

**CITY
MUSIC**

CLEVELAND

CHAMBER

ORCHESTRA

Amit Peled, Music Director

September 25, 2020

Chamber Music Concert

**Celebrating Women's Rights
to Vote and Create**



History of CityMusic Cleveland Chamber Orchestra

CityMusic Cleveland, founded in 2004, has carved a distinctive place in the cultural life of Northeast Ohio. The professional chamber orchestra presents free concerts in neighborhoods that lack access to classical music. CityMusic has established a fresh orchestral paradigm by forging relationships, fostering community arts involvement, and offering programs full of artistic adventure.

CityMusic has a strong history of exploring social issues through innovative projects. In 2011 CityMusic addressed bullying with a commissioned work for narrator and chamber orchestra, Margaret Brouwer's *Daniel and Snakeman*. A program about genocide and oppression included Hans Krása's children's opera *Brundibár*, which was initially performed at the Nazi internment camp Theresienstadt. The plight of Cleveland refugees was embodied in another commissioned work, Dan Visconti's 2013 *Roots to Branches*. A program titled "Wishes and Dreams" focused on Cleveland's homeless children and featured Broadway and Hollywood star Heather Headley. A 2018 commission by Merima Ključić underpinned "Two Faiths—One Spirit," which combined parallel stories of interfaith efforts to preserve Jewish and Islamic texts, highlighting the common humanity that underpins all faiths. In May 2019 CityMusic presented a powerful Holocaust Remembrance Day performance of Verdi's Requiem to commemorate the 1943 performances of the work at Theresienstadt.

For the 2019-2020 season, CityMusic commissioned jazz artist John Clayton to write a work inspired by Dvořák's "New World" Symphony, which was heavily influenced by melodies Dvořák learned from his African-American student Henry T. Burleigh. The new work, titled *HOME*, offers a musical commentary on the social-political struggles that African-Americans are facing today.

CityMusic has commissioned several works in addition to the Brouwer and Visconti pieces created for inter-generational projects. Brouwer composed her Concerto for Violin and Chamber Orchestra for the ensemble and soloist Michi Wiancko in 2007. The Greek-born Canadian composer Christos Hatzis wrote *Redemption: Book I* for the orchestra and the Pacifica Quartet, who premiered the score in 2009 under guest conductor David Alan Miller. A year later, CityMusic made its New York debut at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall in "A Celebration of America's Hellenic Community," a benefit program of music by Hatzis featuring the renowned Greek pop singer George Dalaras.

Since its founding in 2004, the ensemble has performed under three music directors, James Gaffigan, Avner Dorman and Amit Peled, and many guest conductors, including David Alan Miller, Joel Smirnoff, and Joshua Weilerstein. Its roster of guest soloists and ensembles has been stellar: violinists Gil Shaham, Jennifer Koh, Kyung Sun Lee, Rachel Barton Pine, Tessa Lark, Sayaka Shoji and Adele Anthony; cellists Edward Aaron and Jan Vogler; singers Sasha Cooke, Chabrelle Williams, Joshua Blue and Raymond Aceto; clarinetists Franklin Cohen and Daniel Gilbert; and saxophonist Timothy McAllister.

CityMusic Cleveland is also committed to advancing arts education access. The Clurie Bennis Children's Outreach Series, performed in schools and libraries in under-served Cleveland neighborhoods, presents arts programs that tell unique cultural stories.

CITYMUSIC CLEVELAND

September 25, 2020 at 7:00 PM
St. Stanislaus Church
Cleveland, Ohio

Minju Kim & Mari Sato *violins*
Esther Nahm *viola*
Nataliya Pshenychna *cello*
Daniel Gilbert *clarinet*
Donna Lee *piano*

HIGDON, Jennifer (b. 1962)
Dash for Violin, Clarinet and Piano

BEACH, Amy (Mrs. H.H.A.) (1867-1944)
Romance for Violin and Piano, Op. 23

LARSEN, Libby (b. 1950)
Black Birds, Red Hills for Clarinet, Viola and Piano
Pedernal Hills
Black Rock
Red Hills and Sky
A Black Bird with Snow-Covered Red Hills

WASHINGTON, Shelley (b. 1991)
Middleground for String Quartet

MENDELSSOHN HENSEL, Fanny (1805-1847)
String Quartet in E-flat major
Adagio ma non troppo
Allegretto
Romanze
Allegro molto vivace

The 2020-2021 CityMusic Chamber Series is supported
by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Kulas Foundation.

