

*Society for*  
C H A M B E R

*Music*

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*in*  
R O C H E S T E R

*45<sup>th</sup> Season*

***Innovation Squared***

Sunday, June 5, 2022 at 4:00 PM  
Innovation Square (formerly Xerox Auditorium)

## *Innovation Squared*

*Duo for Violin and Cello (2015)* ..... Jesse Montgomery  
(b. 1981)

Petros Karapetyan, *violin*  
Lars Kirvan, *cello*

*Three Madrigals (1947)* ..... Bohuslav Martinů  
(1890 - 1959)

Poco allegro - Poco vivo  
Poco andante - Andante moderato  
Allegro - Moderato

Juliana Athayde, *violin*  
Marc Anderson, *viola*

----- *Intermission* -----

*String Quintet No. 2 in G major, Op. 111 (1890)* ..... Johannes Brahms  
(1833 - 1897)

Allegro non troppo, ma con brio  
Adagio  
Un poco allegretto  
Vivace ma non troppo presto

Juliana Athayde, *violin*  
Petros Karapetyan, *violin*  
Josh Newburger, *viola*  
Marc Anderson, *viola*  
Lars Kirvan, *cello*

*This concert is generously sponsored by Larry and Elizabeth Rice.*

## **Jessie Montgomery: *Duo for Violin and Cello* (2015)**

Jessie Montgomery is an acclaimed composer, violinist, and educator. She is the recipient of the Leonard Bernstein Award from the ASCAP Foundation, and her works are performed frequently around the world by leading musicians and ensembles. Her music interweaves classical music with elements of vernacular music, improvisation, language, and social justice, placing her squarely as one of the most relevant interpreters of 21st century American sound and experience.

Jessie was born and raised in Manhattan's Lower East Side in the 1980s during a time when the neighborhood was at a major turning point in its history. Artists gravitated to the hotbed of artistic experimentation and community development. Her parents – her father a musician, her mother a theater artist and storyteller – were engaged in the activities of the neighborhood and regularly brought Jessie to rallies, performances, and parties where neighbors, activists, and artists gathered to celebrate and support the movements of the time. It is from this unique experience that Jessie has created a life that merges composing, performance, education, and advocacy.

Jessie began her violin studies at the Third Street Music School Settlement, one of the oldest community organizations in the country. At Third Street, her first violin teacher kindled her interest in improvisation and the school offered training in composition that led to several works for ensembles of friends and to a requested piece for the school's concert band. Continuing at the Juilliard School, she received a bachelor's degree in violin performance and gained confidence that composition would be part of her career path. A firm belief in the social mission of music led to community outreach and music instruction at Community Music Works, Providence, R.I., where improvisation, so successful in student engagement, became part of her compositional style. She then pursued a Master's degree in composition and film scoring from New York University. An eclectic taste in music and an experimental nature led to forming PUBLIQuartet to help develop improvisational and collaborative (live) composition and later collaboration with the Catalyst Quartet.

Jessie's teachers and mentors include Sally Thomas, Ann Setzer, Alice Kanack, Joan Tower, Derek Bermel, Mark Suozzo, Ira Newborn, and Laura Kaminsky. She is a Graduate Fellow in Music Composition at Princeton University, Professor of violin and composition at The New School and was appointed Mead Composer-in-Residence with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and artistic director of Chicago's *Music Now* program for a three-year term starting in May 2021.

Since 1999, Jessie has been affiliated with The Sphinx Organization, which supports young African-American and Latinx string players and has served as composer-in-residence for the Sphinx Virtuosi, the Organization's flagship professional touring ensemble. A two-time laureate of the annual Sphinx Competition, she was awarded a generous MPower grant to assist in the development of her debut album, *Strum: Music for Strings*. She has received additional grants and awards from the ASCAP Foundation, Chamber Music America, American Composers Orchestra, the Joyce Foundation, and the Sorel Organization.

