Music@Menlo LIVE

Maps and Legends 1–8

Music@Menlo *LIVE*

1 Maps and Legends

Music@Menlo's eighth season, *Maps and Legends,* explored a wide compass of times, places, and universal phenomena. The season's offerings ranged from programs that celebrated a nation's identity to music composed in response to the changing of the seasons and the trauma of war. The 2010 edition of Music@Menlo *LIVE* chronicles this fascinating journey, preserving for listeners the exceptional performances that made *Maps and Legends* such a memorable experience.

Disc 1 captures the magic of 2010's opening-night program. The distinct interpretations of four virtuoso soloists combined for a uniquely dynamic reading of *The Four Seasons* of Antonio Vivaldi. In one of the festival's most delightfully unorthodox turns, this perennially beloved Baroque masterpiece prefaced George Crumb's *Music for a Summer Evening,* a mesmerizing soundscape for two amplified pianos and percussion composed more than 250 years later.

Inon Barnatan, piano; Ani Kavafian, violin; Joshua Gindele, cello

ANTONIO VIVALDI (1678–1741): ***The Four Seasons*** (1723)

Antonio Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* makes a strong case as the Western canon's most universally familiar music. Such widespread popularity is a double-edged sword: *The Four Seasons*'s ubiquity in popular culture has too often presented as harmless background music a fiendishly inventive work by a composer of terrific originality.

The concertos that make up *The Four Seasons (Le quattro stagioni)* appeared as the first four of twelve violin concertos published as *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'inventione (The Contest between Harmony and Invention)*, op. 8. Vivaldi composed them to accompany a set of four sonnets—"La primavera," "L'estate," "L'autunno," and "L'inverno"—whose authorship is uncertain but generally attributed to Vivaldi himself. The sonnets' tripartite structures align with the three movements of each concerto, which in turn provide vivid musical depictions of the corresponding text.

The Four Seasons evinces Vivaldi's importance to the development of the Baroque concerto. His contributions to the genre, which total more than five hundred, defined the concerto form as a dialogue between soloist and ensemble and established certain formal

characteristics as standards in concerto writing. (They also established the concerto as a vehicle for instrumental virtuosity—fittingly so, given Vivaldi's stature as one of the finest violinists of his generation; more than two hundred of Vivaldi's concertos are for violin.) Vivaldi's concertos served as significant models for no less than Johann Sebastian Bach's *Brandenburg* Concertos, among other major works of the Baroque period.

But of equal importance to the formal innovations manifested in works like *The Four Seasons* are the breadth of their dramatic character and the extent of Vivaldi's vision in imagining the expressive potential of the concerto form. *The Four Seasons* concertos are remarkable for their vivid illustration of the sonnets that accompany them, whether in depicting hunting horns and guns in "Autumn" or in the chilling texture of "Winter," mimetic of the "cold in the icy snow/In the harsh breath of a horrid wind."

—Patrick Castillo

GEORGE CRUMB (b. 1929): ***Music for a Summer Evening (Makrokosmos III)*** (1974)

Music for a Summer Evening (Makrokosmos III), for two amplified pianos and percussion, was completed in February 1974. The work was commissioned by the Fromm Foundation and was written specifically for (and is dedicated to) Gilbert Kalish, James Freeman, Raymond DesRoches, and Richard Fitz. These four gifted performers premiered the work at Swarthmore College on March 30, 1974.

The combination of two pianos and percussion instruments was, of course, first formulated by Béla Bartók in his sonata of 1937, and it is curious that other composers did not subsequently contribute to the genre. Bartók was one of the very first composers to write truly expressive passages for the percussion instruments; since those days there has been a veritable revolution in percussion technique and idiom and new music has inevitably assimilated these developments. The battery of percussion instruments required for *Summer Evening* is extensive and includes vibraphone, xylophone, glockenspiel, tubular bells, crotales (antique cymbals), bell tree, claves, maracas, sleigh bells, wood blocks and temple blocks, triangles, and several varieties of drums, tam-tams, and cymbals. Certain rather exotic (and, in some cases, quite ancient) instruments are occasionally employed for their special timbral characteristics, for example: two slide whistles (in *Wanderer-Fantasy*), metal thunder sheet (in *The Advent*), African log drum, *quijada del asino* (jawbone of an ass), sistrum, Tibetan prayer stones, musical jug, alto recorder, and, in *Myth,* African thumb piano and guiro (played by the pianists). Some of the more ethereal sounds of *Summer Evening* are produced by drawing a contrabass bow over tam-tams, crotales, and vibraphone plates. This kaleidoscopic range of percussion timbre is integrated with a great variety of special sounds produced by the pianists. In *Music of the Starry Night,* for example, the piano strings are covered with sheets of paper, thereby producing a rather surrealistic distortion of the piano tone when the keys are struck.

As in several of my other works, the musical fabric of *Summer Evening* results largely from the elaboration of tiny cells into a sort of mosaic design. This time-hallowed technique seems to function in much new music, irrespective of style, as a primary structural *modus.* In its overall style, *Summer Evening* might be described as either more or less atonal or more or less tonal. The more overtly tonal passages can be defined in terms of the basic polarity f-sharp-d-sharp minor (or, enharmonically, g-flat-e-flat minor). This (most traditional) polarity is twice stated in *The Advent*—in the opening crescendo passages ("majestic, like a larger rhythm of nature") and in the concluding "Hymn for the Nativity of the Star-Child." It is stated once again in *Music of the Starry Night,* with the quotation of passages from Bach's d-sharp minor fugue (*The Well-Tempered Clavier,* Book II), and a concluding "Song of Reconciliation" in G-flat (overlaid by an intermittently resounding "Fivefold Galactic Bells" in F-sharp). One other structural device which the astute listener may perceive is the isorhythmic construction of *Myth,* which consists of simultaneously performed taleas of thirteen, seven, and eleven bars.

I feel that *Summer Evening* projects a clearly articulated large expressive curve over its approximately forty-minute duration. The first, third, and fifth movements, which are scored for the full ensemble of instruments and laid out on a large scale, would seem to

define the primary import of the work (which might be interpreted as a kind of "cosmic drama"). On the other hand, *Wanderer-Fantasy* (mostly for the two pianos alone) and the somewhat atavistic *Myth* (for percussion instruments) were conceived of as dream-like pieces functioning as intermezzos within the overall sequence of movements.

The three larger movements carry poetic quotations which were very much in my thoughts during the sketching-out process and which, I believe, find their symbolic resonance in the sounds of *Summer Evening. Nocturnal Sounds* is inscribed with an excerpt from Quasimodo: *"Odo risonanze effimere, oblío di piena notte nell'acqua stellata"* ("I hear ephemeral echoes, oblivion of full night in the starred water"). *The Advent* is associated with a passage from Pascal: *"Le silence éternel des espaces infinis m'effraie"* ("The eternal silence of infinite space terrifies me"). And the last movement, *Music of the Starry Night,* cites these transcendently beautiful images of Rilke: *"Und in den Nächten fällt die schwere Erde aus allen Sternen in die Einsamkeit. Wir alle fallen. Und doch ist Einer, welcher dieses Fallen unendlich sanft in seinen Händen halt"* ("And in the nights the heavy Earth is falling from all the stars down into loneliness. We are all falling. And yet there is One who holds this falling endlessly gently in His hands").

