

Thursday, February 5, 2015 at 8:00pm

Musical Preview by Opus 21 at 7:00pm

Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall

Please note that this program replaces Isabelle Faust and Alexander Melnikov who were originally scheduled to appear tonight but were forced to cancel due to illness. We are grateful to Mr. Jackiw and Ms. Polonsky for stepping in on such short notice.

STEFAN JACKIW, *Violin*
ANNA POLONSKY, *Piano*

MAURICE RAVEL (1875-1937)

Tzigane

Lento, quasi cadenza

WITOLD LUTOSŁAWSKI (1913-1994)

Partita

—INTERMISSION—

KAIJA SAARIAHO (b. 1952)

Nocturne, *in memory of W. Lutoslawski*

CÉSAR FRANCK (1822-1890)

Sonata in A Major for Violin and Piano, FWV 8

Allegretto ben moderato

Allegro

Recitativo – Fantasia ben moderato

Allegretto poco mosso

The artists appear by arrangement with Opus 3 Artists

ABOUT STEFAN JACKIW

Violinist Stefan Jackiw is recognized as one of his generation's most significant artists, captivating audiences with playing that combines poetry and purity with an impeccable technique. Hailed for playing of "uncommon musical substance" that is "striking for its intelligence and sensitivity" (*Boston Globe*), Jackiw has appeared as soloist with the Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, Philadelphia, and San Francisco Symphony Orchestras, among others, and he has collaborated with such renowned conductors as Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Andris Nelsons, Charles Dutoit, David Robertson, Marin Alsop, Sir Andrew Davis, and Yuri Temirkanov. His solo performance of Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto with the YouTube Symphony Orchestra at Australia's Sydney Opera House in March 2014 was seen live on YouTube by more than 30 million people worldwide.

Highlights of Jackiw's 2014/15 season include a tour of Australia playing Mendelssohn with the Australian Chamber Orchestra, and appearances with the Detroit Symphony, Oregon Symphony, Fort Worth Symphony, BBC Scottish Symphony, Philharmonische Orchester Heidelberg, Orquesta Sinfónica de Galicia de la Coruna, Dortmunder Philharmoniker, and Tampere Philharmonic. He also returns to the Aspen Festival performing Lutoslawski's Partita alongside Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 5. In March 2014 he gave the world premiere of American composer David Fulmer's Violin Concerto No. 2 *Jubilant Arcs*, written for him and commissioned by the Heidelberg Festival with the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie under Matthias Pintscher.



Last season, Jackiw made his Carnegie Hall recital debut performing Stravinsky, Brahms, Strauss and the world premiere of a new work for piano and violin by David Fulmer. Other season highlights included performances of Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 5 with

the St. Louis Symphony under Nicholas McGegan, and with the Rotterdam Philharmonic under Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Jackiw's return engagements included performances with the Indianapolis Symphony under Krzysztof Urbanski, the Pittsburgh Symphony under Juraj Valcuha, and the Kansas City Symphony under Michael Stern.

Jackiw is also an active recitalist and chamber musician. He has performed in numerous important festivals and concert series, including the Aspen Music Festival, Ravinia Festival, and Caramoor International Music Festival, the Celebrity Series of Boston, New York's Mostly Mozart Festival, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Washington Performing Arts Society and the Louvre

Recital Series in Paris. As a chamber musician, Jackiw has collaborated with such artists as pianist Jeremy Denk, cellists Steven Isserlis and Yo-Yo Ma, and violinist Gil Shaham. At the opening night of Carnegie Hall's Zankel Hall in New York, Jackiw was the only young artist invited to perform, playing alongside such artists as pianist Emanuel Ax, soprano Renée Fleming, piano Evgeny Kissin, and conductor James Levine.

On disc, Jackiw is garnering acclaim for his debut album of the Brahms Violin Sonatas with pianist Max Levinson (Sony). *Fanfare* magazine proclaimed, "Jackiw is fantastic. ... This is now the recording of Brahms's violin sonatas to have."

Born in 1985 to physicist parents of Korean and German descent, Stefan Jackiw began playing the violin at the age of four. His teachers have included Zinaida Gilels, Michèle Auclair, and Donald Weilerstein. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Harvard University, as well as an Artist Diploma from the New England Conservatory, and is the recipient of a prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant. He lives in New York City.

