

ARNAUD SUSSMANN  
VIOLIN

ANNA POLONSKY  
PIANO

**LEOŠ JANÁČEK**  
(1854-1928)

**Violin Sonata**  
Con moto  
Ballada  
Allegretto  
Adagio

**ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK**  
(1854-1904)

**Sonata for Violin and Piano in F Major, Op. 57**  
Allegro ma non troppo  
Poco sostenuto  
Allegro molto

**INTERMISSION**

**JOHANNES BRAHMS**  
(1833-1897)

**Violin Sonata No. 3 in D Minor, Op. 108**  
Allegro  
Adagio  
Un poco presto e con sentimento  
Presto agitato

**MIECZYSLAW WEINBERG**  
(1919-1996)

***Rhapsody on Moldavian Themes, Op. 47, no. 3***



**ARNAUD SUSSMANN**  
*Violin*

## ARNAUD SUSSMANN

Winner of a 2009 Avery Fisher Career Grant, Arnaud Sussmann has distinguished himself with his unique sound, bravura, and profound musicianship. Minnesota's *Pioneer Press* writes, "Sussmann has an old-school sound reminiscent of what you'll hear on vintage recordings by Jascha Heifetz or Fritz Kreisler, a rare combination of sweet and smooth that can hypnotize a listener."

A thrilling musician capturing the attention of classical critics and audiences around the world, Sussmann has recently appeared as a soloist with the Mariinsky Orchestra under Valery Gergiev, the Vancouver Symphony, and the New World Symphony. As a chamber musician, he has performed at the Tel Aviv Museum in Israel, London's Wigmore Hall, Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, the White Nights Festival in Saint Petersburg, the Dresden Music Festival in Germany, and the Phillips Collection in Washington, DC. He has been presented in recital in Omaha on the Tuesday Musical Club series, New Orleans by the Friends of Music, and at the Louvre Museum in Paris. He has also given concerts at the OK Mozart, Moritzburg, Caramoor, Music@Menlo, La Jolla SummerFest, Mainly Mozart, Seattle Chamber Music, Chamber Music Northwest, and the Moab Music festivals.

Sussmann has performed with many of today's leading artists, including Itzhak Perlman, Menahem Pressler, Gary Hoffman, Shmuel Ashkenasi, Wu Han, David Finckel and Jan Vogler. He has been featured on multiple PBS's *Live from Lincoln Center* broadcasts alongside Itzhak Perlman and the Perlman Music Program, and with musicians of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

Born in Strasbourg, France and now based in New York City, Arnaud Sussmann trained at the Conservatoire de Paris and the Juilliard School with Boris Garlitsky and Itzhak Perlman. Winner of several international competitions, including the Andrea Postacchini of Italy and Vatelot/Rampal of France, he was named a Starling Fellow in 2006, an honor which allowed him to be Mr.

Perlman's teaching assistant for two years. Mr. Sussmann now teaches at Stony Brook University on Long Island and was recently named Music@Menlo's Associate Artistic Director of the International Chamber Music Program.

## ANNA POLONSKY

Anna Polonsky is widely in demand as a soloist and chamber musician. She has appeared with the Moscow Virtuosi, the Buffalo Philharmonic, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, the Memphis Symphony, the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, and many others. Polonsky has collaborated with the Guarneri, Orion, Daedalus, and Shanghai Quartets, and with such musicians as Mitsuko Uchida, Yo-Yo Ma, David Shifrin, Richard Goode, Emanuel Ax, Arnold Steinhardt, Peter Wiley, and Jaime Laredo. She has performed chamber music at festivals such as Marlboro, Chamber Music Northwest, Seattle, Music@Menlo, Cartagena, Bard, and Caramoor, as well as at Bargemusic in New York City. In 2018, Polonsky began performing in a trio with clarinetist David Shifrin and cellist Peter Wiley.

Polonsky has given concerts in the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the Vienna Konzerthaus, the Alice Tully Hall, and Carnegie Hall's Stern, Weill, and Zankel Halls, and has toured extensively throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia. A frequent guest at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, she was a member of the Chamber Music Society Two during 2002-2004. In 2006 she took part in the European Broadcasting Union's project to record and broadcast all of Mozart's keyboard sonatas, and in the spring of 2007 she performed a solo recital at Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium to inaugurate the Emerson Quartet's Perspectives Series. She is a recipient of a Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship and the Andrew Wolf Chamber Music Award.

Anna Polonsky made her solo piano debut at the age of seven at the Special Central Music School in Moscow,



**ANNA POLONSKY**

*Piano*

Russia. She emigrated to the United States in 1990 and attended high school at the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan. She received her Bachelor of Music diploma from The Curtis Institute of Music under the tutelage of the renowned pianist Peter Serkin, and continued her studies with Jerome Lowenthal, earning her Master's Degree from the Juilliard School. In addition to performing, she serves on the piano faculty of Vassar College, and in the summer at the Marlboro and Kneisel Hall chamber music festivals.

