

Gettysburg  
College

Sunderman Conservatory  
of Music

SENIOR RECITAL

ALEXIS T. GONZALES

*Double Bass*

*featuring*

DR. SCOTT CROWNE, *Piano*

HECTOR VASQUEZ, *Clarinet*



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2025 · 2:30PM  
PAUL RECITAL HALL  
SCHMUCKER MEMORIAL HALL

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We hope you return again and again to support Gettysburg College students,  
Conservatory faculty, and visiting professional artists.*

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## PROGRAM

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Cello Sonata No. 2 .....Benedetto Marcello  
(1686 – 1739)

Ed. Analee Bacon & Lucas Drew

- I. Adagio
- IV. Allegro Moderato
- II. Largo

Alexis Gonzales, *Double Bass*

Dr. Scott Crowne, *Piano*

Concerto for Double Bass in F Major .....Giuseppe Antonio Capuzzi  
(1753 – 1818)

Ed. Francis Baines

- I. Allegro Moderato

30 Etudes No. 17, Polacca.....Franz Simandl  
(1840 – 1912)

Musikalisches Blumengärtlein und Leyptziger Allerley.....Paul Hindemith  
(1895 – 1963)

I. ...

V. Broken Melody

VI. Marsch der Löwenreichswehr (Oberst W. gewidmet) /  
March of the Lions' Defence (dedicated to Major. W)

VII. Lied / Song

IX. Ein Tänzlien / Little Dance

Hector Vasquez, *Clarinet*

Alexis Gonzales, *Double Bass*

Chaconne.....Armand Russell  
(b. 1932)

Alexis Gonzales, *Double Bass*

Dr. Scott Crowne, *Piano*



*This is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelors of Music  
Education. Alexis is a student of Dr. Kris Monson.*

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## PROGRAM NOTES

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### *Cello Sonata No. 2*

Benedetto Marcello (1686 – 1739)

Born in Italy to a noble family, Marcello was surrounded by music and poetry from his early years. His first teacher was his father, Agostino Marcello, a Venetian senator and violinist. Like his father, Benedetto Marcello worked as a lawyer and in government positions for most of his life. As a musician, Marcello composed several hundred compositions, most of which were discovered well after his death. Of his compositions, Marcello's keyboard and cello sonatas were influential for future composers such as Pescetti and J.C. Bach, and are some of his most regularly performed works.

Today's performance is based on Analee Bacon and Lucas Drew's edition of Marcello's "Six Cello Sonatas", differing from Marcello's original composition in that the modern double bass replaces the cello as the soloist, and because the basso continuo part has been fully realized for keyboard accompaniment.

Typical of Baroque sonatas, Marcello's "Cello Sonata No.2" has four movements, and could be argued to be a "Sonata da chiesa" ("church sonata") because of its four movements that alternates between slow and fast movements. The slower movements, movements 1 and 3, are meant to resemble an aria, with the bass having a smooth and sustaining tone. The faster movements, movements 2 and 4, each have their own uniqueness; in the second movement, the bass melody is nearly in constant motion, and running eighth and sixteenth notes makes the movement feel more instrumental than vocal. The fourth movement, on the other hand, maintains the sense of a soloist's aria with slurs and long phrases that emphasize lyricism, but also highlights the technical virtuosity of the soloist with constant arpeggios and varied rhythmic figures.

### *Concerto for Double Bass in F Major*

Giuseppe Antonio Capuzzi (1753 – 1818)

Born in Breno, Italy, Giuseppe Antonio Capuzzi studied the violin and

composition during his school years. As a young man, he was the concertmaster of the Orchestra at Teatro di Samuele from 1780 to 1785, though his fame would come in London about a decade later with the production of the popular ballet, “La villageoise enlevée”. Eventually, Capuzzi returned to Italy, taking part in renowned orchestras, and teaching violin to conservatory students. Unfortunately, most of Capuzzi’s repertoire and biographical information has been lost to time. Today, he is most recognized for his “Concerto for the Double Bass”.

