

## 2 Resonance

### 1–5 String Quartet in d minor, op. 56, *Voces Intimae* (1909)

**JEAN SIBELIUS** (1865–1957)

*Andante – Allegro molto moderato*

5:25

*Vivace*

2:32

*Adagio di molto*

9:36

*Allegretto (ma pesante)*

5:44

*Allegro*

5:07

ESCHER STRING QUARTET: ADAM BARNETT-HART, WU JIE, *violins*;

PIERRE LAPOINTE, *viola*; DANE JOHANSEN, *cello*

### 6 Dover Beach, op. 3 (1931)

**SAMUEL BARBER** (1910–1981)

7:36

KELLY MARKGRAF, *baritone*; ESCHER STRING QUARTET:

ADAM BARNETT-HART, WU JIE, *violins*; PIERRE LAPOINTE, *viola*;

DANE JOHANSEN, *cello*

### 7 Romance of Hsiao and Ch'in (1995; rev. 1999)

**CHEN YI** (b. 1953)

3:27

JORJA FLEEZANIS, *violin*; JEFFREY KAHANE, *piano*

### 8–13 Six épigraphes antiques (1914)

**CLAUDE DEBUSSY** (1862–1918)

I. Pour invoquer Pan

2:11

II. Pour un tombeau sans nom

2:40

III. Pour que la nuit soit propice

1:57

IV. Pour la danseuse aux crotales

2:12

V. Pour l'égyptienne

2:23

VI. Pour remercier la pluie au matin

2:07

JEFFREY KAHANE, WU HAN, *piano*

### 14 Evocación from *Iberia Suite*, B. 47,

Book 1 (1905–1909)

5:26

**ISAAC ALBÉNIZ** (1860–1909)

JEFFREY KAHANE, *piano*

### 15 Das himmlische Leben

from *Symphony no. 4* (1899–1900)

9:34

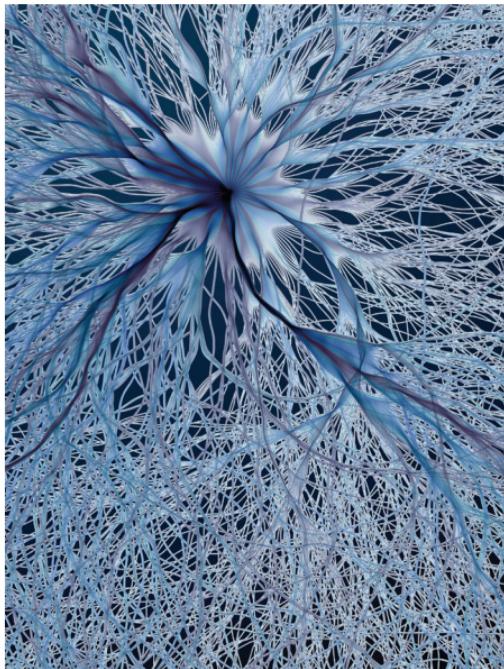
**GUSTAV MAHLER** (1860–1911)

SUSANNE MENTZER, *mezzo-soprano*; CAROL WINCENC, *flute/piccolo*; JAMES AUSTIN SMITH, *oboe/English horn*; JOSE FRANCH-BALLESTER, *clarinet*; JEFFREY KAHANE, *piano*; HYEYEON PARK, *harmonium*; JORJA FLEEZANIS, WU JIE, *violins*; PIERRE LAPOINTE, *viola*; NICHOLAS CANELLAKIS, *cello*; SCOTT PINGEL, *bass*; FLORIAN CONZETTI, CHRISTOPHER FROH, *percussion*

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# Music@Menlo *LIVE*

## 2 Resonance



SIBELIUS	String Quartet in d minor, <i>Voces Intimae</i>
BARBER	<i>Dover Beach</i>
CHEN YI	<i>Romance of Hsiao and Ch'in</i>
DEBUSSY	<i>Six épigraphes antiques</i>
ALBÉNIZ	<i>Evocación</i> from <i>Iberia Suite</i>
MAHLER	<i>Das himmlische Leben</i>

# Music@Menlo *LIVE*

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## 2 Resonance

Music@Menlo's tenth-anniversary season, *Resonance*, explored the many ways in which music resonates within the listener. Music has an immense capacity to nurture the mind, transport listeners to new places, and, ultimately, delight the ears and stir the hearts of all people. Each disc of the 2012 edition of Music@Menlo *LIVE* captures the essence of *Resonance* and the festival's milestone season.

