



Café Ludwig is Sponsored By  
Dot & Rick Nelson

## DEFIANCE AGAINST ADVERSITY

Sunday, Feb. 11, 2024 @ 3 p.m.

Orli Shaham, piano  
Dennis Kim, violin  
Warren Hagerty, cello



Performance at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts  
Samueli Theater

## PROGRAM

- MOZART  
Violin Sonata in E minor, K. 304  
*Allegro*  
*Tempo di Menuetto*  
Dennis Kim  
Orli Shaham
- BRITTEN  
Cello Sonata in C Major, Op. 65  
*Dialogo*  
*Scherzo-Pizzicato*  
*Elegia*  
Warren Hagerty  
Orli Shaham
- INTERMISSION—
- SHOSTAKOVICH  
Piano Trio No. 2 in E minor, Op. 67  
*Andante*  
*Allegro con brio*  
*Largo*  
*Allegretto*  
Dennis Kim  
Warren Hagerty  
Orli Shaham

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**A consummate musician recognized for her grace and vitality, Orli Shaham has established an impressive international reputation as one of today's most gifted pianists.**

Hailed by critics on four continents, Shaham is in demand for her prodigious skills and admired for her interpretations of both standard and modern repertoire. *The New York Times* called her a "brilliant pianist," *The Chicago Tribune* recently referred to her as "a first-rate Mozartean" in a performance with the Chicago Symphony and London's *Guardian* said Shaham's playing at the Proms was "perfection."

Shaham has performed with nearly every major American orchestra, as well as many in Europe, Asia, and Australia. A frequent guest at summer festivals, her appearances include Tanglewood, Ravinia, Verbier, Mostly Mozart, La Jolla, Music Academy of the West, and Aspen. Shaham's acclaimed 2015 recording, *Brahms Inspired*, is a collection of new compositions alongside works by Brahms and his compositional forefathers. Other recordings include John Adams' *Grand Pianola Music* with the pianist Marc-André Hamelin and the San Francisco Symphony, with the composer conducting, "American Grace," a CD of piano music by John Adams and Steven Mackey with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, David Robertson conducting, and Nigunim-Hebrew Melodies, recorded with her brother, violinist Gil Shaham.



**Pacific Symphony's Concertmaster Dennis Kim was born in Korea, raised in Canada, and educated in the United States.**

He has spent more than a decade leading orchestras in the United States, Europe, and Asia. He was first appointed concertmaster of the Tucson Symphony at the age of 22. He then served as the youngest concertmaster in the history of the Hong Kong Philharmonic, before going on to lead the Seoul Philharmonic and Tampere Philharmonic in Finland. Previous to his current position, he was concertmaster of the Buffalo Philharmonic in New York.

After making his solo debut at the age of 14 with the Toronto Philharmonic, Kim has gone on to perform as a soloist with all of the most important orchestras in Asia. During his tenure as Concertmaster with the Buffalo Philharmonic and Tampere Philharmonic, he was featured annually as a soloist. Over the last few seasons, he was a guest soloist with the Lebanon Philharmonic and Orchestra NOW, with repertoire ranging from Mozart and Haydn to Glass and Penderecki.

A graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and Yale School of Music, Kim's teachers include Jaime Laredo, Aaron Rosand, Peter Oundjian, Paul Kantor, Victor Danchenko, and Yumi Ninomiya Scott. He plays the 1701 ex-Dushkin Stradivarius, on permanent loan from a generous donor.



**As of 2019, Warren Hagerty is the Principal Cellist of Pacific Symphony.**

An avid chamber musician, Warren was the founding cellist of the Verona Quartet. As a member of the quartet, he was awarded top prizes in international chamber music competitions on four continents, including the Wigmore Hall International String Quartet Competition, Osaka International Chamber Music Competition, Melbourne International Chamber Music Competition, Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition, and Concert Artists Guild's Victor Elmaleh Competition. He has performed at many of the world's most renowned venues, such as Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall, Alice Tully Hall, the Kennedy Center, and the Sydney Opera House. Warren holds degrees from The Juilliard School and Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music; his primary mentors have included members of the Juilliard String Quartet, Pacifica Quartet, Eric Kim, and Sharon Robinson. A strong proponent of new music, Hagerty was involved in commissioning and premiering composer Michael Gilbertson's first string quartet, which was a finalist for the 2018 Pulitzer Prize in music. He has also premiered works by Richard Danielpour and Sebastian Currier.



## PROGRAM NOTES

### Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Violin Sonata in E minor, K. 304

Despite its usual designation as a sonata for violin, Mozart's K. 304 is in every sense a double sonata in which the violin and piano share equally. In fact, in 18th century sonatas pairing these two instruments, it was usual for the piano to predominate; Mozart, who played both masterfully, engaged them in a more balanced musical partnership than did his contemporaries. He composed some 35 sonatas for this duo (including several he left unfinished) over a span of more than 25 years—from the age of six until three years before his death—and all possess the characteristic formal elegance, expressive concision, and symmetry of construction we hear in the K. 304. But they are not interchangeable. If one stands apart from the rest, it is this one, which has engendered more speculative analysis than any of the others.



Of all Mozart's violin-piano sonatas, only K. 304 is in a minor key. It is one of a set of six he composed during the famous, fateful journey to Paris, Mannheim, and Munich that he undertook with his mother in search of career advancement. The journey was unpleasant, the job-hunt was unrewarding, and—adding tragic loss to Mozart's professional woes—his mother died en route.