Ms. Polonsky is a Steinway Artist.

## NOTES

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### LEOŠ JANÁČEK: VIOLIN SONATA

One of a prominent trio of 19th-century Czech composers (including Smetana and Dvořák), Leoš Janáček was born in Moravia in 1854 and began his musical training at age 11, when he sang in the choir at a monastery school in Brno. Upon graduating in 1869, he studied at the Czech Teachers' Institute, then returned to Brno to serve as the head of the monastery choir.

Janáček, a prolific composer of operas, was esteemed as a national hero for his use of traditional compositional techniques, while writing music imbued with traditional Eastern European folk idioms.

In 1888, he began collecting folk songs from northern Moravia, an endeavor that would have a profound effect on his future musical style and harmonic language. Up until that point, his compositional style was based in late 19th-century Romanticism. His musical output now reflected the folk music idioms and reflections of nationalism that were sweeping Eastern Europe at that time.

The Violin Sonata was Janáček's second attempt at the form: his first attempt, while a student in Vienna, has been lost. While it follows traditional compositional forms, like the sonata allegro form of the first movement, there are striking virtuosic passages and unusual sonorities produced by both instruments, sometimes together, though often not. There is a clear element of Eastern European folk music, yet one can also hear frequent tinges of Debussy's impressionism in the piano accompaniment.

The work was composed in 1914 at the beginning of World War I and reflects the uncertainty and turbulence of that time in Europe. Janáček composed the work as a reaction to the war, stating, "...in the 1914 Sonata for Violin and Piano, I could just about hear sounds of the steel clashing in my troubled head."

The first performance of the Sonata was in 1922 at a concert of new Moravian music organized at the Young Composers Club in Brno. The first European performance was the following year in Germany, performed by violinist and composer Paul Hindemith.

Historical records tell us that the four movements of the sonata were shifted many times before the final order was set. In the first movement, marked *Con moto*, the violin issues a dramatic and somewhat anguished solo opening statement, immediately followed by *pizzicato*, accompanied by a lyrical and thickly textured piano part. The rest of this agitated movement features disjointed bursts of virtuosity between the two instruments.

The lyrical and lush melodic opening of the second movement, marked *Ballada*, is nostalgic and more linear than the first movement. The piano accompaniment is reminiscent of the impressionism of Debussy.

The third movement, *Allegretto*, clearly takes its cue from the folk song idiom that Janáček was exploring. The opening of the movement features a Russian-sounding statement of the piano, as well as gypsy-like slides by the violin, which are then imitated by the piano.

The last movement, *Adagio*, opens with a chorale-like statement by the piano, followed by contrasting bursts of sounds made by the muted violin. The violin then plays a beautifully nostalgic lyrical section, again interspersed with harsh outbursts of accented notes. Unlike the usual fast and often dramatic final movements of many violin sonatas, this last movement leaves the listener straining to hear the final notes of an unusual and striking work of art.

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK:  
SONATA FOR VIOLIN  
AND PIANO IN  
F MAJOR, OP. 57

Antonín Dvořák was born in 1841 in Bohemia, approximately 40 miles north of Prague. The son of a butcher and innkeeper, his musical abilities were clear from early in his childhood. He spent his formative years in a small town called Zlonice, where he learned German and studied music. In 1857, he entered the Prague Organ School, studying there for two years before moving on to play the viola in a local theater orchestra.

In 1874, Dvořák's music came to the attention of Johannes Brahms and the renowned music critic Eduard Hanslick, author of the influential *On the Beautiful in Music*. In addition, he received a five-year award from the Austrian government. These relationships and funding were pivotal in bringing Dvořák's music to the international stage.

In 1891, he was invited to serve as Director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York. This move would be pivotal to his development as a composer and would lead to the significant influence of American music on his own style, including the *Symphony "From the New World,"* the *American Quartet* and the *American Quintet*.

Dvořák returned home in 1895 and died in 1905.

The Sonata for Violin and Piano in F Major was his second attempt at the form and was written at the same time he was composing the Violin Concerto. One can see and hear the influence of Brahms in this work in the textures and cross-rhythms and the use of the sonata format. Dvořák himself played the work in March 1880 with the famous violinist Joseph Joachim.

The first movement, *Allegro ma non troppo* in F major, is written in sonata-allegro form with a lyrical first theme and a second subject in the folk song idiom. The second movement, *Poco sostenuto* in A major, is a lovely and intimate movement. The third movement in rondo form is centered again on folk-inspired melodies.

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Brahms wrote his three violin sonatas between 1886 and 1888. This sonata is the last and the only one in four movements and it is dedicated to Hans von Bülow, a famous pianist and conductor. The first movement is in traditional sonata-allegro form. The second movement is a cavatina, a short lyrical melody, played by the violin with a simple accompaniment in the piano. The third movement reverses roles, with the piano stating the main theme and the violin providing a simple accompaniment on the off beats. The fourth movement is a virtuosic tour de force, and is suggestive of a tarantella, a folk dance characterized by a fast upbeat tempo.

