

ABSTRACT

Title of dissertation: STUDIES AND PERFORMANCES OF
TRANSCRIPTIONS FOR CELLO
FROM 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 Béla Bartók 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 César Franck, transcribed by Jules Delsart, *Variations on a Theme from Rossini* by Nicolo Paganini, 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 Béla Bartók and *Sonata, Op. 108* by Johannes Brahms, transcribed by

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by

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Introduction

Music in the earliest times was preserved only by experience and by ear. There were no written schemes nor electronic devices available to record our most fundamental tunes and rhythms as they were carried along from one generation to the next among tribes or villages. The inevitable ornamentations and elaborations that surely arose as musical traditions were thus conveyed are in a sense the first examples of musical transcriptions.

The oldest known manuscripts of music were written in the middle ages. In plainsong (liturgical, mostly chanted music of the western church) from this time, motets (unaccompanied choral works) were based upon a pre-existing melody, the *cantus firmus*, and a set of words. Composition of new works typically involved adding more voices or exchanging the chant in different lines to create very different and more complicated versions of essentially the same music, another example of transcription. This trend continued in the 16th century even as the function of music began to shift from sacred to secular usage. Increasingly, the troubadours and trouvères of the day composed music for their own uses, and instrumental versions of chants or motets began to flourish among the nobles and peasants. Once the printing of music became available, then transcription became profitable.

As a cellist, I have found it interesting to discover how the instrument has become as important as it is today considering its earliest role of being only part of the compositional accompaniment or continuo. Study of the intertwining relationship between the evolution of the cello and the development of its repertoire can help us understand where the instrument stands today. Specifically, the transcription for cello of

works written for violin has deeply influenced the place of the cello in both performance and teaching.

In this project, I will explore the transcribed repertoire for cello and discuss the similarities and differences between original compositions for the violin and the transcribed versions for the cello. I find that there are interesting issues of balance to consider when one transcribes violin works for the cello. To overcome the challenges of the register of the cello, it is necessary to recognize and experiment with different possibilities for musical balance and emphasis especially in relation to the piano or other accompaniment. Also, the character and color is very different between the violin and the cello. The performer is thus continually challenged to recreate the image and the sound that was intended for violin, or more daringly even search for another way to interpret the same music with a character that is more suitable to the cello's own range of tone and vibration.

The transcriptions by Stravinsky, Paganini, Bartók and Franck are a valuable asset to the cello literature which otherwise would be void of contribution from great composers such as these. The transcribed works bring to the cello not only the composers' personal genius but also the heritage of the varied historical periods of their lives and works.

This paper is organized in three sections. The first section, defining and presenting a general history of musical transcriptions, is followed by a section providing an analysis of each of the specific cello transcriptions that I studied and performed. Transcriptions written by the original composer, including the works of Stravinsky and Bartók, are set apart from those arranged by performers, including the compositions by

Franck, Schubert, Paganini, and Brahms. In the final section, the influence of transcribed works on the evolution of cello playing and composition is presented and discussed.

Works Transcribed for Cello, Presented Herein

Composer transcriptions

- ❖ *Suite Italienne* (1932), Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971)

Transcribed by Gregor Piatigorsky
with the help of the composer

- ❖ *First Rhapsody* (1928), Béla Bartók (1881–1945)

Performer Transcriptions

- ❖ *Sonata in A major* (1886), César Franck (1822–1890)

Transcribed by Jules Desart

- ❖ *Sonatina, Op. 137, No. 1.* (1816), Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

Transcribed by Janos Starker

- ❖ *Variations on a Theme from Rossini*, Nicolo Paganini (1782–1840)

Transcribed by Pierre Fournier

- ❖ *Sonata in D, Op. 108* (1886-1888), Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

Transcribed by Hsiao-mei Sun
with reference to recording by Yo-Yo Ma

I have performed all of the compositions included in this project in two recorded recitals presented to the School of Music at the University of Maryland, College Park. The recital programs were designed to demonstrate the incredible variety of form and style represented in these works. The first recital, performed in Ulrich Hall, on 9

September 2000, included *Sonata in A* by César Franck, *Variations on a Theme from Rossini* by Nicolo Paganini, and *Suite Italienne* by Igor Stravinsky. The second recital, held in Gildenhorn Hall on 12 February 2001, included *Sonatina Op. 137, No. 1* by Franz Schubert, *First Rhapsody* by Béla Bartók and the *Sonata Op. 108* by Johannes Brahms. I am grateful to pianists Naoko Takao and Airee Loh.

Musical Transcription: A Definition and Brief History

A musical transcription is an adaptation or arrangement of a composition so that it may be played by an instrument or instrumentation other than that for which the composition was originally written. The process of transcription may be thought of as the musical counterpart of literary translation. The transcriber and translator both strive to closely reiterate the original, yet both must take creative liberties in order to best adapt the original work to the specific idioms and characteristics of changed mode of expression, be that a different instrument or a different language. A musical arrangement is thought to differ from a transcription in that an arrangement is a more literal translation. A transcription may be expected to deviate more from the original in such a way as to best express the character of the original piece while also utilizing the special aptitude of the new instrumental medium (Blom 223–28).

There are several approaches to transcription that may be distinguished. Some transcriptions are intended primarily for the purpose of study while others facilitate wider public performance. There are many examples of piano arrangements of operas, symphonies, string quartets and the like. The goal is to allow a single instrument to recreate a broader instrumentation as authentically as possible, and the role of the transcriber is to follow the original as closely as possible.

Some transcriptions may involve a more creative participation of the performer or arranger. Various procedures have been followed at different periods in history, ranging from simple transcriptions, in which the musical substance remains the same but

is transferred to a new medium, to the complete rearrangement of a piece with substantial additions and modifications. Noteworthy examples are J. S. Bach's (1685–1750) arrangements of violin concerti for organ; Franz Joseph Haydn's (1732–1809) *Die Sieben Worte am Kreuz* which appeared as an orchestral composition, as a string quartet, and as choral music; Liszt's concert arrangements of Schubert's songs and scenes from Wagnerian operas; and Brahms' arrangement for two pianofortes of his *Piano Quintet in F Minor* (Blom 223–28).

Before the early seventeenth century, the music most commonly transcribed was originally written for voice. Motets and other sacred pieces as well as madrigals and chansons were frequently played by stringed or wind instruments, with or without voices. The phrase “apt for viols or voices” appears in various languages on the title pages of publications from the middle of the sixteenth century. The resulting arrangements differed little from the original, and any added ornamentation was improvised (Arnold 108).

