



# Dialoghi

 YARLUNG RECORDS  
BOB ATTIYEH, PRODUCER

1	DE FALLA	<i>Asturiana</i>	02:12
2	MAYUZUMI	<i>Bunraku</i>	08:54
3-8	J. S. BACH	Suite No. 1 for solo 'cello BWV 1007	17:50
		Prelude	02:22
		Allemande	04:41
		Courante	02:49
		Sarabande	02:44
		Minuets	03:14
		Gigue	01:59
9	ROUSE	<i>Ricordanza*</i>	04:41
10	STUCKY	<i>Dialoghi—studi su un nome*</i>	06:59
11	BRITTEN	<i>Tema "Sacher"</i>	01:08
12	LUTOSLAWSKI	<i>Sacher Variation</i>	03:43
13	LUTOSLAWSKI	<i>Grave, metamorphoses for 'cello and piano</i>	05:41
14-16	MACHAUT, LEONIN, LEFKOWITZ	<i>Amour et Biauté Parfaite*</i>	09:00
		<i>Simple</i>	02:29
		<i>Alleluya</i>	03:36
		<i>Double</i>	02:55
17-23	SAARIAHO	<i>Sept Papillons</i>	10:14
24	DE FALLA	<i>Nana</i>	02:43

\* World Premiere Recording



## *Dialoghi*

NOTES BY MARTIN PERLICH

One can view the universe as a dialogue between emptiness and form: energy rises endlessly, finds momentary form, then dissolves once again into emptiness. One can understand emptiness, not as the void, but as the womb of all phenomena, in which, moment by moment, a new structure appears and then, *mutatis mutandis*, fades, only to be replaced by the next and the next, moment after moment after moment.

Closer to “everyday life,” dialogue creates the fabric of our interpersonal relationships, our relationships with our communities, and our relationships with our selves.

Music too is a dialogue: between musicians, between musical instruments, between composers and performers, between musicians and audiences, and especially in an album like *Dialoghi*, between composers across Europe, America and Asia, and across nine centuries of history. Music dialogues with us as it rises and falls moving through time, and sweeps us—if we allow—along in its stream of endless change. And as dialogue at all these levels, music mirrors life itself.

The music on this album reveals dialogues in many forms, often dialogues within dialogues. We hear these conversations between ‘cello and piano, old and new (Bach and Saariaho for example), between original and newly created (Machaut and Lefkowitz, for example), between Folk Music and “High Art” (de Falla and Bach, for example), between Nature and Art (Saariaho, for example), and in every piece between musician and audience and between composer and musician. In discussing the music which forms the centerpiece of this program, *Dialoghi—studi su un nome (Dialogues—Studies on a Name)*, composer Steven Stucky explains his title: “Why ‘dialogues’? Partly because the theme notes and the non-theme notes so often interact in “conversation” throughout, but more importantly because the friendship recognized in this rests not only on my musical collaborations with Elinor Frey but also on our conversations about books, music, paintings, films, psychology, religion, food, and all things Italian (hence the title).”

Elinor Frey and David Fung share an intimate dialogue with us in this album. This is Elinor’s debut album, but David we know from his prior recordings with ABC in Australia, and Yarlung Records in the United States. Indeed I play David’s solo piano recordings on my radio broadcasts. But the quality of musical collaboration on this disc reveals a sincere friendship that arose as a result of their rehearsals and performances together. Elinor and David remind me of a famous comment about Oscar Peterson and Billie Holiday performing together, that his special ability with music spread flower petals at her feet, upon which she then danced. David and Elinor communicate with sincerity and sympathetic sensitivity. Great concert pianists, primarily

famous as soloists or for their concerto repertoire, sometimes also reach heights of musical collaboration. Emanuel Ax, Alfred Brendel, Jeffrey Kahane and András Schiff come to mind, especially in concert performances. Thank you Elinor and David for giving us musical dialogue of this caliber.

The music on this disc—with its many splendors—acquaints us with multiple forms of dialogue. Successful dialogues (each element acting upon the other) produce change and evolution. Dialogue is quintessentially creative. Human genes “dialogue” when our species creates new life, and audience and musician can remain changed forever after a great concert.

Evolution itself is an endless dialogue between beings and their environments. Dialogue, therefore, is always about Love in the largest sense, about creation, accommodation, adaptation and survival. I hope the many levels of dialogue on this album will give you years of pleasure and (who knows?) maybe even encourage evolutionary growth.

