

The Red Bank
Chamber Music Society
presents

Misha Keylin, violin
Sergey Antonov, cello
Ilya Kazantsev, piano

The Hermitage Piano Trio

Beach • Shostakovich • Mendelssohn

Sunday Afternoon

October 16, 2022 • 4:30 PM

Trinity Church Auditorium

Red Bank, NJ

Advance Notes

PROGRAM

Piano Trio in A minor, Op. 150 (1938)

Amy Beach

- I. Allegro
- II. Lento espressivo
- III. Allegro con brio

Piano Trio in E minor, Op. 67 (1944)

Dmitri Shostakovich

- I. Andante – Moderato
- II. Allegro con brio
- III. Largo
- IV. Allegretto – Adagio

INTERMISSION

Piano Trio in C minor, Op. 66 (1845)

Felix Mendelssohn:

- I. Allegro energico e con fuoco
- II. Andante espressivo
- III. Scherzo: Molto allegro quasi presto
- IV. Finale: Allegro appassionato

Steinway piano selected from Jacobs Music Company

Program Notes

Amy Beach (1867-1944) **Piano Trio in A minor, Op. 150**

(~16 minutes)



Amy Marcy Cheney Beach (Mrs. H.H.A. Beach) was the first American woman to succeed as a composer of large-scale works of serious music; she was celebrated during her lifetime as the foremost woman composer of the United States. Her mother, a gifted pianist and singer, provided Beach's first exposure to piano. Beach's early feats included improvising duets before the age of two, playing by ear in full harmony at four, and giving public recitals at seven. She taught herself composition by studying the great masters. When her family moved to Boston, she studied with experienced professional teachers interested in helping her develop her talents. She made her Boston debut as a pianist in 1883 at sixteen, and in 1884, she played Chopin's F minor Concerto with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which had been founded only three years earlier.

She learned orchestration and fugue techniques by translating Berlioz and François-Auguste Gevaert's musical treatises. In 1885, she married H. H. A. Beach, a distinguished Boston surgeon and Harvard professor, slightly older than her father. Following the mores of Victorian society, her husband restricted her concert appearances but encouraged her composing.

Beach completed over 300 works, including the Gaelic Symphony, a Piano Concerto, a large-scale Mass, numerous songs and choral works, and many other compositions for chorus, including Festival Jubilate, commissioned for the dedication of the Women's Building at the Chicago World's Fair in 1897. She gathered numerous honors and was twice received at the White House. Many of her works were premiered by major orchestras and often these performances marked the first times these orchestras performed music by a female composer.

Much of Beach's work shows the influence of American late Romantic composers Horatio Parker, Edward MacDowell, Arthur Foote, and George Chadwick, but her music is also indebted to that of Brahms and Debussy. The majority of her compositions, however, display her own idiomatic style and her gift for melody.

The author of an important history of music in the United States once asked Beach if she resented being called an American composer. Her reply, he reported, was, "No, but I would rather just be called a composer." There is no doubt that she frequently gave the same answer when asked about being called a woman composer.

She was widely known for the broad range of her strong musical mind, which led her to translate European theoretical works to English, for example, and to mount a campaign in favor of the work of Brahms when his music was still considered difficult and modern. The Boston Symphony

Orchestra engaged her as soloist eleven times and also premiered her Gaelic Symphony, the first female-composed symphony performed in the United States.

After her husband's death, in 1910, Mrs. Beach spent four years in Europe, where her Piano Concerto, her symphony, and her shorter works were widely performed. She returned at the outbreak of World War I and, for most of the rest of her long and fruitful life as a busy composer, she lived in New Hampshire.

Several of her works incorporate elements that she adapted from the musical folklore of the Bostonians of her time. The stylistic diversity that she found and transmitted is extraordinary; it includes material from native Eskimo and Indian sources and others. In choosing Irish music, Beach tapped into a rich heritage that had been part of the American musical mainstream for at least a century; by the 1890s, it was assimilated into the new genre called popular music.