CityMusic Cleveland Celebrates the
Centenary of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution:
“The right of citizens of the United States to vote
shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State
on account of sex.”

Women composers have long played a part in the history of music. The earliest composer known to many music lovers is a woman — the 12th-century German scholar, mystic and abbess HILDEGARD OF BINGEN. Hildegard has had many female successors — *The Norton/Grove Dictionary of Women Composers* included some 900 entries when it was published in 1995 — but acknowledgement and opportunity, like the struggle for women’s suffrage, was a long time coming.

Most female composers through the end of the 18th century were women of privilege who had the family situation, financial resources, individual musical training or religious affiliation to support their creativity. The nuns CHIARA MARGARITA COZZOLANI and ISABELLA LEONARDA, both daughters of prominent Italian families, were noted for their published religious vocal works. BARBARA STROZZI, the adopted daughter of Venetian poet and dramatist Giulio Strozzi, published several volumes of sacred and secular songs in the mid-17th century and was able to support herself as a composer and vocalist. LEONORA DUARTE was the child of a wealthy Antwerp jeweler and wrote several *sinfonias* for the family’s music-making that her father had published. Composer and harpsichordist ELISABETH-CLAUDE JACQUET DE LA GUERRE, born into a musical family in Paris, sang at the court of Louis XIV as a child, composed the first opera by a French woman (1694), and became one of the most respected musical figures in France. WILHELMINE, PRINCESS OF BAYREUTH, older sister of the music-loving, flute-playing Frederick the Great of Prussia, made Bayreuth a German cultural center and, for the delectation of the court, composed an opera in 1740 (including its libretto), vocal pieces and a flute concerto.

The 19th century was a time of rising awareness and expanding possibilities for female musicians, as it was in the struggle for women’s suffrage. That development is seen in the lives of FANNY MENDELSSOHN HENSEL, older sister of the brilliant Felix Mendelssohn, and CLARA SCHUMANN, Robert’s wife. Fanny, born in 1805 into one of Berlin’s most prominent and prosperous families, was a gifted pianist and composer (Goethe, a friend of young Felix, asked him in a letter to “give my regards to your equally talented sister”), but she had no chance to enter the field. “You must prepare earnestly for your real calling, the only calling for a young woman,” Papa Abraham instructed her. “I mean the state of a housewife. Music should be an accomplishment, and never a career for women.” Fanny heeded her father’s advice and never worked professionally, though she did compose some 500 works, many for the salons she hosted in the Berlin home she shared with her husband, court painter William Hensel. Clara Wieck Schumann, born fourteen years later, established herself as a piano virtuoso as a teenager and was encouraged to compose by her husband. Robert died when she was just 37 years old and with six children to support, so she resumed touring (to universal acclaim) but never composed again.

The first Women’s Rights Convention, organized by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, was held in Seneca Falls, New York in July 1848 and marked a milestone in the evolution of human rights. The decades that followed were a time of focused and tireless activism that led to the ratification of the 19th Amendment in 1920, as well as the period during which women composers began to integrate themselves into the professional music community. Oberlin College was established in 1833 as the first co-educational institution of higher learning in the country. It began admitting

Blacks two years later, and granted the first bachelor’s degrees in America to women in 1841. The Music Vale Seminary was founded in Salem, Connecticut in 1835 as the first music conservatory for women and the first accredited music school in the United States. In 1867, Clara Baur became the first woman to found a conservatory and initially admitted predominantly female students; today it is the College-Conservatory of Music of the University of Cincinnati. Women were accepted into the Paris Conservatoire from the time of its founding in 1796, but mainly as performers. In 1819, Louise Farrenc became the first woman allowed to study composition at the Conservatoire, and in 1842 she was appointed as the only permanent female member of its faculty during the entire 19th century, though women were not generally admitted to advanced composition classes until the 1870s. Similar chronologies obtained elsewhere in Europe.