## *The Music*

### **MANUEL DE FALLA • *Asturiana* from *Siete Canciones Populares Españolas* (1914)**

This song reveals a dialogue between the original folk text and de Falla’s re-creation, with its melody and melancholy reflecting the rugged Asturian coastal cliffs and mountains of northern Spain. And de Falla’s setting of the poem for mezzo soprano also reveals a conversation between poet and Nature. Two of these songs, the first and last tracks on our recording, retain special meaning and memories for Elinor. She performed her transcription of these songs first in concert at Juilliard, and for Elinor they blossom with feelings of love, bittersweet and profound. These gentle gems hold this album in their embrace.

### **TOSHIO MAYUZUMI • *Bunraku* (1960)**

Bunraku, founded in Osaka in 1684, became the generic name for traditional Japanese puppet theater. Bunraku involves three types of performers: puppeteers, chanters and shamisen players. The shamisen (literally “three taste strings”), is a fretless guitar-sized three-stringed instrument played with a plectrum called a *bachior*. In *Bunraku*, Mayuzumi translates the sounds and gestures, drones and pizzicatos of the shamisen (and other traditional Japanese instruments) to the ‘cello.

Kabuki may be theater that features the performer, but Bunraku is theater that honors the writer above others. At the opening of a Bunraku performance, the main chanter holds up the author’s text and respectfully bows before it, symbolically pledging the performers’ fealty.

**J. S. BACH • Suite No. 1 for solo 'cello in G Major BWV 1007 (ca. 1720)**

Bach's six 'cello suites—like his other secular works composed at Köthen between 1717 and 1723 (the *Brandenburg Concertos* and Book One of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*) became defining examples of their form, the *loci classici* of instrumental composition. These suites explore an enormous range of technical maneuvers, broad emotionality and some of Bach's most inventive contrapuntal intra-instrument dialogue. But it is their lightness, their grace, and above all their extraordinary invocation of intimacy which finally defines these 'cello suites. This intimacy may originate in their historical roots as dances in the French court. Today, almost 300 years after their composition, dispute continues between those who contend that these are not dances and people who acknowledge that they are. Acclaimed 'cellist Nathaniel Rosen writes "People often talk about the notion that these pieces are dance movements. They're not dance movements! They are works for unaccompanied 'cello which have, with the exception of the Preludes, titles of dance movements." And then one hears performances of these suites by artists as dissimilar as Janos Starker and Pieter Wispelway (Wispelway refers to them directly as dances), and one can simply not sit still while listening. Of course both views are correct. We must acknowledge the suites' roots in actual 17<sup>th</sup> century dances. But Bach, in his genius, transformed them—conducting a dialogue with the originals, if you will. Bach reveals a dialogue between dance (with its steady pulse) and solo instrumental performance which gave us these stylized and far more expressive works of lasting depth, balance and weight. Elinor's interpretation of this first suite, which she plays with an agile Baroque bow, makes us eager for her performances of the next five suites.

**CHRISTOPHER ROUSE • Ricordanza (1995)**

A contemplative, elegiac work, commissioned in memory of Robert P. Goldberg, by his wife. Robert Goldberg particularly loved Bach's Goldberg Variations, and Rouse uses Bach's Variation number twenty-five as his starting point. Yo-Yo Ma premiered the work, and Elinor's Yarlung Records recording is the world premiere recording of this piece.

*Ricordanza* offers us dialogue with The Master, Bach himself, but also between a mourning widow and her much-loved husband. Elinor maintains a close friendship with Christopher Rouse, whom she met originally at the Aspen Festival and with whom she later kept in touch at Juilliard. One can sense their ongoing conversation in Elinor's loving presentation of this work.

**STEVEN STUCKY • Dialoghi—studi su un nome (2006)**

This album includes the world premiere recording of Stucky's new work *Dialoghi*, written for Elinor. Stucky returns to a compositional technique originating in the Renaissance called *soggetto cavato*, or "carved subject." This technique is known to contemporary audiences

in Robert Schumann's piano compositions, including the *Abegg Variations*, for example, or Donatoni's *ESA (In cauda v)*, which Esa-Pekka Salonen introduced at the Los Angeles Philharmonic in February 2001. About this technique Stucky writes: "Among composers there is an old tradition of honoring patrons or friends by incorporating their names into the fabric of the music." He wrote *Dialoghi* "as a gift to my new-music colleague and friend, the American cellist Elinor Frey. Its theme is the six letters of her first name, translated into notes. The letter E is simply the note E, while L can be rendered as *la*, or A, and I as *mi*, or E. According to one system sometimes used (for example, in Ravel's *Minuet on the Name of Haydn*), N = G. The letter O = *do*, or C; the letter R = *re*, or D—hence the notes of the opening theme, E A E G C D, and hence the Italian subtitle in the original manuscript, *Studi su un nome (Studies on a Name)*....The music unfolds in seven short, vividly contrasting variations. Since the name-theme contains only five different pitches, namely the pentatonic grouping C, D, E (twice), G, and A, many of the ensuing variations juxtapose these five "white" notes with other, contrasting combinations drawn from the remaining seven "black" notes of the chromatic scale. The last variation leads to a grand restatement of the theme but then subsides into a serene coda."

