



# STEEPLECHASERS

A dynamic, new chamber music series  
celebrating the rich history of Milwaukee area  
churches and places of worship.

## Music of Bach, Hovhaness and Mendelssohn

Sunday, January 17th, 3:30 p.m.

St. Mary's Visitation Catholic Parish

Elm Grove, WI



Program

Suite No. 1 in G Major - J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Prelude

Allemande

Courante

Sarabande

Minuetto I and II

Gigue

*Elizabeth Tuma*, cello

String Trio, Op. 201 - Alan Hovhaness (1911-2000)

I. Adagio

II. Allegro

III. Lento

*Jerry Loughney*, violin *Jenny Kozoroz*, viola *Elizabeth Tuma*, cello

◇ ◇ Intermission ◇ ◇

String Quintet, Op. 87 - Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

I. Allegro Vivace

II. Andante Scherzando

III. Adagio e Lento

IV. Allegro Molto Vivace

*Jerry Loughney*, violin *Juliette Williams*, violin  
*Amanda Grettie Koch*, viola *Jenny Kozoroz*, viola  
*Elizabeth Tuma*, cello

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This concert is free to the public. Free will donations are accepted.

## **Suite No. 1 in G Major J.S. Bach**

It's likely Bach wrote his Cello Suites between 1717-23 when he was serving as Kapellmeister in Köthen, along with his other famous secular triumphs including the Brandenburg Concertos and the Well-Tempered Clavier. They are, without a doubt, some of the most emotionally intense pieces in the Baroque repertoire, making the most of the emotional depth of a solo Cello and using a wide range of complex playing techniques. There are six suites in all, each with six movements, each of which acts like a musical conversation – high passages are echoed by reflective low playing, and dense chords accompany delicate ornamental flourishes. The most famous movement, the 'Prelude' from Suite No. 1 in G, is a great example of Bach's genius; there's no accompaniment, but the harmony plays out note-by-note like a musical journey, as chords are implied over the course of a bar rather than played.

There are no surviving manuscripts in Bach's own hand, so musicians have relied on a copy written out by his second wife, Anna Magdalena. Her role as a scribe has even led some musical historians to paint her as a sort of Bacon to Bach's Shakespeare, with the suggestion that she actually wrote many of the suites herself. It's perhaps more astounding that these amazing works weren't widely known before the 1900s, and were merely dismissed as studies.

## **String Trio, Op. 201 Alan Hovhaness**

An American composer of Armenian and Scottish descent, Alan Hovhaness is a very interesting, if not a unique figure in American music. Incredibly prolific, he combined in his output an exalted spirituality and a continuous search for new technique. Today's minimalists and New Age composers owe a great deal to Hovhaness's innovations. There are different schools of thought as to the reason for his courageous act in the mid-1940's, when Hovhaness put into the fire nearly all of his works to date, by most accounts over 1,000 compositions. It could be that his study of 7th century Armenian religious music, classical music of South India and orchestra music of the Tang Dynasty in China outlined possibilities of combining Eastern with Western influences, and resulted in strong discontent with his output to date. Criticism of his style by some of his contemporaries could also have played a role. However, in the approximate 400 compositions (over 60 symphonies!) written after his bonfire, there was no radical change in Hovhaness's musical style, but rather continuous evolution and refinement. His String Trio, Op. 201, is a wonderful piece full of many interesting features. I will point to just one: it transforms practically any performing space (with the possible exception of those with the utmost dry acoustics) into a cathedral. Close your eyes and see what I mean...

## String Quintet, Op. 87 Felix Mendelssohn

Mendelssohn's second viola quintet dates from last years of his composing career. By this point he had written all of his chamber music save the final string quartet, Op. 80, and a few isolated quartet movements that were since bundled and published in a composite set as Op. 81. Within two years, Mendelssohn would be dead and this final quintet would remain unpublished due to his feeling that the work was somehow not finished. Mendelssohn wrote his first quintet some twenty years earlier when he was seventeen. And although the precocious Mendelssohn was already a master by the standards of lesser mortals, it is the second quintet that lasts in the repertoire as the mature masterwork, the next historical landmark for the viola quintet after Mozart. (Beethoven wrote a viola quintet in 1801 called "The Storm" but it is not included in the traditional canon).

The quintet begins with a huge Allegro vivace sonata, the longest movement of the four. The musical means are ostensibly simple comprising two contrasting themes, one, an exuberant rising arpeggio with a dotted rhythm, the other, a softer falling line with equal note values. But from these elements, Mendelssohn crafts a drama of great passion, driven by characteristic tremolos, a nearly concertante first violin part and the swelling textures of string symphony. The music is seamless and rhapsodic. Indeed, there is not a single repeat symbol in the entire work: it is continuously thorough composed.

The tempo of the second movement Andante scherzando is, by Mendelssohn standards, quite moderate compared to his typical "elfish" scherzi. But still there is that telltale light and tensile agility with agile bowing and pizzicato, as if the players were on tiptoes whispering a magic spell from an invisible world. This effect is enhanced by a bit of fugal imitation among the parts, a repetitive, ritualistic incantation. Furthermore, as he frequently does, Mendelssohn spins out his scherzo without strong seams or vividly contrasting trio. The music forms a continuous web until a final disruptive cadence sends the spirits flying, a final sprinkle of fairy dust in their wake.

