

BEYOND THE SUNSET

8:00PM

SATURDAY 12 OCTOBER 2024

REARDON THEATRE



Georg Philipp TELEMANN (1681 – 1767)
Concerto for Four Violins in D major, TWV 40:202

1. *Adagio – Allegro*
2. *Grave*
3. *Allegro*

Helena Rathbone *Violin*
Zoë Black *Violin*
Elizabeth Sellars *Violin*
Monica Curro *Violin*

Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART (1756 – 1791)
Horn Quintet in E♭ major, K. 407

1. *Allegro*
2. *Andante*
3. *Rondo. Allegro*

Carla Blackwood *French Horn*
Elizabeth Sellars *Violin*
Christopher Moore *Viola*
Thomas Chawner *Viola*
Molly Kadarauch *Cello*

Ottorino RESPIGHI (1879 – 1936)
Il tramonto

Lotte Betts-Dean *Mezzo-soprano*

Orava Quartet
Daniel Kowalik *Violin*
David Dalseno *Violin*
Thomas Chawner *Viola*
Karol Kowalik *Cello*

Johannes BRAHMS (1833 – 1897)
String Quintet No. 2 in G major, Op. 111

1. *Allegro non troppo, ma con brio*
2. *Adagio*
3. *Un poco allegretto*
4. *Vivace, ma non troppo presto*

Christopher Moore *Viola*

Orava Quartet
Daniel Kowalik *Violin*
David Dalseno *Violin*
Thomas Chawner *Viola*
Karol Kowalik *Cello*

Georg Philipp TELEMANN (1681 – 1767)
Concerto for Four Violins in D major, TWV 40:202

1. *Adagio – Allegro*
2. *Grave*
3. *Allegro*

Of the roughly 3600 works by Telemann, well over 100 are concertos for one or more instruments. Among these are three magnificent unaccompanied concertos for four violins, which Telemann most likely composed some time between 1710 and 1715, a period that covers most of his tenure as concertmaster and *kapellmeister* at Eisenach, and the start of his positions as city music director and *kapellmeister* in Frankfurt. Telemann probably wrote them for his own use with his friends, colleagues and/or students, perhaps wishing to explore the sonorities of an unaccompanied ensemble of violins. To that end, he gives no individual part any special or predominant role, but rather places all four players on a more or less equal footing.

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Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART (1756 – 1791)

Horn Quintet in E^b major, K. 407

1. *Allegro*
2. *Andante*
3. *Rondo. Allegro*

Dating from between 1780-2, the Quintet for Horn and Strings is the first of several works that Mozart composed for the Austrian horn virtuoso Joseph Leutgeb. The Mozart family had met Leutgeb while he was a member of the archiepiscopal court orchestra in Salzburg. Then Leutgeb moved to Vienna at about the same time that Mozart did, buying a house with the help of a loan from Mozart's father Leopold. Mozart had a playful, mischievous relationship with Leutgeb, and the manuscripts of his horn concertos are famously peppered with jokes at Leutgeb's expense. To his credit, when Mozart was having financial troubles a few years later, Leutgeb was one of those who lent him some money. Instead of the usual string quartet instrumentation, in this work Mozart makes use of two violas, enhancing the mellow middle range of the ensemble. The first movement opens with a brief flourish from the strings, before the horn enters with the main theme. Soloist and violin trade phrases easily in this genial movement, which highlights the lyrical possibilities of the horn. Longest of the three movements, the andante is full of sustained melodic lines and presents a graceful partnership between the horn and strings. The concluding allegro is in the usual rondo form, and its main theme, heard immediately in the strings, bears some similarity to the theme of the slow movement. This jubilant melody recurs throughout before a series of horn fanfares brings the work to a spirited close.

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Ottorino RESPIGHI (1879 – 1936)

Il tramonto

Largely composed in the summer of 1914 while he was visiting his hometown of Bologna, *Il tramonto* (*The Sunset*) is the most popular of Respighi's several settings of poems by the English poet Percy Bysshe Shelley. Respighi intended it specifically for his close friend, collaborator and muse, the mezzo-soprano Chiarina Fino-Savio, to whom the work is dedicated. Styled in the score as a *poemetto lirico* or 'little lyric poem', *Il tramonto* is structured as an unbroken alternation of lyrical recitatives and ariosos, the intensity of which anticipates the finest moments in Respighi's later operas. The musical style is firmly anchored in the late Romanticism of Strauss, brimming with chromatic harmony and sumptuous sonorities, despite the modest size of the ensemble. Superbly illustrating Shelley's poem, in which love is brutally interrupted by fate, it recalls Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* and Richard Dehmel's *Verklärte Nacht*, as set to music by Schoenberg. The whole work is pure musical poetry, intense in its expressiveness, crystalline yet colourful in its instrumentation, and delicate in its harmonies. But whether the mood is tender, contemplative, joyful or sad, the composer's imagination never strays from the core of the poetic conception.

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Johannes BRAHMS (1833 – 1897)

String Quintet No. 2 in G major, Op. 111

1. *Allegro non troppo, ma con brio*
2. *Adagio*
3. *Un poco allegretto*
4. *Vivace, ma non troppo presto*

Though in retrospect it seems incredible, Brahms intended for the String Quintet No. 2 in G major to be his final piece of music. In a letter to his publisher dated December 1890, the 57-year-old composer slipped in the message, "With this note you can take leave of my music, because it is high time to stop." Around the same time, Brahms told a friend, "I thought to myself that I had been busy enough all my life, had achieved enough, was of a carefree old age and could now enjoy it in peace." In fact, Brahms soon came out of 'retirement' to write a series of Indian summer works, including the chamber music with clarinet and the Op. 116-119 piano pieces. Nevertheless, if the Second String Quintet had been his last work, it would have been a fittingly monumental swan song. In initial sketches its musical material was conceived for a possible Fifth Symphony. The resulting chamber work, scored for string quartet with an added viola, feels almost symphonic. The addition of a middle register voice results in tonal weight and depth, opening the door to a new, heroic dimension. A bold, swashbuckling statement in the cello launches the first movement into action. Fighting its way through the ecstatic, pulsating lines of the other instruments, this lowest voice emerges as a Herculean presence. The second theme, introduced by the viola, relaxes into a lilting Viennese waltz rhythm. The second movement, an adagio in D minor, begins with a viola duet, impelled forward by resolute pizzicatos in the cello. This melancholy music, unfolding as a set of mysterious and restless variations, suggests the sombre, ghostly chorales of Schubert. The final bars drift into a quiet, soulfully restful D major. As is typical of Brahms, the third movement is not a scherzo but, instead, a slower intermezzo in 3/4 time. Mysterious and autumnal, its gentle forward motion floats somewhere between a waltz and a minuet. The joyful final movement starts softly but quickly erupts into a wild, frolicking Hungarian folk dance. It's the ultimate party music, reminiscent of the Hungarian Dances which were so commercially profitable for Brahms. The development section teems with brilliant fugal counterpoint, culminating in a surging coda full of ecstatic celebration.

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