The availability of conservatory training was not just a recognition of women’s potential for creative work but also a catalyst for its realization, and in the decades before World War II a number of gifted, ambitious and determined women gained prominence as composers: LUISE ADOLPHA LE BEAU (Germany), a student of Clara Schumann, had many successful performances, including the production of an opera; TERESA CARREÑO (Venezuela), a virtuoso pianist who settled in the United States, studied with Louis Moreau Gottschalk, and was one of the first female musicians to tour North America; REBECCA CLARKE (England) was the first woman accepted to study composition at the Royal College of Music, London, and one of the first to play (viola) in London’s professional orchestras; Ethel Smythe (England) was an ardent suffragette who spent two months in jail for her activism, composed an anthem for the movement, and wrote the first opera by a woman staged by the Metropolitan Opera (1902; it remained the only opera by a female composer staged there until Kaija Saariaho’s *L’amour de loin* in 2016); AMY BEACH (United States), internationally known as both pianist and composer, was the first American woman to compose a symphony; and FLORENCE B. PRICE (UNITED STATES) was among the first African-American students to graduate from the New England Conservatory of Music and the first Black woman to have a symphony performed by a major American orchestra (Chicago Symphony Orchestra, 1933).

Since ELLEN TAAFFE ZWILICH became the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize, in 1982, our musical life has been inestimably enriched by the compositions of women. SHULAMIT RAN received the Pulitzer Prize in 1991 and MELINDA WAGNER in 1999, and in the last decade four more of the country’s leading female composers have earned the distinction: JENNIFER HIGDON (2010), CAROLINE SHAW (2013), JULIA WOLFE (2015) and ELLEN REID (2019). These composers, as well as such gifted contemporaries of theirs as LIBBY LARSEN and AMANDA HARBERG, are the vanguard of a remarkable generation of young women, including SHELLEY WASHINGTON and JESSIE MONTGOMERY, who are drawing a wide spectrum of traditional and current musical styles into their creative work.

As with women’s suffrage, it has taken far too long for the creative voices of half the world’s population to be properly heard. The progress to overcome that prejudice has been remarkable, but the struggle for all human rights continues. The Equal Rights Amendment — “Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex” — which was first proposed at the Seneca Falls Conference of 1923, passed by Congress in 1972, and finally ratified by the required number of states in January 2020, still awaits further Congressional action to be added to the Constitution. CityMusic Cleveland’s recognition of the centenary of the 19th Amendment is therefore both a celebration of how much has been accomplished and how much still remains to be done.



MINJU KIM, *violin*, born in South Korea, is Principal Second Violin of CityMusic Cleveland and serves on the faculty of the Cleveland Institute of Music Preparatory Program and as Assistant Professor of violin and viola and Chair of the string area at the University of Akron. Dr. Kim, who holds degrees from CIM and the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University, has performed throughout North America, Central America and Europe, given masterclasses

and recitals as a guest artist at various universities and institutions, and taught at Encore Chamber Music, IU Summer String Academy, Community Music School at Oberlin College, Chamber Music Workshop at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and elsewhere. Minju Kim was Concertmistress of the Evansville Philharmonic, Indiana University and CIM orchestras and has also performed with the Akron Symphony, Canton Symphony, Aspen Music Festival, Classical Revolution Cleveland, Roundtop Institute, Britt Festival Orchestra, and Artosphere Arts Festival.

MARI SATO, *violin*, was second violinist of the award-winning Cavani String Quartet for 24 years and a faculty member of the Cleveland Institute of Music from 1995 to 2018. With the Cavani Quartet, Ms. Sato gave concerts on major concert series and festivals in the United States and Europe, was featured on NPR's *Performance Today* and *St. Paul Sunday* and on NBC, CBS, ABC and PBS network programs, collaborated with such distinguished artists as members of the Cleveland, Juilliard, Miami, Ying, Emerson, Borodin, Amadeus, St. Lawrence and Colorado String Quartets, Weilerstein Trio, Itzhak Perlman, Robert Mann, Anton Nel, Stephanie Blythe and Charles Neidich, and coached many outstanding young musicians in the Intensive Quartet Seminar, Apprentice Quartet Seminar, and Art of Engagement Seminar.



ESTHER NAHM, *viola*, directed CityMusic Cleveland's educational series from 2017 to 2019, which brought unique concerts to schools in Cleveland that did not have access to arts education; in 2014 she created a series of children's concerts for the Richmond Symphony. Ms. Nahm performed with the St. Louis Symphony during the 2018-2019 season, and was previously a fellow of the New World Symphony and Assistant Principal Viola of the Richmond Sympho-

ny. She has also performed at music festivals across the country, including Sun Valley, Tanglewood, Spoleto, National Repertory Orchestra, Banff Centre and Norfolk Chamber. Esther Nahm earned a bachelor's degree and graduate performance certificate from Boston University and a master's degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music as a student of Lynne Ramsey.



