Clarice Presents

NATIONAL ORCHESTRAL INSTITUTE + FESTIVAL: CHAMBER MUSIC SPOTLIGHT

Saturday, May 3, 2025 • 7:30PM GILDENHORN RECITAL HALL AT THE CLARICE SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

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NATIONAL ORCHESTRAL INSTITUTE + FESTIVAL: CHAMBER MUSIC SPOTLIGHT

Brendon Elliott, violin Julian Maddox, violin **Quinn Price, violin** Lauren Spaulding, viola Sebastian Stefanovic, viola Maki Kubota, cello **Braizahn Jones,** bass Bethany Slater, oboe Juan Esteban Martinez, clarinet

Ludwig van Beethoven String Quartet No. 11, Op. 96, "Serioso"

(1770 - 1827)Allegro con brio

Allegretto ma non troppo

Allegro assai vivace ma serioso - Piu allegro Larghetto espressive - Allegretto agitato - Allegro

Takuma Itoh Kīpuka for Oboe and String Quartet

(Clarice Presents Commission & World Premiere) (b. 1984)

A Tree Still Stands

From Refuge to Abundance INTERMISSION

Voodoo Dolls Jessie Montgomery

(b. 1981)

Sergei Prokofiev Quintet in G Minor, Op. 39

(1891-1953) Tema con variazioni Andante energico

Allegro sostenuto, ma con brio

Adagio pesante

Allegro precipitato, ma non troppo presto

Andantino

This performance is supported in part by the Maryland State Arts Council and The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation.



THE MORRIS AND GWENDOLYN CAFRITZ FOUNDATION



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Program Notes by Dr. Richard E. Rodda

String Quartet no. 11 in F minor, op. 95, "Serioso"

Ludwig van Beethoven

Beethoven was unable to take his usual extended country vacation during the summer of 1810, and settled instead for shuttling between Vienna and the distant suburb of Baden, where the Op. 95 Quartet was begun and completed by October. "Serioso," he called it, the only of his quartets to which he appended a descriptive sobriquet, and it may well reflect the flow of his emotions during that time, when Napoleon's troops had invaded Vienna and his own health and finances were increasingly troublesome. But it is also a serious work in that it looks forward to the mighty concerns of form, texture and expression that he was to address in his final series of quartets, written during the last three years of his life.

The F minor Quartet, the shortest and the most highly compressed example of the genre Beethoven wrote, grapples with the philosophic/artistic problem he had broached in the Fifth Symphony: the "apotheosis" or "struggle to victory." "In this Quartet," wrote Joseph Kerman, "Beethoven evokes that almost tangible sense of the artist assaulting a demon of his own fancying; we admire the process of assault, conquest, assertion or becoming that the illusion permits." The struggle is joined immediately with the opening movement. The music is shorn of everything unessential—transitions, unrelated figurations, even the repeat of the exposition are abandoned in favor of the most lean, concentrated, forceful presentation of the musical materials and their development. Almost in mid-thought, certainly without any sense of resolution, the movement fades away to an inconclusive ending. The Allegretto, though hymnal in texture and contemplative in mood, is prevented from banishing the accumulated uneasiness of the preceding movement by its chromatic uncertainty and shifting tonalities. The Scherzo, propulsive yet somber, begins without pause. After a brief, expressive introduction, the haunted finale follows a rondo form until its closing page, when, at long last, the music is freed from the tragic tonality of F minor into the sunlight of its major-key coda.