—George Crumb, excerpted from the liner notes to *George Crumb: Music for a Summer Evening* (Bridge Records, Inc.), reprinted with kind permission from Bridge Records, Inc., and George Crumb

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Disc 2 spotlights the rebirth of England's musical culture in the first half of the twentieth century. Following the death of Henry Purcell in 1695, England entered a long era of silence, becoming known for two centuries as "a land without music." Sir Edward Elgar reawakened England's composers to the richness of their musical heritage with his iconic *Enigma Variations* for orchestra in 1896. With Elgar leading the way, subsequent generations of English composers—including William Walton and Benjamin Britten—revitalized their country's musical landscape.

BENJAMIN BRITTEN (1913–1976): ***A Charm of Lullabies*** (1947)
Arguably England's greatest composer of the twentieth century, Benjamin Britten was an especially key figure in the advancement of that country's vocal tradition. The confluence of a deep sensitivity to literature, the composer's fruitful partnership with the tenor Peter Pears, and the particular qualities of Britten's musical language yielded an extensive catalog of vocal music whose quality is unsurpassed in the postwar era.

Ani Kavafian, violin; Lily Francis, viola; Wu Han, piano; David Finckel, cello

Britten composed his Opus 41 song cycle *A Charm of Lullabies* for the soprano Nancy Evans following the premiere of his second opera, *The Rape of Lucretia,* in 1947. Evans had doubled the lead role in the opera and was furthermore instrumental in guaranteeing the funds to launch the Aldeburgh Festival, an arts festival founded by Britten, Pears, and the librettist Eric Crozier the following year. The cycle presumably was an expression of Britten's appreciation; Evans received it in the mail with a note from Britten that the title, "thought up by Eric and me, is only provisional, do you like it?"

The cycle comprises five songs on texts by William Blake, Robert Burns, Robert Greene, Thomas Randolph, and John Philip. The poems are lullabies, but each contains some enigmatic element, magnified by Britten's musical setting. In "A Cradle Song" (a poem possibly

intended for Blake's *Songs of Innocence*), the piano accompaniment obliges "the cunning wiles that creep/In thy little heart asleep" with unsettling harmonic ambiguity. Likewise, Britten sets the cryptic words of the fourth song, "A Charm," to music at once playful and threatening. Even the cycle's sweetest moments, in "The Nurse's Song," are tempered by the haunting absence of the piano.

WILLIAM WALTON (1902–1983): **Piano Quartet** (1918–1921, revised 1955, 1974–1975)

Seeking a stronger education for his son than what their home province of Oldham offered, the English baritone and choirmaster Charles Walton enrolled ten-year-old William in the Choir School at Oxford's Christ Church. In addition to his choral training, early piano and violin lessons revealed the younger Walton's musical aptitude, and he was admitted by the Right Reverend Thomas Banks Strong, Dean of Christ Church College, to the university six years later at the age of sixteen. Recognizing Walton's musical precocity, the Reverend Strong furthermore secured the necessary funding to support his studies. In the same year as his matriculation at Christ Church College, Walton undertook his first major work, a quartet for piano and strings. He later dedicated the Piano Quartet to his benefactor as a token of gratitude.

Although Walton's foundation, rooted in his boyhood years as a Christ Church Cathedral chorister, was decidedly English, he was equally fascinated by composers ranging from Maurice Ravel and Igor Stravinsky to George Gershwin as he was by Edward Elgar and his own English contemporaries. The Piano Quartet brandishes with abandon the catholicity of Walton's palate.

An essentially English pastoral theme, introduced by the violin over a rustic drone in the cello, guides the opening *Allegramente* through a veritable harmonic wilderness. The music in turn evokes Elgar, German Romanticism, French Impressionism, and American popular song. Walton integrates these disparate elements with a degree of cohesiveness remarkable for any composer, let alone a teenager.

The *Allegro scherzando* demonstrates even greater daring, in its impish rhythmic gait as well as its harmonic freedom. A clever *fugato* passage in the strings briefly recalls the first movement's pastoral theme. The movement's highest drama occurs in passages marked by melodic breadth and spacious piano chords but encompassing divergent harmonic worlds: now in debonair Oxford fashion and then marked by harrowing chords that call to mind *The Rite of Spring*.

The lovely *Andante tranquillo* sets unabashedly heartfelt tunes in a deceptively sophisticated harmonic landscape. Murky chords in the piano colored by rarefied violin harmonics raise the curtain on the contrasting middle section; a softly crooned viola melody develops into a stark recollection of the first movement's main theme. The music intensifies and the movement's dreamy opening returns.

Echoing the thematic materials of the first movement, the closing *Allegro molto* begins with a startling burst of energy. The finale further betrays Walton's diverse spectrum of musical influences. The movement is rife with references to Stravinsky, Ravel, and jazz. A complex fugue later in the movement nods to the modal folk idiom of Walton's countryman Ralph Vaughan Williams.

EDWARD ELGAR (1857–1934): **Piano Quintet in a minor, op. 84** (1918–1919)

In 1917, with Europe engulfed in the First World War, Edward Elgar departed London for the English countryside. He remarked to a friend, "I cannot do any real work with the awful shadow over us." Elgar and his family retreated to Brinkwells, a secluded cottage in Sussex, where they could enjoy some measure of escape from the war's centrality to daily life. The change of scenery rejuvenated Elgar. He immediately set to work on two new chamber pieces: the Opus 82 Violin Sonata and Opus 83 String Quartet. He completed the sonata on September 15, 1918, and proceeded immediately to the Piano Quintet in a minor, op. 84, which has endured as his finest contribution to the chamber music literature.

When he had completed the quintet's first movement, Elgar wrote to the critic Ernest Newman (to whom he would later dedicate the work), "It is strange music I think and I like

it—but it's ghostly stuff." A spurious legend associated with the twisted trees immediately outside Brinkwells prompted the music's ghostliness. According to W. H. Reed, Elgar's biographer and one of the violinists who took part in the quintet's premiere, the work was inspired by a story about a group of Spanish monks who were turned into trees after performing a sacrilegious ritual. This supposed legend, accepted for a time as the quintet's genuine program, was actually a fiction invented by a friend of Elgar's (the perfectly named Algernon Blackwood).

Inauthenticity notwithstanding, Elgar's atmospheric music perfectly captures the spirit of the faux-legend. The piano intones a stoic melody evocative of Gregorian chant amidst eerie whispers in the strings. The influence of Brahms and German Romanticism becomes evident with the emergence of the first theme. Following the spooky introduction and Brahmsian theme, Elgar presents the lighter second subject: amiable salon music that nevertheless proceeds cautiously, as if suspicious of trouble afoot. As Elgar establishes and develops further thematic material, the "ghostly stuff" of the introduction continues to haunt the movement.

The exquisite *Adagio* is the quintet's centerpiece emotionally as well as structurally. Elgar biographer Percy M. Young writes, "[I]n some ways, the *Adagio* may be ranked as Elgar's greatest single movement." Elgar couches the serene intimacy of the heartrending theme in orchestral majesty. The spacious texture Elgar achieves with the ensemble of piano and strings is a sonic signature of English music of this period.