In 1893, Antonin Dvořák, who was then visiting the United States, suggested that American composers should follow the example he had set in his own New World Symphony and adopt "native" themes, which to him, meant African-American music that he had heard on the plantations he had visited. Beach responded with a letter to the Boston Herald, in principle agreeing with Dvořák about the need for a distinctive American music based on ethnic and traditional idioms but disagreeing with his specific recommendation because of her lack of familiarity with African-American music. She wrote: "We of the North should be far more likely to be influenced by the old English, Scotch, or Irish songs, inherited with our literature from our ancestors."

She completed her Piano Trio, Op. 150, the last chamber work she composed, in 1938 while she was at the MacDowell Colony, a colony for composers and artists in Peterborough, New Hampshire. The Piano Trio was premiered at the MacDowell Club in January 1939 with Beach at the piano, and it was published that year. At the time, Beach was exploring dissonance and imitation in her music, but the late-Romantic style in which she composed the work was considered old-fashioned by the time she completed the work.

The trio has three movements: the outer movements are both fast, and the slow central movement features a scherzo. The trio gives equality to the instruments even though the piano part is very virtuosic. In this romantic and impressionistic work, Beach incorporates fragments from one of her songs and the piano piece, "The Returning Hunter," from her Eskimos, Op. 64.

The opening movement of the trio, *Allegro*, begins with sumptuous piano lines over which the cello introduces the first subject. The music's impressionistic melodic lines and harmony lessen a sense of its tonal attributes.

The central movement, *Lento espressivo*, starts in a similar way as the preceding movement. In the middle of the movement, a very quick section, with a predominant staccato figure, shifts the texture to the contrapuntal; in this section, the harmony remains lush and even languorous as in much of the rest of the movement. The figure predominant in the central section makes another appearance in the coda.

The final movement, *Allegro con brio*, combines the predominant languid feel of the preceding movements with a more energetic yet contented and relaxed feel. Here Beach shifts more to a folk-like tone and incorporates ragtime as well as what have been identified as Native American influences.



Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

Piano Trio in E minor, Op. 67 (1944)

(~29 minutes)



Dmitri Shostakovich, who composed fifteen symphonies and fifteen string quartets, wrote only two trios for violin, cello, and piano. The first is a student work that dates from 1923, when he was seventeen years old; it has remained in manuscript. Trio No. 2, which Shostakovich composed in 1944, like his 7th, 8th, and 9th Symphonies, is one of his wartime tense, tragic works. It is dedicated to the memory of the Soviet wit, scholar, and critic Ivan Sollertinsky, one of Shostakovich's close friends and earliest supporters, a musicologist who died in February 1944. The work was given its first performance in November 1944, with the composer as pianist.

The opening movement is an elegiac and lyrical *Andante* that begins quite strikingly with the cello playing at the top of its range and the violin in the lower register. About halfway through the movement, the music becomes somewhat more animated, but it keeps its gravely lyrical character. The second movement is a typical Shostakovich scherzo, *Allegro non troppo*, rhythmic and free. The trio reaches its emotional climax in the third movement, a short and simple but eloquently expressive *Largo*, an "epitaph" in a form resembling that of a passacaglia or a chaconne, with the violin and cello weaving continuous variations over the sustained hymn-like chords of the piano. This movement leads directly into the final *Allegretto*, whose principal theme recalls the theme from the first movement. The character of the music is that of a ceremonial folk dance, a war-dance perhaps, or a grim processional. The music rises to a grand climax that is suddenly interrupted by the opening movement's theme, before it begins to recede. The main theme of the finale returns, as well as one from the first movement, but at the very end, the piano chords from the second movement bring the work to a quiet conclusion.

Shostakovich's friendship with many of his Jewish compatriots and his special awareness of the problems that they faced in Soviet society are well known. They found their grandest expression in a cycle of eleven songs to texts translated from the Yiddish into Russian, which he composed in 1948 but had to withhold from performance until 1955. The incorporation of the sounds of Russian-Jewish dance music in this trio has sometimes been misinterpreted as providing light relief in an otherwise serious and dramatic work. In fact, much of the literature about the composer and his works hardly mentions its presence here, but a Soviet-Jewish biographer of Shostakovich, in a book published in Moscow in 1959, dared to write that Shostakovich did not intend this to be

amusing at all but wished this composition to be a tragic dance of death of Jews fated to be slaughtered by invading Nazis. Shostakovich intended this musical dissent to be disguised, and thus it was often completely overlooked in the beginning of the composition's performance history.