This trend continued into the early Baroque period to some extent, but instrumental pieces joined vocal music at this time in being chosen as subjects for transcription. J. S. Bach was one of the greatest transcribers in history of music. He arranged 16 violin concerti by Vivaldi into versions for harpsichord, and three into versions for organ. Bach, though, took liberties in these transcriptions which would not be allowable today (Arnold 108).

Bach's own compositions have also been favorite subjects for transcribers. His great organ works inspired many great orchestrators when organ recitals had become less popular. Elgar produced an orchestral arrangement of Bach's work for organ, the *C*

minor Fantasia and Fugue. Bach's *Chaconne* from the *Partita in D Minor* for solo violin was arranged for piano by Ferruccio Busoni in a way that makes it a very different piece. Brahms, in his transcription of the same *Chaconne*, used only the left hand, which maintains some of the challenge in playing the original. Schumann went so far as to write an entire piano accompaniment to the violin part, perhaps to make it more accessible to the non-virtuoso. Bach rearranged his own *Prelude to the E-Major Partita* for organ into a version for solo violin that is also virtually a new piece. Both versions are quite magnificent (Blom 223–28).

The great pianists of the nineteenth century often created arrangements of works written for less broadly accessible ensembles. Well-played orchestral concerts were rare in many smaller towns and cities and the great operas could not be performed in many provincial opera houses. Piano transcriptions greatly expanded the potential venue of these works and brought enjoyment to diverse and expanded audiences.

Transcriptions for cello became fashionable in the nineteenth century when virtuoso cellists such as the Duport brothers [J. P. Duport (1741–1818) and J. L. Duport (1749–1819)], Bernhard Romberg (1767–1841), and Alfredo Piatti (1822–1901), were traveling and performing around Italy, France, and Germany. The need for variety in programs was an essential drive for transcribing popular and worthwhile pieces from other repertoires to supplement and enhance concert programs for cello. This became the trend for generations of virtuoso cellists from then on (Stowell 157).

Piatti arranged a selection of Mendelssohn's *Songs Without Words* for cello and piano, and between 1881 and 1898 published arrangements for cello of works by composers such as Boccherini, Brahms, Valentini and Veracini. Julius Klengel (1859–

1933) also made some contributions in arranging works for his cello and produced worthy editions of Classical cello sonatas and concertos in promoting his playing skill. His pupil Gregor Piatigorsky (1903–1976) also published some excellent transcriptions. The best-known example is Weber's *Adagio and Rondo* (originally written for harmonichord). Piatigorsky furthermore collaborated with Stravinsky in producing the cello version of the *Suite Italienne* (itself adapted from Stravinsky's ballet *Pulcinella*) (Stowell 157).

Hungarian cellist David Popper (1843–1913) arranged many Baroque compositions and some Schubert songs including *Du bist die Ruh* and *Frühlingslaube*. Twenty-five of Popper's transcriptions were published (ca. 1878–1911) by Johann André in a collection entitled *Perles Musicales—from the Concert Repertoire of David Popper*.

Spanish cellist Gaspar Cassadó (1897–1966) produced transcriptions for cello, notably of concertos by Mozart (originally for horn) and Weber (originally for clarinet), piano pieces by Tchaikovsky, and works by a wide variety of other composers. Cassadó himself composed some original works for cello including solo sonatas, concertos, and some short pieces, mostly in a Spanish style, beautifully represented by the character of the cello (Stowell 157).

Cellists such as Auguste Franchomme (1808–1884), Friedrich August Kummer (1797–1879), and Julius Goltermann (1825–1876) added fantasias and potpourris on popular songs and operatic melodies to the repertoire of the cello transcriptions. Various other compositions by Schubert, Brahms, and Rachmaninov, among others, have also been transcribed for the instrument. Finally, composers themselves have made successful transcriptions for cello and keyboard of their own works. These composers include

Dvorák (*Silent Woods* Op. 68 No. 5 and *Two Slavonic Dances*), Rheinberger (*Six Pieces* Op. 150), Elgar (*Romance* Op. 62) and Bartók (*First Rhapsody*) (Stowell 157).

Composer Transcriptions

The composer of a work is uniquely qualified to craft its transcription. As the creator of original, the composer best understands every nuance of intention behind each component of the work at all levels. Thus the composer can best choose which elements must be maintained and also which must be altered in order to convey the intended impact of the original through the transcribed version. A good knowledge or even deep familiarity with both the original and transcribed instruments or media is desirable, but the composer can always seek a consultant to provide needed information and advice.

The composer also has the freedom to take substantial liberties in transcription to make the work best suited to the nature of the transcribed medium rather than simply seeking to preserve the original piece as closely as possible. A composer transcription that is substantially different from the original work may be much more effective as a piece in its own right than even a brilliantly crafted transcription that must adhere closely to the format of the original because the composer is not involved.

The sensitivity and precision of both Stravinsky and Bartók are evident in the transcriptions studied in this project. Both transcriptions convey a strong sense of the different instrumentation. Both composers took the liberty to rearrange the melody and the accompaniment lines among the instruments in accordance with their color and sound. Often balance seems to have been an important issue. Sometimes the nature of an

instrument called for changes in the writing or even the overall structure of the piece, as is the case with Stravinsky's *Suite Italienne*.

From a performer's point of view, I find it more natural to play pieces arranged by the original composer than works transcribed by other musicians. Balance problems have usually been considered and resolved. Importantly, either the character of the original composition is well-maintained or any differences are obviously approved by the composer. This is most reassuring in the preparation and performance of the piece.

***Suite Italienne* by Igor Stravinsky**

The *Suite Italienne* by Igor Stravinsky is an orchestral suite arranged from the composer's own ballet *Pulcinella* (1919–20). The ballet is based on arias and instrumental pieces attributed to the eighteenth-century Italian composer Giambattista Pergolesi. Though Stravinsky based *Pulcinella* on pre-existing compositions, he used a variety of subtle techniques—such as characteristic harmonic shifts, *ostinato* accompaniments, and off-beat accents—to boldly recast the works within a modern compositional context that was still strongly reminiscent of the Baroque and Classical Periods. Thus did Stravinsky establish the foundation of his newly invented neo-classical style of composition. “*Pulcinella* was my discovery of the past” the composer declared, “the epiphany through which the whole of my late work became possible,” (Stravinsky, *Expositions and Developments*, 128–29).