The finale opens with a recollection of the first movement introduction, reinforcing the quintet's sense of narrative, before the strings present a sweeping new theme en masse. Midway through the movement, Elgar unexpectedly returns the listener to the twisted trees outside Brinkwells. The first movement's sunnier second theme also reappears, now reduced to an anxious murmur. But Elgar ultimately restores the finale's confident demeanor, ending the work on a triumphant note.

—Patrick Castillo

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Disc 3 honors the great musical tradition of Vienna, the seat of Western music from the early eighteenth century to the dawn of the twentieth. Vienna was the crucible of the Classical and Romantic periods, fostering the innovations of Joseph Haydn—the father of the Classical style—and forward-looking statements like the *Serioso* Quartet of Ludwig van Beethoven, Haydn's prize pupil. Beethoven's vision for a new direction in music would be realized by the Romantic generation in such masterpieces as Johannes Brahms's Opus 36 Sextet.

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN (1732–1809): **Keyboard Concertino in C Major, Hob. XIV: 11** (1760)

Haydn composed the Concertino in C Major, Hob. XIV: 11, for keyboard, two violins, and cello in 1760, near the end of roughly a decade spent as a freelance composer in Vienna and shortly before beginning his tenure as Kapellmeister at the court of the Hungarian Prince Nikolaus Esterhazy. (The composer spent the majority of his professional career, from 1761 to 1790, in Esterhazy's employ.) This early period of his career also yielded about fifteen symphonies, numerous keyboard sonatas, trios, divertimentos, concertos, string trios, partitas for wind band, and possibly the Opus 2 string quartets, nos. 1 and 2. The C Major Concertino is one of at least fifteen keyboard concertos that Haydn composed; precisely how many he produced is difficult to determine as there are a number whose authenticity is uncertain.

Miró Quartet

The modest instrumental forces required suggest that the little-known keyboard concertinos were intended for domestic entertainment rather than the concert hall. Whereas the rhetorical content and grand sonic environment of Mozart's and Beethoven's concertos for soloist with orchestra come more readily to mind as the Classical piano concerto rubric, Haydn's C Major Concertino transposes that aesthetic

to a piercingly intimate setting. (Mozart explored a similar sound with arrangements for piano and string quartet of three of his piano concertos, K. 413–415.) The elegance, clarity, and wit of the concertino's language are vintage Haydn. Despite their scale, Haydn's concertinos nevertheless spotlight the keyboard soloist with brilliant, concertante writing, supported by an impeccably sculpted conversational accompaniment in the strings.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827): **String Quartet in f minor, op. 95, *Serioso*** (1810–1811)

The String Quartet in f minor, op. 95, marks the transition from Beethoven's middle "heroic" style to his late period. It is the eleventh of his sixteen string quartets, which collectively represent a cornerstone of the chamber music literature. In its unrestrained expressivity, the Opus 95 Quartet foreshadows both Beethoven's own late quartets and the aesthetic of the Romantic generation that followed him. Owing to its austere character, Beethoven nicknamed the work "Quartetto serioso." The quartet was not originally intended for public performance but for private appreciation by musicians and connoisseurs.

The *Serioso* is a study in brevity. The opening *Allegro con brio* contains all of the components of a proper sonata-form movement—a brusque opening theme, lyrical second theme, full development section, recapitulation, and coda—concentrated inside about just four minutes of music.

What the first movement achieves in pithiness, the second matches in expressive ambiguity. It functions as the quartet's slow movement, despite the tempo marking *Allegretto ma non troppo*. Rather than following the first movement's f minor conclusion in the related key of D-flat major, the movement begins in the remote tonality of D major; within this traditionally bright and extroverted key, Beethoven instead crafts a subtle and enigmatic utterance. C-naturals and B-flats borrowed from the melancholy sound world of d minor leave ear and anima disoriented. Following a resigned cadence, the viola begins a contemplative fugue.

The third movement, marked *Allegro assai vivace ma serioso,* punctures the meditative atmosphere left by the *Allegretto*. A pair of dramatic shouts and silences forcefully restores the first movement's terse tone; the scherzo proceeds at once lithe and unrelenting.

The scherzo's propulsive dotted rhythm is transfigured in the slow introduction to the biting finale. At the quartet's conclusion, Beethoven counteracts the *Allegretto agitato*'s malevolence with a suddenly exuberant coda—a kind of punch line, perhaps most amusing to the composer whose listeners weren't in on the joke.

One hundred years later, the Viennese composer Anton Webern would intrigue listeners by writing music of extreme concision. His Six Bagatelles for String Quartet, composed between 1911 and 1913, take all of about three and a half minutes to perform. Arnold Schoenberg wrote about these works: "One has to realize what restraint it requires to express oneself with such brevity. You can stretch every glance into a poem, every sigh into a novel. But to express a novel in a single gesture, joy in a single breath—such concentration can only be present in the absence of self-pity." That these words could just as well have applied to the *Serioso* Quartet a century before is a testament to the breadth of Beethoven's vision.

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897): **Sextet no. 2 in G Major, op. 36** (1864–1865)

Brahms composed his String Sextet in G Major, op. 36, between 1864 and 1865. It is his second essay in the string sextet genre, following the Opus 18 Sextet of 1860. Like the other chamber works of Brahms's early maturity, the Opus 36 Sextet displays the craftsmanship and sensitivity of an artist fully fledged despite his youth. Brahms's expert handling of the string sextet sonority prevails throughout the work, as he exploits different instrumental and registral combinations to achieve a broadly expressive sonic palette.

Above a hushed, oscillating figure in the viola, the first violin proclaims the opening movement's soaring first theme, its heroic melodic contour tempered by Brahms's instruction to play *mezza voce*. The delicate balance contained in these measures between fortitude and restraint foreshadows a duality that pervades much of the sextet. The movement also represents the composer's cathartic response to his ill-fated love affair with the amateur soprano Agathe von Siebold. Dropping the T (and with H used in German notation for the note B-natural), the robust second theme spells "Agathe." "Here," Brahms, the lifelong bachelor, wrote of this passage, "I have freed myself from my last love."

The scherzo exercises a similar restraint to that of the first theme of the *Allegro non troppo*. Its wistful manner descends to a whisper as the first violin and viola play a hushed triplet figure in stark octaves, marked *tranquillo*. The rambunctious country-dance of the trio section emphatically offsets the scherzo's melancholy.

The *Poco adagio* is a theme and variations. Given the enigmatic profile of the opening section, the critic and Brahms intimate Eduard Hanslick referred to this movement as "variations on no theme."

The finale begins with a breathless gallop of sixteenth notes before quickly settling into a more relaxed musical idea, crooned by the first violin in its lowest register. The cello introduces the billowing second theme beneath a reappearance of the sixteenth-note figure. As if emerging victorious from the introversion and agita of the preceding movements, the effervescence of these two ideas carries the sextet to a spirited coda. Along the way, demonstrating Brahms's steady craftsmanship and deep admiration of the music of Bach, the movement's development section features a fugue.