The Adagio is unquestionably the center of gravity and the movement most admired by commentators on this quintet. Full of pathos and drama, it begins with the telltale signs of a funeral march, a mournful musical elegy. An insistent drumming permutes into a variety of pulsations underlying much of the music for a sense of both mounting drama and dour inevitability. Never has Mendelssohn sounded so much like Schubert. (Removed sentence) Twice Mendelssohn softens the mood with his signature lyricism in a pastorale vein until a lone violin rising above turgid tremolos sends a final entreaty skyward, a new ray of hope banishing the sorrow for good. Mendelssohn finishes his last quintet with a rondo-sonata hybrid that takes full advantage of the ensemble's larger forces, again encroaching on the textures of his string symphonies. The main rondo refrain surges forward trailing shimmering, echoing reverberations, riding swift figurations and bounding in muscular unisons that eventually divide into disciplined fugal imitations reflecting Mendelssohn's love of Bach. A contrasting lyrical song fragment surfaces occasionally to check the momentum, sweeten the ride and to preface the last triumphant flourish of unshakable resolution.

## Musicians Biographies

### **Jerry Loughney, violin**

Mr. Loughney enjoys his career as a violinist. As an active performer, his styles range from Classical to Bluegrass and Country Fiddle to Celtic and Jazz. As a soloist, he has performed the Sibelius Violin Concerto with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra as well as other area ensembles. He currently performs with the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra as Principal Violin II, the Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra as Assistant Concertmaster and the Elgin Symphony Orchestra. His career has led to performances at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., as well as Europe and the British Isles. Residing in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin with his wife Andrea and two children, Mr. Loughney keeps a busy teaching studio and enjoys sharing what he has learned over the years to others.

### **Juliette Williams, violin**

Juliette Williams holds a Bachelor of Music from Indiana University, which she earned under the direction of Professor Mimi Zweig. After receiving a full tuition scholarship to Northwestern University, she studied with Professor Almita Vamos and graduated with a Master of Music. In 2002 at the age of fourteen, Mrs. Williams was the winner of both the Milwaukee Symphony and Menomonee Falls Concerto Competitions, playing Sarasate's "Zigunerwiesen" and Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E Minor. Mrs. Williams was a member of the Madison Symphony from 2010-2012 and joined the Milwaukee Symphony for it's 2012-2013 season. While Mrs. Williams continues to play chamber music, she especially enjoy spending time with her husband Andrew, her son Robert and daughter, Evelyn.

### **Amanda Grettie Koch, viola**

Violist, Amanda Grettie Koch, is a seasoned orchestral and chamber musician. She currently performs with the Milwaukee Chamber Orchestra, the Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra, the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, the Bel Canto Chorus Orchestra, Skylight Opera Orchestra and Woodstock Mozart Festival. Prior to moving to Wisconsin, Mrs. Koch lived in Norfolk, Virginia and was a violist in the Virginia Symphony Orchestra for 5 years. As a teacher, Mrs. Koch maintains a private studio in her home and holds an adjunct faculty position at Concordia University of Wisconsin. Amanda Grettie Koch holds degrees from Oberlin Conservatory of Music (B.Mus.) and The Juilliard School (M.Mus.). Her principal teachers were Lynne Ramsey, Jeff Irvine and Karen Tuttle. She currently resides in Cedarburg, WI with her husband and oboist, Phillip Koch, and three children.

### **Jenny Snyder Kozoroz, viola**

Mrs. Kozoroz completed her high school studies at the Interlochen Arts Academy and her Bachelor of Music degree in viola performance at the Ohio State University. She then went on to receive her Master of Music degree from the Juilliard School where she was a student of Karen Tuttle. Before moving back to her native Milwaukee, she was Assistant Principal violist with the Virginia Symphony and violist and founding member of the Ambrosia String Trio. Mrs. Kozoroz performs with the Milwaukee Symphony, and has performed with the Columbus Symphony, ProMusica Chamber Orchestra and the Harrington String Quartet. An enthusiastic educator, Mrs. Kozoroz is on faculty at The Brevard Music Center and she currently is the Director of the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra Progressions program which is an intense string training program for underrepresented children in Milwaukee Public Schools. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her husband Michael and daughter Isabella and has even been seen on a few music videos as well!

### **Elizabeth Tuma, cello**

Elizabeth Tuma, cellist, is a long time member of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. In Milwaukee, she has performed with the Milwaukee Chamber Orchestra, the Stratford and Chanterelle Quartets, the Arcadia Trio, and the Baroque group, Bach Babes, as well as many other chamber groups in and out of state. She has had a private studio for many years, and also participates in the Arts in Community Education program of the MSO. Her formal music education was received at University of Michigan, and Curtis Institute of Music, a student of Mr. David Soyer, and the Guarneri and Budapest Quartets. She did post-graduate work with Mr. Laurence Lesser, at the Peabody Conservatory, and the Hungarian Quartet.

Prior to her engagement with the Milwaukee Symphony, she performed with the National Symphony, the Virginia Chamber Orchestra, and recorded with the Smithsonian Chamber Players.

### **Steeplechasers wishes to offer their sincere thanks to:**

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Those of you who braved the cold...