NATALIYA PSHENYCHNA, *cello*, born in Kyiv, Ukraine, started playing cello at age six guided by her mother, a student of Mstislav Rostropovich. Ms. Pshenychna holds degrees from the Ukrainian National Tchaikovsky Academy, Kent State University, and Cleveland Institute of Music. She was First Place winner of the Ukrainian National Competition of Young Performers and the Ukrainian international competition "The Art of 21st Century," was granted the title

of Laureate of The New Names of Ukraine, and received a Yamaha Music Foundation of Europe Scholarship Award. She was a member of the National Opera Orchestra of Ukraine, a regular substitute player with the Ukrainian National Symphony Orchestra, National Ensemble of Soloists "Kyiv Kamerata" and chamber orchestra "Renaissance" before coming to the United States in 2005 to attend Kent/Blossom Music. Ms. Pshenychna has also participated in such festivals as Spoleto USA, Tanglewood and National Repertory Orchestra. In 2010, her piano trio was selected to represent the Cleveland Institute of Music in the Conservatory Project at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Nataliya Pshenychna is currently a member of CityMusic Cleveland, Canton Symphony and Firelands Symphony and an active chamber musician, recitalist and cello and piano instructor.

DANIEL GILBERT, *clarinet*, joined the faculty of the University of Michigan as Associate Professor of Clarinet in 2007 after serving as Second Clarinet in the Cleveland Orchestra since 1995. He also currently teaches at Case Western Reserve University and formerly served on the faculties at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and Oberlin Conservatory of Music. A native of New York City, Mr. Gilbert received a Bachelor of Arts from Yale University and both a Master of Music and Professional Studies Certificate from the Juilliard School. Prior to joining the Cleveland Orchestra, he appeared regularly with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, American Ballet Theater, New Jersey Symphony, Solisti New York, Stamford Symphony and New Haven Symphony, where he was Principal Clarinet from 1992 to 1995. He was also a member of the Quintet of the Americas in 1994-1995. Mr. Gilbert has appeared at festivals across the country and as soloist with the Cleveland Orchestra, CityMusic Cleveland, New Haven Symphony, Solisti New York and Aspen Mozart Orchestra. Daniel Gilbert is an artist/clinician for Backun Musical, Canada and Vandoren companies and is featured as a soloist and clinician throughout the North America and Europe.





DONNA LEE, *piano*, made her solo debut in 1990 with the National Symphony Orchestra and has since appeared as a soloist and collaborative artist at Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall. She has also performed and been heard in broadcasts in Asia, Europe and throughout the United States. Ms. Lee has recorded for the Proprius, Innova and Musart labels, and made her solo recording debut on the Azica label with a program of works by Schumann, del Tredici, Medtner and Prokofieff. She has taught at the Peabody Conservatory, Bucknell University and Interlochen Arts Camp in Michigan, and is currently Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Piano Division at Kent State University, Co-Director of the Piano Institute at Kent State, and Artist-Faculty at Kent/Blossom Chamber Music and Brevard Music Center in North Carolina. Donna Lee earned her doctorate at Peabody and also holds degrees from Juilliard and the University of Maryland. Donna Lee is a Steinway Artist.

SAWSAN ALHADDAD, *cover artist*, immigrated from Iraq forty years ago. Working as an anesthesiologist, she took up watercolor as a way to relieve stress. She has taken classes and workshops at the Cleveland Museum of Art, area art centers, Morgan Conservatory in Cleveland, and elsewhere in the United States and abroad. Ms. Alhaddad now works in watercolor, oils, pastels, encaustic, cold wax, paper making and ceramics. Most of her artwork is representational. She enjoys plein air painting and is inspired by the play of light on objects. Recently she has been exploring abstract art in encaustic and oil with cold wax. Sawsan Alhaddad has had five solo shows in area art centers and had work accepted in juried shows in Cleveland and Akron.



NOTES ON THE PROGRAM BY
DR. RICHARD E. RODDA

Dash for Violin, Clarinet and Piano (2001)
Jennifer Higdon (born in 1962)

Jennifer Higdon, born in Brooklyn, New York on New Year's Eve 1962 and raised in Atlanta and Tennessee, is one of America's foremost composers. She took her undergraduate training in flute performance at Bowling Green State University, and received her master's and doctoral degrees in composition from the University of Pennsylvania; she also holds an Artist Diploma from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. Her teachers have included George Crumb, Marilyn Shrude, David Loeb, James Primosch, Jay Reise and Ned Rorem in composition, Judith Bentley and Jan Vinci in flute, and Robert Spano in conducting. Higdon joined the composition faculty of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia in 1994 after having served as conductor of the University of Pennsylvania Orchestra and Wind Ensemble and Visiting Assistant Professor in music composition at Bard College; she now holds the Milton L. Rock Chair in Composition Studies at Curtis. She has also served as Karel Husa Visiting Professor at Ithaca College (2006-2007) and Composer-in-Residence at the Mannes College The New School for Music (2007-2008).

