



# JENNIFER KOH

VIOLIN

Photo: Fran Kaufman

## BACH AND BEYOND

"Having grown up in a time when people were declaring classical music to be a dead art form, I have felt it necessary to understand why I am committed to this art form and why I believe classical music is a relevant and meaningful to the present society that I live in. I have always believed that music is a direct conversation and reflection of the world that we live in.

Through my own experience as a performer, I have witnessed music reaching others regardless of race, religion or language. Human beings can connect to music written in the past because there is a common thread that connects us to that very human work of art. However, the historical context of the work can create a barrier to connecting to the music of a past time. With each day that passes, we move further away from the time and history of a composer like Bach. I believe that contemporary music re-creates the thread to which we can connect back to past works of art. Contemporary music makes music from all time periods more transparent to the listener and also to the performer.

The Six Sonatas and Partitas of Bach have long been considered the definitive works written for solo violin. When exploring solo violin works written in the Classical, Romantic, and present day, I have found the compositions to be especially directly connected to Bach's Sonatas and Partitas. Whether Ysaye quotes directly from Bach's E Major Partita; or Bartok quotes directly from Bach's compositional structures in his solo violin sonata (Chaconne-Fugue-Adagio-Presto); or Salonen writes his solo violin work, "Iachen verlernt" in the form of a chaconne, Bach's solo sonatas and partitas are felt clearly throughout history in all of these works. Bach's Six Sonatas for solo violin, although written nearly 300 years ago has proven to be a summit for composers and violinists.

I wanted to create a program that truly connected my beliefs not only in the relevance of classical music as a whole, but in the process of how I live and work as a musician. I wanted to present the works of Bach which I have a long loved, in communion with the contemporary music of composers that I am dedicated to. I am launching the Bach and Beyond project in order to strengthen the connection with the Six Sonatas and Partitas by Bach to our present world through a historical journey of solo violin works to the very newest connections through the commissioning of new works by contemporary composers. The Bach and Beyond project consists of 3 programs with one Sonata and Partita of Bach beginning and ending each program. The first program consists of works ranging from Bach, Ysaye, Salonen and Saariaho with a new video commission for the Salonen by Tal Rosner. The second program will feature one commissioned work for solo violin written by Phil Kline in addition to Bach and Bartok. The third program will consist of Bach, Berio, and a new work by John Harbison. All three composers have agreed to write these works." -JENNIFER KOH

# BACH AND BEYOND PROGRAMS

2009-10 | 2010-11

## BACH AND BEYOND PART 1

SALONEN LACHEN VERLERNT WITH VIDEO

BACH Partita No. 3 in E Major  
YSAYE Sonata No.2 in a minor, "OBSESSION"  
SAARIAHO Nocturne  
SALONEN "lachen verlernt"  
.....

BACH Partita No.2 in D minor

2011-12 | 2012-13

## BACH AND BEYOND PART 2

BACH Partita No. 1 in B minor  
KLINE Partita for Solo Violin  
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BACH Sonata No. 1 in G minor  
BARTOK Sonata for Solo Violin

2013-14 | 2014-15

## BACH AND BEYOND PART 3

JOHN HARBISON (NEW WORK) "IN HOMMAGE TO BACH"  
A musical palindrome based on the letters "Jennifer Koh"

BACH Sonata No.2 in A minor  
BERIO Sequenza VIII for solo violin  
.....

HARBISON New Work  
BACH Sonata No.3 in C Major

# JENNIFER KOH

[www.jenniferkoh.com](http://www.jenniferkoh.com)



"Ms. Koh made subtle but important distinctions between the sonatas — which are cast in the formal church style, and which she played as devoutly focused meditations, with rigorous fast movements interspersed — and the partitas, collections of dances, which are performed more spiritedly.

That said, she also accounted for the fact that those distinctions are not airtight. The Chaconne that closes the Partita No. 2, a variation set built on a dance pattern, is as sublime as any of the sonata movements, although the huge Fugue in the Sonata No. 3 is surely a formidable challenger.

Ms. Koh played both with the intensity they demand, in beautifully shaped, mesmerizing readings. At the other end of the sobriety spectrum, the incendiary Allegro assai that closes the Third Sonata has much in common with the Gigue that closes the Third Partita, and Ms. Koh made the link between them clear." THE NEW YORK TIMES, OCTOBER 27, 2011

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