“Concerto for the Double Bass” was initially written in D Major, yet many bassists and editors have published alternate editions and transpositions. Given Capuzzi’s limited experience with the Double Bass compared to the other string instrument, Capuzzi is believed to have relied on a friend for guidance and inspiration: Domenico Dragonetti, the famous bass virtuoso and composer for the double bass. It was likely through this friendship that Capuzzi wrote his “Concerto for the Double Bass”. However, at the time, the four-string bass was tuned in A – D – F# – A, not the contemporary double bass tunings pitches, E – A – D – G. Throughout the years, many have debated Capuzzi’s compositional intent, particularly considering the technical developments of modern instruments and tuning. This performance is based on Francis Baines’ edition, accepted as a compelling interpretation of Capuzzi’s Concerto for the modern double bass.

In the concerto, each movement has its own distinct characteristics. “Allegro moderato” alternates its mood throughout the movement, ranging from a grand theater to a private ballroom, primarily established via the changing tone and dynamics of the bass. As the title suggests, “Andante cantabile” is exceptionally lyrical, melodic, and beautiful, particularly emphasized by the movement’s slower tempo. Despite its often shorter notes, the phrasing of the movement for the bass is nothing short of elegant, particularly for the double bass. “Rondo” is the only movement to have an ABACA structure, in addition of having a “Coda-like” ending. The A sections are brief, yet regal, while the B section uses scales, arpeggios, and quick phrases to create a playful, colorful tone. The C section changes keys and fabricates a theatrical, dance-like atmosphere, while the “coda” ends similarly to the B passage, using repetition, varied dynamics, and concludes with the regal, colorful tone that opened the movement.

*30 Etudes No. 17, Polacca*

Franz Simandl (1840 – 1912)

Born in Blatna, Bohemia, Simandl studied at the Prague Conservatory in his teens and was a pupil of Josef Hrabe, the conservatory's double bass professor. After graduating, Simandl first served in the military, and then became the principal bassist of the Vienna Court Orchestra and was eventually associated with the Vienna Philharmonic from 1869 until a few years before his death.

During his time with the Philharmonic and Court Orchestra, Simandl served as the Double Bass Professor at the Vienna Conservatory of Music. An exceptionally influential pedagogue, his teachings and technical approach to the instrument have been directly passed down from his own students to future generations of bassists, including Eduard Madensky (1877 – 1923), Orin O'Brien (b. 1935) and the Conservatory's new bass professor, Dr. Kris Monson (b. 1992). Many more bassists have also been impacted by Simandl's pedagogy because his teaching methods for double bass were summarized into method books that have been in high regards worldwide. However, there are some technical methodologies that have broken away from Simandl's methods, if not subtly. Stuart Sankey for example, proposed that Simandl's iconic positions for shifting ( $1/2$ , 1<sup>st</sup>,  $1\ 1/2$ , 2<sup>nd</sup>,  $2\ 1/2$  position, etc.) be integrated with a higher finger position ( $1/2$ , 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> position, etc.). However, Sankey and other pedagogists, are not far from Simandl's teachings, and Simandl's pedagogy remains ever-present.

“Polacca”, or polonaise, is a Polish dance that is traditionally performed in triple meter at a moderate tempo for couples in a dance hall. Simandl wrote the etude in this manner, in a AABA form, and in e minor. The A section moves rapidly due to the bass primarily performing 16<sup>th</sup> notes, with some longer note values in between to add more color and texture. The A' section differs from A, with a modulation to G major for the whole section before slowing down for a brief pause. The B section distinguishes itself by having a “cantabile” tone, a slower tempo, longer note values than in the A sections, and dramatic change in dynamics. The piece ends with the A section in e minor, with a ritardando in the final measures and added articulations to emphasize the ending of the etude.