Jennifer Higdon's works have been performed across the country and internationally, and she has received grants, awards and commissions from many of the country's leading orchestras, ensembles and organizations. Her honors include the Pulitzer Prize in Music for her Violin Concerto (2018), Eddie Medora King Award from the University of Texas at Austin (2018), Nemmers Prize from Northwestern University (2018), and Governor's Award for the Arts from the State of Pennsylvania (2014). Her opera, *Cold Mountain*, with a libretto by Gene Scheer based on Charles Frazier's best-selling novel, was introduced at Santa Fe Opera in 2015 and received the International Opera Award for Best World Premiere and Grammy nominations as Best Opera Recording and Best Contemporary Classical Composition. Higdon's works have been recorded on over sixty CDs, three winning Grammy Awards for Best Contemporary Classical Composition: Percussion Concerto, 2010; Viola Concerto, 2018; Harp Concerto, 2020. The recording of the Percussion Concerto was inducted into the Library of Congress National Recording Registry in 2020.

Higdon has served as Composer-in-Residence with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Green Bay Symphony, Fort Worth Symphony, Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, Institute at Deer Valley, Music From Angel Fire Festival, Bard College Conductors' Institute, Philadelphia Singers, Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival, Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, University of Wyoming and other prominent ensembles and institutions. In 2003, she became the first American female composer featured at the prestigious Festival of Contemporary Music at Tanglewood; during the 2005-2006 season, she was the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra's Composer of the Year.

CityMusic Cleveland Needs Your Support

We continue to provide FREE programming of the highest QUALITY to our audiences because we know that the arts are essential to HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.

Please consider making a donation to support CityMusic this season as we find new and different ways to reach people thirsting for music that speaks to their soul.

Your donation will go towards paying our fantastic local professional musicians playing in the Celebrating Women's Right to Vote and Create Series and the Clurie Bennis Children's Outreach Series.

Donations can be sent to:
CityMusic Cleveland
2865 Fairfax Rd
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

Give online at citymusiccleveland.org

Higdon wrote that *Dash* (2001) “comes at the beginning of the 21st century, when speed often seems to be our goal. This image fits well the instruments in this ensemble — clarinet, violin and piano — because these are some of the fastest-moving instruments in terms of their technical prowess. Each individual plays an equal part in the ensemble, contributing to the intensity and forward momentum as the music dashes from beginning to end.”

Romance for Violin and Piano, Op. 23 (1893)
Amy (Mrs. H.H.A.) Beach (1867-1944)

In this land of pioneers, Amy Beach stood tall among the artistic avant-garde — the most prominent female American composer of her day, one of the leading keyboard artists during the years around World War I, the first native woman composer to earn recognition abroad, the first woman musician to receive her entire professional training in this country, the first to write a symphony. Born Amy Cheney in 1867 in Henniker, New Hampshire to a family of colonial descent, she early showed an exceptional talent for music. She received her earliest instruction in piano from her mother, began composing melodies at four, and gave her debut recital (in her first formal dress, she later proudly recalled) a year later, at which she played some waltzes of her own invention. In 1875, when she was eight, the family moved to Boston, where Amy pursued her studies of piano with Ernest Perab (a student of Moscheles) and Carl Baermann, and theory with Junius W. Hill. Her sessions with Prof. Hill were the only formal instruction she ever received in composition. On October 23, 1883, she made her public debut with orchestra in Boston in works by Moscheles and Chopin, and pursued a successful career as a soloist for the following two years; she first performed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra on March 28, 1885, to much acclaim.

