

# POPE-POURRI

## A Stroll Through the Architecture of John Russell Pope (1872-1937) for Violoncello and Piano

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### Program Note

The inspiration for *Pope-pourri* comes from the architectural masterpieces of John Russell Pope (1874-1937). The pieces are neither depictions of the architecture nor musical equivalents of these buildings, but rather free form inventions and fantasias on the buildings and their functions. The formal structures of the movements refer to the formal symmetry of the buildings, but the lyricism of the music recalls the graceful lines and sometimes elaborate decor of these noble structures. Since four of the movements are dance forms, another, *Promenade*, a way of walking, and the last, *Ballad*, a form of song, each movement invites the listener to enter the buildings, either physically, emotionally or aesthetically.

*March and Barcarole* is a three-part stroll through the BMA's galleries stopping at several artworks. *Ballad*, in the form of an American folk song, depicts the National Archives as a singer. She sings of the Bill of Rights and reminds us all of the responsibilities we hold for the care of each other and the protection of our freedoms against the hubris of overweening authority. *Promenade* is a stroll through one of the great art collections of the world, not stopping at any particular work of art, but reveling in the totality and comprehensiveness of the collection. *Tarantella*, perhaps the most programmatic and virtuosic of the movements, depicts the hustle and bustle of crowds racing to catch trains, busses and cabs when Union Station in Richmond was still a functioning railroad hub. *Siciliana* is a slow processional over a repeating chromatically descending ground bass and alludes to the ceremonial grandeur of the Washington D.C. Masonic Temple. Lastly, the *Gigue* reflects both the brilliance and depth of intellect of Thomas Jefferson (himself a world class architect) and to the many dazzling vistas of the Jefferson Memorial from Washington highways and walkways.

*Pope-pourri* is dedicated to Kim Cook and Elizabeth Sawyer Parisot.