



Niel DePonte, Interim Artistic Director

An Afternoon of Chamber Music



3:00pm Sunday, April 16, 2023

beavertonsymphony.org

The Composers



Giovanni Gabrieli



Felix Mendelssohn



Francis Poulenc



Antonín Dvořák



Dmitri Shostakovich

Beaverton Symphony Orchestra

Niel DePonte, Interim Artistic Director

Giovanni Gabrieli
(1556-1612)

Canzon in echo duodecimi toni à 10, Ch. 180 (1597)

Dan Schmidt, trumpet *Nicolas Pescatore, trumpet*
Mayne Mibacsi, trumpet *Kippe Spear, horn*
Greg Gadeholt, horn *Karen Bjorge, horn*
Holly Bliss, horn *Jenny Anderson, horn*
John Zagorski, trombone *Paul Hanau, trombone*
Jay Klippstein, tuba

Niel DePonte, conductor

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)

String Quintet No. 1, Op. 18 (1826/1832)

Intermezzo: Andante sostenuto
Allegro Vivace

Trevor Stroup, violin *Kris Oliveira, violin*
Cherie Hull, viola *Rachael Susman, viola*
Marcy England, cello

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)

Trio Sonata for Horn, Trumpet, and Trombone (1922)

Allegro moderato
Andante
Rondeau

Dan Schmidt, trumpet
Greg Gadeholt, horn
John Zagorski, trombone

--- Intermission ---

Antonín Dvořák
(1840-1904)

Piano Quintet No. 2, Op. 81 (1887)

Allegro moderato

Stella (Eun Sobl) Koh, violin Sohyun Westin, violin
Katie San Diego, viola Elizabeth Goy, cello
Jieun Seong, piano

Dmitri Shostakovich

Piano Trio No. 2, Op. 67 (1944)

Andante – Moderato

Allegro con brio

Largo

Allegretto – Adagio

Elle Hohn, violin Kynan Shook, cello
Paul Hanau, piano

Program Notes

Giovanni Gabrieli (c. 1554/1557 – 12 August 1612) was an Italian composer and organist. He was one of the most influential musicians of his time, and represents the culmination of the style of the Venetian School, at the time of the shift from Renaissance to Baroque idioms.

Gabrieli was born in Venice. He was one of five children, and his father came from the region of Carnia and went to Venice shortly before Giovanni's birth. While not much is known about Giovanni's early life, he probably studied with his uncle, the composer Andrea Gabrieli, who was employed at St Mark's Basilica from the 1560s until his death in 1585. Giovanni may indeed have been brought up by his uncle, as is implied by the dedication to his 1587 book of concerti, in which he described himself as "little less than a son" to his uncle.

Like composers before and after him, he would use the unusual layout of St Mark's, with its two choir lofts facing each other, to create striking spatial effects. Most of his pieces are written so that a choir or instrumental group will first be heard on one side, followed by a response from the musicians on the other side

The Canzon in echo duodecimi toni à 10, Ch.180 is number 46 in the collection of 63 pieces published in 1597 as *Sacrae Symphoniae*: 45 motets for 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15 or 16 voices; 14 canzonas in 8, 10, 12 or 15 musical lines; and two sonatas, one in 8 musical lines, the other in 12.

Felix Mendelssohn (3 February 1809 – 4 November 1847) was a German composer, pianist, organist and conductor of the early Romantic period. Mendelssohn's compositions include symphonies, concertos, piano music, organ music and chamber music. His best-known works include the overture and incidental music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (which includes his "Wedding March"), the *Italian Symphony*, the *Scottish Symphony*, the oratorio *St. Paul*, the oratorio *Elijah*, the overture *The Hebrides*, the mature *Violin Concerto* and the *String Octet*. The melody for the Christmas carol "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" is also his. Mendelssohn's *Songs Without Words* are his most famous solo piano compositions.

Mendelssohn's early musical talents were fostered by his wealthy parents who not only provided Mendelssohn with the finest education in the arts and sciences but also invited professional musicians into their home on Sunday mornings for informal musical gatherings. They even hired string orchestras for Mendelssohn to practice his compositions.

The *String Quintet* was written in 1826, shortly after the completion of the *String Octet* and his *Overture to Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream*, when Mendelssohn was just seventeen years old. Dissatisfied with the original minuet second movement, in 1832 he substituted a slow movement composed in memory of his friend the violinist Eduard Rietz, who had recently died of tuberculosis. It is this revised version of the quintet which was published in Bonn the same year.