In December 1885, Amy Cheney married the prominent Boston surgeon Henry Harris Aubrey Beach, and thereafter referred to herself exclusively in the Victorian fashion as “Mrs. H.H.A. Beach” (initials only). Dr. Beach, an excellent amateur musician, encouraged his wife to cultivate her gift as a composer, so she largely curtailed her public appearances during the following years to devote herself to the intense study of theoretical treatises and music by both old and contemporary masters. She produced some piano pieces in 1886, and then began the earliest of her large compositions, the Mass in E-flat. The Mass took three years to complete, and was introduced by Boston’s Handel and Haydn Society in 1892, the first music by a woman composer to be performed by that venerable ensemble. Her aria *Eilende Wolken* (“*Scudding Clouds*”) marked a similar milestone for the New York Philharmonic when it was given the following year. Beach began receiving notice from the musical establishment, and she was commissioned to write works for the Woman’s Building at the Chicago World’s Fair (1892), the Trans-Mississippi Exposition at Omaha (1898) and the Pan-American Exposition in San Francisco (1915). Her *Gaelic Symphony*, premiered by Emil Paur and the Boston Symphony in 1896, was the first such work to be written by an American woman. Her Piano Concerto followed four years later.

Following the death of her husband in 1910, Amy Beach resumed an active performing career, and in 1911 she made her first trip to Europe, where her original compositions and her performances in Rome, Berlin, Munich, Dresden, Leipzig, Hamburg and elsewhere were so warmly received that she remained abroad for three years. She returned to the United States in 1914 and settled in New York, making numerous concert tours at home and overseas during the next quarter century. Among the compositions of her later years are an opera (*Cabildo*, 1932), scores for chorus *a cappella* and with orchestra, several chamber pieces, many songs and numerous piano works; her catalog runs to more than 150 opus numbers. The high estimation in which Beach was held by her contemporaries is evidenced by the fact that only three of her works remained unpublished during her lifetime, a remarkable achievement for any composer. Following her death from a heart attack in 1944 at the age of 77, her music quickly slipped into near obscurity, however, and it remained largely unperformed until Morton Gould and pianist Mary Louise Boehm re-introduced the Piano Concerto with the American Symphony Orchestra in 1976, an event that sparked further performances, recordings and research. Today, Beach’s music is again recognized as an important and integral part of this country’s artistic and cultural heritage.

Amy Beach was the last representative of the turn-of-the-20th-century American Romantic school, whose other members included George Whitefield Chadwick, Arthur Foote and Horatio Parker. In the *New Grove Dictionary*, Judith Tick wrote that Beach was “an eclectic composer, drawing on the music of Brahms and Wagner, and later on that of MacDowell and Debussy. Her style is elaborate and inventive rather than concise, relying on a natural gift for melody; characteristically, the instrumental works contain many themes, broad developments and complex harmonies.”

Beach wrote her lovely Romance for Violin and Piano for a special concert she gave with Maud Powell, the first American female violinist to make a successful career, in May 1893 at the Women’s Musical Congress at the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago. (Antonín Dvořák, on his way back to New York to resume his duties directing the National Conservatory after a summer in Spillville, Iowa, participated in a “Czech Day” at the fair two months later.) Powell took the Romance into her repertory and when she performed it on a recital in New York in January 1906, critic Henry Krehbiel wrote that it was “a piece of sustained, emotionalized melody ... with a rich and varied harmonic basis.”

Black Birds, Red Hills for Clarinet, Viola and Piano (1987, revised 1996)
Libby Larsen (born in 1950)

Libby Larsen, born in Wilmington, Delaware on Christmas Eve 1950, is among today's most prominent American composers. She studied composition with Dominick Argento, Eric Stokes and Paul Fetler at the University of Minnesota, where she earned her bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees. In 1973, she founded the Minnesota Composers Forum with Stephen Paulus, and served as one of that organization's managing composers. She and Paulus were appointed Composers-in-Residence with the Minnesota Orchestra in 1983, a position she held for four years; Larsen has also held residencies with the Colorado Symphony, Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, and at the John W. Kluge Center of the Library of Congress. She has served on the Music Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts, "Meet the Composer" National Advisory Committee, as vice-president of the American Music Center, as a member of the ASCAP Board of Review, as a trustee of KTCA (Minnesota Public Television), as an advisor to the American Symphony Orchestra League, and as a board member of the Minnesota Composers Forum. Her awards include a composition grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, National Opera Institute Fellowship, National Endowment for the Arts Composer Fellowship, American Council on the Arts Young Artists Award, and George Peabody Medal for Outstanding Contributions to Music in America. Among Larsen's compositions are five symphonies, five concertos, many other pieces for orchestra, chamber works (one of which, *Love and Hisses* for double woodwind quintet, is intended to accompany a Laurel and Hardy silent film), songs, eleven operas (her latest, *Picnic* [2009], is based on William Inge's 1953 play, also made into a successful movie), and numerous choral and vocal pieces. Recordings of her music appear on the EMI Classics, Decca, Koch International, Elektra/Nonesuch, CRI, Innova, Leonarda and Pro Arte labels.