Shortly after completing the ballet, Stravinsky arranged its orchestral sibling, the *Suite Italienne*, and the suite became one of his most popular concert pieces. With the advice of violinist Samuel Dushkin, Stravinsky subsequently transcribed portions of the suite for violin and piano (ca. 1933). Meanwhile, in 1932, cellist Gregor Piatigorsky had transcribed the work for cello and piano. After hearing the cello version, a pleased Stravinsky added the *Aria* movement, composed especially for the cello in collaboration with Piatigorsky. In comparing the versions for the cello and the violin, one finds that both begin with an *Introduzione* followed by a *Serenata*, both contain a *Tarantella*, and both conclude with a *Menuetto e finale*. However, the *Aria* movement in the cello

version is inserted between the *Serenata* and the *Tarantella* movements and is not found in the violin version. Conversely, the violin version encompasses a *Gavotta con due variazioni* and a *Scherzino* inserted between the *Tarantella* and the *Menuetto e finale*, and these inserted movements are not found in the cello suite.

Version for Violin and Piano (ca. 1933)	Version for Cello and Piano (1932)
Arranged by the composer and Samuel Dushkin <i>Introduzione</i> <i>Serenata</i> <i>Tarantella</i> <i>Gavotta con due variazioni</i> <i>Scherzino</i> <i>Menuetto e finale</i>	Arranged by the composer and Gregor Piatigorsky <i>Introduzione</i> <i>Serenata</i> <i>Aria</i> <i>Tarantella</i> <i>Menuetto e finale</i>

The movements that exist in both versions are close replicas of one another.

There are a few differences however. From time to time, a melodic line or the theme in the cello version is shared in the piano part, while in the violin version the composer and the transcriber have left the same line completely for the violin itself. Interestingly, this same characteristic is found in the Bartók *Rhapsody*, another composer transcription, but is not apparent in any of the performer transcriptions I have studied.

The choice of whether a specific movement is better suited for one instrument compared with another lies in the hand of the transcriber. (In the case of the *Suite Italienne* the transcribers are actually composer-artist teams, thus it is difficult to attribute specific decisions or adjustments to the composer versus the cooperating artist.) It is obvious that transcribers should strive to attend to the differences in character and

sound between instruments in selecting the movements for transcribed versions. However, transcriptions may reveal a composer's desire not just to accommodate differences but in fact to emphasize them and thus capitalize on the differing personalities and capabilities of the individual instruments. This latter strategy is certainly evident in the cello version of the *Suite Italienne*. The majestic and humorous *Aria* placed just following the joyful *Introduzione* and the peaceful *Serenade* takes advantage of the cello's low register which is suggestive of the voice of a tenor or baritone singer. The *Aria* thus provides, in advance of the zealous bright *Tarantella* movement, an artistic interlude especially appropriate for the cello. The *Aria* movement would have no such particularly apt nor synergistic function in the violin version of the suite.

Stravinsky was a master of change, and his love of variety would have never allowed him to compose exactly the same work for two different instrumentations. The cello version is eloquently complete with its five movements. The challenge facing Stravinsky was to determine the identity of a violin version that would have the same title and incorporate the same musical ideas without being too similar to the cello piece. Ultimately, with the advice of Dushkin, Stravinsky succeeded. Six movements appropriately comprise the structure of the violin version. Following the *Introduzione*, *Serenata*, and zealous and fast *Tarantella*, something lyrical and simple with little variety such as the *Gavotta con due variazioni* seems just right both for the violin and the piece itself. In this movement, a simple dance theme is followed by two variations, providing a Classical flair that comes off beautifully as played by the violin. The entire movement seems to spring directly from an earlier time, creating a feeling of juxtaposition of the old and the new which is the essential idea of Stravinsky's neo-classical style. The *Scherzino*

movement serves to return the piece to a character more in keeping with the overall feeling of the suite. The *Scherzino* also parallels somewhat the *Aria* found in the cello version, both being *alla breve* and humorous in their own right. The violin version is comparably longer than the cello version, but considering the range of sound and the possibility of color for the two instruments, both versions are complete and suitable in their own ways. The cello version cannot be categorized as a transcription of the violin version nor vice versa. Both arose from the “*Suite Pulcinella*.”

I believe that most cellists today could easily play almost all the notes that are written in the violin transcription of the *Suite Italienne*. In general, technical difficulty is no longer a motivation or an issue of concern when transcribing music from the violin. Rather, there is the question of whether or not it is possible for the musical interpretation and the intention of the original work to be expressed in a transcribed form. In the balance is the question of the degree to which a work may be changed as it is recast for new instrumentation, especially those pieces which are particularly well known or most often heard. It may be an honest challenge for a performer to deliver, or an audience to receive with an open mind, even the most appropriate and well-crafted transformation of a familiar favorite.

***First Rhapsody* by Béla Bartók**

Béla Bartók (1881–1945) dedicated the *First Rhapsody* to his life-long friend, the Hungarian violinist Joseph Szigeti (1892–1973). One of the most acclaimed violinists of the twentieth century, Szigeti was a fervent advocate of modern music. It was with Szigeti that Bartók performed the piece in a Coolidge Festival concert on 13 April 1940, two days following the composer’s second and permanent relocation to the United States. The Coolidge recital was both Szigeti’s and Bartók’s first concert in the New World. Among the best-known Hungarian musicians of their day, Bartók and Szigeti had much in common. Both were avid nationalists and anti-fascists, and both deeply loved their homeland, each spending decades observing, documenting, and perpetuating Hungary’s musical traditions (Lampert 278–79).

Version for Violin and Piano (1928)	Version for Cello and Piano (1928)
Dedicated to Joseph Szigeti <i>Prima parte “lassu”</i> <i>Seconda parte “friss”</i>	 <i>Prima parte “lassu”</i> <i>Seconda parte “friss”</i>

Bartók’s *First Rhapsody* is composed in two parts, *lassú* and *friss* (slow and fast), in the style of traditional Hungarian dance. Intonation, rhythm, dynamics, and texture are

all intermingled and manipulated with the goal to produce the uninhibited emotional effect of a wild and festive gypsy celebration.

The cello transcription of the rhapsody was composed in the same year as the violin piece. At the time, it was Bartók's intention to write versatile pieces that could be adapted in several versions. Bartók wrote to his mother on 26 August 1928, "I was diligent again during the summer and wrote the following: a piece for violin with piano accompaniment of about twelve minutes. This is an arrangement of folk dances; I will adapt it for violin with orchestral accompaniment. Then I intend to transcribe the whole thing for violoncello with piano accompaniment," (Lampert 279).