Her growing body of work includes solo, chamber, vocal, and orchestral music. The New York Philharmonic selected Jessie as one of the featured composers for their Project 19 - marking the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment granting equal voting rights to women in the United States. Other forthcoming works include a nonet inspired by the Great Migration, told from the perspective of Montgomery's great-grandfather William McCauley, to be performed by Imani Winds and the Catalyst Quartet; a commissioned cello concerto for Thomas Mesa; a new orchestral work for the National

Symphony and a commissioned viola concerto, *L.E.S. Characters*, for Masumi per Rostad of the Eastman School of Music.

She also continues to maintain an active performance career as a violinist appearing regularly with her own ensembles, as well as with the Silkroad Ensemble and Sphinx Virtuosi.

Jessie Montgomery's *Duo for violin and cello* is an exploration of friendship: "It's an ode to friendship that is meant to be fun and whimsical, representing a range of shared experiences with friends." The faster outer movements feature spitfire volleys of notes from both instruments, while the slow central movement is built around layered chords that call for a seamless blend between the two players.

The *Duo* was written for Adrian Taylor, cellist with the Providence Quartet with whom Jessie collaborated while working with Community Music Works. The piece was first performed by Montgomery and Taylor in a special winter concert for the Providence, R.I. community. The movements are plays on different aspects of friendship; antics (many pizzicato elements), in confidence (rhythmic inflections reminiscent of Kodaly), and serious fun (a reference to performance focus from a chamber music coach, with influences of Martinů). Although honoring the historic form of the limited duo repertoire from Ravel, Kodaly, and Schulhoff, this piece employs a toolbox of familiar idioms with purposeful quotations steered in different directions and is written with clear but minimal notation allowing freedom of interpretation.

### **Martinů: *Three Madrigals* (1947)**

Of the generation following Dvořák, Bohuslav Martinů is widely regarded, second perhaps only to Leoš Janáček, as the most significant Czech composer of the twentieth century. Martinů also ranks among his generation's most prolific composers, writing in virtually all genres of vocal and instrumental music.

Born in 1890 in Polička, a small town just on the Bohemian side of the Bohemia-Moravia border, Martinů showed great promise as a youngster on the violin and was sent in 1906, with the help of funds raised by his local community, to study at the Prague Conservatory. While he performed poorly as a student, showing little interest in the rigid pedagogy and the hours of violin practice required, he became engrossed in the musical culture of Prague. He excelled in memorizing and analyzing new music, particularly French impressionist works, and learning on his own. Dropped from the violin program, Martinů moved to the organ department that taught composition, but was finally dismissed in 1910 for "incurable negligence." Martinů's access to a broad range of music during these years was formative—he attended the Prague premiere of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* in 1908, which had an especially significant impact on him and earnestly focused on developing his voice as a composer.

Martinů spent the next few years back home in Polička where he passed the state teaching examination, maintained a studio, and composed several works that led to recognition by the composer Josef Suk who encouraged Martinů in pursuit of formal compositional training. In 1923, he moved to Paris, a city to which he had long been drawn, to study composition with Albert Roussel. Though he would frequently visit Prague and Polička, he never resided in his homeland again. He explored a wide range of styles, from renaissance and baroque to jazz, neo-classicism, and surrealism, but continued to look to his Bohemian and Moravian roots for musical ideas, and finally settled in a neo-classical style. In the period leading up to World War II, he developed a significant reputation, with important premieres in Paris, Prague, Berlin, London and Venice, as well as performances of several pieces by Serge Koussevitsky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

In addition to being one of the twentieth century's most prolific composers, Martinů also possessed one of the most distinctly personal styles of his generation. Influenced by his early teachers, Josef Suk and

Albert Roussel, he was also deeply influenced by Debussy, Stravinsky, the composers of Les Six, and he discovered jazz. Continuing a deep interest in Czech folk music and culture, Martinů developed an interest in music from the Renaissance and the Baroque periods and drew frequently from forms and conventions of early music in his own work.