—Patrick Castillo

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Disc 4 brings together three of the twentieth century's most commanding compositional voices. Dmitry Shostakovich's name has become virtually synonymous with the intensity of his musical reaction to Stalinism, his work serving as a musical chronicle of the harsh conditions under Stalin's regime. His countryman and contemporary Sergey Prokofiev fled Russia after the October Revolution of 1917 and ultimately settled in Paris, where he composed the Opus 39 Quintet, a work of razor-sharp wit and duplicitous charm. Arnold Schoenberg became the most notorious of the three as Western music's first composer to abandon the tonal system. His audacious compositional language that so revolutionized music in the twentieth century remains as fresh and provocative at the dawn of the twenty-first.

DMITRY SHOSTAKOVICH (1906–1975): **String Quartet no. 8 in c minor, op. 110** (1960)

In 1960, Shostakovich wrote the score for *Five Days, Five Nights,* a film set in the aftermath of the 1945 bombing of Dresden. While working on the score, Shostakovich

Lily Francis, violin; Joshua Gindele, cello; Gilbert Kalish, piano; Todd Palmer, clarinet; Tara Helen O'Connor, flute

stayed in Dresden, where he was surrounded by reminders of the destruction that had befallen the city just fifteen years earlier. During work on the film score, Shostakovich was moved to write a new string quartet, a kind of dual meditation on the events of 1945 and his own present circumstances. The score's dedication reads: "In memory of victims of fascism and war."

The Opus 110 String Quartet is an explicitly autobiographical work. In a letter to the writer Isaak Glikman, Shostakovich wrote:

> When I die, it's hardly likely someone will write a quartet dedicated to my memory. So I decided to write it myself. One could write on the frontispiece,

"Dedicated to the author of this quartet." The main theme is the monogram D, Es, C, H, that is, my initials.

(In German notation, the note E-flat is spelled Es; B-natural is spelled H.) Shostakovich's monogram anchors the quartet, commencing in the work's grave opening measures and appearing in various guises throughout its five continuous movements.

The quartet furthermore quotes several of Shostakovich's own earlier compositions. Throughout the work are scattered references to his First and Fifth symphonies, Opus 67 Piano Trio, Cello Concerto, and opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* (a work condemned in a 1936 *Pravda* editorial widely assumed to have been issued by Stalin).

Among the piece's many compelling moments are the *Allegretto* third movement—a sardonic waltz based on the DSCH motif—and the transition to the following *Largo*. The *Allegretto* ends with a single note quietly sustained in the first violin, as if anxiously holding its breath. Three harrowing chords, easily heard as the KGB's dreaded knock at the door, begin and recur throughout the fourth movement. Shostakovich scholar Harlow Robinson notes another possible significance to the three-chord motif: if Soviet citizens saw a KGB informant enter the room, they would signal a warning by knocking under the table three times. The fourth movement also quotes the Russian revolutionary anthem "Tormented by Grievous Bondage." The quartet ends with an elegiac reprise of the first movement.

SERGEY PROKOFIEV (1891–1953): **Quintet in g minor, op. 39** (1924)

Like many artists of his generation, the Russian composer Sergey Prokofiev fled his homeland in the wake of the October Revolution of 1917. He first immigrated with his family to the United States; five years later, at the age of thirty-two, Prokofiev resettled in Paris, adding a new dimension to the city's bustling musical landscape. His music was not immediately embraced: when his First Violin Concerto premiered in October 1923, the composers of Les Six derided it as old-fashioned. Prokofiev responded with his Second Symphony, a work whose biting dissonance seemed to announce that Prokofiev could hold his own with the avant-garde. The composer acknowledged that his new environment—and Paris's openness to adventurous new sounds—energized him while he was composing the new symphony. Following its premiere, Prokofiev joked that the work was so complex that "neither I nor the audience understood anything in it."

Prokofiev composed his Opus 39 Quintet in g minor simultaneously with the Second Symphony. The quintet began as music for a ballet called *Trapeze*. The presenting dance company requested music for a small ensemble that would evoke a circus setting. Prokofiev obliged with this idiosyncratic work, scored for oboe, clarinet, violin, viola, and double bass. While it shares some of the Second Symphony's caustic dissonance and acerbic orchestration, so, too, does the quintet reflect the singular combination of elegance and fiendish wit that characterizes Prokofiev's best-known works.

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG (1874–1951): **Chamber Symphony no. 1, op. 9** (1922; arr. Webern, 1922–1923)

The Chamber Symphony no. 1, op. 9, reflects the period of Schoenberg's career just before he abandoned tonality. The music of this period extends the Romantic idiom towards a more abstract, Expressionist language. Although he would soon challenge deeper musical premises, Schoenberg nevertheless regarded the Chamber Symphony as enough of a personal artistic breakthrough that, upon its completion, he declared, "Now I have established my style. Now I know how I have to compose."

Schoenberg originally composed the Chamber Symphony for an ensemble of fifteen wind and string instruments. In 1912, he expanded the orchestration with doubled winds and multiple strings; this first orchestral version does not survive, but a second was published in 1935 as Schoenberg's Opus 9b. This is the work's most widely performed version. The present transcription was arranged by Webern between 1922 and 1923.

The work is in one continuous movement and comprises five distinct yet interrelated sections, simultaneously suggesting a single sonata-form movement and the multi-

movement character of a Classical symphony. A slow introduction and inviting F major cadence introduce the exposition-cum-first movement, a peripatetic affair thereafter. A faster, restless section (marked *sehr rasch*—very rapidly) functions as the scherzo, with a fleeting trio marked, in the present arrangement, by tentative staccato gestures and mysterious flute notes. The central development section (or, as Schoenberg preferred to call it, elaboration) recalls the thematic material of the opening. Rising fourths in cello harmonics, punctuated by featherweight chords in the upper voices, introduce the dream-like slow "movement." As it unfolds, the movement reveals itself as a fulfillment of the work's four-measure introduction. The finale recapitulates material from the opening and slow movements.

Webern's arrangement of the Chamber Symphony for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano (an instrumental combination commonly referred to as Pierrot ensemble, after Schoenberg's landmark *Pierrot lunaire* of 1912) highlights, in Schoenberg's words, the "style of concision and brevity" striven for in the original, "in which every technical or structural necessity was carried out without unnecessary extension, in which every single unit is supposed to be functional."

—Patrick Castillo

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5 Maps and Legends

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Disc 5 transports listeners to Paris of the 1920s: "La Ville-Lumière," a cauldron of modern ideas stirred by the Western world's visionary artists and thinkers—a time that marked the intersection of Fauré's nineteenth-century elegance, Ravel's Impressionist stylings, and the emerging avant-garde, epitomized by Francis Poulenc, Darius Milhaud, and American expatriates Aaron Copland, George Antheil, and George Gershwin. The integration of classical and popular American styles pioneered by Gershwin's *An American in Paris* continues today in the music of William Bolcom, whose cabaret songs round out this disc's eclectic offerings.

DARIUS MILHAUD (1892–1974): ***La création du monde,* op. 81** (1923)
Milhaud's jazz ballet *La création du monde* is based on an African folk legend about the creation of the world. Following the mysterious and quietly seductive overture, the ballet launches into *The Chaos before Creation,* a swanky jazz fugue. Milhaud sets the scene depicting the creation of man and woman to a cakewalk, an early African American folk dance thought to have originated with nineteenth-century slaves, as a parody of the white

Jorja Fleezanis, violin, and Alessio Bax, piano

slave owners' stiff, high-society dances. The final movement features a series of semi-improvisatory jazz figurations in the piano set against playful interjections from the strings, mimicking a jazz band's rhythm section. After reprising some of its earlier tunes, the ballet ends with a sweet, bluesy cadence.