In the first part (*lassú*), the difference between the violin and cello versions is slight. Occasionally a chord in the violin part is to be played differently by the cello. For example, in the opening theme at the fourth measure, the cello plays a G-d-a chord followed by a single A. At the same place in the violin version, the chord g'-d''-a''-a''' is followed by an A double stop. Such adaptations of chords for the cello version occur many times in this movement, at measures 8, 10, 14, 18, 26, and 76 to 83 among others. This adjustment of chords is necessitated by the differences in strings and tuning between the violin and the cello. The four strings tuned in a violin are g-d'-a'-e'' (from bottom to top), and the four strings tuned in a cello are C-G-d-a. Thus, it is not fully possible to recreate the open string sound of the violin chord at measure 4. The open G on the violin is the lowest string while on the cello it is the second lowest, leaving only two remaining higher strings to resonate on the cello compared with the upper three on the violin.

Another reason for chord adjustments is the difference in tone quality and string vibration between the violin and the cello. It is easier to play chords on the cello than on

the violin because strings on the cello are longer and thicker producing a rounder tone and wider vibrations. Thus the sound of a chord played on the cello can be much grander even if it contains fewer notes.

An exception is found in measures 76 to 83 wherein the violin part is actually simpler while the cellist must produce a more complicated chord progression. I believe this is because in this passage, which marks the return of the theme in the subdominant key, there is a small interlude or cadenza supported by little piano writing to emphasize the chords. The solo stringed instrument must express a strong and flamboyant character while playing in a low register. The violin can easily accomplish this because of its focused sound and fast vibration. However, it is a danger for the cello if the writing is too thin to support an energetic expression of the line. Bartók notices this potential difficulty and adds rolling chords to the cello part to help in achieving the combined energetic and meticulous effect of the violin.

The piano parts of the two versions are virtually identical with the exception of one spot at measures 96 and 97. The left hand is an octave lower in the cello version playing the very low D', and the right hand is one note short in playing the rolling chord. Even the dynamic marking is slightly different here, *piano* in the violin version versus the *pianissimo* in the transcription for cello.

The rhapsody's second part, *friss*, exhibits many more alterations in the transcription for the cello version compared with the number seen in the *lassú* movement. Aside from little changes of notes here and there in both the piano and cello parts, there are three major sections in the second movement in which alterations are readily apparent.

In the first section, from rehearsal numbers 6 to 8, for the first time in the piece the composer switches the lines between the cello and the piano. Bartók gives the theme in the violin version to the piano in the cello version, and lets the cello play the piano's left hand part from the violin version. This change in the lines serves two important purposes. First, it allows all notes to be present from the original work. Second, the composer fully recognizes through this alteration the distinctive individual characters of the two string instruments. The cello retains its character through playing accompanying chords while allowing the piano to carry out the complicated rhythmic syncopation that could be easily covered in sound if played by the cello. In addition, the cello is less suitable than the piano in this case to interpret a violin passage that is vivacious and agile.

Next, from rehearsal numbers 16 to 18, Bartók again arranges the violin line to be played by the piano in the cello version. Instead of playing the half-note chord or the simple quarter notes with rests, the cello reinforces the chordal progression by emphasizing the half notes at the top of the rolling chords of the accompaniment.

A third alteration is seen from rehearsal numbers 25 to 28. Bartók wrote two endings to the *friss* part of this rhapsody. He states in the beginning of the score that the *lassú* and the *friss* parts can be performed separately. In this case, the second ending of the *friss* is to be played. However, I chose to play the second ending even though I performed the whole piece. Unlike the violin version, there is an extension of eight bars of cadenza near the end of the first ending. The second ending is much more elaborate, even in the cello version, which is the reason why I chose to play it. Interestingly, the second endings of both the violin and the cello versions are basically identical, with

only slight modification of some notes at measures 133 to 137. Other than that, the piano parts of this second ending are exactly the same.

Performer Transcriptions

This section examines four violin works transcribed for cello by a musician other than the composer. The first three pieces considered are the *Sonata in A Major* by Franck, the *Sonata Op. 137, No. 1* by Schubert, and *Variations on a Theme from Rossini* by Paganini. Published editions of all of these three transcriptions are available. However, the final work considered, the *Sonata in D Op. 108* by Brahms, has no published version for cello. Thus I had the opportunity to become the transcriber myself, using a violin part and aided by a recording of the sonata played by cellist Yo-Yo Ma.

All four of these performer transcriptions adhere almost completely to the original writing of each piece, either out of respect for the composer or because there were no insurmountable technical difficulties encountered in order for the music to be played and heard. This is in dramatic contrast with the two composer transcriptions by Stravinsky and Bartók wherein there were major adaptations made in both the cello and the piano parts as the pieces were accommodated—or even restructured as is the case with Stravinsky's *Suite Italienne*—in response to the demands and opportunities of new instrumentation.

Careful examination reveals that the piano parts for both the violin and the cello versions of the Franck, Schubert and Paganini works are exactly identical. For the Brahms Sonata, the pianist actually used a score published for violin and piano.

Only in the cello parts can there be found any alterations. In general, the cello plays an octave lower than the violin in these pieces. There are places however where the

transcribers chose the cello to play in a register different than the exact lower octave. Some of these changes are necessitated by simple balance of sound between the cello and the piano. If the line goes too low in the cello during a high-tension section of the music, then the cello will not be heard. Instead of standing out in what is supposed to be an intense moment, the cello sound would be buried in the thick sound and texture of the piano accompaniment. In these types of sections, the treble voice of the violin is able to cut through with its higher pitch and more intensive level of vibration. Conversely, if the line goes too high in the cello, there may be unnecessary technical difficulties in execution. There is also a limit to how high in pitch the cello can play without sounding emotionally perturbed.

The great challenge I found in playing these performer transcriptions is that of addressing the character differences between the violin and the cello in combination with the technical challenges and consideration of the musical intention of the pieces. A major issue in playing violin music on the cello is the difference in the fundamental nature and color of the sound of these two instruments. A composer has in mind when creating a work the specific sound of the instrument he is composing for. Also, certain lines must be carefully interpreted in a precise manner even when executed by the intended instrument. Usually, when transcribing music, whether it is from opera to piano, or from one instrument to another, performer transcribers strive to maintain the original ideas and themes from the work that is to be arranged. It is not their intention to make something new and different, but to merely transfer the work to another form so it can be more accessible to different musicians and audiences. Ultimately, the challenge becomes that of the performer who must imitate the idiom of the original work and overcome any

technical or balance difficulties, all the while trying to make the piece sound as natural and effortless as possible, at the same time lending to the work some characteristic yet appropriate signature.