Felix Mendelssohn (1804-1857)
Piano Trio in C minor, Op. 66 (1845)

(~30 minutes)



The richness and the elegance of Mendelssohn's melodic invention, the beautifully proportioned extension and development of his musical ideas, his rhythmic vigor, and the brilliance of his writing for the combination of strings and piano combine to make this one of Mendelssohn's most exemplary chamber works.

In December 1844, Mendelssohn began to extricate himself from public pressure by moving to Frankfurt to live as a simple private citizen, refusing all kinds of engagements, among which was an invitation to participate in a music festival in distant New York. It was in Frankfurt that he completed his six Organ Sonatas; in February 1845, he began this trio, which he finished in the spring or early summer.

In April he wrote to his sister, "The Trio is a bit nasty to play, but not really difficult." In fact, it is not "nasty," but it is by no means easy. The piano part reflects the quiet power and the fleet, fluent style that Mendelssohn's contemporaries described in his playing. The string writing, too, is demanding. The violinist in the first public performance, on December 20, 1845, was Ferdinand David, for whom Mendelssohn had written his Violin Concerto in 1844. Mendelssohn dedicated this Trio to Louis Spohr (1784-1859), an important violinist and composer.

The trio is a big work and a more serious one than his popular, earlier Trio No. 1 in D minor. It is a nearly perfect example of Mendelssohn's mastery of a difficult esthetic problem: containing Romantic expression within Classical forms. The principal material of the first movement, *Allegro energico e con fuoco*, consists of a pair of contrasting themes, the first darkly passionate and the second gentle and lyrical. Both are powerfully developed.

The two middle movements are lighter in tone, a simple *Andante espressivo* with a gentle, lyrical quality and a witty, elfin Scherzo, *Molto allegro, quasi presto*, in which speed and virtuosity are noteworthy. In the Finale, *Allegro appassionato*, the emphatic leaping first subject returns us to the emotional world of the first movement. There are tempestuous outbursts, dramatic contrasts, tense textures, a personalized version of a Lutheran hymn tune, and at the end, a coda of great power.

Program notes are copyright © Susan Halpern, 2022



Welcome to our in-person concerts!

Based on your responses to our membership survey, most of our members have been vaccinated against COVID-19, but for everyone's safety, **we are requiring that all attendees wear masks** while inside the Trinity Church building.

As a favor to your fellow concertgoers, **please remember to turn off your cell phones**. If you feel you might have a cough coming on, please try to unwrap any lozenges before the concert begins or between movements.



The recording of the Hermitage Piano Trio concert is scheduled to be broadcast on the Brookdale Community College cable access channel

- Sunday, October 9, 2022, at 4:30 PM
- Monday, October 10, 2022, at 2:30 PM and 7:30 P,
- Friday, October 14, 2022, at 7:30 PM and
- Saturday October 15, 2022, at 7:30 PM.

The recording will premiere on YouTube starting Sunday, October 9, 2022, at 4:30. You can access the YouTube recording at www.rbcms.org

Artists

Now entering their second decade, the United States-based **Hermitage Piano Trio** has solidified its place as one of the world's leading piano trios, garnering multiple GRAMMY® Award nominations and receiving both audience and press accolades for their performances that The Washington Post singled out for “such power and sweeping passion that it left you nearly out of breath.”

The Trio is a champion of immense repertoire ranging from the works of the great European tradition to more contemporary American pieces. Hallmarks of the Hermitage Piano Trio are their impeccable musicianship, sumptuous sound and interpretative range, which have led to demand for many repeat performances. They have appeared on major chamber music series and festivals in Los Angeles, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Miami, Washington, D.C., Tucson, Portland (OR), Tulsa, San Diego, Corpus Christi, Newport (RI), San Miguel de Allende (Mexico), Winnipeg (Canada), New Orleans, and many others. In addition to their extensive touring engagements, the Trio is involved in educational and outreach projects.

Hermitage Piano Trio began its multiple-album recording deal with Reference Recordings, debuting its CD titled “Rachmaninoff,” which featured Sergei Rachmaninoff’s two trios and his unforgettable Vocalise. Echoing many enthusiastic reviews of the “Rachmaninoff” recording, The Strad lauded the Trio’s “outstanding playing in intense, heartfelt performances,” and American Record Guide praised that “the Hermitage wants to burst forth with passion, to let the whole world know! I am really glad that someone can still play that way in our utterly unromantic age.” Their next album release is slated for 2023 and will feature the music of 20th century Spanish romantic composers.

