ABSTRACT

Title of dissertation: STUDIES AND PERFORMANCES OF
THE TRANSCRIPTIONS FOR CELLO
OF THE VIOLIN REPERTOIRE

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The potential of the violoncello as a solo instrument was recognized and
supported by cellists such as Luigi Boccherini (1743 - 1805), Luis Duport (1749 - 1819),
Auguste Franchomme (1808 - 1884), and Alfredo Piatti (1822 - 1901). These pioneers
composed technically demanding etudes, exercises, and caprices for the cello that were
comparable to those already present in the violin literature.

Even so, in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, considerably
fewer substantial works were brought forth for the cello as compared with the violin.
Consequently, many cellists such as Luigi Silva (1903 – 1961), Gregor Piatigorsky (1903 – 1976), Pierre Fournier (1906 – 1986), and Janos Starker (b. 1924) selected notable pieces from the violin repertoire and transcribed these for the cello.

Some composers themselves actually adapted for the cello their own works originally written for the violin. Johannes Brahms with his *Violin Sonata Op. 78*, Igor Stravinsky with his *Suite Italienne*, and Bela Bartok with his *First Rhapsody* all belong to this category. Adaptations such as these further raised awareness among composers and performers of the possibilities of the cello as an independent and expressive instrument. Thus, many composers from the early 1900s to the present were encouraged to write increasing numbers of more soloistic and demanding works for cello.

Herein, I explore the repertoire of cello transcriptions in order to analyze the differences between the original and transcribed versions and the challenges found therein. The performer may attempt to recreate the effect originally intended for the violin or, more daringly, may strive to search for alternate presentations of the music more suitable and expressive of the cello’s own character.

The project includes two recitals of the following transcribed works presented at the University of Maryland College Park, School of Music: *Sonata in A* by Cesar Franck, transcribed by Jules Delsart, *Variations on a Theme by Rossini* by Nicolo Paganini, as transcribed by Fournier, *Suite Italienne* by Igor Stravinsky, transcribed with the help of Piatigorsky, *Sonatina Op. 137, No. 1* by Franz Schubert, transcribed by Starker, *First Rhapsody* by Bela Bartok and *Sonata Op. 108* by Johannes Brahms, as transcribed by Hsiao-mei Sun.
STUDIES AND PERFORMANCES OF THE TRANSCRIPTIONS FOR

CELLO OF THE VIOLIN REPERTOIRE

by

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