Voodoo Dolls for String Quartet

Jessie Montgomery

Violinist, composer and music educator Jessie Montgomery, who served as Mead Composer-in-Residence with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra from 2021 to 2024, started studying violin at age four at the Third Street Music School Settlement in her native New York City. She was composing by 11, and while still in high school twice received the Composer's Apprentice Award from the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Montgomery went on to earn a bachelor's degree in violin performance at Juilliard and a master's from New York University in film scoring and multimedia; she also studied composition with Derek Bermel and Steven Burke and is currently a Graduate Fellow in Music Composition at Princeton University. In 2020, she was appointed to the faculty of the Mannes School of Music in New York, and in September 2022 was appointed Composer-in-Residence at Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, Among her rapidly accumulating distinctions are the Leonard Bernstein Award from the ASCAP Foundation, Sphinx Medal of Excellence and recognition as Musical America's "2023 Composer of the Year." In September 2021, Montgomery was commissioned by The Metropolitan Opera along with two other Black composers—Valerie Coleman and Joel Thompson—to develop new works in collaboration with the Lincoln Center Theater. Montgomery wrote, "Voodoo Dolls was commissioned in 2008 and choreographed by the JUMP! Dance Company of Rhode Island, a collaborative work among their faculty and the program's youthful students. The work was included in a suite of dances, each one representing a different traditional children's doll: Russian dolls, marionettes, rag dolls, Barbie, voodoo dolls...Voodoo Dolls was influenced by West African drumming patterns and lyrical chant motives, all of which feature improvisation within the ensemble."

Quintet for Oboe, Clarinet, Violin, Viola and Double Bass, op. 39

Sergei Prokofiev

After Russian émigré conductor Sergei Koussevitzky had successfully premiered his Violin Concerto No. 1 at his Parisian concert of October 18, 1923, Sergei Prokofiev thought the time had come for him to end his residency in America (and, briefly, Germany), and settle in the French capital. Given the French proclivity for modernity, Prokofiev thought that Paris was a good place to try a new symphony, his second, which he determined was "to be made of iron and steel." Koussevitzky commissioned the Symphony No. 2 from him early in 1924, and Prokofiev worked on the score as much as his busy piano performance schedule and the birth of his first child, Sviatoslav, allowed. "In order to earn some money while writing the Symphony," he recalled, "I accepted a commission [in July 1924] to compose a ballet for a roving dance troupe that wished to present a program of several short pieces accompanied by an ensemble of oboe, clarinet, violin, viola and double bass. The simple plot, based on circus life, was titled Trapeze." The company toured Trapeze through Germany and Italy during 1925, after which the ballet was forgotten, though Prokofiev reworked the music into a six-movement concert suite for the original instrumentation. The Quintet, Op. 39 was premiered on March 6, 1927 in Moscow during one of Prokofiev's visits to his homeland in the years preceding his permanent return there in 1933.

Prokofiev noted that the Second Symphony and the Quintet were among his "most chromatic works," and cited them as examples of the "modern" strain of his creative personality. The Quintet opens with an oboe theme with an abundance of cock-eyed "wrong" notes. The music toddles along for a while, stumbles upon the oboe theme again, and then abruptly stops. Two variations follow, though they are concerned as much with the open-interval accompaniment figures as with the oboe's theme. The original music returns to close the movement. The Andante is a sort of contrapuntal free-for-all based on the theme given by the double bass. Prokofiev took a certain glee in noting that the "impractical rhythms" of the following Allegro (i.e., patterns of eighth notes grouped 3+4+3 in a 5/4 measure) "gave the choreographer a great deal of trouble." The Adagio is less music of theme and harmony than of shifting instrumental colors. The following Allegro is an insouciant march. The closing Andantino juxtaposes two strains of music—a duet for the woodwinds (A) and a lively 6/8 passage shared by the full ensemble (B)—in the simple structural pattern A–B–A–B.

BRENDON ELLIOTT, VIOLIN

BRENDON ELLIOTT is a Sphinx Competition Laureate who received his B.M. studying with Pamela Frank and Joseph Silverstein at The Curtis Institute of Music, and attained his master's at The Juilliard School under Sylvia Rosenberg and Ronald Copes. Following school, he completed a fellowship with the New World Symphony. He began his violin studies under his mother's tutelage at the age of three and made his solo debut when he was 10 years old. He was chosen to be featured on NPR's From the Top at 13. At age 17, Brendon was invited as a guest soloist with the Richmond Symphony Orchestra after winning their concerto competition thrice. That same year he toured with the Virginia Symphony Orchestra performing Adolphus Hailstork's Violin Concerto as an opener for Natalie Cole. Brendon has since soloed with The Cleveland Orchestra. New York Philharmonic, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Harlem Chamber Players, Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, and has performed in orchestras such as the Sphinx Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and Chineke! Orchestra. Brendon is a member of the Virginia Symphony Orchestra and is currently touring as Joseph Bologne's musical half in Bill Barclay's play The Chevalier. The New York Times review of The Chevalier wrote, "Elliott lends his silvery tone, superb phrasing and a commanding technique to the Chevalier's solos."