“A 14-year-old violinist took the London music world by storm.”

—*Strad Magazine* on Jackiw's European debut

ABOUT 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 Columbus Symphony Orchestra, the Memphis Symphony, the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, and many others. Ms. Polonsky has collaborated with the Guarneri, Orion, Daedalus, and Shanghai Quartets, and with such musicians as pianists Mitsuko Uchida and Richard Goode, clarinetist David Shifrin, and violinists Ida and Ani Kavafian and

Arnold Steinhardt. She is regularly invited to perform 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. Ms. 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, and appeared in Richardson Auditorium with them in the Fall as part of PUC's family concert series. In 2006 she took a 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, 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, where she worked with 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. She is a Steinway Artist.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

By Peter Laki, ©2015

MAURICE RAVEL (1875-1937)

Tzigane (1924)

It was in 1922 that Ravel first met the Hungarian-born violinist Jelly d'Áranyi, who was the niece of the great 19th-century violinist Joseph Joachim and the recent dedicatee of two violin sonatas by Béla Bartók. At a private musicale where d'Áranyi performed Ravel's Sonata for Violin and Cello with cellist Hans Kindler, the composer asked the violinist to play some Gypsy melodies. As pianist Gaby Casadesus, who was present, later recalled, this "continued until about 5 a.m., with everyone exhausted except the violinist and the composer." This is how the idea for Tzigane was born, although Ravel did not actually write the piece until two years later, just in time for the London premiere, played—of course—by Miss d'Áranyi.

The Gypsy flavor can be felt in every measure of this brilliant concert rhapsody. The violin part is fiendishly difficult and the Gypsy melodies are garnished with spicy harmonies, emphasizing the wildness of an exotic musical culture that endlessly fascinated the composer.

It is not universally known that Tzigane exists in three versions: in addition to the two familiar ones (violin with piano and violin with orchestra), there is a version for violin and luthéal, which was, in the words of Ravel biographer Arbie Orenstein, “a short-lived attachment to the keyboard with produces the approximate timbre of a Hungarian cimbalom or a harpsichord.”

WITOLD LUTOSŁAWSKI (1913-1994)

Partita (1984)

Witold Lutosławski's artistic path led him from an early nationalistic-folkloristic phase to the forefront of modern music in the 1960s, and from there to a unique blend of innovation and tradition achieved in the works of his late period. The present Partita is a product of those years of artistic synthesis. It was originally written for Pinchas Zukerman and Marc Neikrug, who gave the world premiere in St. Paul, Minnesota, on January 18, 1985. In 1988, Lutosławski made a version for violin and orchestra at the request of Anne-Sophie Mutter. The composer provided a brief outline in the preface to the score:

The work consists of five movements. Of these the main movements are the first (*Allegro giusto*), the third (*Largo*) and the fifth (*Presto*). The second and fourth are but short interludes to be played *ad libitum*. A short *ad libitum* section also appears before the end of the last movement.

Ad libitum, in this case, means that the violin and the piano play without any coordination whatsoever; they play their parts independently and then give each other a cue when rhythmic coordination resumes. The contrast between precisely defined and looser formal sections is a typical feature of Lutosławski's music; their alternation not only serves to generate the work's structure, but also bears out Lutosławski's conviction that there are times when it is beneficial for a composer to relinquish 100% control over his or her material.

The first of the “main” movements alternates between fast motion and lyrical,

expressive moments, including one where the violin melody moves in quarter-tones, where the smaller-than-usual distances between pitches adds to the emotional intensity of the passage. The central Largo is an expansive aria for violin on which the heavy chords of the piano part confer a certain sense of dignity; but the majestic motion is enlivened, time and time again, by delicately expressive, faster-moving violin passages, at one point even evoking some mysterious birdsong. The final Presto brings the whole Partita to its climax with vigorous motion, virtuoso flourishes with harmonics, and more.

