

FORBES CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

**JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY®**

School of Music

*presents*

*the guest artist recital of*

**HARLEY-FADIAL DUO**

**John Fadial, *violin***

**Andrew Harley, *piano***

Monday, October 13, 2025

7 pm

Recital Hall



There is no intermission.

## Program

Berceuse (1903)	John Ireland (1879-1962)
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Three Pieces for violin and piano (1923)	Cecil Armstrong Gibbs (1889-1960)
Gossamer	
March Wind	
The Silent Pool	

Romance and Pastoral for violin and piano (1923)	Ralph Vaughan-Williams (1872-1958)
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Four Short Pieces for Violin and piano (1912)	Frank Bridge (1879-1941)
Meditation	
Spring Song	
Lullaby	
Country Dance	

## Brief Pause

Sonata for Violin and Piano op. 82 in e minor (1919)	Edward Elgar (1857-1934)
Allegro	
Andante	
Allegro, non troppo	

<i>The Gentle Maiden: Irish Air</i> op.19	(arr.) Cyril Scott (1879-1970)
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## Program Notes

All the music featured on this program was composed by English musicians who were personally affected by the two World Wars of the first half of the twentieth century. Tonight's selections come from before, during, and after these conflicts and provide a lens through which we may see British life and indeed all society shift in the winds of war. These worldwide upheavals left no one untouched and the music that we will perform reflects shifts musical form, sentiment, and harmonic language. The works on this program are largely introspective pieces that offer us a view into the human psyche. Perhaps they may provide clarity and solace in today's troubled times.

John Ireland was born in 1879. He was educated at the Royal College of Music where he studied piano with Richard Cliffe and organ with Walter Parratt. At the turn of the twentieth century, he gained notoriety for his chamber works and songs. His *Berceuse* for violin and piano from 1903 is representative of this period. As Ireland matured as a composer, prominent English performers took to his work, including the violinist Albert Sammons and the pianist William Murdoch who together gave the world premiere at Aeolian Hall of Ireland's second sonata for violin and piano. Ireland had submitted the work to a competition in 1917 meant to assist musicians in wartime. In 1923 Ireland was appointed to the Royal College faculty where he taught a generation of notable composers. The *Berceuse* of 1902, like the *Frank Bridge Four Pieces*, is from a time of relative calm before the tumult of the wars to come.

Armstrong Gibbs was a contemporary of Ireland who received his initial college education at Winchester College where he majored in history and excelled in Latin. During this time, he also began to study music seriously. He moved to Trinity College where he continued his studies in both music and history (1908-1911). In 1919, at the request of the conductor Sir Adrian Boult, Gibbs took a one-year leave of absence from his teaching position to study music at the Royal College of Music. By 1920 his music was being published regularly and in 1921 he was invited to join the Royal College faculty where he taught theory and composition until 1939. He developed a close relationship with fellow composer Ralph Vaughan-Williams. During World War II Gibbs's home was used by the British military as a hospital, and in 1943 his son was killed in action in Italy. He continued to compose notably choral music and to organize multiple music festivals until his death in 1960. His *Three Pieces* published shortly after World War I are easily approachable at first glance but often veer disarmingly into a dissonant and exotic harmonic world.

Ralph Vaughan-Williams was a prodigious composer whose work includes nine symphonies, opera, ballet, chamber music, and choral music. He was a social progressive who believed strongly in making music available to everyone. To that end, he spent a great deal of time and energy composing music for student and amateur musicians. These accessible compositions often are based on Tudor music and English folk tunes. Though the material is often simple, the idea of creating music from this folk idiom was an important factor for Vaughan-Williams generally, in shaking off the yoke of German compositional style. In 1907-08 he studied with Maurice Ravel, further encouraging him to leave Teutonic influences behind. His army service in World War I left an

## Program Notes - *continued*

indelible impression on him and the Romance and Pastoral of 1923 are examples of music that look both inward and back in time, even to plainsong chant. The composer finds expression of the raw emotions human emotions by linking them to the long, universal human experience, by using devices from centuries before, giving the music a sense of timelessness.

Frank Bridge was a composer, conductor, and violist. He came from a family of performers in which he was the youngest of nine children. His father was a master lithographic printer, violin teacher, and variety theater conductor. Frank performed in the theater orchestra from a young age eventually serving his father as an arranger. From 1899 to 1903 he studied at the Royal College of Music. The composer (and Bridge pupil) Benjamin Britten claims that the pacifist Bridge was heavily affected by First World War. Bridge wrote several elegiac works during this period including a lament for string orchestra as a memorial to the victims of the sinking of the RMS Lusitania. The Four Pieces for Violin and Piano are early essays in that are indicative of a sweet, poetic style that would expand into a more sweeping grand style later in life. Thanks to the patronage of Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, Bridge did not need to teach to make a living. During his life, he only accepted a handful of students, including Britten, and eventually experimented with dodecaphonic techniques, not worrying particularly about the public appeal of his compositions.