Since his New York Carnegie Hall début at age 11, violinist **Misha Keylin** has continued to earn critical and audience acclaim for his exuberant musicality, keen interpretive insight and rare tonal beauty. Noted for a wide range of repertoire, Keylin attracted particular attention with his world-premiere four CD series, featuring all seven of Henry Vieuxtemps’ Violin Concertos and showpieces with orchestra, released on the Naxos label. These recordings have sold over 150,000 copies worldwide and have garnered numerous press accolades and awards (such as “Critic’s Choice” by The New York Times, Gramophone and The Strad).

In a career already spanning over fifty countries on five continents, Keylin has collaborated with such distinguished conductors as Roberto Benzi, Irwin Hoffman, Eliahu Inbal, Vakhtang Jordania, Theodore Kuchar, Fabio Mechetti, John Nelson, Marco Parisotto, Alexander Schneider, Jörg-Peter Weigle, Bruno Weil and Takuo Yuasa, amongst many others. He has been guest soloist with the St. Petersburg Philharmonic, Leipzig Chamber Orchestra, Marseille Philharmonic, NDR Philharmonic of Hannover, Budapest Philharmonic, Israel Sinfonietta, Bologna Philharmonic, Amadeus Chamber Orchestra, Brandenburg Philharmonic and the Philharmonic Orchestra of Chile; in addition, he has performed with the National Symphony Orchestras of Ukraine, Latvia, Colombia, Costa Rica and other noted ensembles. United States concerto and recital appearances have brought him to major venues in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington D.C., Seattle, Charlotte, Indianapolis, Atlanta, Denver and San Francisco.

As an active chamber musician, has been a regular guest artist with the Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players and has participated at the Aspen, Ravinia, Newport (RI) and Australian Chamber Music festivals, amongst others. In 2011, Keylin became a founding member of the Hermitage Piano Trio together with renowned soloists – Sergey Antonov (cello) and Ilya Kazantsev (piano). The Trio has performed to similarly tremendous acclaim for audiences on major chamber music series in Los Angeles, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Tucson, Newport (RI), Portland (OR), San Miguel de Allende (Mexico), and New Orleans. Recently signed to a multiple-album recording deal with Reference Recordings, the Trio's Debut CD – released in June 2019 – is comprised of the piano trios of Sergey Rachmaninoff: Trio élégiaque No. 1 in G minor; Trio élégiaque No. 2 in D minor, Op. 9; and Vocalise.

Misha Keylin began musical studies with his mother in St. Petersburg, Russia. He immigrated to the USA at nine and was immediately accepted as a student by the legendary Dorothy DeLay at The Juilliard School. After winning New York's coveted Waldo Mayo Award as "Best Young Performer of the Year," Keylin went on to capture top prizes in the prestigious Hannover (Germany), Paganini (Italy), Sarasate (Spain) and Viña del Mar (Chile) competitions. Keylin has been a Career Grant recipient of the Clarisse B. Kampel Foundation and he currently resides in New York and performs on a violin made by Antonio Gagliano in 1831 and bows made by Dominique Peccatte and Nicolas Leonard Tourte.

Grammy cellist **Sergey Antonov** enjoys a versatile career as a soloist and chamber musician. Critics throughout the world have hailed him as "destined for cello superstardom" -Washington Post, "combining formidable technique and an incredibly warm, penetrating and vibrant tone to a romantic musical sensibility to create music - making of a highest caliber" - Budapest Sun. After one of the Newport Festival concerts in RI, a critic wrote "... a performance with soaring phrases and a tone to die for." Sergey's performance of the Elgar concerto drew the critic of the Moscow's Daily Telegraph to write: "[he] is a musician who has his own inner space, where he submerges himself from the very first sound...who turns each phrase, every deeply felt sound into an event of his own inner monologue. The theme of this monologue is existential suffering; a change of intricately noted emotions, directly related to the unexplainable condition known as Spiritual Life." A Canadian critic wrote: "Antonov conveyed ...a world of expression from plaintive hope to existential pathos."

