

Members of the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra

Alexander Platt, conductor

Guest Artists: Alex Chambers-Ozasky, cello; Jonathan Borja, Flute

Friday, September 18, 2026, 7:30 pm

“BACHtoberfest!”

Cello Concerto in A Major, H439, Wq. 172

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714 - 1788)

- I. Allegro
- II. Largo Maesto
- III. Allegro assai

Alex Chambers-Ozasky, cello

Suite No. 2 in B Minor, BWV 1067

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 - 1750)

- I. Overture
- II. Rondeau
- III. Sarabande
- IV. Bourrée – No. 1, No. 2
- V. Polonaise
- VI. Menuet
- VII. Badinerie

Jonathan Borja, Flute

INTERMISSION

Appalachian Spring Suite (original instrumentation)

Aaron Copland (1900 - 1990)

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| I. Very slowly | V. More deliberate tempo |
| II. Allegro | VI. Molto moderato |
| III. Moderato | VII. Doppio movimento |
| IV. Fast | VIII. Moderato |

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Friday, September 18, 2026, 7:30 pm

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Cello Concerto in A Major, H439, Wq. 172

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (b. Weimar, Germany, March 8, 1714; d. Hamburg, Germany, December 14, 1788)

- I. **Allegro**
- II. **Largo**
- III. **Allegro assai**

Alex Chambers-Ozasky, cello

Until the Romantic Era, the music of German composer Carl Philipp Emanuel (CPE) Bach was even more renowned and celebrated than that of his father, Johann Sebastian. Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven were all strong admirers of CPE.

He was a preeminent composer in the sensitive style and “storm and stress” movements, key transitional styles between the Baroque and Classical periods.

His strikingly original music also anticipated major stylistic traits of the Romantic Era, with its deep expression and harmonic and rhythmic freedom. Today, he is particularly well-known for his keyboard music, concertos, string symphonies, and chamber music with strings.

CPE wrote three cello concertos in the early 1750s, which were later rearranged in versions for harpsichord and flute.

His third, the *Cello Concerto in A Major, Wq 172* (1753), is the most overtly virtuosic of the three, featuring wide leaps, fast string crossings, exuberant arpeggios, and fascinating rhythmic clashes between soloist and orchestra. Extroverted, playful outer movements with surprising modulations frame a striking, melancholy slow movement, prominently featuring the plaintive upper register of the cello. This concerto is popular today thanks to a revision and piano reduction by Ferdinand Pollain.

What to Listen For

The concerto consists of three distinct movements:

- I. **Allegro** – A lively, virtuosic opening that frequently shifts in mood and dynamic, showcasing the soloists' expressive capabilities.
- II. **Largo** – A profoundly emotional and melancholic slow movement featuring muted strings.

III. **Allegro assai** – A energetic and rhythmic concluding movement that brings the concerto to a brilliant close

About the Cello

The cello (called the violoncello but is commonly abbreviated as the 'cello') is a medium-low pitched bowed string instrument of the violin family. Unlike the violin, it is played while seated with the cello resting on the floor, usually with an 'endpin' (a stick-like tube that is inserted into an attachment at the end of the instrument, which can be adjusted to the desired height). The instrument produces a lush, rich, low timbre (almost like a singing voice).

Mstislav Rostropovich was a cellist who produced a fabulous deep sound, a very large sound. In a solo recital, his playing was stunning as it varied in intensity to match the composer's era (e.g., Bach – *Cello Suites* vs. Prokofiev – *Sonata*). He also brought fine coordination with his piano accompanist. It must be noted that Rostropovich studied the piano for years, beginning studies with his mother when he was only four years old – and continuing piano studies at the Conservatory where he was viewed as an outstanding pianist.

"Rostropovich taught at his own alma mater, the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory," writes Elizabeth Wilson in her book *Rostropovich: The Musical Life of the Great Cellist, Teacher, and Legend*.

"The qualities Rostropovich brought to his cello class reflected the philosophy inherent in his own performances. His capacity for self-discipline and hard work was enormous," writes Wilson. "To his students he transmitted a lasting love of music and a set of ideals that deeply influenced their lives. In doing so, he taught them to believe in their own resources, to think that the impossible did not exist - with his own example serving as an inspiration."