KAIJA SAARIAHO (b. Helsinki, 1952)

Nocturne, *in memoriam Witold Lutosławski* (1994)

Lutosławski's death was mourned by the music world as the loss of one of the defining figures of classical music in the post-war era. Several composers dedicated works in memory of their deceased senior colleague; in addition to several eminent Polish composers, these included Toru Takemitsu (*Paths* for trumpet) and Magnus Lindberg (*Aura* for orchestra). Kaija Saariaho, like Lindberg a world-famous Finnish composer (they collaborated in the Ears Open group in Helsinki many years ago), contributed the present brief work for unaccompanied violin. Nocturne shares material with Saariaho's violin concerto, *Graal Theatre*, on which she was working when she received the news of Lutosławski's passing.

It is a quiet and meditative composition in which timbral contrasts play a defining role—contrasts between regular notes and harmonics (played with a lighter touch to produce overtones), as well as between normal bowing and bowing close to the fingerboard or near the bridge (*sul tasto* and *sul ponticello*). Between a calm beginning and ending, there is a faster and more energetic middle section that, however, still needs to be played *dolce* (gently), according to the composer's instructions. Nocturne was first performed by Finnish violinist and conductor John Storgårds in Helsinki on February 16, 1994—only nine days after Lutosławski's death.

CÉSAR FRANCK (1822-1890)

Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major (1886)

For many years, César Franck worked as an organist at Sainte-Clotilde, which was not one of Paris's most prestigious churches. His father had destined him for the career of a travelling piano virtuoso *à la* Franz Liszt. The dreams, however, did

not come true, and Franck had to settle for a less glamorous existence. His first major break did not come until he was fifty; in 1872, he was appointed to the Paris Conservatoire as a professor of organ. But even that did not necessarily mean success as a composer. His large-scale oratorios and other sacred works failed to make an impression. It was only during the last decade of his life that he wrote the series of masterpieces (including the Violin Sonata, the Symphony, and the String Quartet) in which he reached the summit of his art.

The Violin Sonata was written in 1886, as a wedding present for the great violinist Eugène Ysaÿe (1858-1931), like Franck a native of Liège, Belgium. The first public performance was given by Ysaÿe and pianist Léontine Bordes-Pène in Brussels on December 16, 1886, at a concert devoted to Franck's works. The Sonata had an enormous success. The director of the Brussels Conservatoire congratulated the composer with the words: "You have transformed chamber music: thanks to you a new vision of the future has been revealed to our eyes."

The director was not exaggerating. Franck's only contribution to the solo violin literature was also a unique achievement in that it introduced into chamber music certain techniques never previously used in that medium. Inspired by Liszt's symphonic poems, Franck linked the four movements of the Sonata together by a network of thematic recurrences. The characters of the themes

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are sometimes fundamentally transformed in this process. Franck also used counterpoint more extensively than did most Romantic composers—in part because, as an organ player, he was deeply immersed in the music of J.S. Bach. Moreover, Franck had been touched by the style of Richard Wagner, who had died in 1883 but was still the most controversial modern composer in Europe. In the Violin Sonata, Franck repeatedly used a variant of the famous “Tristan” chord. He combined all these influences, however, with a boundless melodic invention all his own.

The Sonata has an unusual movement sequence. In most sonatas, the longest and weightiest movement comes at the beginning. In the Franck sonata, this movement stands in second place, preceded by a dreamy “Allegretto ben moderato.”

The passionate second movement is in the key of D Minor that was often used to depict tempestuous emotions. The third movement is a “Recitativo-Fantasia” that, in what was an extraordinary move in 1886, entirely dispenses with the idea of a main tonal center. The key changes constantly as the violin plays two unaccompanied cadenzas, separated by a nostalgic recollection of the first movement’s opening melody on the piano. The movement continues with an “aria” for violin that is in turn lyrical and dramatic, with a *molto lento e mesto* (“very slow and sad”) ending. Finally, the fourth movement crowns the Sonata with a real *tour de force*: its initial melody is played by the two instruments in canon—that is, the melodic lines are the same, with the violin starting one measure after the piano. The remaining themes come from the third movement, turning the “aria” into a major dramatic outburst. A recapitulation of the canon theme and a short, exuberant coda ends this great sonata.

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