***Sonata in A Major* by César Franck**

Version for Violin (1886)	Version for Cello (date not known)
Written for Eugène Ysaÿe	Transcribed by Jules Delsart
<i>Allegretto ben moderato</i>	<i>Allegretto ben moderato</i>
<i>Allegro</i>	<i>Allegro</i>
<i>Recitativo-Fantasia</i>	<i>Recitativo-Fantasia</i>
<i>Allegretto poco mosso</i>	<i>Allegretto poco mosso</i>

Franck composed his *Violin Sonata* early in the fall of 1886 as he was approaching his sixty-fourth birthday. In this same year, he wrote his famous symphonic poem *Psyché* and became the president of the Société Nationale, succeeding Saint-Saëns. Franck's commitment to new ideas and his astonishing success with his *Piano Quintet* both led him to this position. The *Violin Sonata* was composed for his friend, the Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe. The form of the sonata is cyclic and contains four movements. The *Allegretto ben moderato* is a kind of extended prologue which helps to establish the A-major tonality of the work since the main key of the *Allegro* movement is D minor. The *Allegretto ben moderato* also introduces the motive that dominates all four movements. This motive is stated in the first three notes played by the violin. Later, the same motive is presented in varied forms as the first theme in each of the following movements. The third movement is a typical fantasia. It begins in the D-minor key of the preceding *Allegro* movement and ends in F-sharp minor. The final movement is treated

as a full-blown canon between the piano and the violin or cello, in the case of the transcribed version (Vallas 192-200).

The four movements together seem to me to illustrate a personal journey perhaps in the search for faith. The first movement suggests questioning, the second exhibits passion and turbulence, the third reflects an inward solitude, and the fourth is an embodiment of the search's culmination, perhaps the finding of an answer.

Franck's *Violin Sonata* was transcribed by Jules Delsart (1844–1900). He was a student of Franchomme (1808–1884), one of the most important cellists and pedagogues at the time in France and also a close friend of Chopin. Delsart followed in his teacher's path, becoming a professor at the Paris Conservatory. He transcribed some Classical works, including this sonata, for cello. There is some debate as to whether or not Franck consented to this cello transcription. Cellist Zara Nelsova once said she had heard through Casals that the sonata had originally been written for the cello, but that Ysaÿe had so loved the piece he had asked Franck to give it to him. Whether the story is true or not, the piece translates itself easily to the cello and perhaps even gains expression through the depth of tone that the cello lends Franck's richly Romantic writing (Nelsova).

The sonata is played mostly an octave lower on the cello compared with the violin. In a few places though, Delsart moved the pitches an extra octave lower so that the line moves downward instead of ascending as it would be played on the violin. However, in the Leonard Rose edition that I used for my performance, these lines parallel the violin part instead of heading downward toward the lower register indicated by Delsart. The Rose edition is possibly more loyal to the composer's intention. Played in the higher register, the tone of the cello becomes both thinner and more intense and the

color is brighter and more emotionally expressive. In the *sempre ff e grandioso* section toward the end of the fourth movement, the effect is certainly more appropriate when the work is played in the higher octave.

This sonata by Franck reminds me of Chopin's *Sonata* Op. 65 (1846) dedicated to Auguste Franchomme. Both have the same thick texture, very demanding piano parts, and extremely Romantic character. I did not encounter any great difficulties in preparing this piece beyond those experienced when playing original works for cello. This may explain in part why this transcription is almost regarded as a standard component of the concert or disc repertoire for cello. Or perhaps, too, the piece was in fact originally written for the cello.

***Sonatina, Op. 137, No. 1* by Schubert**

Version for Violin (1816)	Version for Cello (1978)
<p><i>Allegro molto</i> <i>Andante</i> <i>Allegro vivace</i></p>	<p>Transcribed by Janos Starker <i>Allegro molto</i> <i>Andante</i> <i>Allegro vivace</i></p>

The publisher Diabelli issued the three of Schubert's early sonatas for piano with violin accompaniment long after Schubert had died. He assigned to them the opus number 137 and changed their titles from *Sonata* to *Sonatina*. Diabelli re-named the pieces *Sonatinas* so as to represent them accurately to his main customers in 1836, amateur musicians for whom the works' light technical demands and conservative Classical style were particularly suited. At this time, due to the influence of Beethoven, "Sonata" had come to mean something more serious and difficult and perhaps on the stodgy side. By the spring of 1816, when Schubert wrote the three *Sonatinas* Op. 137, he was already the composer of the famous songs *Gretchen am Spinnrade* and *Erlkönig* as well as four symphonies, so it is not surprising that his familiar musical personality is evident in this piece (Winter 655–729).

A contemporary of Beethoven (1770–1827), Schubert (1797–1828) was under his influence. However, the very different personalities and temperaments of the two men are reflected in their work. Compared to Beethoven's interest in writing mainly instrumental works, Schubert turned his talents toward writing *Lieder* (songs). Also,

Schubert's musical style was more natural, simple, and poetic than Beethoven's dramatic, serious and grand writing. There is no original work for solo cello from Schubert, although he wrote beautiful music for cello in his *Trout Quintet in A*, D. 667 (1819) and his two-cello *String Quintet in C*, D. 956 (1828). Schubert's *Sonata in a*, for *Arpeggione* (a fretted guitar-shaped instrument played with a bow) and piano, D. 821 (1824) has been played on the cello so much, it is considered part of the standard cello repertoire (Winter 655–729).

Schubert, with his experience as a brilliant composer of songs, is very careful with sound coloration and the musical meaning of each specific tone. Schubert well understood the character and sound of the violin. All three movements are light, delicate, quick and vibrant, quite appropriate when sung by the violin. If one tries to be loyal to the original tone intended for the piece it is difficult to play the *Sonatina* on the cello. It is as if a middle-aged woman is trying to sing with the voice and naiveté of a young girl.

This first of Schubert's violin sonatinas was transcribed by Janos Starker in 1978. The transcription's piano part is identical to the original and most of the cello part is faithful to the violin part as well. Only in the middle section of the third movement, when the violin begins to accompany the piano with triplets, does Starker rewrite the cello part. Here, Starker strives to make the broken chord triplets more interesting compared with the original version in which the violin part is very simple and stays mostly in the same position. By introducing more motion Starker has made the piece more vibrant and interesting and more difficult.

