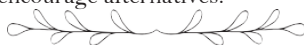


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- In the United States, there are systems of power that grant privilege and access unequally such that inequity and injustice result. We resolve to educate ourselves, keep vigilant watch, and act to bring an end to systemic oppression.
- Cultural equity—which embodies values, practices, and policies that ensure all people have access to, and are represented in, the arts—is critical to the sustained engagement of music in society.
- Acknowledging and challenging our inequities and working in partnership is how we will make change happen.
- Everyone deserves equal access to a full, vibrant creative life, which is essential to a healthy and democratic society.
- The prominent presence of musicians in society can challenge inequities and encourage alternatives.



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FORBES CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY®

School of Music

presents the faculty recital of

Ian Zook, *horn*

featuring

Stephen Miahky, *violin* Aleksandra Velgosha, *piano*

Monday, September 16, 2024

7 pm

Recital Hall



There will be one 10-minute intermission.

Biographies

Ian Zook is an active orchestral and solo performer and has appeared in concerts throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia. As soloist he has performed with numerous ensembles including the JMU Symphony Orchestra, Brass Band, Wind Symphony, Percussion Ensemble, Madison Singers, the Charlottesville Symphony Orchestra, the Virginia Baroque Consort, the Chamber Orchestra of Charlottesville, and the Staunton Music Festival.

He is also a frequent substitute musician with the Philadelphia Orchestra in addition to the National, Richmond, Virginia, Roanoke, and Harrisburg Symphony Orchestras. He holds degrees from the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill and the University of Michigan, and has performed at the Verbier, Pacific, Sarasota, AIMS in Graz, Staunton, and Aspen Music Festivals, and the National Orchestral Institute.

His solo album, *Musica Incognita* released MSR Classics, features sonatas by Sixten Sylvan, Jean-Michel Damase, Leslie Bassett, and York Bowen. Zook is also on the editorial staff of the International Horn Society, writing the featured column “Horn on Record” for the monthly newsletter *Horn & More*.

Praised for his “sweet, luxurious” sound (*Fanfare*), violinist **Stephen Miahky** is the Joseph Joachim Professor of Violin and First Violin of the Blair String Quartet at Vanderbilt University. He has garnered acclaim for his performances as a recitalist and a chamber musician throughout North America and Europe. His most recent engagements include performances New York City’s Symphony Space, Merkin Hall, and Bargemusic, Atlanta’s ProMozart Society, the Princeton Chamber Music Society, the Southwest Virginia Festival of the Arts, Vancouver’s Sonic Boom Festival, the American Academies in Rome and Berlin, the Netherlands’ De Lakenhal, NPR’s *Performance Today*, and for the Dalai Lama.

Pianist **Aleksandra Velgosha** was born in Moscow, Russia. Aleksandra’s achievements include first and second prizes in competitions like E. R. Davis Piano Competition, Crescendo Competition (Carnegie Hall, NY), and many others. Aleksandra received her BM in Piano Performance with honors from Washington Adventist University with Dr. Mark Di Pinto, and completed her Master's degree at the University of Maryland under Larissa Dedova. Aleksandra is in her third year of DMA, studying with Dr. Gabriel Dobner, and has taught at such institutions as University of Maryland (Class Piano Coordinator), Richardson School of Music, Takoma Academy, and Chanson Music School.

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Program Notes - *continued*

instead of the expected sonata form, there is an Andante comprised of two contrasting themes, neither one developed. The recurring first theme, filled with nostalgia and dry-eyed sentiment, is countered by an agitated, impetuous second subject, it too repeated. The second movement, titled a Scherzo, is far more urgent than playful, and, in its middle section, touching in its broad, elegiac expressiveness.

It is as if this minor-key lyricism is meant to prepare for the heart of the Trio – a wrenchingly moving Adagio that must be counted one of the composer's great slow movements. The depth of feeling here is intensified by the horn's melancholy, yet the music would be no less affecting were a viola or cello (each of which is specified in the score as a substitute for the brass instrument) to take the horn's place. The finale, however, is horn music all the way, being a glorified hunting piece, with all the vigor and ebullience that is the heritage of that historical style. But, inimitably, Brahms adds an element of mystery and romantic imagery to the spirited proceedings, making of the movement a multi-faceted rather than a one-dimensional experience.