Edward Elgar, the giant of Edwardian composition began his musical life on the violin and had hoped to study in Leipzig. However, that dream never materialized and in 1872 he found himself working as a clerk in a lawyer's office. Ultimately, he left this job in favor of private violin and piano teaching. In the early 1880s he was able to travel to Paris and to Leipzig, where he heard Saint-Saëns, Schumann, Brahms, and Wagner. By the outbreak of World War I, having enjoyed great professional success, Elgar fell ill, and he and his wife took a house in the countryside. They lived there in recovery until 1919 by which time the War had ended and Elgar had emerged from his malady, composing three great chamber works including the Violin Sonata in E minor, the Piano Quintet in A minor, and the String Quartet, followed quickly by the Cello Concerto (1919-20). The violin sonata expresses monumental struggle, introspection, and ultimate triumph, sharing with these other works an emotional depth and searing expressive intensity beyond what may be found in his previous compositions.

The Gentle Maiden is a Cyril Scott arrangement of a traditional Irish tune. Scott was born in Oxtou, Cheshire in 1843, demonstrated early musical talent, and eventually received formal training at the Frankfurt Hoch Conservatory. He wrote in virtually every type of classical form, from solo piano and chamber works, to ballet, opera, concerti and incidental music for theatrical productions. He was a poet and writer and even wrote on the benefits of alternative medicine and the practice of Yoga. His use of exotic harmonies and evocative textures earned him the title of "The English Debussy" during his lifetime, and this may be heard in the dreamy treatment of this old Irish Melody. Even the glissandi and portamenti in the violin part are written out as highly specified expressive effects.

## Biographies

The Harley-Fadial Duo has performed across the US and on recording, treating audiences to their probing and thoughtful interpretations, for over twenty years. Andrew Harley and John Fadial first performed together as faculty colleagues at the University of North Carolina and have managed to continue their collaboration. Their 2019 release of the complete Brahms Sonatas for Piano and Violin on the Centaur label met with critical acclaim and has stoked intense interest in their unique brand of imaginative and expressive interpretation.

“Rich tone and elegant phrasing... (Harley- Fadial Duo) ... Five Stars: a fresh rendition by a pair of elegant artists...” (Peter Burwasser, Fanfare)

Employing a sweet, supple tone (more French than Russian) and the avoidance of cliché throbbing Romantic style, Fadial personalizes these scores in such a fashion that you cannot tear yourself away. Andrew Harley has made a specialty of collaborative pianism, teaching and performing on an international scale, and the Brahms violin sonatas could hardly be bettered to display what collaboration means. He is a superb interpreter of the piano part, effortless in technique, eloquent in expression. But in addition, Harley blends so seamlessly with Fadial that we get the alchemy that results when two musical minds are in perfect sympathy. Five Stars: “...these could hardly be bettered” (Huntly Dent, Fanfare).

Over my years with Fanfare, I’ve reviewed countless recordings of Brahms’s violin sonatas. Some I’ve panned, others I’ve praised. But I can honestly say that I’ve never heard these works played like this. John Fadial and Andrew Harley bring an interpretive vision to the music, which, in my experience, is unique and, crucially, convincing, and compelling. Of the two-dozen or more versions I have of these sonatas on my shelf—a number of which I really like—I can see myself reaching for Fadial and Harley before any of the others. Urgently recommended. Jerry Dubins Five stars: “Extraordinary music-making, truly visionary” (Jerry Dubins, Fanfare)

Harley-Fadial Duo’s recordings of works for Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and Brahms may be found on Amazon, iTunes, and Spotify. Look for us on YouTube.

English pianist Andrew Harley enjoys an internationally recognized performing and teaching career. Specializing in instrumental chamber music and song literature, he has been heard in live radio and television broadcasts, on numerous recordings, as well as at venues such as Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall, Purcell Room, Kennedy Center, Library of Congress, and the Supreme Court of the United States.