In playing this piece to suit Schubert's musical intentions, especially when the cello register is not high and the color is more sedate, I found that I could compensate by

playing in a very light, pointed and forward-moving manner rather than in the more conventional style of the cello. The second movement is less problematic to play than the outer two movements, because its slower tempo and calmer nature are a better match with the cello's innate character.

Variations on a Theme from Rossini by Paganini

Version for Violin (1819?)	Version for Cello
Titled: <i>Variations on the G string on Rossini's "Moses"</i>	Titled: <i>Variations on a Theme from Rossini</i>
	Transcribed by Pierre Fournier
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>Introduction</i>
<i>Theme</i>	<i>Theme</i>
<i>Variation I</i>	<i>Variation I</i>
<i>Variation II</i>	<i>Variation II</i>
<i>Variation III</i>	<i>Variation III</i>

Moses in Egypt is an opera by Rossini (1792–1868), which was produced for the first time at the Theater of Saint Carlo in Naples in March of 1818. It was restaged the following year in the same theater with a modification of the last act required to resolve a scenic problem encountered in the first production. Among the most important changes is the addition of a musical setting of a prayer by Moses which Paganini used as the basic motive for his composition for violin and orchestra, *Variations on the G string on Rossini's "Moses."* From the title, it is clear the piece should be played entirely on one string. It was indeed the intention of Paganini to show off his virtuosic control of the instrument. When he was performing this piece, he would remove all the strings except the G string and then play the entire composition on that one string but with the string tuned to Bb instead of G (Stratton 171–72).

The introductory *Adagio* embodies the prayer and is followed by a *Tema Tempo alla Marcia* section. There are three variations and a short coda, which was derived from the aria *Castore e Polluce* (1787) by G. J. Vogler. Paganini was extremely proud of this

composition, and wrote in advance to his friends to inform them when it was programmed. The work appeared frequently in Paganini's performances, and it has continued to be a most popular concert piece for both performers and audiences alike.

Berlioz makes reference to the work when he states that Paganini employed the bass-drum with better effect than did Rossini himself. In the accompaniment to the prayer, Paganini placed the stroke of the drum on the syncopated beat to which the verbal accent was assigned, whereas Rossini less imaginatively wrote the drum stroke on the first beat of the bar. An appreciative fan, complimenting Paganini upon his composition, added; "It must be confessed that Rossini furnished you a very beautiful theme." "That's very true," replied Paganini, "but he didn't invent my bang of the big drum." It is said of his performances of *Variations* that Paganini produced a tone when playing his violin that dominated the entire orchestra even in fortissimo passages (Stratton 171–2).

The firm of Ricordi published two arrangements, one for string quintet, and another for violin with piano accompaniment. The G string of the solo violin is raised to B flat, and the *Adagio* is played in C minor and C major, while the accompaniment is in E-flat minor and E-flat major. The melody in the minor key is played three times. The second time, the first eight bars are to be played an octave higher than the first time; the third time, the same bars are played in harmonics (Stratton 171–2).

Paganini's one-string composition is more challenging to play on the cello because the distances between the notes are much larger on the cello compared with the violin. The *Introduction* in E-flat minor in the violin version is modulated to D minor for the cello. Also, the theme and the variations in E-flat major in the violin version are written in D major for the cello. Since the G string is the lowest string on the violin the

sonority tends to be on the darker side for that instrument. On the cello, the work is played on the A string, the highest string, which of course is thus on the brighter side of that instrument's sonority. The reason for the change of key in the cello version is most likely to facilitate ease of playing on the open A. Although there is the G string also on the cello, the string is too low and the character of the sound is too distant from that of the violin to work for this piece. I found that the key and string choice worked reasonably well on the cello. Even the balance between the cello and the piano is not a problem since Paganini uses only a very light texture of *alberti* chords in the accompaniment.

This piece is certainly a great addition to the cello repertoire; many of the techniques in the work rarely appeared in original cello works from the same period in history. The use of harmonics in the melodic modification, the slurred staccato, the color, and the character of the piece all help broaden one's image of what a cello sound can be.

***Sonata in D, Op. 108* by Johannes Brahms**

The third *Sonata* for violin and piano by Brahms (1833–1897) was written from 1886 to 1888 during the summers in Thun, Switzerland. Brahms dedicated the work to Hans von Bülow. The *Sonata* consists of four movements; *Allegro*, *Adagio*, *Un poco presto e con sentimento*, and *Presto agitato*, and it is bigger in scope than Brahms's earlier two sonatas for violin which each had only three movements. The third sonata is also broader musically and much more compelling with its complex emotions.

The first movement, in 2/2, is written in the key of D minor and marked *sotto voce ma espressivo*. The violin enters with a long singing line softly accompanied by a syncopated eighth-note figure in the piano. The opening melody is punctuated with many fast *crescendi* and *decrescendi* creating an expressive mood of longing. This first theme is soon interrupted at measure 24 with *forte* dominant chords that gradually carry the piece to a tender second theme. Brahms uses many eighth-note figures in this piece, some even, others syncopated. The rhythmic drive continues throughout the first movement. The accompanying eighth notes transform in the development section into the violin melody with string crossings carrying the broken theme underlain by a repeated A, like an insistent yet subtle drum beat from far away. The effect is to create a wondering, searching mood in contrast with the flowing fast-paced opening. This same motive from the development section returns in the coda, then slowly fades away.

The melancholic and expressive slow second movement is in the key of D major, gradually progressing from low tones to high and intensive singing chords. This

movement possesses the characteristic warmth that is the signature of Brahms. A fast and breathless third movement follows, with accompanimental thirds on off beats in the violin line supporting a light and delicate tune in the piano. On the cello, this movement is particularly hard to play because of its speed combined with the distance between chords, especially since it needs to be played with poise and in a delicate and singing manner.

The final movement *Presto agitato* opens with forceful galloping chords in the violin part. These chords accompany the piano part which introduces the theme in this motive of role reversal. The violin then sings the passionate melody with the piano continuing the eighth-note galloping figure. For a cellist playing the violin part, there is a difficult decision of register for this line because of its passionate character. It is hard to convey the musical intent if played an octave lower, although it is much easier technically to play in that range. I opted for the challenge of playing this section in the higher register which demanded excellent control of the left hand in order to handle the leaps between notes. Other challenging sections, at measures 107–113, 177–194, 287–292, and 303–310, have the similar characteristic of fast, large leaps between notes played in a high register.