Milhaud originally scored *La création* for a large ensemble of woodwinds, brass instruments, strings, piano, and percussion; the wind section includes a prominent alto saxophone part. This recording features Milhaud's own chamber arrangement of *La création du monde* for piano quintet.

AARON COPLAND (1900–1990): **Movement for String Quartet** (ca. 1923)
Aaron Copland, the so-called Dean of American Music, fashioned a distinctly American voice by drawing on elements of numerous popular American styles, but he integrated these elements with what he absorbed from his European counterparts. Throughout his career, Copland's European influences would retain an audible presence in his music. He

composed his youthful Movement for String Quartet while studying in Paris with Nadia Boulanger. The music combines the modernism of Stravinsky with the textural clarity of Fauré. After a slow, dissonant introduction played on muted strings, the gloves come off for the piece's angular middle section. The music subsequently returns to the languid tempo of the introduction, but now palpably disquieted. An unexpectedly tranquil cadence in D-flat major completes the work's exquisite strangeness.

GEORGE ANTHEIL (1900–1959): **Violin Sonata no. 2** (1923)
Antheil described his Violin Sonata no. 2 as: "a composite composition somewhat relative to the Picasso 1918 cubist period in which Picasso assembled into one picture such banal commonplaces as café tables, mandolines, bits of actual newspaper, etc. The piano is treated percussively and is a many-teethed and pointed instrument against the, in this case, banal violin. The spirit of the music represents one phase of America—cubistic Tin Pan Alley. The thematic material is both original and from sentimental tunes long since become ridiculous. The whole goes into a final duet between bass drum and violin, in which the piano is abandoned, having gradually worked up to the percussive state where it finds its most complete expression in the drum rather than upon the keys."

GABRIEL FAURÉ (1845–1924): **Barcarolle no. 13 in C Major, op. 116** (1921)
MAURICE RAVEL (1875–1937): ***Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré*** (1922)
The 1920s saw Gabriel Fauré, French music's refined elder statesman, in his final years. Such works as the Opus 116 Barcarolle by this time reflected the old-world elegance and sophistication of a bygone era. Meanwhile, in the wake of Claude Debussy's death, Fauré's student Maurice Ravel had emerged as France's leading voice.

Ravel composed the *Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré*, a poignant tribute to his teacher, in 1922. Substituting pitches for letters with no corresponding notes, Ravel fashioned the *Berceuse*'s opening melody on Fauré's name:

G	A	B	R	I	E	L		F	A	U	R	E
G	A	B	D	B	E	E		F	A	G	D	E

FRANCIS POULENC (1899–1963): **Sonata for Clarinet and Bassoon, op. 32** (1922)
The lighthearted cleverness of Poulenc's Opus 32 Sonata for Clarinet and Bassoon demonstrates Poulenc's assessment of the French musical ideal:

> You will find sobriety and dolor in French music just as in German and Russian. But the French have a keener sense of proportion. We realize that somberness and good humor are not mutually exclusive. Our composers, too, write profound music, but when they do, it is leavened with that lightness of spirit without which life would be unendurable.

WILLIAM BOLCOM (b. 1938): **"Amor," "Blue," "Song of Black Max (as Told by the de Kooning Boys)"**
William Bolcom's pedigree includes studies with Milhaud and Olivier Messiaen; early in his career, he produced rigorous serial music in the tradition of Schoenberg. But in the 1960s, Bolcom turned towards more popular musical styles and became a key figure in the revival of ragtime music. His language since then has explored the space in between serious and popular music. With his wife, the mezzo-soprano Joan Morris, Bolcom has been a prominent advocate of American popular song, especially cabaret and other early-twentieth-century styles.

Bolcom's *Cabaret Songs* are the fruit of two defining partnerships in the composer's creative life: that with his wife, for whom the songs were composed, and another with the poet and librettist Arnold Weinstein, whose texts they set. In his preface to the four-volume publication of *Cabaret Songs,* Weinstein writes:

> William Bolcom the composer studied with Roethke the poet, and before that, his feet barely hitting the pedals, Bill had played for the vaudeville shows passing through Seattle with such songs in the repertory as "Best Damn Thing Am Lamb Lamb Lamb." Milhaud found Bill and brought him back alive to highbrow music, though he never lost his lowbrow soul (neither did Milhaud). Operas later, we wrote these songs as a cabaret in themselves, no production "values"

to worry about. The scene is the piano, the cast is the singer, in this case Joan Morris…Nobody defines better than she this elusive form of theater-poetry-lieder-poptavernacular prayer called cabaret song.

GEORGE GERSHWIN (1898–1937): ***An American in Paris*** (1928)

An American in Paris is a musical portrait of the French capital in the 1920s as seen by a visitor. For the premiere performance at Carnegie Hall, Gershwin brought a set of four taxi horns from Paris to New York to faithfully evoke the Parisian cityscape. This recording features *An American in Paris* in Gershwin's own two-piano version.

Gershwin provided the following program note for the work's premiere:

> This new piece, really a rhapsodic ballet, is written very freely and is the most modern music I've yet attempted. The opening part will be developed in typical French style, in the manner of Debussy and Les Six (Auric, Durey, Honegger, Milhaud, Poulenc, Tailleferre), though the themes are all original. My purpose here is to portray the impression of an American visitor in Paris as he strolls about the city and listens to various street noises and absorbs the French atmosphere…
>
> The opening gay section is followed by a rich blues with a strong rhythmic undercurrent. Our American friend, perhaps after strolling into a café and having a couple of drinks, has succumbed to a spasm of homesickness. The harmony here is both more intense and simpler than in the preceding pages. This blues rises to a climax followed by a coda, in which the spirit of the music returns to the vivacity and bubbling exuberance of the opening part with its impressions of Paris. Apparently the homesick American, having left the café and reached the open air, has disowned his spell of the blues and once again is an alert spectator of Parisian life. At the conclusion, the street noises and French atmosphere are triumphant.
>
> —Patrick Castillo

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Music@Menlo *LIVE*

6 Maps and Legends

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Disc 6 features performances from the festival season's "Spanish Inspirations" program. Chamber music masterpieces by the foremost French composers of the early twentieth century, Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel, betray the influence of their Spanish counterparts. The hypnotic second movement of Debussy's String Quartet evokes the sound of Spanish guitars, while Ravel's Piano Trio recalls the folk dances of the composer's own Basque ancestry. Joaquín Turina's *La oración del torero* offers an example of Spain's finest chamber music during this time.

MAURICE RAVEL (1875–1937): **Piano Trio** (1914)
Maurice Ravel spent the summer of 1913 near his birthplace in the Basque region of France. Throughout his life, the composer felt a special affinity for this side of his heritage (his mother was Basque), and his fondness for Spanish folk music and dance is frequently evident in his music, most famously in the 1928 ballet *Boléro.*

Ravel had pondered a piano trio for some time before setting to work on realizing the idea that summer; he remarked to the composer and pianist Maurice Delage, "My trio

Jupiter String Quartet

is finished. I only need the themes for it." His beloved Basque country provided the setting Ravel needed to get started, and he worked feverishly to complete it the following spring. Amidst the psychological turmoil of impending war, he wrote, "I think that at any moment I shall go mad or lose my mind. I have never worked so hard, with such insane heroic rage."