Dr. Harley began his early musical education at the renowned Chetham’s School of Music, continuing his studies at Oxford University, the Royal Northern College of Music, and the University of Southern California. Since immigrating to the United States, Dr. Harley has held faculty positions at The Juilliard School, the University of Southern California, and the University of North Carolina. His summer affiliations include Director of Chamber Music for the International Institute for Young Musicians, the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, the Vancouver International Song

## Biographies - *continued*

Institute (VISI), and The Aspen Music Festival and School, where he served as Interim Director. As a guest artist, he has taught and given master classes at The New England Conservatory, Indiana University Bloomington, the Royal Northern College of Music, Chapman University, and the Folkwang University of the Arts in Essen, Germany, where he served as Visiting Guest Faculty in Accompanying. Dr. Harley was recently featured as the National Conference Master Clinician for the National Association of Teachers of Singing. He currently serves as a member of the Eastman Piano Faculty, as well as Director of the Piano Accompanying and Chamber Music Degree Program.

As a performing artist, Dr. Harley concertizes across the globe, collaborating with such distinguished recital partners as international opera stars J'Nai Bridges, Denyce Graves, Susanna Phillips, Eric Owens, the legendary American cellist Lynn Harrell, and members of The Cleveland Quartet, The Juilliard Quartet, and Talich Quartet. In June 2018, together with J'Nai Bridges and Susanna Phillips, Dr. Harley gave the East Coast premiere of *The Long View: A Portrait of Ruth Bader Ginsburg in Nine Songs* by Patrice Michaels. Recent recital partners include concertmasters and principal players of Bamberg Symphony, Bavarian State Opera Orchestra, Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Gothenburg Symphony, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Munich Philharmonic, Moscow Virtuosi, National Symphony Orchestra, Norwegian Chamber Orchestra, Norwegian Radio Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, Radio Symphony Orchestra (WDR) Cologne, Radio Symphony Orchestra (NDR) Hamburg, Teatro La Fenice, and Teatro alla Scala. *Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* recently described him as "a soloist who understands how to blend within an ensemble with excellence, yet without subjugating himself. Pearls of gold met with a diamond." A recording of four-hand works by Schubert and Brahms is scheduled for release in 2022.

Violinist John Fadial serves as Professor of Violin and Head of Strings at the University of Wyoming. At the age of eleven, he performed for President Gerald Ford and since has appeared around the globe as chamber musician, soloist, and pedagogue. His performances have been praised by the critics. "Sparkling Technique," *L'Est Republicain* (France) "Wow! Great Stuff," *The Washington Post* "Gorgeously rendered!", *New York Concert Review*. He has toured four continents for the US State Department as a United States Artistic Ambassador, and has served as Concertmaster of the North Carolina Opera, the Colorado Festival, ProMusica Colorado, the Menuhin Festival Orchestra of Saumur (France), the Heidelberg Schloss-Spiele (Germany), and Greensboro (NC) Symphony Orchestra (eighteen seasons). Additionally, he has served as Associate Concertmaster of the Eastern Festival Orchestra, appearing as both concertmaster and soloist, under the direction of Gerard Schwarz since 1999.

As a recording artist he was a semifinalist for the Grammy Award for best Chamber Music Performance of 2007 for the CD *Where Does Love Go: Chamber Music of Mark Engebretson* on the Innova label; and in 2009 he released a disc of the *Complete String Sextets of Johannes Brahms* (RadioFrance) with the Stanislas Sextet of Nancy (France),

## Biographies - *continued*

of which he is a founding member. His disc of the Chamber Music of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor with English pianist Andrew Harley was deemed “not to be missed” by American Record Guide; and he and the duo recently completed a recording of the Brahms Sonatas for the Centaur label. His disc of the Chamber Music of Jennifer Higdon, produced in collaboration with the Pulitzer Prize winning composer was released on the Albany label in 2013. In 2016 Fadial embarked on a recording project of string sextet repertoire with the Nancy-based Stanislas Sextet in celebration of their 20th season. Discs released so far include world premier recordings of new Sextets by Georges, Sauget and Fadial on the Forgotten Records label. 2023 will see his recording at Cornell University of the complete works for violin and piano of Gabriel Fauré, with pianist Chi-Chen Wu, using an 1860 Erard keyboard. The release on MusicOmnia/Naxos will coincide with the 2024 centennial of the composer’s death. Dr. Fadial holds degrees from the North Carolina School of the Arts, the Eastman School of Music, and the University of Maryland. His teachers have included Jerry Cadek Lucktenberg, Elaine Richey, Charles Castleman, Arnold Steinhardt, Zoltan Szekely, and Joseph Silverstein. Mentors have included Jan DeGaetani, Abram Loft, Joseph Gingold, members of the Beaux Arts Trio, and members of the Cleveland, Juilliard, and Guarneri String Quartets.

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