

Grace Park: She's All Music

Grace Park is a dynamic violinist, dedicated chamber musician, and passionate pedagogue. Her diverse career has carried her from the world's foremost concert halls to universities around the country as a soloist, collaborator, coach, and educator.

Grace is making her CMSCVA debut on April 21. So we asked her some questions we are posing to some of our 2017-18 performers.



CMSCVA. *Can you name the first piece of music or performance that inspired you to become a musician?*

GP. When I was 9, I played my first concerto with orchestra- Mozart Concerto No. 3 in G major. I remember working on it the days leading up to the performance with my teacher, and she sat me down to talk about the piece- a concept with foreign to me. To realize that music can have a real effect on us outside of practicing and playing it the “right way”. On the car ride back home from this lesson, I recall thinking how I love Mozart. A thought that came to me rather easily, not much thought went into it honestly. I just knew I liked it, and that was that. The next day, I had another lesson and expressed this to my teacher. After I stated it out loud, a light bulb moment happened. I loved Mozart. I loved the concerto. I loved playing. I loved violin. That feeling has grown ever since to this day.

CMSCVA. *What's the most striking thing an audience member has ever said to you after a performance you played?*

GP. "You're all music."

CMSCVA. *What are you listening to these days?*

GP. [Johannes Brahms'] "Vier ernste Gesänge" opus 121 III. *O Tod, wie bitter bist du.*

CMSCVA. *What is the most memorable chamber music experience you've ever had, and why?*

GP. Playing the first Mozart viola quintet with Maria Lambros. Maria is someone I've always loved and looked up to, but playing the slow movement of this work with her made me realize how a true vulnerability can change how one expresses themselves through their instruments. She was able to let go of everything that I always seem to worry about (technique, bow arm, the right vibrato, etc). She let the emotional effect lead all of that in the moment, from the first rehearsal to the last performance. Working with her made me appreciate the act of performing in a different and vital way.

CMSCVA. *What can you do as a performer to truly reach an audience member through performance? Or what do you think a listener should take away from a performance?*

GP. To be vulnerable and open, both as a performer and listener. Try to keep judgment at the door.

CMSCVA. *What is the role of a "classical" musician today, and how do you think it's changed?*

GP. Keeping tradition while integrating and acknowledging present time. I don't think one can exist without the other, so we shouldn't try to measure the importance of one or the other. The role of classical music has changed in obvious ways. It's rarely or ever going to make the front page of the New York Times or ever be the topic of conversation the way that Trump or Russia does now, but I think the emotional effect of classical music is more powerful than ever. Building a career doesn't always coincide with the amount of work you put in the practice room. Recognizing what else it means to live as a musician isn't taught, but learned as we go.

So, I'm learning!