Disc II explores music's ability to transport audiences to places near and far. Samuel Barber's *Dover Beach* depicts a picturesque English shoreline. Jean Sibelius's brooding String Quartet in d minor enraptures listeners with the brutal winters and stark memories of his native Finland. Debussy delivers listeners to the Greek isle of Lesbos, while Albéniz conveys images of the Iberian Peninsula. The disc culminates in Gustav Mahler's enchanting setting of a child's vision of heaven.

### **JEAN SIBELIUS (1865–1957)**

#### **String Quartet in d minor, op. 56, *Voces Intimae* (1909)**

By the turn of the twentieth century, Finnish composer Jean Sibelius's fame had been secured by the success of his first two symphonies, which had been performed to remarkable acclaim throughout Western Europe. However, by 1909, Sibelius's poor money management and declining health had reached a dire state, and, for the first time, he was haunted by his own mortality. Around this time of deep introspection, Sibelius began work on his String Quartet in d minor, the only substantial chamber music work he would write after the turn of the century.



Jean Sibelius's String Quartet in d minor, op. 5, *Voces Intimae*. Escher String Quartet: Adam Barnett-Hart, Wu Jie, Pierre Lapointe, and Dane Johansen.

Subtitled *Voces Intimae*, or *Intimate Voices*, the string quartet is a remarkable and deeply personal statement. Though there is no known program, the work can be construed through its somber and stormy qualities as a representation of the turbulent Finnish wilderness and harsh winters. The third movement serves as the emotional core of the string quartet. In the manuscript, over the first bars, Sibelius mysteriously wrote the phrase "voces intimae." Though there is palpable angst and despair throughout the movement, near the end, Sibelius finds temporary resolution and repose.

## SAMUEL BARBER (1910–1981)

### *Dover Beach*, op. 3 (1931)

American composer Samuel Barber was always drawn to the human voice. One of his first compositions was an operetta entitled *The Rose Tree*, based on a libretto by the family cook, which Barber composed when he was ten years old. This lifelong fascination would permeate Barber's musical language—highlighted by the distinct and fluid lyricism which became a hallmark of much of his music across genres.

*Dover Beach* is a setting of a poem by the same name, written by the English Victorian poet Matthew Arnold. It is thought that the poem was written while Arnold was on his honeymoon at Dover Beach. The poem depicts the English shoreline around the ferry port of Dover, Kent, at the narrowest point of the English Channel. In its stunningly beautiful language, the poem begins with a description of the coastline and sets up the serene but perhaps bleak night scene. Barber, through music, begins his musical depiction with two violins, the second violin playing a flowing line complementing the yearning theme in the first. The flow of the music becomes notably more restrained in the second stanza, at the introduction of Sophocles's idea of "the turbid ebb and flow of human misery." The opening texture, accentuated by the rich depth of the viola and cello, returns near the work's conclusion, revealing the "eternal note of sadness" inherent in the sea.

—Isaac Thompson

## CHEN YI (b. 1953)

### *Romance of Hsiao and Ch'in* (1995; rev. 1999)

*Romance of Hsiao and Ch'in* was originally composed in 1995 for two violins and string orchestra, dedicated to Maestro Yehudi Menuhin and Edna Michell. It was premiered by Shlomo Mintz and Elmar Oliveira with the Orchestra of St. Luke's conducted by Maestro Menuhin at "A Benefit Tribute to Yehudi Menuhin" at Lincoln Center, August 11, 1996. Responding to many requests, I created this version for violin and piano in 1999.