"He started studying the cello with his father, Leopold Vitodovich Rostropovich, a cellist himself who was a former student of Pablo Casals. At the age of 16, he entered the Moscow Conservatory where he studied cello, piano and composition," adds Wilson.

"At the Conservatory, Rostropovich studied with Semyon Matveevich Kosolupov who had built a reputation as an excellent and thorough cello teacher," writes Wilson. "His bow changes were so perfectly smooth that they were completely inaudible as Kosolupov taught his students (including Rostropovich) to do."

Wilson continues, "'Vibrato' was considered an essential part of musical expression. Kosolupov (with whom Rostropovich studied) never played without a vibrato (rocking of the player's fingers over the string on the fingerboard). Kosolupov transmitted to his students a strong bow technique, with an immense variety of bow strokes. Great attention was paid to developing the upper part of the bow. He insisted on using the natural weight of the arm and shoulder, allowing the cellist to remain free while still being able to employ force, at the point of the bow."

"The Kosolupov school of cello performance was characterized by smooth, expressive phrasing, and an insistence on a beautiful singing tone," adds Wilson.

Rostropovich, now as a teacher himself, insisted on training his students to sight-read. "Sight-reading requires instant decisions on which bowings and fingerings best transmit the music's requirements, so by emphasizing it, Rostropovich was training his pupils to react quickly on the instrument," writes Wilson.

Suite No. 2 in B Minor, BWV 1067

Johann Sebastian Bach (b. Eisenach, Germany, March 31, 1685; d. Leipzig, Germany, July 28, 1750)

- I. Overture
- II. Rondeau
- III. Sarabande

- IV. Bourrée – No. 1, No. 2
- V. Polonaise
- VI. Menuet
- VII. Badinerie

Jonathan Borja, Flute

The 'dance suite' pieces were in their highest development, at the hands of Bach. "Even in the suites of Bach, occasional dances were followed by varied and progressive forms," writes Donald N. Ferguson of the University of Minnesota in his book *A Short History of Music*. We see this in the dance movements in this suite. "In Germany, the group of four movements was also accepted as most satisfactory." Although, in this Suite No. 2 in B Minor, Bach adds joyousness with more movements!

The *Badinerie* (means literally "jesting" in French) – has become a showpiece for solo flautists because of its quick pace and difficulty. The "final" version of the *B-minor Orchestral Suite* dates from Bach's Leipzig years. The handwriting and paper used for the orchestral parts (no manuscript score survives) date specifically to the period 1738-39.

This work was written for a flute used during the Baroque era. "The tone, tuning, and character of instruments have changed so much that the special sound and feeling of music that moved previous generations, is sometimes all but lost to us," writes Ardal Powell in his book *The Flute*.

What is now known about the flute and flute-playing in the past and in the present makes this work an outstanding piece for both the flutist and the audience. "Today mechanical training has reached unprecedented levels and the flute's repertoire is broader than ever," continues Powell.

Also, with the advent of metallurgy and heat treating, the metal flutes take on a wonderful sound (frequently made with gold and silver).

"In the first decades of the eighteenth century the best composers and musicians including Bach, Handel, Quantz, Vivaldi, and Telemann were attracted to the town of Dresden," writes Powell. "Here woodwind players first began to specialize in a single instrument, and the flute first took its place as a virtuoso's vehicle in mixed ensembles. "None of Johann Sebastian Bach's flute solos was published before the nineteenth century, continues Powell."

"Composers mentioned in the eighteenth century created 'ornaments' to dress up their music," discusses Walter Emery in his book *Bach's Ornaments*. "These include 'trills' (or as Bach called them – 'shakes'). This ornament is two notes delicately moving back and forth – DCDCDC – and then moving on to the rest of the phrase," continues Emery.

There are other 'ornaments' as well, and they will be demonstrated in fine fashion throughout this work (as well as the following cello concerto).