#### **BENJAMIN BRITTEN • Tema "Sacher" (1975)**

For a 70<sup>th</sup> birthday tribute to the distinguished Swiss conductor and generous patron Paul Sacher, Mstislav Rostropovich invited twelve of Sacher's composer friends (including Berio, Dutilleux, Ginastera and Lutoslawski) to collaborate in writing a set of variations based on his name (SACHER making E-flat, A, C, B, E, and D). This piece, *soggetto cavato* like Stucky's *Dialoghi*, is Benjamin Britten's contribution to the work.

#### **WITOLD LUTOSLAWSKI • Sacher Variation (1975)**

Like Britten's *Tema "Sacher"* above, Lutoslawski wrote *Sacher Variation* in 1975 at the request of Mstislav Rostropovich to honor Paul Sacher's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. Rostropovich gave the first performance in May 1976.

Lutoslawski juxtaposes the theme, in fortissimo declarations of a repetitive rhythm, growing longer and higher in register, with creative treatment of non-theme notes in an intriguing variety of quarter-tone, flautando, glissando, and spiccato passages. The last statement of the theme is no longer fortissimo and carries a charming, almost tossed-off feel, using two light pizzicatos to end this magnificent work. What a delight to eavesdrop on the dialogue here presented among Sacher, Rostropovich and Lutoslawski, and to experience this communication between Elinor and us, her audience.

### **LUTOSLAWSKI • *Grave: Metamorphoses for 'Cello and Piano (1981)***

Roman Jablonski and Krystyna Brucinska first performed this duo for 'cello and piano in Warsaw, in 1981. Lutoslawski wrote *Grave* in memory of his friend Stefan Jarocinski, a critic and musicologist expert on both Debussy and Lutoslawski. Lutoslawski reflects this connection in his four opening notes for solo 'cello, which he borrows from the opening of Debussy's *Péleas and Melisande*. Lutoslawski constructs the 12-tone row upon which he bases subsequent variations (metamorphoses) in two halves, the first six (diatonic) notes refer to *Péleas*, the second six (chromatic) ones refer to Lutoslawski's own *Music of Mourning* in memory of Bartók. Through these motifs, Lutoslawski slowly weaves 'cello and piano into a gradual composed accelerando, a classic example of Lutoslawski's chain form. This dialogue rises and falls in energy and dynamics as it develops into a frenetic and anxious climax which then quietly subsides.

### **MACHAUT, LEONIN, LEFKOWITZ • *Amour et Biauté Parfaite (2007)***

*Amour et Biauté Parfaite* (Love and Perfect Beauty) incorporates two Medieval works: *Quant en Moy* by Guillaume de Machaut (ca.1300-1377), and *Alleluya Pascha Nostrum* attributed to Leonin (ca.1150-1201). Twelfth century Leonin is one of the earliest composers known by name in the western world. The title of the work, *Amour et Biauté Parfaite*, comes from the first words in the triplum (in this case, the middle voice) of *Quant en Moy*, and refers both to the subject of Machaut's lyrics and to the overabundance of threes. As in much medieval music and thought, the number "3" expresses the perfection of the Trinity. Threes reveal themselves in the 9/8 meter (three groups of threes), in the triplet divisions found throughout the music, and in the form of the work. One can divide each of the three movements into two halves, each of which divide further into three subsections.

*Amour et Biauté Parfaite* begins with Machaut for the first movement, moves to Leonin for the second, and returns to Machaut for the third movement. The first movement transcribes Machaut's work with few alterations; since it is unadorned, it is termed a "simple." Leonin's *Alleluya* forms the second movement. Lefkowitz presents Leonin's original music verbatim in *Amour et Biauté Parfaite*, but adds a series of accelerating canons, resulting in blindingly fast notes expressing ecstatic praise of God—that is, "Alleluya." The Machaut returns in the third movement significantly altered and includes both ornamentation and Lefkowitz' reinvention of the material. This is termed a "double" (the terms "simple" and "double" come from late Renaissance/early French Baroque composition, in which the double is a heavily ornamented variation of the simple).