JULIAN MADDOX, VIOLIN

JULIAN MADDOX is a violinist from Minneapolis, Minnesota. He received both his undergraduate and graduate degrees at the Cleveland Institute of Music as a student of William Preucil, Kathleen Winkler, Jan Sloman and Jaime Laredo. Julian began his studies at the age of six, working extensively with Sally O'Reilly. He has been a prizewinner in the Schubert Club, Thursday Musical, MNSOTA and MTNA Competitions. Julian is a devoted chamber musician, as his ensembles have won first place in the MNSOTA Chamber Music Competition and worked with members of the Cleveland, Takács, Emerson, Danish, Jupiter and Cavani String Quartets. He is dedicated to presenting contemporary music, having worked with composers such as Keith Fitch, Jeffrey Mumford, Melinda Wagner and Andrew Norman. Previously, Julian served as a contract player with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. He regularly performs with the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra and serves as acting concertmaster of the Minneapolis Pops Orchestra. He has also performed with the San Diego, New World, Sphinx and the Canton symphonies. In 2022, Julian was incredibly humbled to join the faculty of the National Orchestral Institute + Festival, as a longtime participant and advocate of the program.

QUINN PRICE, VIOLIN

Violinist **QUINN PRICE** is an active performer and chamber musician in the Seattle area. A former member of the Richmond Symphony, he currently plays as a member of the Pacific Northwest Ballet Orchestra and as principal second of the Northwest Sinfonietta. He also plays with other ensembles including Auburn Symphony Orchestra, Seattle Chamber Orchestra and the Fifth Avenue Theater. He holds performance degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music (B.M.) and the University of Texas at Austin (M.M.). While at CIM he was a student of Stephen Rose, and was a recipient of the Dr. Jerome Gross Prize in Violin.

LAUREN SPAULDING, VIOLA

Noted for "genre-defying" performances with "distinct sonic identity" and "ethereal refinement" (Gramophone Magazine/Musical America), **DR. LAUREN SPAULDING** captivates international audiences as a versatile chamber musician and viola soloist. Spaulding is a member of both the Thalea String Quartet in Residence at the University of Toronto and Tallā Rouge Duo, the 23'-24' ensemble in residence at Harvard University's esteemed Dumbarton Oaks. As a performer Spaulding has toured internationally in over 20 countries, sharing chamber concerts, recitals and solo performances with acclaimed artists such as the St. Lawrence Quartet, Carolin Widmann, Laurence Lesser, Jorja Fleezanis, Attacca Quartet, Brentano Quartet and with members of the London Haydn Quartet, Orpheus, Pro Arte Quartet, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, The Knights, A Far Cry and Imani Winds. She has appeared in broadcast and television productions of the BBC, Netflix, NPR Live Sessions, and has aired as featured album of the week on the CBC.

SEBASTIAN STEFANOVIC, VIOLA

Violist **SEBASTIAN STEFANOVIC** is a tenured member of The Florida Orchestra and a Baltimore native. He earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Rice University's Shepherd School of Music, where he studied with Ivo-Jan van der Werff. Stefanovic is a passionate advocate for new music and the expansion of the viola repertoire. He has commissioned, premiered and recorded various solo and ensemble works, including the winning composition of the American Viola Society's Gardner Prize. This summer, he looks forward to joining the viola section of the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music. As a chamber musician, Stefanovic has received fellowships at the Aspen Music Festival and the Robert Mann String Quartet Seminar. He enjoys innovative and multifaceted programming, frequently curating interdisciplinary collaborations for the Houston-based conductorless string orchestra Kinetic. Since relocating to Tampa Bay, Stefanovic has been instrumental in creating and co-teaching a seven-week Community Strings Summer Program, now in its third year, as the first community-embedded musician of The Florida Orchestra. He also serves as the director of the Pinellas Youth Philharmonic.

