At the center of this program is one of the six multi-movement works for solo violin composed by **JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH** (1685-1750) between about 1715 and 1720. Bach wasn’t first composer to write significant pieces for unaccompanied violin, but his three sonatas and three partitas (suites of movements based mostly on dance genres) are the acknowledged pinnacle of the genre. The six-movement **Partita No 3 in E, BWV**, begins with the famous Preludio, Bach at his most brilliant. He liked this movement well enough to reuse it in a few later works, including the wonderful organ concertos found in the cantatas nos. 29, *Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir*, and 120a, *Herr Gott, Beherrscher aller Dinge*. The second-movement Loure (AABB) is a French dance also known as a “slow gigue,” in this case written in 6/4 time. Bach rarely uses this dance, this being the only instance among the violin partitas. The four-beat Gavotte heavily emphasizes each beat of the measure and has a rustic feel. “Rondeau” means the first phrase returns as a refrain. The first of the two three-beat minuets is the more outgoing, but the sonority of the second is interesting in its use of a drone-like held B in its first two measures, evoking a hurdy-gurdy. The Bourée is an energetic four-beat dance making use of repeating phrases. The finale (AABB) is a quick three-beat Gigue with running sixteenth-notes.

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