Yarlung Artists commissioned *Amour et Biauté Parfaite* for Elinor Frey and David Fung with support from Alice and Joe Coulombe. *Amour et Biauté Parfaite* honors Elinor's late aunt Barbara Thornton, a famed singer of medieval music and co-founder of *Sequentia*.

**KAIJA SAARIAHO • *Sept Papillons* (2000)**

The Rudolf Steiner Foundation commissioned *Sept Papillons* for Finnish 'cellist Anssi Karttunen. Karttunen gave the first performance in Helsinki on September 10, 2000. Saariaho wrote this work in Salzburg during rehearsals for her opera *L'Amour de loin*. It was the first piece she wrote after creating the opera. As a dialogue with nature it explores fleeting and transitory elements, symbolized by the butterfly. In seven short movements Saariaho asks us to wander with her through the butterfly's fragile existence, magnificently utilizing the 'cello's harmonics and the performer's glissandos, *sul ponticello*, finger percussion and other demanding extended techniques to evoke the cyclical and the ephemeral. Elinor describes falling in love with this work: "Steve [Stucky] sent me the music....I experienced an intense connection with the piece....I thought about it all the time and practiced it obsessively. It was a new world to me, so beautiful and yet so strange. So absolutely suited to the 'cello and yet beyond the normal scope of the instrument." One must see Elinor perform this piece live for its full effect. Attend one of her live concerts if you can.

**MANUEL DE FALLA • *Nana* from *Siete Canciones Populares Españolas* (1914)**

Our album, this chapter in our dialogue, ends with a lullaby sung by a mother to her soon to be blissfully resting child. After the turbulence and excitement of the various musical exchanges on this recording, Elinor and David end peacefully. They leave us with fond memories of a musical conversation spanning almost a millennium, from many parts of the world. We look very much forward to their next dialogue, and their next conversation with us.

—Martin Perlich





## *Producer's Notes*

Australian pianist David Fung joins American 'cellist Elinor Frey in her debut recording featuring some of our favorite composers from Asia, America and Europe. Elinor plays a 1962 Mario Gadda Italian 'cello from Mantua. She uses a Baroque bow (made by Louis Bégin in Montreal) for Bach's 'cello suite and for *Amour et Biauté Parfaite*. Elinor commissioned her modern bow, which she uses for all other tracks on this album, from Charles Espey of Port Townsend Washington. David Fung plays New York Steinway Concert & Artists piano number 430, a hybrid of sorts. It was made in New York, and has that characteristic "New York" linearity of tone, control, and size. But it has the Hamburg Steinway lacquer finish, which may contribute to that extra sparkle in the tone, especially in the treble. Additionally, this piano has a lighter action than traditional New York Steinways, which makes it more like the German pianos. It was Colburn School's John Perry who persuaded friends at Steinway & Sons in New York to allow Colburn School to buy this particular instrument. Thank you Maestro Perry, and thank you Steinway!

There are no equalization adjustments on this album. We made all "EQ adjustments" with microphone placement at the start. It is always our goal to record this way: we succeeded similarly with David Fung's *Evening Conversations* released in 2006, and also with *Orion, Joanne Pearce Martin: Barefoot*, and *Ryan MacEvoy McCullough in Concert* among other albums to be released in 2008.

Thanks to our friend and supporter Jon Fisher, *Gearworks Pro Audio* gave us the use of an Austrian AKG C-24 stereo microphone, one of the few still using the original brass surround CK12 tube in excellent condition.

For this recording we used Yarlung-Records-designed interconnects with a flat silver ribbon suspended in air for the dielectric, customized vacuum tube preamplifiers, no mixer, and recorded directly to two tracks sampled at 176,400 samples per second at 24 bit depth. Engineers Steve Hoffman, Kevin Gray and I worked at AcousTech Mastering at RTI in Camarillo to convert these high resolution tracks to CD Audio.

Yarlung Artists raises money to support debut recordings for select concert musicians as they begin their international concert careers. Generous support from individual donors, corporations, foundations and our board of directors made this album possible, including The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, the Attiyeh Fund for New Music, Colburn School, Gearworks Pro Audio and AcousTech Mastering. Yarlung Artists wishes also to thank Lennie & Bernie

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—Bob Attiyeh, producer

TO LEARN MORE *about Yarlung Artists and to support future such recordings, please visit our website at [www.yarlungartists.org](http://www.yarlungartists.org). We are a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) public charity, and we welcome your help and appreciate your interest. Thank you!*

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# Dialoghi

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