The Basque setting of the Piano Trio's genesis infiltrates its musical content. The peculiar rhythm that begins the *Modéré* derives from the *zortziko,* a Basque folk dance characterized by its quintuple meter, in which the second and fourth beats are dotted. Ravel adopts the hypnotic lilt of this dance form for the trio's first theme.

The second movement further exemplifies the influence of other cultures on Ravel's music. He labeled the movement *Pantoum,* after the *pantun,* a Malayan verse form. Ravel biographer Arbie Orenstein writes, "Ravel apparently wished to associate the movement's rhythmic subtleties with those found in the Malayan pantun. Thus...one may note the spiritual imprint of the exotic rhythms heard at the 1889 International Exposition." Scholar Michael Tilmouth calls Ravel's pantoum "[an] ingenious synthesis of a musical equivalent of the verse form with that of the traditional scherzo and trio."

The third movement is a passacaglia, a form based on the constant repetition and variation of a central musical idea. The contemplative melody of Ravel's passacaglia appears first in the piano's lowest register and is subsequently taken up by the cello and violin. The texture of the music grows increasingly rich: the climactic point of the score requires three staves for the piano part.

The gravity of the passacaglia is offset by the shimmering brilliance of the finale. The music's uneven rhythmic gait, set alternately in 5/4 and 7/4 meter, again evokes Basque folk music.

JOAQUÍN TURINA (1882–1949): ***La oración del torero*** (1925)
La oración del torero (The Bullfighter's Prayer), a single-movement work composed for lute quartet in 1925, quickly became and remains one of Joaquín Turina's most popular works; its immediate success led Turina to rescore it for string quartet and, later, for string orchestra. Though his music generally demonstrates a facility with Spanish folk-dance rhythms, the hot-blooded *Oración* more audibly betrays Turina's early experience with *zarzuela,* a Spanish musical theater genre. The quartet's palette of evocative instrumental effects (including shimmering *tremolandos* redolent of Debussy) and long-breathed arioso melodies in each voice leave a compelling impression of dramatic narrative.

CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862–1918): **String Quartet in g minor, op. 10** (1893)
Claude Debussy is universally recognized as one of the most influential musical voices of the twentieth century. To the ears of many music lovers, his landmark work of 1894, *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune (Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun),* represents the beginning of a new era in music. The composer and conductor Pierre Boulez wrote that, with this work, "The art of music began to beat with a new pulse." In 1971, the eighty-eight-year-old Igor Stravinsky surmised, "Debussy is in all senses the century's first musician."

Debussy's unique approach to harmony, rhythm, and orchestration was driven as much by a conscious resistance to the prevailing German musical language of Richard Wagner as it was by the instinctive desire to express himself in an original way. This approach yielded a distinctly French musical voice, as distinguishable by its color and inflection from the German idiom as the spoken languages are different. This musical language, cultivated by Debussy, became known as Impressionism, a term borrowed from the visual arts and, specifically, the work of Claude Monet. As applied to the music of Debussy (and his younger contemporary Maurice Ravel), the term describes a rich palette of harmonic colors and instrumental timbres.

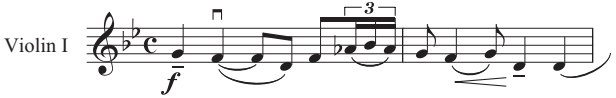
While he is known for having cultivated a distinctly French style, the Frenchness of Debussy's music is only one aspect of his compositional language. Like Ravel, Debussy had insatiably open ears and absorbed a broad spectrum of musical styles, from American jazz to Indonesian gamelan (which Debussy and Ravel both discovered at the 1889 World's Fair in Paris). This penchant for a variety of musical cultures included a visceral draw to the music of Spain.

The String Quartet in g minor, op. 10, dates from early 1893, one year prior to the completion of *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun.* Both works signal the onset of the composer's early maturity. The quartet mystified listeners at its premiere: the work's unfamiliar tonal effects and liquid form represented a striking departure from the stalwart quartet canon of Beethoven and Brahms. The French Symbolist poet Stéphane

Mallarmé once identified Symbolism's ethos as follows: "To evoke in a deliberate shadow the unmentioned object by allusive words." That mindset finds its musical analog in Debussy's quartet, whose surface character reflects the composer's sympathy with the Symbolist writers.

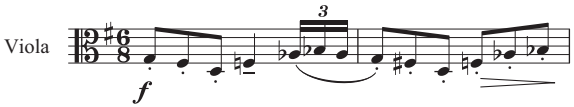
The exotic flair of Spanish folk music likewise marks the piece, as in the opening theme, which serves as a germinal motive for the entire work.

I. Animé et très décidé, mm. 1-2



Betraying a characteristically French preoccupation with orderliness (or, equally so, demonstrating a handle on the motivic development of Beethoven and Brahms), Debussy derives the scherzo's prefatory measures from this gesture.

II. Assez vif et bien rythmé, mm. 3-4



This motive serves as an insistent ostinato beneath a tart pizzicato theme, while strummed chords evoke the sound of flamenco guitars. The sweet *Andantino* makes frequent references to the motive, from which likewise emanates the languid introduction to the final movement. Throughout the remainder of the finale, Debussy continues to recall and transform the germinal motive. By the quartet's conclusion, its initial utterance has guided the listener through a kaleidoscopic journey, and it arrives at the work's final cadence considerably changed.

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Disc 7 celebrates "Dvořák's America." Universally renowned at the end of the nineteenth century as one of the supreme composers of his generation as well as the greatest champion of his native Czech music, Antonín Dvořák received an invitation in 1891 to lead the National Conservatory in New York and guide America's composers in discovering their own musical language. With the help of the African American singer and composer Harry T. Burleigh, whose arrangements and performances of Negro spirituals Dvořák lovingly absorbed, the Czech master became fluent in the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic traits of American folk styles. During the summer of 1893, while living in the Czech community of Spillville, Iowa, Dvořák captured the essence of Americana in two classic chamber works: his Opus 96 String Quartet and Opus 97 String Quintet, both nicknamed *American.* The recording also illustrates the evolution of American song since Dvořák's time, featuring the great American composer Samuel Barber's Four Songs, op. 13.

Erin Keefe, Arnaud Sussmann, violins; Laurence Lesser, cello; Liz Freivogel, Beth Guterman, violas

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904): **String Quartet no. 12 in F Major, op. 96, *American*** (1893)

The *American* Quartet's beguiling evocation of the Midwestern countryside that has endeared it to generations of music lovers spills forth immediately from the first page of the score. The first theme bubbles with a folksy charm derived from Dvořák's use of the pentatonic scale, a five-note scale characteristic of much of the world's folk music. But the effect of the *American* Quartet ultimately relies on Dvořák's singular voice more than on his use of folk-like scales and melodies. In a manner reminiscent of his mentor Johannes Brahms, Dvořák fashions seemingly innocuous musical ideas into a

thrilling composition. Witness the *Allegro ma non troppo*'s development section, in which the movement's idyllic melodies are turned into Romantic *Sturm und Drang*.

