was in the

United States, the trio was proofread by his good friend Johannes Brahms.

The E Minor Piano Trio indeed expresses the lament for which the original literary form is intended: the work opens with a striking cello solo that seems to express a direct outpouring of grief and pain. In contrast to previous works that might feature only one movement that make use of a dumka form, the Dumky Trio uses the dumka in all of its six movements, a seeming radical departure from the norms of classical form. However, taking Dvořák's experimental usage of key area in the work into account, it is possible to observe a kind of four-block structure similar to the traditional four-movement structure of sonata form. The first three movements, linked as they are by the related key areas of E Minor, E Major, C# Minor and both A Major and A Minor, can be heard as a unit, and the following three movements can then be heard as traditional movements within a typical sonata-allegro form. One can thus observe in the Dumky a molding of the dumka form, what has been described by some as a "dark fantasia," with the broad and stable formal scheme from the Classical era, whose bounds had been pushed by the likes of Beethoven, Schubert, and Brahms in the intervening century. With its stunning combination of pathos, quiet introspection, and dizzying, even wild, dance passages, the Dumky trio is a powerful work of the piano trio genre.

Dvořák's Piano Trio in E Minor has been performed many times at Marlboro since its first appearance on a festival program in 1958, reflecting its enduring popularity. This afternoon's performance is the twelfth time that the Trio has been performed at the festival.

Participants: Evren Ozel, *piano*; Anna Göckel, *violin*; Christoph Richter, *cello*