Scholars far wiser than your intrepid annotator have warned against reading the events of composers' lives into their music: Piero Weiss in the case of Beethoven, Howard Gardner in the case of Mozart. Still, in this case, we must reckon with the possibility that sad experience may have played a role in Mozart's choice of

# PROGRAM NOTES

E minor for the K. 304, a work of somber elegance and sublime beauty. We do not know whether Mozart composed this work before or after his mother's death. While some musicologists strongly assert it came afterward and reflects the composer's shock, they seem to be relying on empathy and the sound of the music rather than documentary evidence.

Small wonder. The sonata conveys a sad dignity from its opening bars, which are shared equally between piano and violin. And even when the piano introduces an upbeat second subject, the overall mood does not change; sadness prevails, and the opening theme returns. Though the second movement is marked *tempo di menuetto*, it expresses dirge-like stateliness rather than the lilt characteristic of a minuet. The shift to E major gives the impression of good times remembered in sadness. Mozart scholar Alfred Einstein called the result "one of the miracles among Mozart's works."

## Benjamin Britten

### Cello Sonata in C Major, Op. 65

Musically speaking, the 21 miles between Calais and Dover are some of the longest in the world, distancing England from the influences of the European continent, where the principal trends in Western classical music took rise. But the emergence of Benjamin Britten helped bridge the gap. Britten is often called "the greatest English composer since Purcell," a description that reflects the edgy covetousness that English music lovers feel about the relative drought their music endured—a drought ended exactly a year and a day after D-Day. Just as the vast upheavals of World War II made British citizens understand that their nation would never be the same, the June 7, 1945 premiere of Britten's opera *Peter Grimes* brought an immediate understanding that English and the world's classical music had been changed. Britten was not only a historically great composer, but also a historically unique voice.

Britten's importance was well established when he composed his Cello Sonata in C Major. The scholar Jeong-A Lee gives a compelling account of the meeting between Britten, Dmitri Shostakovich and Mstislav Rostropovich that gave rise to the sonata. It took place in September 1960 in a dressing room at London's Royal Festival Hall, where Rostropovich had just been the soloist in Shostakovich's cello concerto. Overwhelmed, Britten told Rostropovich that his performance was "the most extraordinary cello playing that he had ever heard." Lee continues, "Britten agreed to compose a sonata for Rostropovich with the condition that the premiere of this work would occur at the following Aldeburgh Festival "in Britten's adopted hometown," with Rostropovich performing the *Cello Sonata*, accompanied on the piano by Britten, the composer. Britten sent the score of the cello sonata to Rostropovich in Moscow with this humble message: "I hope you can make something of it. I have put some suggestions of bowing, but I haven't had much first-hand experience of the cello and may have made some mistakes. The pizzicato movement (second movement) will amuse you; I hope it's possible!"



Rostropovich, for his part, was effusive in his praise for the work, calling it full of surprises and innovations, "a gift for the musician flowing freely from the horn of plenty. We meet not merely a novelty in finger work but, what is most important, a new kind of expressive and profound dramatic composition." Britten was perhaps unduly modest in describing his knowledge of the cello; Rostropovich called his writing "meticulous" and on a par with Shostakovich's, "as if he played the instrument himself."

The sonata was the first of five major works Britten composed for Rostropovich over the course of the next decade. The others included the Cello Symphony and the suites for solo cello.

## Dmitri Shostakovich

### Piano Trio No. 2 in E minor, Op. 67

The shock of bereavement has prompted some of the most original and impassioned compositions in the classical repertory. This was the case when two remarkable Russian polymaths died tragically young. One was Viktor Hartmann, a painter and architect whose friendship with Modest Mussorgsky gave rise to *Pictures at an Exhibition* in 1874. Seventy years later, the death of Ivan Sollertinsky, a brilliant scholar most noted for his music scholarship and criticism, inspired Shostakovich's Piano Trio No. 2.

Shostakovich was only 26 when Stalin denounced his *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* in Pravda. After that, the young composer knew that further official disapproval of his music could endanger him and his family, and he publicly agreed to follow the officially approved guidelines of the Soviet cultural bureaucracy. But five years later, when Sollertinsky died unexpectedly at age 41, Shostakovich's sorrow eclipsed these fears. "It is impossible to express in words all the grief that engulfed me on hearing the news about his death," Shostakovich wrote to Sollertinsky's widow. "To live without him will be impossibly difficult." In the following months, composing became almost unbearably painful for him. In struggling to create a fitting musical elegy for his friend, Shostakovich set the Kremlin's artistic guidelines aside, adopting the dramatically expressive effects we hear in this piano trio.

As the trio opens, its effect is almost unearthly, with the cello voicing exclusively in harmonics before it is joined in canon by the piano and violin. In the second movement, which shifts to F-sharp major, its energy is almost frantic, and its tone—as with much of Shostakovich's music—seems to convey veiled sarcasm. After a slow, heartfelt toccata, the trio concludes with an allegretto that slows down and shifts from E major to E minor, incorporating a mournful Jewish folk melody. Shostakovich's inspiration for this movement is said to have been his horror upon learning that SS guards in Nazi death camps had forced Jews to dance alongside their own graves.