The *Lento* is given over to a heartfelt aria, sung as a duet between the first violin and cello.

The third movement cleverly documents Dvořák's circumstances as a Czech expatriate. The joyful music that begins the scherzo emulates the song of the scarlet tanager, an American songbird that Dvořák observed in Spillville—but the syncopated rhythm also recalls the Czech folk dances that infuse much of Dvořák's music. The trio section slows the exuberant dance melody to a plaintive sigh, thus transforming a joyous evocation of Bohemia into melancholy nostalgia.

The brisk final movement echoes the first in its beguiling and uncomplicated mien. Its propulsive rhythmic figure has been thought by some to reflect Native American drumming, by others, the trains that so delighted Dvořák on his cross-country travels. A hymn-like chorale interrupts the finale's exuberant gait: a nod, perhaps, to Dvořák's sometime activity as organist for Spillville's Saint Wenceslaus Church, still the oldest Czech Catholic parish in the United States.

HENRY T. BURLEIGH (1866–1949): **"By an' By," "Deep River," "Wade in de Water"**

Dvořák had invaluable help in getting to know the repertory of spirituals during his time in America: the African American composer and singer Henry Thacker Burleigh introduced him to numerous spirituals, singing them for him to demonstrate their proper style and character. "I'd accompany myself on the piano," Burleigh wrote. "Dvořák especially liked 'Nobody Knows the Trouble I Seen' and 'Go Down Moses.' He asked hundreds of questions about Negro life. He would jump up and ask: 'Did they really sing it that way?'"

In addition to being a revelatory interpreter of spirituals, Burleigh made arrangements of them, which have become among the standard editions for generations of singers. These arrangements provide a lens showing Dvořák's experience of American music while he was composing his own "American" works.

SAMUEL BARBER (1910–1981): **Four Songs, op. 13** (1940)

Barber's significant oeuvre of vocal music, comprising songs, choral music, and three operas, demonstrates an instinctive understanding of the voice. The Four Songs, op. 13, reflect the qualities that have endeared Barber equally to singers and audiences: melodic eloquence, deference to text in rhythm and harmony, and overall sensitivity to the nuances of vocal composition. The first song of the cycle, "A Nun Takes the Veil," illustrates the spiritual ecstasy of Gerard Manley Hopkins's "Heaven-Haven" with enraptured, harp-like arpeggios in the piano accompaniment. "Nocturne," the cycle's finale, answers with a meditation on romantic ecstasy: the perhaps forbidden union described in the poem by Frederic Prokosch ("None to watch us, none to warn/But the blind eternal night") finds voice in Barber's juxtaposition of sweet melody and mysterious harmony. In between come "The Secrets of the Old," whose rhythmic quirks accommodate the natural meter of Yeats's text, and Barber's most famous and arguably most enchanting song, "Sure on This Shining Night."

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK: Quintet for Two Violins, Two Violas, and Cello in E-flat Major, op. 97, *American* (1893)

Dvořák's *American* Quintet shares creative circumstances and general expression with the *American* Quartet, its elder sibling by roughly one month. Like the quartet, the quintet reflects Dvořák's absorption of American music in the character of its melodies and spacious textures. The Kneisel Quartet, with the violist Max Zach, premiered the quintet in New York on January 12, 1894, alongside the quartet, which had debuted in Boston less than two weeks prior. A review in the *New York Times* read:

> Both compositions are as fresh and melodious in subject matter, as clear in form, as spontaneous in development, and as flexible in part writing as the

best works of the two earliest quartet writers [i.e., Haydn and Mozart]...[T]hat spirit of eternal sunshine in music which Rubinstein acclaims as the soul of Mozart's music is in every measure. These compositions are not of to-day; they are of yesterday. They are of the dawn of art, with the freshness of the dew and the voices of the birds in them. They are pure, sweet, wholesome, and from first to last, all through and through, beautiful.

In them Dr. Dvořák has once again proclaimed his belief in the possibility of imparting an American character to music. His themes are redolent of the cotton fields and the river valleys of the South...and in the finale of the quintet we are brought to realize that Dr. Dvořák has heard some of our music hall ditties and decided that they are of the people. Here, indeed, he approaches triviality: but it is the trifling of a genius that has found a new plaything. Whatever may be the general opinion as to the Americanism of these works, it can be safely said that Europe has given us nothing which resembles them in thematic material, and we may be thankful that Dr. Dvořák came to America if he was able to find inspiration here for such lovely compositions.

The quintet's *Larghetto* movement comes with an interesting side note: among his "American" projects, Dvořák apparently planned to compose a new national anthem. The second half of the slow movement's theme (followed by five subsequent variations) is said to be based on sketches for that project: it includes a chorale passage originally intended to set the words "My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty..."

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Finnish pianist Juho Pohjonen made his sensational Music@Menlo debut with a program highlighting the theme-and-variations form. Bringing together music by Mozart, Grieg, Handel, and Brahms, Pohjonen's thoughtfully curated recital explored how composers across the Baroque, Classical, and Romantic eras approached the same compositional technique to achieve a broad, expressive palette.

Juho Pohjonen

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791): **Sonata in A Major, K. 331** (1781–1783)

On August 4, 1782, in Vienna, Mozart married Constanze Weber—without the blessing of his father. Papa Leopold thought that the humble, uneducated girl was not worthy of his brilliantly talented son, and he made no secret of his opposition to the union. In an attempt to heal the family rift, the new Herr and Frau Mozart parked their first child, six-week-old Raimund Leopold, with a nurse in a Viennese suburb and headed for Salzburg at the end of July 1783. They called on several of Wolfgang's old friends, but their reception was cool both from the members of the town's archiepiscopal music establishment (from whose service Mozart had bolted two years before without permission) and from his father and sister. Wolfgang tried to put a good face on the situation, but he was bitterly disappointed at the results of the Salzburg sojourn. He never again returned to the town of his birth. The three piano sonatas, K. 330–332, were Mozart's most important creative endeavors during his Salzburg visit, written perhaps as teaching material, perhaps for his own performances; they were published by Artaria the following year. Mozart infused the second of the Salzburg sonatas, in A major (K. 331), with great popular appeal. Its first movement is a set of variations on a gracious theme Mozart may have derived from a German folk song. The second move-

ment is a large minuet in a richly expressive, almost Romantic style. The finale—the rousing *Alla turca*—is a delightful march "in the Turkish manner."