*Romance of Hsiao and Ch'in* is written for Western musical instruments reproducing the style of the *hsiao* and *ch'in*, traditional Chinese instruments. The *hsiao* is a vertical bamboo flute that carries lyrical melodies through delicate lines, grace notes, and silence. The *ch'in* is a two-thousand-year-old Chinese seven-string zither, with a rich repertoire in the history of Chinese music and literature. In performance, the *ch'in* produces various articulations through different fingerings of plucking and vibrato, played with both hands. These two instruments are often played together and produce a good balance for sonority.

In this version of *Romance*, the solo violin transmits the lyrical sense of the *hsiao*, expressing my love for humanities, while the piano accompaniment, sounding like an enlarged *ch'in*, symbolizes nature.

—Chen Yi

## CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862–1918)

### *Six épigraphes antiques* for Piano, Four Hands (1914)

In 1894, the French writer Pierre Louÿs, a close friend to Claude Debussy, translated and published a controversial collection of 143 erotic poems and songs by Bilitis, a supposed contemporary of Sappho, the ancient Greek poet native to the island of Lesbos most known today for her early writings on sexuality and gender roles. Shortly after *Les chansons de Bilitis* was published, it was revealed that Louÿs had imitated the writing style of Sappho under the pseudonym Bilitis and that the work was counterfeit Greek period writing. Nevertheless, Louÿs's work proved compelling in its own right, and Debussy derived two works from it: *Les chansons de Bilitis* (1900–1901), an accompaniment to three of Louÿs's poems, and *Six épigraphes antiques* (1914), where he used six of the poems as inspiration. The *Six épigraphes* are one of only three pieces Debussy originally published for piano, four hands, alongside the *Petite suite* and *Marche écossaise*.

—Andrew Goldstein

## ISAAC ALBÉNIZ (1860–1909)

### ***Evocación* from *Iberia Suite, B. 47, Book I* (1905–1909)**

In 1905, Albéniz began working on his *Iberia Suite*, a remarkable four-volume musical travelogue evoking places throughout the Iberian Peninsula. *Iberia* is a pianistic masterpiece and arguably the composer's most important work. *Evocación* comes from the first book of *Iberia*. Though the title does not suggest a specific locale, the piece features elements of the Spanish fandango, a lively triple-meter dance, as well as the Navarrese *jota*, another triple-meter dance hailing from Spain's northern Navarra region. The work's dreamy and coloristic soundscape beautifully demonstrates Albéniz's rich musical language.

## GUSTAV MAHLER (1860–1911)

### ***Das himmlische Leben* from *Symphony no. 4* (1899–1900)**

Perhaps the greatest symphonist of the twentieth century, Gustav Mahler created a remarkable body of large-scale orchestral works that remains unparalleled in its scope and emotional breadth. The genesis of the Fourth Symphony is rooted in Mahler's deep fascination with the collection of German folk poetry entitled *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. While work on the symphony proper took place between 1899 and 1900, the Fourth Symphony took for its finale a song actually composed in 1892: "Das himmlische Leben"—or "The Heavenly Life."

The movement is a depiction of a child's view of heaven. The piece begins with a beautifully simple clarinet melody, which is passed to the oboe and flute. The soprano enters in the spirit of the opening, displaying Mahler's incredible and ingenious ability to spin a seemingly simple melody out of just about any material. Near the end of the movement, Mahler turns to the sunny key of E major, the tender, quiet music transporting listeners to a more peaceful place.

—Isaac Thompson



Samuel Barber's *Dover Beach*. L-R: Adam Barnett-Hart, Wu Jie, Kelly Markgraf, Dane Johansen, and Pierre Lapointe.

## About Music@Menlo

Music@Menlo is an internationally acclaimed three-week summer festival and institute that combines world-class chamber music performances, extensive audience engagement with artists, intensive training for preprofessional musicians, and efforts to enhance and broaden the chamber music community of the San Francisco Bay Area. An immersive and engaging experience centered around a distinctive array of programming, Music@Menlo enriches its core concert programs with numerous opportunities for in-depth learning to intensify audiences' enjoyment and understanding of the music and provide meaningful ways for aficionados and newcomers of all ages to explore classical chamber music.