When the Nazis invaded Czechoslovakia in 1939, Martinů was instrumental in facilitating the emigration of a substantial number of Czech artists to France. As the Nazis approached Paris the following year, he fled with his wife to the south of France and in 1941, to the United States, where he spent most of the following decade, composing and teaching at Tanglewood, Mannes, Curtis and Princeton.

In the summer of 1946, while teaching at Tanglewood, Martinů fell from an unprotected balcony at the manor in which he was staying, broke several ribs and fractured his skull. During his long recuperation he suffered from severe headaches, tinnitus, and bouts of depression. As he gradually returned to composing, Martinů focused on chamber music, which he could better manage during his recovery than large orchestral and operatic scores; during this period, he composed, among other works, his Sixth and Seventh String Quartets, his Second Piano Trio, and the Three Madrigals for Violin and Viola.

Martinů's *Duo no. 1 for Violin and Viola*, designated *Three Madrigals*, was composed near the beginning of the recovery from his Tanglewood fall and was inspired by a performance of the Mozart Duos by his friends Joseph and Lilian Fuchs, to whom Martinů dedicated the Madrigals. The madrigal is a fourteenth-century musical form; in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the term came to specifically describe secular, polyphonic vocal works and then, in later periods, it was loosely appropriated for instrumental works as well. The imaginative textures, interplay, and three-movement form of Mozart's duos are the direct and obvious inspiration of the *Three Madrigals* and the title reflects Martinů's fondness for English madrigal — he applied the term to more than twenty pieces over his career. But despite this evocation of an earlier era, the Three Madrigals have an unmistakably modern perspective.

One immediately striking characteristic of the *Three Madrigals* is the strength of Martinů's writing for both the violin and the viola: the two instruments are given equal roles, at times lyrical and at other times rhythmically charged. Also, the sonic breadth that Martinů achieves with just these two instruments rivals the sound of many string quartets. These qualities are in evidence from the outset of the first movement, throughout which the duo shuttles back and forth between big, unified sounds and playfully trading phrases with one another. Following the rhythmic vigor of the opening measures, Martinů introduces a long-breathed melody, first in the violin above sixteenth-note figurations in the viola and then vice versa. The remainder of the *Poco allegro* relies on the melodic and rhythmic ideas introduced in its first few bars, but Martinů conjures a thrilling dramatic arc by developing those ideas and by varying textures.

The second movement, marked *Poco andante*, introduces a new palette of textures: both instruments play with mutes, dulling the brilliance of the string sound, and evocative harmonies and murmuring trills create an aura of mystery. Other ornamental techniques further enhance the music's enigmatic mood, from flowing sixteenth- and thirty-second-note runs to wide tremolando in the violin accompanied by strummed chords in the viola, evoking a troubadour singing a plaintive ballad. The concluding *Allegro* is exuberant and rhythmic, full of driving dance rhythms. Martinů sneaks in references to the previous two movements; rhythms from the first movement and a contrasting lyrical Moderato reprising several ideas from the second movement. Rapid double stops provide an exciting conclusion.

## Brahms: *String Quintet No. 2 in G Major (1890)*

In the summer of 1890, Brahms planned to retire from his composing career, intending his String Quintet, Op. 111 in G major to be his swan song. As with many of his compositions, the piece was originally conceived for a different ensemble, in this case as sketches for a fifth symphony. And though it ended as a string quintet with two violas, a grand symphonic sonority still graces the outer movements. It is an extraordinary work, one of the finest in Brahms's oeuvre and therefore all of chamber music: exuberant, elegant, subtle, original and unmistakably Brahms in nearly every bar.