The term *Intermezzo* is often used to describe a short piece for solo instrument. The enchanting first violin melody is beautifully accompanied by the other instruments in the *Intermezzo*. Rather

than mournful, the warm richness of this movement captures a loving memory of Mendelssohn's dear friend.

Schumann wrote of Mendelssohn that he was "the Mozart of the nineteenth century, the most brilliant musician, the one who most clearly sees through the contradictions of the age and for the first time reconciles them.

Francis Jean Marcel Poulenc (7 January 1899 – 30 January 1963) was a French composer and pianist. His compositions include songs, solo piano works, chamber music, choral pieces, operas, ballets, and orchestral concert music. Among the best-known are the piano suite *Trois mouvements perpétuels* (1919), the ballet *Les biches* (1923), the *Concert champêtre* (1928) for harpsichord and orchestra, the *Organ Concerto* (1938), the opera *Dialogues des Carmélites* (1957), and the *Gloria* (1959) for soprano, choir, and orchestra.

Poulenc was a member of a French group of composers who called themselves *Les Six*. They rejected the Impressionist idea of music as a representation of mood and atmosphere as well as the elaborate orchestration and dramatic presentation of Late-Romantic composers such as Wagner. Instead, they sought to celebrate everyday life rather than the stereotypical tortured soul. Poulenc's *Sonata for Horn, Trumpet, and Trombone* exemplifies this ideology.

The *Sonate pour cor, trompette et trombone* (*Sonata for horn, trumpet and trombone*), FP 33a, is a piece of chamber music composed in 1922 and dedicated to Raymonde Linossier (1897–1930).

The sonata is the composer's second extant work of chamber music, after the *Sonata for two clarinets*. It was premiered at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris on 4 January 1923 at a Satie-Poulenc concert organized by Jean Wiener. Poulenc revised it in 1945.

The character of the music resembles a fair music, conforming to the spirit of *Les Six*. Kathy Henkel described the first movement as a series of dance episodes, the second as a lullaby derived from motifs of the first movement, and the third as a rondo with more light-hearted dance music. She summarizes the piece's "variety of tone colors, striking rhythms, delicious dissonances, and elegant wit".

Poulenc was inspired by Stravinsky's ballet *Pulcinella*, which was composed two years earlier, and the everyday sounds of Paris—music from dancehalls, street performers, and even the circus. The youthful Poulenc shines through with playful melodies and humorous dissonant harmonies. The second, more lyrical movement, is surrounded by upbeat dance-like movements. Poulenc asked his listeners: "Do not analyze my music, love it!"

Antonín Leopold Dvořák (8 September 1841 – 1 May 1904) was a Czech composer. Dvořák frequently employed rhythms and other aspects of the folk music of Moravia and his native Bohemia, following the Romantic-era nationalist example of his predecessor Bedřich Smetana. Dvořák's style has been described as "the fullest recreation of a national idiom with that of the symphonic tradition, absorbing folk influences and finding effective ways of using them".

Dvořák's *Piano Quintet No. 2 in A major, Op. 81, B. 155*, is a quintet for piano, 2 violins, viola,

and cello. It was composed between August 18 and October 8, 1887 and was premiered in Prague on January 6, 1888. The quintet is acknowledged as one of the masterpieces in the form, along with those of Schumann, Brahms and Shostakovich.

The work was composed as the result of the composer's attempt to revise an earlier work, the first Piano Quintet in A major, Op. 5, composed in 1872. Dvořák was dissatisfied with the Op. 5 quintet and destroyed the manuscript not long after its premiere. Fifteen years later, he reconsidered and retrieved a copy of the score from a friend and started making revisions. The revised quintet proved hopeless, so Dvorak composed his second quintet in A major, becoming a favorite chamber music piece throughout Dvorak's life and continuing today. The new quintet is a mixture of Dvořák's personal form of expressive lyricism with elements from Czech folk music. Characteristically, those elements include styles and forms of song and dance, but not actual folk tunes; Dvořák created original melodies in the authentic folk style.

The quintet features each instrument individually. The blending of voices and the exchange of melodies and harmonies are a splendid manifestation of Dvorak's love and pride in Czech folk music and the formalities of the Austro-German tradition.

The first movement opens quietly with lyrical cello theme over piano accompaniment which is followed by a series of elaborate transformations. The viola introduces the second subject which is another lyrical melody, but much busier than the cello's stately line. Both themes are developed extensively by the first and second violins and the movement closes with a free recapitulation and an exuberant coda.

Dmitri Dmitriyevich Shostakovich (25 September [O.S. 12 September] 1906 – 9 August 1975) was a Soviet-era Russian composer and pianist who became internationally known after the premiere of his First Symphony in 1926 and was regarded throughout his life as a major composer.