Black Birds, Red Hills originated with a commission from the University of Alabama for a concert in November 1987 honoring the centennial of the birth of American painter Georgia O'Keeffe. The work was conceived as a song cycle for soprano, clarinet and piano based on six of O'Keeffe's paintings, with vocal texts drawn from the artist's comments about them, and premiered in that form. Larsen was unable to obtain permission to use O'Keeffe's text for the published edition, however, so in 1996 she revised the work for viola, clarinet and piano; that version was introduced on an Innova recording by violist David Harding, clarinetist Caroline Hartig, and pianist Kevin Purrone.

Larsen wrote, "*Black Birds, Red Hills* is inspired by six paintings of Georgia O'Keeffe. Each painting explores the flow of time and color on her beloved red hills of New Mexico, and reveals perspective, beauty and meaning through the magnification of objects, specifically the horizon line, the black rock and the black bird. Movements I [*Pedernal Hills*], III [*Red Hills and Sky*] and IV [*A Black Bird with Snow-Covered Red Hills*] reflect the 'V shape' of the hills just

outside O'Keeffe's window. She describes this shape as the arms of two great hills, which reach out to the sky and hold it, suggesting to me an abstract cradle. In movement II [*Black Rock*], I liken the music to O'Keeffe's image of the black rocks, which she found on her walks to the Glen Canyon dam. She became fascinated with the effect of time on the rocks, noting that time has turned them into objects which are precious to look at and hold. Finally, to paint the black birds that lived in the hills near her, O'Keeffe covered the red hills with snow and focused on the bird as a metaphor for time, always there and always moving away."

The movements of *Black Birds, Red Hills* were inspired by the following paintings of Georgia O'Keeffe:

I. *Pedernal and Red Hills* (1936)

II. *Black Rock with Blue Sky and White Clouds* (1972)

III. *Red and Orange Hills* (1938) and *Red Hills and Sky* (1945)

IV. *A Black Bird with Snow-Covered Red Hills* (1946) and *Black Bird Series (In the Patio IX)* (1950)

Middleground for String Quartet (2016)

Shelley Washington (born in 1991)

"I like to write music with a big palette that draws elements from jazz, rock, American folk and other musical spaces, new and old," says Shelley Washington. "I want listeners to somehow move, for their emotions or imaginations to be altered, or even just be moved to tap their toes. My music explores intricate rhythms to encourage a sort of layered listening through grooves, melody and harmony. In the music I write that confronts known social injustices, I want to create a space for public dialogue while personally reclaiming power for my own experienced inequalities."

Composer, educator and performer (vocalist, flute, piccolo, clarinet but primarily baritone saxophone) Shelley Washington grew up in Kansas City, Missouri and earned degrees in music and education at Truman State University in Kirksville, Missouri and a master's degree in composition at NYU as a student of Pulitzer Prize winners Julia Wolfe and Caroline Shaw; she is currently working on her doctorate at Princeton with Steven Mackey and Donnacha Dennehy. Washington has taught with the New York Philharmonic Very Young Composers Program and the Young Composers and Improvisers Workshop in New York City, and was Artistic Director for the Noel Pointer Foundation in Brooklyn, New York, whose mission is "to put stringed instruments in as many young hands as possible, regardless of their skin color or zip code." She has performed and recorded with numerous ensembles in styles ranging, she says, "from Baroque to Screamo," and is a founding member of the composer collective Kinds of Kings. In 2018, Shelley Washington received a Jerome Fund for New Music Award to compose a work for the piano-double bass-percussion trio Bearthoven [sic].

Washington's string quartet *Middleground* was composed in 2016, premiered that spring in New York City by the JACK Quartet, and featured on her autumn 2017 tour with the Schiele String Quartet to Savannah, Georgia, where it was performed throughout the city. The Midwest-born composer wrote of it, "*Middleground*: the space grounded, the between, the center. The Heartland. The prairie, the grasslands, Konza [a preserve of original native tallgrass prairie in northeastern Kansas], Flint Hills, Manhattan [Kansas], Emporia, Salina. Where we gathered.

"Home of the heart, heart of the home.

"The years spent in cars, daydreaming, scooping handfuls of wheat, racing out into amber fields, cycling together, water wheel ice cream, fireworks and apples. The stories shared, books read sprawled in the yard, family prayers over anything, late evening walks, quiet nights. Open arms, open hearts, humble and extraordinary.