"Bach's highly ornamental passages were but the careful working out of the earlier more improvisatory ornaments," writes Ferguson. "Naturally, also, styles of phrase or ornament which had grown up in connection with one type of form were often found suitable for other forms. And even dance

movements, directly borrowed from the suite, were freely used for the last movements of Church sonatas by Bach.”

By the 19th century Bach’s music was played with less of the ornamentation of Baroque style.

“New attention then began to focus around the end of the nineteenth century on music in a style completely foreign to most musicians and listeners - the compositions of J. S. Bach. Bach’s music remained unfamiliar to most concert audiences,” writes Powell.

What to Listen For

The *Suite in B minor* opens with an *Ouverture*, a French label that indicates the movement's underlying delight. The combination of a slower, grave opening and the ensuing fugal allegro lead into the next movements. “In Bach’s works especially, the slow movements, are almost invariably marvels of profundity in feeling,” writes Ferguson.

Six dances follow including the *Rondeau*, the *Bourée* and the Menuet which were fashionable dances at the French court of Louis XIV. The *Sarabande* also takes on a French guise. The *Polonaise*, derived from a Polish folk dance, was a favorite of German composers. The *Badinerie* (means literally "jesting" in French) – has become a showpiece for solo flautists because of its quick pace and difficulty.

“The various dances have individual characteristics that suggest either the old dance steps, or the conventional patterns of rhythm that had become associated with the dances,” adds Ferguson

This brilliant flute part marks the piece as no less than an extravagant Italian solo concerto, beneath which Bach has built a solid German foundation.

This *Suite No. 2 in B Minor* for solo for flute is frequently performed in recitals with piano accompaniment. The piano part is basically the chamber orchestra arranged for piano. A satisfying recital opportunity may be performed by including only three of the seven movements – *Rondeau*, *Polonaise*, and *Badinerie*.

About the Flute

We will hear lovely flute playing tonight. A beautiful flute sound embodies a natural style of playing that values a beautiful tone, is even throughout the registers, is both lyrical and expressive, and is produced in a very natural manner. It is characterized by a smooth legato and a free, light, agile, and flexible upper register. Ideally add to that, a warm and rich tone.

It is interesting to review the following well-accepted style of flute playing as it moved into the 20th century. Georges Laurent was a flutist in Paris. At the end of World War I, he became Principal Flute of the Boston Symphony and taught at the New England Conservatory of Music. He recorded this work, Bach’s *Suite No. 2 in B Minor*, with the Boston Symphony under Serge Koussevitzky on 78rpm-records.

Laurent taught James Pappoutsakis who became Assistant Principal Flute of the Boston Symphony and Principal Flute of the Boston Pops. Pappoutsakis, who taught at the Conservatory and at Tanglewood (the summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra), carried on this French Flute School of Playing.

Pappoutsakis in his lessons taught that “A beautiful tone quality must always be maintained whether the note is loud, soft, legato, slow, or fast. No substitute has been found for the accuracy of intonation.”

So, what do flutists need to be accepted into an orchestra? Pappoutsakis demonstrated, “The ingredients of winning an audition are these: a gorgeous quality of tone; secondly, accuracy; thirdly, a precise sense of rhythm; and fourthly musicianship with a knowledge of traditions of the orchestra excerpts.”

“A confidence in traditional interpretations and flexibility is very important,” continues Pappoutsakis. Daily practice of orchestral excerpts is essential for anyone interested in playing in an orchestra. Many orchestral excerpts are very challenging, require alternate fingerings, and take time to learn up to tempo. The flutist should learn the entire part, not just the well-known solos, and learn how the flute part relates to what the rest of the orchestra is playing. Bring out all the dynamics, accents, and markings. Play in the most polished manner possible.”

INTERMISSION

Appalachian Spring Suite (original instrumentation)

Aaron Copland (b. Brooklyn, New York City, New York, November 14, 1900; d. Sleepy Hollow, New York, December 2, 1990)

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| I. Very slowly | V. More deliberate tempo |
| II. Allegro | VI. Molto moderato |
| III. Moderato | VII. Doppio movimento |
| IV. Fast | VIII. Moderato |

The original ballet and subsequent suite for chamber orchestra are scored for:

Woodwinds

1 flute
1 clarinet in B $\flat$
1 bassoon

Percussion

piano

Strings

2 first and 2 second violins
2 violas
2 cellos
1 double bass

Appalachian Spring is an American ballet created by the choreographer Martha Graham and the composer Aaron Copland, later arranged as an orchestral work. The work performed today is in its original instrumentation.