His Piano Trio No. 2 in E minor, Op. 67, for violin, cello and piano was started in December of 1943, having earlier that year in October mentioned beginning work on a piano trio "on Russian folk themes", and having written to Isaac Glikman on 8 December he was working on the trio. Several days before completing the piece's first movement, Shostakovich's good friend Ivan Sollertinsky, a Russian polymath and avid musician, died. Sollertinsky's death affected Shostakovich deeply, and he decided to dedicate the trio to his friend's memory. He finished writing the work later that year, completing the second movement by 4 August 1944 and the fourth by 13 August.

The work received its premiere in Leningrad on 14 November 1944, with the composer at the piano alongside Dmitri Tsyganov and Sergei Shirinsky, members of the Beethoven Quartet, who gave his Second String Quartet its premiere during the same concert.

The piece consists of four movements:

The first movement, in E minor, begins with a haunting passage in the cello, which plays

exclusively harmonics. It is joined by the violin and then the piano, all three instruments playing in canon, with the violin entering a 13th below the cello and the piano a 13th below the violin. This slow first section of the movement undergoes development before the music moves into the faster "Moderato" section, which is in sonata form. The melodic and rhythmic features of this section's first and second themes are in essence based upon motifs introduced in the opening and are played alongside a rhythmic "eighth-note pulsation", an accompaniment which returns in the piece's fourth movement.

The second movement, in F-sharp major, is a frenzied, sardonic scherzo which moves relentlessly through dissonant figurations, never resting. The movement's trio section, in G major, is a "giddy waltz", and is less separate from the rest of the movement than is usual for Shostakovich. Sollertinsky's sister considered the movement to be "an amazingly exact portrait" of her brother, whom she said Shostakovich "understood like no one else".

The third movement, in B-flat minor, is a lugubrious passacaglia, based around a repeating eight-bar theme of sustained semibreve chords in the piano, tonally unstable in character. Against this background, the violin and cello, playing in canon, trade off dark, slow, and somber melodic lines. The movement continues into the next movement without a pause. In 1975, after Shostakovich's death, this movement was played at his public funeral service held in the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory, as thousands passed his coffin.

The piece's fourth and final movement begins in E major and transitions to E minor. Staccato repeated notes begin this "Dance of Death" movement, which introduces a Jewish-style melody, and revisits the thematic content of the previous three movements. It ends in a tortured E major chord, almost inaudibly. Ian MacDonald says in his book *The New Shostakovich* that the movement was inspired by the composer's horror at reports that SS guards in Nazi death camps had forced Jews to dance by their own graves.

The tragic cries from the cello in the opening and the transparent nature of the piano create unnatural tension throughout the piece. While the trio was dedicated and written in response to the death of Shostakovich's beloved friend, it also captures the horror and pain that was unveiled when the Soviet troops liberated the death camps Treblinka and Majdanek. At the time, the trio was also regarded as a protest against Soviet totalitarianism and was banned from 1948 to 1953.

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In Memoriam

Travis Hatton, our beloved Conductor and Music Director for the past 12 years, passed away suddenly on October 3, 2022. He will be sorely missed.

Travis brought the orchestra together not only to make beautiful music, but to create and build a musical community. His legacy includes the Young Artist Concerto Competition and performances of pieces by Living Northwest Composers each season.

We thank all our generous supporters.



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Niel DePonte, Interim Artistic Director

Whether composing or arranging, conducting ballet, opera, pops, or symphonic repertoire, or performing as a concerto soloist with major orchestras, Niel DePonte has gained a national reputation as one of his generation's most versatile musical artists. He was Principal Percussionist of the Oregon Symphony for 43 seasons, the Music Director and Conductor for Oregon Ballet Theatre (OBT), and for 28 years, was the founding Artistic Director of MetroArts Inc (now Cognizart) and its Young Artists Debut Concerto Competition.

Niel DePonte was born in New York City and received his graduate training at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, where he earned a Master of Music degree and the Performer's Certificate. He holds a certificate from Harvard University's Graduate School of Education's professional development seminar, *The Project Zero Classroom*, and a degree in music education from the State University of New York. Dr. Howard Gardner, Hobbs Professor in Cognition and Education at Harvard University has written, "As a person who has worked for decades in the area of arts education, I can attest that there are few individuals with Niel's combination of talents, and literally only a handful who are devoting their lives to the education of young individuals. Oregon is lucky to have such an individual in residence."

Niel has generously offered his help to guide the BSO through this difficult period as we navigate the current season and plan for the future. Thank you, Niel.

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