Preparing this sonata for performance on the cello was most interesting and challenging since there is no published transcription for this work. I was not only playing violin music, I was playing from a violin score. It was helpful to be able listen to a recording of the sonata played by a cellist. Yo-Yo Ma and pianist Emanuel Ax recorded a CD of the work in 1991 on the SONY label.

Transcribing this work myself, going through the process of deciding where each phrase should be on the cello and examining whether that was technically possible and suitable to the character and color of the phrase, was stimulating and fun. The opening A, for example, would sound different played an octave lower compared with two octaves lower than the original violin part. The debate becomes whether to let the phrase truly sound like a cello or to try to make it sound as much as possible like a violin. Choosing the higher register usually introduces an increased level of technical difficulty.

String crossings are another consideration. The violin part in this sonata has a long section of string-crossing accompaniment in the development. This is much more demanding to play on the cello because of the increased distance between notes and different string tuning compared with the violin. Extremely demanding control and fluency are required of the cellist, especially when the phrase should be both fast and soft. Different string tuning and wider distances are again significant when playing chords in a lyrical passage; one must work hard to avoid the interruption of the shifts while maintaining the exceptional beauty of the line. These issues tend to be minimized where possible in pieces written especially for cello. Further challenge is found in the fast and agitated fourth movement that starts with intervallic changing chords marked *forte*. Especially for someone with small hands, the passionate line that follows, with wide leaps between the notes, is quite daunting to play.

One notes both similarities and differences when playing Brahms's *Sonata, Op. 99* in F major written for cello and this *Sonata, Op. 108* in D major written for violin. The style and tonal texture are similar and the writing for color and location on each instrument are well thought out. The pieces are clearly written with the specific

instrument in mind. Playing a transcription thus requires careful re-examination of the work from the viewpoint of the characteristics of the new instrument. Preparation and performance of one's own transcriptions indeed stretches ones interpretive and technical abilities.

The Influence of Transcriptions upon the Evolving Role of the Cello

In determining the relative influence of the cello transcriptions on the evolution of the instrument—in comparison with the influence of the progress of the instrument on the development of the transcriptions—it would be difficult to say which carried the most weight. Nonetheless, the intertwining relationship of both definitely had great impact on raising the cello to its current level of importance in the twenty-first century as an established and beloved solo instrument of virtuosic dimensions supported by a broadly diverse and demanding repertoire.

Initially, violin music transcribed for cello required expanded playing ability and agility on the part of the performer and also added breadth and depth to the cello repertoire. Ultimately, following the Romantic Period, the cello grew in importance as a solo instrument, ultimately attaining solo status similar to that of the piano or violin.

To be sure, many composers before the nineteenth century had composed substantial numbers of compositions for cello. Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741) composed six sonatas and twenty-seven concerti for cello in addition to his numerous works for violin. J. S. Bach (1685–1750) contributed his six solo suites for cello. Luigi Boccherini (1743–1805) wrote a variety of compositions for cello including sonatas, concerti and importantly, the cello parts in his string quartets and quintets. There is during this time clearly a growing importance of the cello as an instrument in its own right.

Among the major composers in the Classical Period, Haydn wrote many concerti for the baryton (an instrument similar to the viola da gamba), played by his patron, Prince Esterházy. Haydn also gave the cello many opportunities to show itself independently in his string quartets and cello concerti. Whether through glorious solo lines or in complex rhythmic drives, the cello was far from just a supporter of the bass line in the harmony and became more of an equal partner with the other strings, particularly the violin. Furthermore, both composers and performers began to transcribe music for cello long before the Classical and Romantic Periods.

Ultimately though, the full blossoming of the trend to transcribe for cello came later and in response to the need for increasingly able cellists to have an exciting and varied repertoire to perform in order maintain an audience both at home and on the road. Compositions and transcriptions thus far had brought the cello to a new point of virtuosity, and the resultant demands of its players and audiences pushed the need for music beyond what was currently available. Cellists such as Alfredo Piatti (1822–1901), the Duport brothers [J. P. Duport (1741–1818) and J. L. Duport (1749–1819)], Franchomme, Romberg (1767–1841) and Friedrich Grützmacher (1832–1903) not only needed more music to play, the repertoire also needed to be more engaging and demanding.

The Duport brothers and Piatti were among the first traveling virtuoso cellists. They wrote treatises to help build the foundation of cello playing, and they also wrote many pieces for cello and arranged many transcriptions. As it turns out, these musicians were more successful as players and transcribers than as composers and publishers. Although their compositions were technically challenging and did serve to advance

expectation and ability on the cello, the musical content was not as satisfying as their transcriptions for cello of works by other composers such as Antonio Veracini (1659–1733), Attilio Ariosti (1666–?1729), Benedetto Marcello (1686–1739), W. A. Mozart (1756–1791) and F. J. Haydn (1732–1809). The original purpose of the Duports and Piatti in arranging music of substance was to compensate for the simple style of the flourishing show-piece salon music of the time which was not interesting enough to keep the cellists nor their audiences satisfied.

Liszt's piano transcriptions of orchestral works were very popular during this time. While these pieces usually incorporated a great deal of stimulating elaboration to fill out the sound required to emulate layers of instrumental voices, the cello transcriptions from the violin repertoire did not need any such elaboration. The surprising effect of a cellist playing a virtuosic violin piece was quite impressive and entertaining. Shifting distances on the fingerboard are much greater on the cello compared with the violin, while the intensity of bowing motion to deliver effective violinistic passages on the cello can be quite energetic. Audiences reveled in the novelty and excitement of witnessing a cellist execute virtuosic violin music with the feeling of ease while trying to deliver the required level of musical expression. The result was symbiotic. Transcriptions placed higher technical demands upon cellists. In turn, more able and demanding cellists required an expanding and increasingly virtuosic repertoire, not only for themselves but also to please a responsive public. The early transcriptions for cello—especially those from the vastly broader violin repertoire of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries—had served to both stretch and demonstrate the ability of the cellist performer and create a public image that cellists were able to do what violinists could.

Now, composers and the performers had to provide more difficult and demanding pieces. The vision and expectation of the cellist was forever broadened. The possibilities and necessities for composition and performance became permanently enlarged.

Subsequently, a vast and varied repertoire has been amassed in the twentieth century with the cello firmly established as a demanding and satisfying solo instrument. There is currently no shortage of interesting and demanding music for cello. Why then does music for cello continue to be transcribed from the past?