EDVARD GRIEG (1843–1907): **Ballade in g minor in the Form of Variations on a Norwegian Folk Song, op. 24** (1875–1876)

"Now I sit here unspeakably lonely and forsaken. I have not been able to pull myself together for anything whatsoever. Life and death and eternity, religion and art—everything creates hazy pictures before my inner eye, pictures I still have not been able to comprehend." Thus did Edvard Grieg write of his sorrow to his friend the Danish pianist and composer August Winding early in 1876 from Bergen, where he had suffered the loss of both his parents within five weeks the preceding autumn. Grieg sought solace in work, and by the end of 1875 he had begun a new piece for piano, a large set of variations on a Norwegian folk melody that seemed to match his mood, a composition that he said he wrote "with my life's blood in drops of sorrow and despair"—the Ballade in g minor in the Form of Variations on a Norwegian Folk Song. Grieg borrowed the mournful melody, "The Peasant Class of the Northland," from the second volume (1858) of Ludvig Mathias Lindeman's collection of *Norwegian Mountain Melodies Old and New*. He worked ten formal variations on the theme that range in style from lamenting to virtuosic, from introspective soliloquy to demonic scherzo. He then ran quickly through several contrasting keys to lead to an almost frenetic major-key development in which he seemed to try to play away his grief at the keyboard, stretching both hands across its full range and attacking the keys *con tutta forza* ("with all possible force"). This music is suddenly broken off by a violent, ascending crescendo and a brief pause before the original minor key returns for a fast, intense passage to be played *Allegro furioso...sempre più* [always more] *furioso...molto pesante e* [very heavy and] *furioso*. Mere commotion cannot here conquer grief, however, and the ballade ends as it began, with the sad, unadorned song of the Norwegian mountains.

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685–1759): **Suite in B-flat Major, vol. 2, no. 1, HWV 434** (1733)

Handel's suites for harpsichord were apparently composed soon after he became Director of Music in 1717 to the household of James Brydges, Earl of Carnarvon, at Cannons, the family estate in Middlesex. Among Handel's noble students at the time was Anne, eldest daughter of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and it is thought that he may have composed some of the suites anew or arranged them from earlier of his keyboard pieces for her instruction. (They are called "Lessons" in some early editions.) The Suite in B-flat Major, HWV 434, opens with a prelude of sweeping chords and running figurations. The bustling second movement is titled sonata, an old usage of the term to indicate an instrumental piece as opposed to a cantata, one for voice. The *Aria con variazioni* comprises a set of five variations on a regal theme.

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897): **Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel, op. 24** (1861)

One of the pieces that Brahms wrote for his tours through northern Europe as a pianist early in his career was the splendid Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel of 1861, which he based on the closing movement of Handel's Suite in B-flat Major. The theme and the first variation pay homage to the eighteenth-century style of their model but then veer into Brahms's world of Romanticism while preserving the sixteen-measure, two-part structure of the original melody. The twenty-five variations encompass a wide range of keyboard styles, expressive moods, and pianistic hues before they are capped by a stupendous fugue in four voices, whose subject is freely based on the opening notes of the theme.

EDVARD GRIEG: *Til våren (To Spring)*, op. 43, no. 6 (1886)

Among the most characteristic of Edvard Grieg's creations rooted in the songs, dances, and spirit of his native Norway are his sixty-six *Lyric Pieces* for piano, composed throughout his career and published in ten books between 1867 and 1901. These fra-

grant miniatures not only solidified his rank as the leading musician of his country but also became some of the most popular music of the day, sounding from parlor pianos throughout Europe and America and constantly in demand on his recitals. The six *Lyric Pieces,* op. 43, composed during the early spring of 1886 in Copenhagen, close with the evocative *To Spring*.

FRANÇOIS COUPERIN (1668–1733): ***Ordre 27ème de clavecin* in b minor: *L'exquise*** (1728)

François Couperin, born in Paris in 1668, was appointed organist of St. Gervais in 1683 and ten years later was named one of four organists to the court of Versailles. By the turn of the century, Couperin was appearing regularly as harpsichordist and composer at the court's musical events, though he was not officially given the title *Ordinaire de la Musique de la Chambre du Roi pour le Clavecin* until 1717, a year after his pedagogical treatise *L'art de toucher le clavecin* appeared; it was one of the era's most important manuals concerning the ornamentation and performance of French keyboard music. At the same time, Couperin published the first of four large volumes of *Pièces de clavecin,* which contain over two hundred separate items, many with fanciful or descriptive titles inspired by friends, feelings, or fashions. *L'exquise* (*The Exquisite One*, Book IV, Ordre [suite] 27, Number 1) is Couperin's final *Allemande,* a gracious dance in moderate duple tempo. In his comprehensive study of Couperin's keyboard music, Philippe Beaussant speculated that "the title describes the character of the music itself more than it evokes a particular 'exquisite' woman or a pattern, scene, or other subject."

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.

Disc 1

1–12 *The Four Seasons*
ANTONIO VIVALDI
Concerto in E Major, op. 8, no. 1, RV 269, "La primavera" (Spring)
Concerto in g minor, op. 8, no. 2, RV 315, "L'estate" (Summer)
Concerto in F Major, op. 8, no. 3, RV 293, "L'autunno" (Autumn)
Concerto in f minor, op. 8, no. 4, RV 297, "L'inverno" (Winter)

13–17 *Music for a Summer Evening (Makrokosmos III)*
GEORGE CRUMB

Disc 2

1–5 *A Charm of Lullabies,* op. 41
BENJAMIN BRITTEN

6–9 Piano Quartet
WILLIAM WALTON

10–12 Piano Quintet in a minor, op. 84
EDWARD ELGAR

Disc 3

1–3 Keyboard Concertino in C Major, Hob. XIV: 11
FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN

4–7 String Quartet in f minor, op. 95, *Serioso*
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

8–11 Sextet no. 2 in G Major, op. 36
JOHANNES BRAHMS

Disc 4

1–5 String Quartet no. 8 in c minor, op. 110
DMITRY SHOSTAKOVICH

6–11 Quintet in g minor, op. 39
SERGEY PROKOFIEV

12 Chamber Symphony no. 1, op. 9
ARNOLD SCHOENBERG

Disc 5

1–5 *La création du monde,* op. 81
DARIUS MILHAUD

6 Movement for String Quartet
AARON COPLAND

7 Violin Sonata no. 2
GEORGE ANTHEIL

8 Barcarolle no. 13 in C Major, op. 116
GABRIEL FAURÉ

9 *Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré*
MAURICE RAVEL

10–12 Sonata for Clarinet and Bassoon, op. 32
FRANCIS POULENC

13–15 "Amor," "Blue," "Song of Black Max"
WILLIAM BOLCOM

16 *An American in Paris*
GEORGE GERSHWIN

Disc 6

1–4 Piano Trio
MAURICE RAVEL

5 *La oración del torero*
JOAQUÍN TURINA

6–9 String Quartet in g minor, op. 10
CLAUDE DEBUSSY

Disc 7

1–4 String Quartet no. 12 in F Major, op. 96, *American*
ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

5–7 "By an' By," "Deep River," "Wade in de Water"
HENRY T. BURLEIGH

8–11 Four Songs, op. 13
SAMUEL BARBER

12–15 Quintet for Two Violins, Two Violas, and Cello in E-flat Major, op. 97, *American*
ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

Disc 8

1–3 Sonata in A Major, K. 331
WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

4–18 Ballade in g minor in the Form of Variations on a Norwegian Folk Song, op. 24
EDVARD GRIEG

19–21 Suite in B-flat Major, vol. 2, no. 1, HWV 434
GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL

22–48 Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel, op. 24
JOHANNES BRAHMS

49 *Til våren (To Spring),* op. 43, no. 6
EDVARD GRIEG

50 *Ordre 27ème de clavecin* in b minor: *L'exquise*
FRANÇOIS COUPERIN