JOHANNES BRAHMS:  
VIOLIN SONATA  
NO. 3 IN D MINOR,  
OP. 108

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Mieczyslaw Weinberg was born into a musical family in 1919. In 1939, he fled from the Nazis in Poland to the Soviet Union, where he would spend most of the rest of his life. Tragically, his parents and sisters did not escape and were murdered by the Nazis.

MIECZYSLAW  
WEINBERG:  
*RHAPSODY ON  
MOLDAVIAN THEMES,*  
OP. 47

This Polish-born Jewish refugee who escaped the Nazis would turn out to be one of the Soviet Union's most distinguished composers, yet one who never quite achieved the world-wide fame of his Soviet contemporaries, Shostakovich or Prokofiev.

A prolific composer of seven operas, some 25 symphonies, 17 string quartets, three full-length ballets and 60 film scores, Weinberg also composed music for numerous other genres, including cartoons. He was a close friend and frequent duo piano partner with Dmitri Shostakovich, and one of the composers threatened by the Zhdanov Doctrine. In 1946, the Central Committee Secretary issued a Soviet cultural doctrine that mandated that artists, writers, and other intelligentsia had to adhere to the party line in their creative works. An additional decree on music was issued in 1948 and signaled a sustained and directed campaign of criticism and harassment against some of the most famous Soviet composers, including Shostakovich and Prokofiev.

While Weinberg did not suffer to the extent that other more famous composers did, he was imprisoned for a short time in 1953 on a charge of “Jewish bourgeois nationalism.” Shostakovich was instrumental in securing his release.

*The Rhapsody on Moldavian Themes* contains clear influences of folk-song idioms, gypsy-like harmonies and nationalistic influences. The country of Moldavia no longer exists, having been absorbed by Romania, Ukraine, and the Republic of Moldova.

– Program Notes by *Alix Corboy*



Lily and Paul Primus



Noor Quartet

## EVENTINGS AL FRESCO Denver Botanic Gardens

We hope you had a chance to enjoy the popular “Evenings al Fresco” series at the beautiful Denver Botanic Gardens this summer. Strolling visitors were as thrilled to hear live music as our local musicians were to perform. Friends of Chamber Music was pleased to partner with Swallow Hill Music to bring chamber music to the series. Thanks to the following musicians and ensembles presented by FCM for this series:

Ensemble Fauchaux | Noor Quartet |  
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Lily and Paul Primus | Violamore Duo



# MUSIC IN THE GALLERIES

Clyfford Still Museum, 1250 Bannock Street, Denver

We are excited to continue our partnership with our friends at the Clyfford Still Museum as their “Music in the Galleries” series resumes. Enjoy live chamber music as you wander the galleries. The music can be enjoyed from any gallery, though limited seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis at each of the two identical concerts. Music is free with admission to the Museum. FCM patrons enjoy a discounted ticket – visit our website for details and link to purchase tickets.

*For the health and wellbeing of the community, all visitors ages three and over are required to wear face coverings inside the Museum.*

## PATTERSON/SUTTON DUO

SUN, OCT 10, 2021 | 1:00 & 2:00 PM

Praised by *The Strad* magazine for their “wit and imagination,” the trailblazing Patterson/Sutton Duo continue to be in demand as they bring the rich cello and guitar repertoire to audiences around the world. The Patterson/Sutton Duo have an ongoing relationship with The Juilliard School as Juilliard Global Visiting Artists. In March 2019, the duo performed the world premiere of *Still Life* by Stephen Goss in the Clyfford Still Museum galleries.



## NOOR QUARTET

SUN, NOV 14, 2021 | 1:00 & 2:00 PM

The Noor Quartet has brought vibrant, versatile performances to Denver’s Front Range since 2016. The ensemble enjoys collaborating with local businesses to present concerts of classical, pop, and other diverse string quartet repertoire in community settings. Performances have included complete works from the classical string quartet repertoire along with tango selections and covers of songs by

Radiohead, the Shins, and the Beatles. Founding members include violinists Nina Fronjian and Brune Macary, violist Aniel Cabán, and cellist Joseph Howe.

## HARLEM QUARTET

SUN, DEC 12, 2021 | 1:00 & 2:00 PM

The New York-based Harlem Quartet, praised for their “panache” by *The New York Times*, is recognized for their expansive repertoire and artistic partnerships with classical and jazz musicians. We are excited to feature this dynamic quartet in the Clyfford Still galleries prior to their appearance in Gates Concert Hall on Monday night, December 13.



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**Michael Brown, piano**  
Mon, Dec 13, 2021

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Wed, Feb 16, 2022

**Benjamin Grosvenor, piano**  
Wed, Mar 16, 2022

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Wed, Apr 6, 2022

**Daniil Trifonov, piano**  
Thu, May 5, 2022

*All concerts begin at 7:30 pm at Gates  
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