Composed while Brahms was vacationing in the Austrian Alps in the summer of 1890, the work evokes the vast panoramic landscapes that its composer must have seen when composing it. Nothing offers better evidence of this than its astonishing opening, with the cello holding forth against the rest of the ensemble's quavering soundscape to spin out a fresh-as-spring melody of wide harmonic range and swaggering rhythmic vigor. In the first of the many dance forms inlaid within this work, its second subject is a double dollop of Viennese waltz played by the violas. The development is strikingly symphonic in scope, with numerous contrasting sections to occupy the ear until the opening theme returns, in the first violin for the recapitulation, which takes the previous thematic material to new heights of expressiveness in the high register.

The second movement is monothematic, without contrasting sections. Its simple melody, embellished by a turn, is presented in four variations that range from the serene to the passionately declamatory. This movement is marked with unusual harmonic interest and is distinctly darker in tone color than the first because of the prominent role given to the viola, which presents the theme at the opening and introduces its final statement with a small cadenza near the end.

The third movement is one of those wistful pieces, paced neither slow nor fast, that capture something unique in the Brahmsian musical aesthetic: that middle ground between restrained sentiment and outright sentimentality best described as *intermezzo*. An utterly charming *Trio* in the major mode features dueling pairs of violins and violas that return for a final bow at the end of the movement slightly transformed, like a memory in the coda, a wan smile after an extended frown.

The finale is a romping sonata-rondo, richly imbued with dance rhythms. The principal theme, based on a mischievous snippet of four 16th notes, is given a jaunty accompaniment with many an off-beat accent. The second theme, in triplets, has its own type of swagger strongly suggestive of a country folk dance. Neither can match the high-kicking élan of the coda, reminiscent of the Hungarian *czárdás*.

It was December 1890, and though he was only 57 years old, he sent the manuscript to his publisher with a note: "With this letter you can bid farewell to my music — because it is certainly time to leave off." He was living comfortably, his music was widely celebrated, and he had the instinct to step down from a height rather than to slip into decline.

This was of course before he had heard Meiningen court clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld, who inspired him, after a few months of rest, to come out of retirement and write several clarinet works (trio, quintet and two sonatas, all with alternate scoring for viola), which he followed with some assorted smaller pieces, and then in 1896 *Vier ernste Gesänge* (Four Serious Songs) as a gift for Clara Schumann as she was dying. Less than a year later, Brahms followed her, departing at 63, though he had long resembled a much older man behind his thick grey beard.

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Notes compiled by Eric Zeise from text by  
Jesse Montgomery, John Henken, Stefan Hersh,  
Connor Stuart, Kai Christiansen, and Donald G. Gislason  
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## Biographical Notes

**Marc Anderson** enjoys a versatile career as an orchestral violist, chamber musician, and teacher. Assistant Principal viola since 2015, Mr. Anderson has been with the RPO since 2005 and was also principal violist of the Rochester Chamber Orchestra. An avid chamber musician, Mr. Anderson frequently collaborates with his RPO colleagues and Eastman School faculty in many of the area's classical concert series. He holds performance degrees from the Eastman School, where he studied with George Taylor (B.M.) and John Graham (M.M.). While at Eastman, he received the coveted Performer's Certificate and Orchestral Studies Diploma. Mr. Anderson has been on the string faculty of Roberts Wesleyan College, the Eastman Community Music School, and the Eastman School of Music.

**Juliana Athayde**, appointed concertmaster of the RPO in 2005, has made numerous solo appearances with the RPO, including several premieres, and with orchestras across the country. She has also appeared as guest concertmaster with several orchestras. A passionate educator, Ms. Athayde is Associate Professor of Violin at the Eastman School, a Visiting Teacher at the Cleveland Institute of Music, and previously served as a Visiting Professor at the Cleveland Institute and at Cornell University. Completing her graduate studies at the Cleveland Institute, she was the first graduate of the CIM's Concertmaster Academy.

