

The EWU Department of Music presents

**Mikaela Elms**  
**Senior Cello Recital**

Assisted by Rebecca Hardy and Andres Jaramillo, piano

**Saturday, May 23rd, 2015**

**5:00 P.M.**

**Music Building Recital Hall**

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Bachelor in Music Performance, cello  
Studio of Dr. John Marshall

Suite for Solo Cello

- I. *Prelude-Prose*
- II. *Nocturne-Koan*
- III. *Scherzo-Expletive*
- IV. *Ballad-Mythos*

Haralabos [Harry] Stafylakis  
(b. 1982)

Le Grande Tango

Astor Piazzolla  
(1921-1992)

-Pause-

Sonata for Cello and Piano in A major (arr. from "Sonata for Violin and Piano")

*Allegro ben moderato*

*Allegro*

*Recitativo-Fantasia (Ben moderato-Molto lento)*

*Allegretto poco mosso*

César Franck  
(1822-1890)

## Program Notes

**Harry Stafylakis** is a Canadian-American composer based in New York City. His music is described as “dreamy yet rhythmic” (NY Times) and strives for dramatic emotional and intellectual expression, integrating idioms drawn from classical and popular styles. With an intimate background in progressive metal and traditional Greek music, Stafylakis has developed a unique conception of musical temporality and rhythm, infusing his compositions with a characteristic vitality and drive.

The *Suite for Solo Cello* was conceived when Toby Kuhn, a close friend and cellist of Stafylakis, challenged him to write a piece for solo cello. Up to the challenge, Stafylakis set about writing the piece while he was in Rome. The work is set in four movements, each representing both a musical and literary form in its stylistic treatment.

- I. *Prelude-Prose*: Ideas relate to each other in familiar syntax; narrative is formed.
- II. *Nocturne-Koan*: By moving constantly, one moves not at all. (A koan is a paradox statement that is meant to be meditated upon and used by Buddhist monks. Stafylakis represents this paradox metaphorically by keeping the cello in constant motion while creating an aura of stillness.)
- III. *Scherzo-Expletive*: Smile is a four-letter word.
- IV. *Ballad-Mythos*: As we remember what was, shall we weep or sing? (This is the most cinematic of all four movements and includes direct quotes from rock bands like Iron Maiden and Judas Priest.)

**Astor Piazzolla** (1921-1992) is known as the greatest master of Latin American Tango and is also remembered as a virtuoso bandoneon player (a square button accordion). He studied composition with Alberto Ginastera and later won a scholarship to study in Paris with Nadia Boulanger. Piazzolla gained international recognition in Paris through his music. When he moved back to Argentina, he was met with resistance from all the changes he had made to the traditional tango style.

*Le Grand Tango* was written in 1982 for the renown cellist Mstislav Rostropovich. After he had completed the piece he sent a signed copy of the score to the cellist. Rostropovich, who was unfamiliar with Piazzolla, placed the score in a drawer of his desk where it was left unappreciated for several years. Later the cellist finally showed interest the piece and flew down to Buenos Aires for a private coaching with the composer in 1990. Six years after that he recorded the work.

The piece is an example of Piazzolla's *tango nuevo* which brought tango to the concert halls. The work is written in the form of a single large movement but is divided into three broad sections within. The first section highlights strongly accented tango rhythms. The second section is marked “libero e cantabile” (“free and singing”) and contains extensive dialogue between the



cello and the piano. The final section is marked “giocoso” (“humorous”) and presents a mood of electric energy and even humour. The music charges forward to its conclusion.

**César Franck** was born on December 10, 1822 in Liège, Belgium. When he was young his father tried to exploit him as a child prodigy and he did manage to achieve something of a reputation. At the age of fifteen Cesar’s family moved to Paris and he was sent to the Paris Conservatoire. He was an excellent pianist with a promising beginning as a performer but because he did not possess the skills for promoting oneself he sank into obscurity. He discovered organ at the age of thirty and specialized in church work and improvisation. He was considered to be by far the greatest improviser of his time. He then went on to hold a position as organist at Ste. Clotilde, a position he held until his death. He also became professor of organ at the Paris Conservatoire in 1872 where he gained a dedicated group of pupils.

The *Sonata for Cello and Piano in A major* is Franck’s most famous work and appears on concert programs regularly. Written during the last part of his life, the piece was originally written for violin and piano and was dedicated to violinist Eugène Ysaÿe. Franck had given the masterpiece to him as a wedding present. Ysaÿe quickly rehearsed the piece with Marie-Léontine Bordes-Pène the day of the wedding and performed it for the wedding guests. Ysaÿe favored the sonata so highly that he kept the sonata in his repertoire for the next 40 years of his life. His championing of the sonata greatly contributed to the public recognition of Franck as a major composer. After hearing the work at a premier in Paris, the renowned cellist Jules Delsart was so enthusiastic about the piece that he promptly asked the composer for permission to arrange the violin part for cello which Franck approved of.

The work is cyclic in nature with all the movements featuring common thematic material. In this technique, the themes reappear in subsequent movements often transformed. There are four movements that alternate between slow-fast-slow-fast. The first movement features a gentle and sweet rocking theme. The second movement is virtuosic, turbulent and passionate. It is sometimes considered the real opening of the sonata with the first movement being an extended prologue. The third movement is improvisatory in nature with a loose structure. The final movement is structured in a rondo-like manner and features an canon which appears four times with a development section in between the third and fourth sections. The melody of this movement is simple, majestic and joyous. The sonata concludes with energetic elegance.