*Musikalisches Blumengärtlein und Leyptziger Allerley*

Paul Hindemith (1895 – 1963)

Born in Hanau, Germany, Hindemith had challenges with his home country. He studied the violin and composition at the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt, becoming a concertmaster with the Frankfurt Opera Orchestra in the 1910s. In 1917, he was enlisted in the German Army, serving as a musician-soldier in WWI. The war profoundly impacted Hindemith; it was during his enlistment that Hindemith realized that music transcended notes, nationality, and war. As a result, after his enlistment, Hindemith would go on to expand his horizons in music, learning other instruments, music from other composers, and change his previous position with the Frankfurt Opera Orchestra for a viola seating.

His relation with his homeland severely declined as the Nazi Party rose to power in 1933. Hindemith attempted to have a good relationship with the regime, arranging concerts for the Third Reich and assisting with the Reich Chamber of Music. Unfortunately, with an untimely, global campaign of his opera, “Mathis der Maler”, the relationship deteriorated. In 1937, Hindemith decided to leave Germany for good, as his music was banned in by the regime, and his wife was targeted by the Nazis for her Jewish ancestry. Hindemith went on to live in the U.S., taking several opportunities to compose new repertoire and teach, before eventually returning to Europe to teach. Hindemith died in his homeland.

Hindemith believed that repetitions in music caused authentic feelings to be lost, and it showed in many of his pieces. Much of his repertoire were written for the “Robber’s Orchestra”, an ensemble formed with close friends using secondary instruments, that Hindemith hoped would not only be refreshing for all, but also sharpen their sense of making music. This duet, however, was not for the Robber’s Orchestra, but for Hindemith to perform in private with his wife, Gertrud, a bassist. Each of the nine movements have distinct identities, styles, tempos, and textures. Furthermore, the suite has an overarching, light-hearted humor, perhaps due to its unusual pairing of the clarinet and double bass!

## *Chaconne*

Armand Russell (b. 1932)

Born in Seattle, Washington, Armand Russell is a living American composer. Russell earned his doctorate from the Eastman School of Music and taught at the University of Hawaii from 1961 until his retirement in 1994. Most notably, Russell is also a double bassist, having performed with the Boston Pops Tour Orchestra, Seattle Symphony Orchestra, and the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra. A prolific composer, Russell has composed orchestral works, chamber works, concertos, and repertoire for double bass. His “Chaconne” for double bass and piano is one of his most frequently performed pieces.

Historically, the Chaconne was a Spanish dance, often in  $\frac{3}{4}$  time, and traditionally built on a repeated, ground bass. However, in composing “Chaconne”, Russell gives the repeating, ground bass role to the piano, and the melodic role to the bass. Variation technique is particularly important for the piano part, as the pianist’s ground bass foundation is consistently developed within an eight-measure phrase and a quasi-regular rhythmic and harmonic texture.

The piece opens its brief exposition with the bass taking the melodic role while the piano both establishes its “ground bass” framework and begins its variations. Both parts switch meters from  $\frac{3}{4}$  to  $\frac{2}{4}$  in some moments, while the dynamics grow and fall. In the first half of the development, the double bass and piano alternate between the harmonic and melodic role frequently. In the second half of the development, the melody is played by the bass once more, and progresses towards the climax with constant rise and fall in both register and dynamics. After the gradual build to the climax, the climactic energy of the development quickly simmers, preparing for a gentle and subtle recapitulation. The recapitulation shortens the exposition theme and repeats it twice, the second time at an extremely low dynamic level. The piece ends with quiet harmonics on the double bass, creating a sense of both familiarity and unsettledness, and blurring the lines between a Baroque dance and twentieth-century chamber music.

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## UPCOMING SUNDERMAN CONSERVATORY EVENTS

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December 1 • 7:00pm *Clarinets and Cocoa* CUB Junction

December 4 • 5:00pm *Haulin' Brass Holiday Concert* CUB Junction

December 4 • 6:30pm *Piano Citizens Recital* Paul Recital Hall

December 5 • 8:00pm *Choir Concert* Christ Chapel



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