Note by Orrin Howard

Program

Horn Sonata (2023) Anthony Plog
(b. 1947)

- I. Part 1: Movement 1 *attacca* Movement 2
- II. Part 2: Movement 3 *attacca* Movement 4

Trio for Horn, Violin, and Piano (2017) William Bolcom
(b. 1938)

- I. Plodding, implacably controlled
- II. Headlong, brutal
- III. As if from far away; misterioso
- IV. Very controlled and resolute

10-Minute Intermission

Five Pieces for Violin and Piano, Op. 81 Jean Sibelius
(1865-1957)

- I. Mazurka
- II. Rondino
- III. Walzer
- IV. Aubade
- V. Menuetto

Trio in E-flat Major, Op. 40 Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)
for Piano, Violin, and Horn

- I. Andante
- II. Scherzo (Allegro)
- III. Adagio mesto
- IV. Allegro con brio

Program Notes

Anthony Plog's Sonata for Horn and Piano (2023) was commissioned by a consortium led by Matthew Haislip, Assistant Professor of Horn at Mississippi State University. I was part of this consortium, and am pleased to be adding to the performances of this piece worldwide over the past year. An American composer prolific in writing for brass instruments, Plog's music is uniquely identified by clear textures, motivic repetition, and often high-velocity lines that twist and turn in chromatically acrobatic fashion.

This sonata has two primary motivic cells: a half-step descending gesture with an overall arching phrase shape, and a secondary motive constructed on descending minor thirds, slightly more *espressivo* in character. Each movement engages with these motives in differing ways, but their contours are ever-present. The resulting music expresses the lyrical qualities of the horn and piano both, and the percussive, driving tenacity of this same pairing through the piece's conclusion.

William Bolcom is a decorated American composer who retired from teaching at the University of Michigan in 2008 after 35 years on faculty. Writing for an expanse of genres including ragtime, cabaret, opera, vocal, chamber, and symphonic music, he has been awarded two Guggenheim Fellowships, the Pulitzer Prize, and the National Medal of Arts. In 2004, after 25 years of compositional investment, Bolcom's *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* based on the text by William Blake was recorded by Leonard Slatkin and the University of Michigan School of Music ensembles, requiring over 400 musicians and dozens of international soloists of myriad musical walks of life. I was fortunate to perform on this monumental recording project, which went on to win four Grammy Awards for Best Choral Performance, Best Classical Contemporary Composition, Best Classical Album, and Best Producer of the Year, Classical.

Concerning his Trio, Bolcom writes: "The Horn Trio for horn, violin, and piano is occasioned—I don't want to write "inspired"—by the era we're living in. So many of us feel desperation from the constant, gratuitous endangerment of our country and the world; I wrote the Trio to express this, hoping listeners might possibly feel less alone. The heavy plodding rhythms of the first movement are supplanted by a hectic second, a portrait of our misfortune's principal agent. The following slow movement contains a short moment of respite toward its end - a brief breakthrough of tonal sunshine in C major—and the finale is a resolute march of resistance."

Program Notes - *continued*

Finnish composer Jean Sibelius had an early ambition to excel as a violinist. Beginning his studies rather late at age 14, he wrote in his diary: "The violin took me by storm, and for the next ten years it was my dearest wish, my overriding ambition, to become a great virtuoso." However, his compositional craft soon outpaced his instrumental prowess. He manifested as a prolific composer, producing many symphonic tone poems, seven monumental symphonies, and his Violin Concerto in D minor, Op. 47, a cornerstone of the 20th Century violin repertoire.

In addition to his large chamber catalog of works for piano and strings in quintet, quartet, and trio configurations, Sibelius peppered pieces for violin and piano across his output. The Five Pieces for Violin and Piano, op. 81 were produced during World War I in an effort to provide shorter works that could be performed and enjoyed in salon settings. None of these works intimates the tragedies of the war; rather they are each full of charm and panache and suffused with the dance-like character associated with their titles.

Notes by Ian Zook

A survey of orchestral works by Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) readily reveals the special fondness the composer had for the horn, an instrument he played as a youth. For example, the Serenade No. 1, the First and Second Symphonies, the B-flat Piano Concerto, all have prominent horn episodes that linger in the memory. Yet in spite of his horn sympathies, Brahms engaged the instrument in only one chamber music work—the present Trio in E-flat major for Horn, Violin, and Piano, Op. 40, which he wrote in 1865. One can only speculate that, having produced this uniquely wonderful piece, the composer felt that he had said all he had to say about the horn in a chamber context. Indeed, musically and instrumentally the Trio makes such a special statement, establishes such a magical aura, that anything further by Brahms on the horn subject might easily have been anti-climactic.

It is noteworthy that Brahms made a point of calling his publisher's attention to the fact that he had written for the "simple," that is, valveless horn, rather than for the technically more sophisticated valve-horn, which at the time was already in general use. By this choice, Brahms was opting for a horn part of nobility rather than virtuosity; the work's incomparably beautiful results confirm the wisdom of the decision. The specific horn for which he was writing seems also to have dictated an unusual structural approach in the first movement, for