Originally from Yerevan, Armenia, **Petros Karapetyan** joined the RPO in 2019. He is a former member of the Aguascalientes Symphony Orchestra, and has played with the Houston Symphony, the IRIS Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfónica de Sinaloa de las Artes, and Symphoria. Petros has had fellowships at Tanglewood Music Center, Pacific Music Festival, Lake George Music Festival, and Colorado College Summer Music Festival, as well as upcoming performances at the Artosphere Festival, the Britt Festival Orchestra, and Music in the Mountains Festival. He teaches at the Chamber Music Institute for Young Musicians in Stamford CT, and has previously given master classes at the Universidad Autónoma de Aguascalientes and the Orquesta Sinfónica Esperanza Azteca in Mexico. He holds a Bachelor of Music with Performance Certificate from the Eastman School, a Bachelor of Arts in Business from the University of Rochester, and a Master of Music from Rice University.

Cellist **Lars Kirvan** grew up in Fairfax VA, where he began his cello studies with Loran Stephenson of the National Symphony Orchestra. He later earned his Bachelors degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he was a student of Stephen Geber. Mr. Kirvan was a section member and principal cellist of the Verbier Chamber Orchestra in Switzerland, as well as the New World Symphony Orchestra under Michael Tilson Thomas. He was invited to join the World Orchestra for Peace, conducted by Valery Gergiev. More recently he became the assistant principal cellist with the Chautauqua Symphony. He has been a concerto soloist with the RPO, the Genesee Symphony Orchestra, and the Roberts Wesleyan College Community Orchestra. Mr. Kirvan joined the RPO in 2008, served as principal cellist in the 2014-15 season, and was appointed assistant principal cellist beginning in the 2022-23 season. He also

maintains a private teaching studio, is an adjunct professor of cello at Roberts Wesleyan College, and is on the cello faculty of the Eastman Community Music School.

**Josh Newburger** grew up in Austin TX, and as a youth was a frequent performer in Austin's local jazz, world music, and indie rock venues. His classical violin studies led him to earn a Bachelor's degree in violin at New England Conservatory. He later picked up viola and subsequently earned his Masters degree at Yale School of Music. Josh has toured extensively in the U.S., Europe, and Asia with ensembles including Ivan Fischer's Budapest Festival Orchestra, the Verbier Festival Chamber Orchestra, and the Pacific Symphony, and has performed in numerous summer festivals. You might also hear him on the soundtracks for various feature films and TV productions, recorded during his time spent in the Los Angeles region! He joins the RPO as principal violist beginning in the 2022-23 season.

This concert was made possible in part by the New York State Council on the Arts  
with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York Legislature.



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**RPO String Principals - September 18th, 2022 at 4:00 PM - Nazareth College**

Vieuxtemps: *Elegy, Op. 30 for Viola and Piano*

Davydov: *At the Fountain, Op. 20 No. 2*

Moszkowski: *Suite for Two Violins and Piano, Op. 71*

Dvořák: *Viola Quintet, Op. 97*

**Beethoven Quintet for Piano and Winds - October 9th, 2022 at 4:00 PM - Hochstein School**

Hang Yang: *Pandora (2022 Composition Competition Winner)*

Jessie Montgomery: *'Peace' for Clarinet and Piano*

Florent Schmitt: *A Tour d'anchos, Op. 97 for Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon and Piano*

Clara Schumann: *Three Fugues on Themes of J. S. Bach*

Beethoven: *Quintet for Piano and Winds, Op. 16*

**Johannes and Rebecca - March 12th, 2023 at 4:00 PM - Nazareth College**

Handel/Halvorsen: *Passacaglia for Violin and Cello*

Rebecca Clarke: *Sonata 1919 for Viola and Piano*

Brahms: *B Major Piano Trio*

**Romantic Masters - April 30th, 2023 at 4:00 PM - Nazareth College**

Arensky: *Chant Triste for Cello and Piano*

Strauss: *Violin Sonata*

Arensky: *Piano Trio*

**Jazz Festival Aperitif - June 11th, 2023 at 4:00 PM - Nazareth**

Nikolai Kapustin: *Viola Sonata*

Jeff Campbell: *Jazz Selections*