

## **Kim Kashkashian: J.S. Bach: Six Suites for Viola Solo**

20 October 2018 | Pitch Fork | Jayson Greene

[https://pitchfork.com/reviews/albums/kim-kashkashian-js-bach-six-suites-for-viol-a-solo/?fbclid=IwAR0e7F-5\\_0IzFvYNNRObhn9vdL-CtB3WGPzidvDhoJ3-LIPyD1JPRoNocWw](https://pitchfork.com/reviews/albums/kim-kashkashian-js-bach-six-suites-for-viol-a-solo/?fbclid=IwAR0e7F-5_0IzFvYNNRObhn9vdL-CtB3WGPzidvDhoJ3-LIPyD1JPRoNocWw)

“In the hands of the master violist, this famous stretch of Bach’s music become body music, rooted in breath and wood and muscle.”

“In Morton Feldman’s “Rothko Chapel,” her viola was a bony branch scraping a window, a voice calling out nervously into gaping silence.”

“In Hungarian composer György Kurtág’s “Signs, Games, and Messages”, her viola filtered into blackness like vents peeking into a collapsed mine shaft.”

“Her decision to tackle Bach’s cello suites is an ambitious one, but in the context of her career, it is just the latest audacious leap in an unbroken series.”

“Kashkashian’s tone has a mournful, woody tang, dark and foreboding and ink-dipped, that makes it a beguiling Bach interpreter.”

“Kashkashian steps into this unforgiving spotlight with grace and poise.”

“The mood of her interpretation is searching, earthbound, human—she doesn’t treat solo Bach like divine math out of reach of mortal understanding.”

“Her tone is sumptuous, moaning, throaty, with a catch of ache snagged in the instrument’s midrange.”

“Her instrument has never sounded lovelier or humbler than it does here.”

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## **JS BACH 6 Suites for Solo Viola (Kim Kashkashian)**

2018 | Gramophone | Rob Cowan

<https://www.gramophone.co.uk/review/js-bach-6-suites-for-solo-viol-a-kim-kashkashian>

“though the latter’s (Kim Kashkashian) wider tonal palette and sense of fantasy often incline me in her direction.”

“With Kashkashian, there’s an invariable tendency to sing out, an appealing ease of movement, and when we reach the written rest within bar 48 of the Prelude to the D minor Suite, Kashkashian – like Yo-Yo Ma on his most recent version of the cello original (Sony, A/18) – makes the gesture pregnant with meaning.”

“Kashkashian I think nails the passage from the standpoint of a superior stylistic balance.”

“Viewed overall, Kashkashian delivers handsomely on all fronts and I extend a warm welcome to her expertly engineered new set, which is much enhanced by a typically imaginative roster of illustrations and superb notes by Paul Griffiths.”

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**Kim Kashkashian, Lera Auerbach, Dmitri Shostakovich, Arcanum**

19 october 2016 | Gapplegate Classical-Modern Music Review | Grego Applegate Edwards

<http://classicalmodernmusic.blogspot.com/2016/10/kim-kashkashian-lera-auerbach-dmitri.html>

“Kashkashian on viola and Auerbach on piano obtain a remarkable sensibility and a tremendous sort of panache as they perform Auerbach's reworking of Shostakovich's "24 Preludes, Op. 34" (1933).”

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**Kurtág, Ligeti: Music for Viola – review**

30 september 2012 | The Guardian | Nicholas Kenyon

<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2012/sep/30/kurtag-ligeti-kim-kashkashian-viol-a-review>

“Wisps, fragments, gestures, aphorisms: it's impossible to pin down the 19 tiny pieces that make up Kurtág's Signs, Games and Messages. Half-heard melodies in a darkened room, they explore the sounds a single instrument can make, from the screeching slides of No 5, Chromatically Saucy, to the plangent beauty of No 19, Plaintive Tune. Many are touching memorial pieces – one is a homage to John Cage; each is full of piercing imagination. They are perfectly projected by the Armenian-American violist [Kim Kashkashian](#), who then tackles the six-movement unaccompanied sonata by [Ligeti](#), which sounds massive and solid by comparison, though it is equally elusive, equally original.”

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**Kim Kashkashian: Lachrymae (ECM New Series 1506)**

7 August 2010 | ECM | Tyran Grillo | CD review

<https://ecmreviews.com/2010/08/07/lachrymae/>

“*Lachrymae* showcases some of the most powerful music written for the viola. And who better than Kashkashian to wring out every last tear from this trio of captivating scores? This music is wrought in sadness and refined through a nurturing touch from its composers and musicians alike. It is not the spirit made manifest, but the manifest made spirit.”

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**Kim Kashkashian/Robert Levin: Elegies (ECM New Series 1316)**

14 May 2010 | ECM | Tyran Grillo | CD review

<https://ecmreviews.com/2010/05/14/elegies/>

“Kim Kashkashian is easily one of the finest violists to ever place her bow on the instrument. She shines just as effervescently in the company of an orchestra as she does solo or here alongside Robert Levin, a trusty accompanist with whom she shares a palpable musical bond, and puts the range of her talents on full display in this fine chamber program of mostly rarities.”

“[...] the fervor of the performance of this finely nuanced masterpiece is a revelation. In the hands of these competent musicians it is given its fullest possible breadth, so that the end leaves us wanting more.”

“On the whole, this album is very warmly recorded. Levin pulls from the piano an almost gamelan-like quality, while Kashkashian luxuriates in the plurivocality afforded to her. She interacts with her instrument as would fingers upon a spine and her tonal depth often breaches cello territory. For anyone who is curious to discover what her playing is all about but who is wary of her penchant for the contemporary, this is an ideal place to start.”

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### **The Lyrical Quality of Violist Kim Kashkashian : NPR**

8 January 2008 | All Things Considered | Tom Manoff | CD review

<https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=17932346>

Although Kim Kashkashian is a world-famous violist, the first word that comes to my mind when I hear her name is not "viola," but "lyricism" — that quality of music to be songlike, and to flow easily with emotion. Kashkashian's ability to make her instrument sing is the wellspring of her new CD, *Asturiana*.

“[...] it's the melodies that matter most. Striking in their beauty, and captivating in the emotions they impart, they will leave you singing.”

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### **Kashkashian viola ECM**

Classics Today | Dan Davis | CD review

<https://www.classicstoday.com/review/review-4526/>

“This is serious, grim music of austere beauty, repaying many hearings and leaving us in awe of Kashkashian’s virtuosity.”

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### **Tigran Mansurian/Kim Kashkashian: Monodia**

7 March 2012 | Tyran Grillo

<https://ecmreviews.com/2012/03/07/monodia/>

“Kashkashian’s harmonic whispers usher us into a world in which the viola not only sings, but also speaks. Through a sometimes-tortured narrative, Kashkashian externalizes the music’s inner life through her fearless translational abilities.”

“The viola is given the final word, which feels more like the first, drawing out a double stop as if it were a pair of lungs about to pray.”