"Together, with our wonder, our joy, we created an incredible painting with abounding colors. The kinds of colors that linger in the mind's eye long after they are out of sight and cradle you long after goodbyes are spoken and car doors closed. The kinds that find you counting the days until the next birthday, the next holiday, the next bike ride, the next camp, the next anything just so you can see them again. When you close your eyes you feel their warmth. They stay.

"The middle ground: my refuge born from the land living in my heart. Where my home is, living and breathing outside of my body, thousands of miles apart. This hallowed ground."

String Quartet in E-flat major (1843)
Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel (1805-1847)

It would be difficult to find a more illustrative example of the genteel social engineering of the 19th century than Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel, older sister of the renowned Felix Mendelssohn. Fanny was only six (Felix was one) when the family was forced by the Napoleonic juggernaut to abandon their native Hamburg for Berlin, but she had already been endowed with good genes and disciplined piano instruction by her talented mother, Lea, a student of the noted German theorist and pedagogue Johann Philipp Kirnberger, himself a pupil of Johann Sebastian Bach. (Lea's sister, Sara Levy, was a gifted harpsichordist and a patron of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. It was through that association that a copy of Johann Sebastian Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* descended to Felix, who revived the work in 1829.) Felix and Fanny were given equal privilege in the family's cultured life — the best tutors, intensive musical study with outstanding teachers, travel, elaborate concerts for invited guests at which they displayed their talents as composers and performers, access to the finest strata of German artists and literati. Brother and sister blossomed — in an 1825 letter to Felix, Goethe asks his young friend to "give my regards to your equally talented sister." That same year Felix went off to university while Fanny attended Humboldt's lectures on physical geography and Holtei's talks on experimental

physics in Berlin, but thereafter their lives — but not their loving devotion to each other and their mutual respect — went different ways. Felix became one of the most highly regarded musical figures of his day, while Fanny stayed at home, taking part in the family's Sunday musicales but otherwise discouraged by both her brother and her father from pursuing the life of a professional musician. "You must prepare earnestly for your real calling, the only calling for a young woman — I mean the state of a housewife," pronounced Papa Abraham. "Music should be an accomplishment, and never a career for women." In 1829, Fanny married Wilhelm Hensel, a painter at the Prussian court, who urged her to continue composing, which she did, though with little public recognition. The Berlin publisher Schlesinger issued one of her songs in an album for voice and piano in 1837; one volume of *Lieder* and another of piano pieces were published in 1846. (Felix published two other of Fanny's songs in a collection of his own works. When Queen Victoria expressed special pleasure at one of them, Felix quickly admitted that it was not his.) Fanny's only formal concert appearance was as pianist in her brother's G minor Concerto in 1838. While leading a rehearsal of Felix's *Die erste Walpurgisnacht* on May 14, 1847, she suffered a massive stroke and died later that day; she was 42. Felix, already ill and exhausted from punishing overwork, was prostrated by her death; he died six months later.

Fanny composed the String Quartet in E-flat major between August and October 1834; she never attempted to publish the score (it was not issued until 1988) and there is no record of a performance during her lifetime. She did, however, send a copy to her brother in January, and he responded that he had "just played through it [on the piano — he was one of his generation's foremost virtuosos] and thank you with all my heart," but then went on to offer some negative comments about the work's form and harmonic choices. She replied in kind when he shared with her his new cantata *Ach Gott, vom Himmel sieh darein* ("*Oh God, Look Down from Heaven*"), and both then concluded that their critical faculties had perhaps been too highly sharpened by their intimate knowledge of the late works of Beethoven.

The opening movement of Fanny's only String Quartet is not the expected sonata structure in quick tempo but rather a serious, lyrical piece without strong formal demarcations that is mostly in the dark tonality of C minor rather than the work's nominal E-flat major, which does not settle in until the very last measures and then only tentatively. The careful integration of the voices, the harmonic adventuresomeness and the striving toward expressive passion of this music are evident throughout the entire work. The second movement, the Quartet's scherzo, apparently proves that the distinctive elfin grace with which Felix treated such music was a Mendelssohn family inherited trait. The *Romanze*, with its lamenting mood, ambiguous harmonic implications and restless thematic working-out, contains the Quartet's deepest sentiments. Expressive contrast and a brilliant close are provided by the finale, a sonata form with a skittering main theme, a smooth second subject and a long development section that uses both motives.