MAKI KUBOTA, CELLO

MAKI KUBOTA is a cellist with the Houston Symphony. He has performed as a guest with the New York Philharmonic, Charleston Symphony, Bozeman Symphony, and Dallas Symphony, where he also won a position in the cello section. Maki has toured through Europe and Colombia with the Houston Symphony, recorded in Granada Spain for IBS Classical, and appeared as a guest artist at festivals such as the Music Academy of the West and La Jolla Summerfest. He has served on faculty at the National Youth Philharmonic of Colombia, the National Orchestral Institute + Festival, Texas All-State Strings Camp, and New Mexico Music Festival and Orchestral Academy. Maki is a faculty member at Texas Southern University, and also maintains a private studio in Houston where his students have been accepted to schools such as the New England Conservatory, Peabody Conservatory, Oberlin College, Indiana University, University of Michigan and Cleveland Institute of Music, to name a few. His former teachers include Alan Stepansky at the Peabody Institute and Desmond Hoebig at Rice University.

BRAIZAHN JONES, BASS

BRAIZAHN JONES is the Assistant Principal Bassist of the Oregon Symphony and a graduate of The Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied with Hal Robinson and Edgar Meyer. Originally from Las Vegas, NV, he began his studies with Paul Firak before attending The Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University under Jeffrey Weisner, later transferring to Curtis in 2014.

Braizahn has performed and toured with The Philadelphia Orchestra and Seattle Symphony, and is an active freelance musician, appearing at Chamber Music Northwest, the Oregon Bach Festival, the Bellingham Music Festival and the Jackson Hole Chamber Music Festival. A dedicated educator, he serves on the faculty of the National Orchestral Institute + Festival and Reed College, maintains a full private studio, and has taught at programs such as the Pacific Music Institute in Honolulu and various international double bass workshops.

BETHANY SLATER, OBOE

BETHANY SLATER is a multifaceted artist based in Washington, D.C. She has been the oboist for Grammy-nominated Inscape Chamber Orchestra since 2012. An avid chamber musician, she has performed at the Jackson Hole Chamber Music Festival, Pikes Falls Chamber Music Festival and the Windham Chamber Music Festival. She has previously held positions with the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra at Lincoln Center and the Glens Falls Symphony Orchestra. In addition to performing, Bethany owns and runs Bethany's Reed Shop, a hand-made oboe reed business with clients spanning the globe. She is also a ceramicist and has had her pottery showcased in galleries throughout the United States as well as in the Ceramics Monthly publication. She teaches pottery classes at the District Clay Center and the Art League. Slater received a B.M. in oboe performance from the Eastman School of Music where she studied with Richard Killmer. She then continued her studies with David Walter at the Paris Conservatory with a Fulbright grant. In 2007, she was a finalist in the Gillet International Oboe Competition.

JUAN ESTEBAN MARTINEZ, CLARINET

A native of Colombia, JUAN ESTEBAN MARTINEZ moved to the Dominican Republic at the age of 4. Juan holds the position of Principal Clarinet of the New Jersey Symphony and the Orchestra Lumos, in Stamford CT. Prior to joining the New Jersey Symphony, Juan was acting second clarinetist of the Phoenix Symphony Orchestra. In 2022, he was awarded first prize at the Sphinx Orchestral Partners Auditions (SOPA) Competition. Juan is a graduate of the Yale School of Music and the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University, where he studied with David Shifrin and Anthony McGill. He received the first prize in the Texas Music Festival Concerto Competition. In 2019, he was selected by concert pianist Gabriela Montero to conform the Gabriela Montero Ensemble, debuting with a program of Montero's original compositions at the prestigious Victoria Hall in Geneva, Switzerland. An avid chamber musician and soloist, Juan has appeared as soloist numerous times with the National Symphony Orchestra of the Dominican Republic, the Caldas Symphony Orchestra in Colombia, The Coeur d'Alene Symphony, among others. Highlights of his upcoming performances include solo performances with the New Jersey Symphony, Orchestra Lumos and the Symphony of the Americas, performing clarinet concertos of Mozart, Copland and Weber. Juan is a Buffet Crampon Performing Artist and performs exclusively on Buffet clarinets.



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