International concert artist Nariaki Sugiura has performed solo recitals and concerto engagements in the U.S., Europe, South America, and Asia at some of the most prestigious concert halls including Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Symphony Hall at Shenzhen Concert Hall (China), Ferenc Liszt Music Academy Recital Hall (Hungary), Daejeon Arts and Cultural Center Hall (South Korea), Manoel Theater (Malta), Kioi Hall (Japan), and Museo de Arte (Puerto Rico). He has appeared as soloist with the Greater Grand Forks Symphony Orchestra, Bismarck-Mandan Symphony Orchestra, Peking University Affiliated High School Concert band, UND Chamber Orchestra, and many others. His arrangements for chamber ensembles and piano ensembles have been frequently performed, and he has also conducted his large ensemble arrangements.

A devoted teacher as well as performer, Dr. Sugiura has become one of the leading piano pedagogues of his generation. He has given piano master classes at numerous institutions such as Civico Institutio Musicale “V. Baravalle” (Italy), Leo Weiner Music Academy (Hungary), Shenyang Conservatory of Music (China), National Kaohsiung Normal University (Taiwan), Ewha Womens University and Sunhwa Arts High School (South Korea), Universitas Pelita Harapan (Indonesia), St. Paul’s College (Hong Kong), and many other music institutions around the world. Previously, he has taught at DePauw University, Indiana University, and Lamont Summer Pre-College Music Academy in Denver, and Guangdon University of Foreign Study in China. While he was at Indiana University, he worked for a legendary cellist/pedagogue Janos Starker.

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Program

Six Romances, Op. 4 (arranged by S. Barbu)  
"Oh Stay, My Love, Forsake Me Not!"
"Morning"
"In the Silence of the Secret Night"
"Sing not, O Lovely One"
"Oh Thou, My Field"
"It Was Not Long Ago, My Friend"

S. Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

Suite for Cello and Piano (2021)  
I. Prelude  
II. Allegro Pizzicato  
III. Serenade  
IV. Groove  

~~~ Intermission ~~~

Sonata in D Minor for Cello and Piano  
I. Prologue: Lent, sostenuto e molto risoluto  
II. Sérénade: Modérément animé  
III. Final: Animé, léger et nerveux  

C. Debussy (1862-1917)

Nocturne for the Left Hand (2021)  

B. Stark (b. 1956)

Wedding Song, Op. 65-3 for the Left Hand  

S. Bortkiewicz (1877-1952)

Requiebros for Cello and Piano  

G. Cassadó (1887-1966)

Oblivion (arranged by Duo Cantabile)  

A. Piazzolla (1921-1992)

Libertango (arranged by Duo Cantabile)

Duo Cantabile Biography

Duo Cantabile was formed in 2012 by cellist Simona Barbu and pianist Nariaki Sugiura, two musicians and university professors residing in Grand Forks, North Dakota. As a duo, the two artists traveled extensively and gave performances, clinics, lectures and master classes at many prestigious music institutions in the world, including Gheorghe Dima Music Academy in Cluj (Romania), Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Mannheim (Germany), Zoltan Kodaly EZI Kecskemet (Hungary), Xinghai Conservatory of Music (China) and the University of Minnesota Twin Cities.

The duo has also participated in the performance series North Dakota Museum of Arts Concert Series, Greencastle Summer Music Festival in Indiana, and Masterworks Music Festival in Ohio. The Duo’s teaching and performing activities resulted in receiving visiting professorships from East China Normal University, honorable awards given to artists who have made significant contributions to their institution. Duo’s concert programs often include unique cello-piano transcriptions of music by Rachmaninoff, Piazzolla, Chopin, Brahms and many others.

An astounding international cellist, Simona Barbu began her musical studies at age seven and gained public attention as a member of the leading string quartet of the Conservatory of Timisoara in her native Romania, where she made her solo debut in Tchaikovsky’s Variations on a Rococo Theme with the conservatory’s symphonic orchestra. Ever since, she has traveled the world as a soloist, chamber musician, clinician, and orchestra musician.

A dedicated teacher, Dr. Barbu has served as the string faculty at Mississippi State University for four years, where she taught strings and conducted the symphonic orchestra. In 2011, Dr. Barbu was appointed Professor of Cello and Burgum Endowed Chair at the University of North Dakota, where she currently teaches cello, string bass and chamber music. During summers, she is a cello faculty at MasterWorks Festival.