One reason is clearly the continuing popularity of historic music, especially that of the Romantic Period. Performers continue to seek the opportunity to play the complex and significant works of the great masters who did not compose music with the modern cellist in mind. Cellists such as Yo-Yo Ma, Janos Starker, Luigi Silva, Gregor Piatigorsky, Pierre Fournier, and Thomas Werner-Mifune have felt the need to experience for themselves the playing of renowned and beloved violin music that creates the poignant feelings of release and communion characteristic of compositions from another time. Their audiences, too, have enjoyed the opportunity to hear these familiar pieces from an alternative point of expression.

Another motivation for modern transcriptions is the desire for exploration and diversity of experience. When we hear a piece played by professionals, amateurs, and students over and over many times in our experience of concert going, it becomes somewhat difficult to ascertain the original intent of the composer. Through actually playing the piece, we can strive to learn for ourselves what the composer meant to convey. At the same time, through performing a transcribed version of a piece we can also create a varied interpretation because of the distinction in tessitura and tonal

possibilities between the original and transcribed instruments. Our minds constantly need to be refreshed, as do our ears. Transcriptions provide such an opportunity.

Conclusion

It has been a long process for the cello to gradually progress over the past 150 years from being just one part of the continuo to becoming a well-established ensemble and solo instrument. The modern standing of the cello is not surprising. The cello has enjoyed much attention from musicians in the twentieth century. Many of the century's greatest composers including Barber, Bloch, Britten, Crumb, Carter, Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Martinu, Kodály, and Elgar among others have written impressive and significant works for the cello including concertos, sonatas, and unaccompanied pieces. In fact, hundreds of works have been written specifically for the cello.

Furthermore, brilliant cellists throughout recent history have been an essential element for the instrument's development. Their contributions have allowed the cello to be played with more facility and to be heard more easily. Their personalities and great artistry have attracted audiences and inspired young players. Perhaps it is also important that the cello's captivating and yearning quality of sound is so reminiscent of the human voice. All combined, these factors have collectively brought the cello to its position of immense popularity in the twenty-first century.

With so many compositions written now especially for the cello, one may wonder if there is still exists any need or justification for the arrangement, study, or performance of cello transcriptions. I believe that transcribed works have been and continue to be an important part of the repertoire. Many brilliant composers never wrote for cello and their input would remain inaccessible for exploration by cellists. Also, there is distinctive

value to be found in the study of transcribed compositions. My study and performance of violin pieces transcribed for cello, including the process of transcribing a piece myself, has been not only been educationally rewarding, it has also been a personally and professionally gratifying experience for me.

The transcriptions I have studied are not only technically demanding, but also musically interesting and philosophically stimulating. It has been an artistic challenge to produce a variety of tonal colors so as to avoid sounding merely like a cellist playing violin music. It was fun and interesting to ponder ways to make a transcription sound convincing as a cello work, especially if it was already well known as a violin piece. From a performer's point of view, learning to play these pieces also pushed me to a new level of playing. It expanded not just my repertoire but also my technical abilities and my concept of playing as a cellist. Playing the violin transcriptions creates the necessity for cellists to expand their expectation of the cello's possibilities and forces cellists to develop more control and efficiency of technique.

The experience of transcribing a work myself also inspired me to more deeply consider and understand many aspects of the cello: its tonal color, how different note placements can have different meanings, how a traditional cello sounds, and how that it is different from the sound of a violin. I experienced personally how cellists can learn from the violin about diverse aspects of music making including tone production, efficiency of the left hand, or the conveyance of a musical idea in a manner new to the cello tradition.

Among the pieces I have studied, the Brahms and Schubert I find the most refreshing. They are the most unfamiliar to the cellist in terms of sound production and required technique. The Stravinsky and Bartók are stylistically fascinating and fun to

play. However, they are quite difficult as well. Perhaps because they were transcribed by the composer themselves, it felt natural to play these works. The Franck and Paganini transcriptions are two of the most often played by cellists today; they are almost considered to be part of the standard cello repertoire.

In contemplating the experience of playing both the Schubert *Sonatina* and the Brahms *Sonata*, I wonder what it would be like to play these pieces transcribed into another key as with the Paganini *Variations*. This type of modulation has been successful in my opinion with the Brahms *Violin Sonata Op. 78*. The violin version is in G major while the transcription for cello is in the key of D major. Even this consideration of key is a challenge. Since each key represents a different musical character, any change in key from the original may alter the identity or nature of the piece in a way not intended by the composer. Therefore, transcribers of cello music may tend to avoid key changes unless they are demanded by technical concerns. It seems that sometimes, though, a key change might place a work more appropriately within a cellist's perspective.

While it is crucial that students should study the standard and even obscure repertoire originally composed for cello, I believe it is important also to encourage the study of transcriptions as a means to inspire young cellists and expand their vision and ability while triggering their imagination. Transcribed works at many levels of difficulty are available, and it is encouraging and exciting to see transcriptions continue to be published such as the J. S. Bach *Chaconne* by Paul Tortelier and Paganini's *24 Caprices* by Luigi Silva. Cellists are taking on the challenge of even the most difficult works from the violin repertoire. Yo-Yo Ma has even performed Bartók's *Viola Concerto*. Although not all cellists can play or would want to play these pieces, for those who would like to

challenge themselves or to surprise their audiences, these transcribed works could definitely serve both functions.

Appendix

Recital Program 1

9 September 2000
 Ulrich Hall
 The University of Maryland School Of Music

Cellist: Hsiao-mei Sun

Pianists: Naoko Takao
 Airee Loh

Sonata in A major

César Franck (1822–1890)
 Transcribed by Jules Desart

Allegretto ben moderato
Allegro
Recitativo-Fantasia
Allegretto poco mosso

Suite Italienne (1932)

Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971)
 Transcribed by Gregor Piatigorsky
 and the composer

Introduzione
Serenata
Aria
Tarantella
Minuetto e Finale

Variations
on a Theme from Rossini

Nicolo Paganini (1782–1840)
 Transcribed by Pierre Fournier

Recital Program 2

Gildenhorn Hall
The University of Maryland School Of Music
12 February 2001

Cellist: Hsiao-mei Sun

Pianist: Naoko Takao

Sonatina in D, Op. 137, No. 1

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
Transcribed by Janos Starker

Allegro molto
Andante
Allegro vivace

First Rhapsody (1928)

Béla Bartók (1881–1945)
Transcribed by the composer

Prima parte "lassú"
Seconda parte "friss"

Sonata in D, Op. 108

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)
Transcribed by Hsiao-mei Sun
with reference to recording
by Yo-Yo Ma

Allegro
Adagio
Un poco presto e con sentimento
Presto agitato

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