One of the recent reviewers wrote, "No virtuosic challenge is more than his equal."

After winning the Gold Medal in the 2007 International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, Russia, Sergey has been touring extensively throughout Europe, Asia, North and South America performing in halls ranging from the Great Hall of Moscow Conservatory to Suntory Hall in Tokyo. He has collaborated with musicians such as Denis Matsuev, Bernadene Blaha, Kevin Fitz Gerald, Ekaterina Mechetina, Harve A' Kaoua, Carl Ponten, Dora Schwartzberg, John Lenehan, Colin Carr, Cynthia Phelps, Martin Chalifour, David Chan, among others, as well as his permanent piano partner Ilya Kazantsev. The duo has recorded several CDs of traditional cello-piano repertoire as well as their own transcriptions, recorded in their CD album Elogy.

Sergey is a member of the acclaimed Hermitage Piano Trio with Ilya Kazantsev and violinist Misha Keylin.

In addition to being the 2007 Tchaikovsky gold medal winner for cello, Antonov has been a recipient of the 2008 Golden Talent Award by the Russian Performing Arts Foundation as well as garnering top prizes at the Justuz Friedrich Dotzhauer Competition, Germany, David Popper International Cello Competition, Hungary, American String Teachers Association in Detroit. His chamber ensemble performances have also brought him honors from the Lyrica Chamber Music Series as their “Young Artist of the Year,” and First Prizes from the Chamber Music Foundation of New England and the Swedish International Duo Competition.

Antonov collaborated with such maestros as Vladimir Spivakov, Dmitry Sitkovetsky Yan Pascal Tortilier, Mikhail Pletnev, Maxim Vengerov, Oue Eiji, Yuri Simonov, Christopher Zimmerman, Uri Bashmet, Jonathan McPhee, Yuri Botnari, Alexey Shabalin, among many others. He has made his conducting debut in the spring of 2014. Sergey frequently gives master classes to solo cellists and chamber music groups in colleges and universities throughout the world.

Born into a family of cellists, Sergey started playing cello at the age of five with his mother, Maria Zhuravleva, as his teacher. She has recently become the recipient of the National 2014 Teacher of the Year Award of Russia. He has studied at the Central Music School and has graduated from the Moscow Conservatory where he studied under the renowned professor Natalia Shakhovskaya.

He holds an Artist Diploma from Longy School of Music in Boston where he worked with Grammy nominated cellist Terry King. While being a student at the Moscow Conservatory, Sergey was under the tutelage of M. Rostropovich.

Sergey has appeared on Russian National Television in performances with the Moscow Philharmonic in their “Stars of the 21st Century” series, and in live concerts on Boston’s NPR radio station WGBH. His performances were also broadcast by NHK Japan.

He lives in New York with his wife Nika and son Noah

Ilya Kazantsev, a fresh and exciting presence on the international music scene, has been hailed by The Washington Post as “virtually flawless.” He has performed extensively with orchestras in Russia and the United States, as well as appearing in recital in Germany, Japan, Italy, France, Canada, Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, the United States, and Slovenia. His many awards and honors include first prize at the Nikolai Rubinstein International Competition (Paris); he also won the International Chopin Competition (Moscow) and the 2007 & 2008 World Piano Competitions (Cincinnati).

In 2014, Ilya was invited to join the esteemed Hermitage Piano Trio, which also includes the renowned soloists Misha Keylin (violin) and Sergey Antonov (cello). An enthusiastic advocate of contemporary music, Ilya has presented numerous premieres of works by contemporary American, Russian, and Eastern European composers, many of which have been dedicated to him. His advanced studies have included working with such prominent contemporary music specialists as Jay Gotlieb, Mark Ponthus and the legendary composer and conductor Pierre Boulez, who praised Ilya for his thoughtful performance of composer's Douze Notations.

Ilya began his music studies in his native Moscow and at the age of nine was accepted as a student of Valeriy Pyasetsky at the Central Music School at the Tchaikovsky State Conservatory. Subsequently, he moved to the United States in 2002 to continue his studies at the Mannes College of Music and the Manhattan School of Music, working with Arkady Aronov. He currently resides in Boston, MA.