Commissioned by Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, Copland composed the ballet music for Graham. The original choreography was by Graham, with costumes by Edythe Gilfond and sets by Isamu Noguchi. The ballet was well received at the 1944 premiere, earning Copland the Pulitzer Prize for Music during its 1945 United States tour.

The orchestral suite composed in 1945 was played that year by many symphony orchestras; the suite is among Copland's best-known works, and the ballet remains essential in the Martha Graham Dance Company repertoire.

Originally orchestrated for a thirteen-piece chamber orchestra (which was one more than was initially included in the commission), the score was arranged into various suites by Copland for different purposes. Copland's biographer Howard Pollack writes in his book *Aaron Copland: The Life and Work of an Uncommon Man*, "Copland imagined an instrumentation of double string quartet and piano but then decided to add a double bass and three woodwinds (flute, clarinet, bassoon) for a total of thirteen musicians. This was one player more than Coolidge's limit of twelve, but Coolidge obliged him in this matter." The original ballet featured eight episodes, three of which were cut in the well-known orchestral suite.

The ballet takes place in a small Appalachian settlement in 19th-century Pennsylvania. There are four main characters: the Bride, the Husbandman, the Pioneer Woman, and the Revivalist; the last is accompanied by four Followers.

Appalachian Spring follows the Bride and the Husbandman as they get married and celebrate with the community. Themes of war are present throughout the story; it is suggested that the Husbandman leaves for war, causing worry and anxiety among the community. Shaker themes also influenced the ballet, notably in the music, where Copland incorporated a theme and variations on the common Shaker tune "Simple Gifts".

What to Listen For

The suite consists of eight continuous sections. The movements below are titled by their *tempo* markings, the characters' actions, or the corresponding scene action.

Characters

- The Bride
- The Husbandman
- The Pioneer Woman
- The Revivalist

- I. Very slowly – An introduction of the characters in the quiet, newly built farmhouse.
- II. Allegro – A fast, animated dance of anticipation and a declaration of the bride and groom's feelings.
- III. Moderato – A scene depicting the daily life and emotions of the pioneers.
- IV. Fast – The lively entrance of the revivalist preacher and his flock.
- V. Subito Allegro - Presto – The bride's solitary dance, expressing her feelings of both joy and fear.
- VI. Meno mosso – A reprise of the opening material reflecting the tender moments between the newlyweds.
- VII. Doppio movimento – A set of variations on the "Shaker melody".
- VIII. Coda: As at first / Broadly – A tender, quiet conclusion bookending the suite, leaving the couple looking out into the future.

About Copland, Graham, and *Appalachian Spring*

Howard Pollack continues in his book, *Aaron Copland: The Life and Work of an Uncommon Man*, “Years before *Appalachian Spring*, the careers of Graham and Copland became entwined. Graham boosted Copland’s reputation among New York’s artistic elite, while Copland provided the music for the dance – ‘the ancestor of so many of Miss Graham’s later dance compositions.’”

Copland himself stated, “When I wrote *Appalachian Spring*, I was thinking primarily about Martha and her unique choreographic style, which I knew well. Nobody else seems quite like Martha. She’s so proud, so very much herself. And she’s unquestionably very American. There’s something prim and restrained, simple yet strong, about her which one tends to think of as American.”

“Since its premiere, *Appalachian Spring* has been more closely associated with Copland’s name than any of his other works,” writes Pollack. “*Appalachian Spring* is a work admired by critics as well as by the average listener. The music is endlessly performed, arranged, and imitated.”

Pollack continues, “Copland’s exact contemporary George Antheil – an avant-garde composer, pianist, author, and inventor – wrote to Copland ‘*The Appalachian Spring* is a fine piece, and I approve deeply of your present direction.’”