La Voce Nuova

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Eunhye Grace Choi piano
Jessica Lambert violin
Lillie Manis viola
Sharon Schuman violin

Guests
Anne Ridlington cello
Kimberlee Uwate viola

Violin by Alina Raiskin

Online Nov. 2, 2020
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Welcome!

Chamber Music Amici is very excited to begin its 2020-21 “virtual and live” combined season. Our opening concert includes two magnificent works by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. We welcome our returning guests, cellist Anne Ridlington and violist Kimberlee Uwate, on our first pre-recorded concert. While we had to jump through many hoops to get where we are tonight, we are grateful to be able to bring our music to you in this unique fashion. Huge thanks to musicians who were patient and kind during the entire process of preparing and recording this concert (including our many garage/carport rehearsals).

And, thank YOU for your continued trust and love for Amici! I believe that sharing music is the most powerful way to get through this difficult time together.

–Eunhye Grace Choi

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Program

String Quintet No. 2 in C Minor, K. 406/516b

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

I. Allegro
II. Andante
III. Menuetto (in canone) - Trio (in canone al rovescio)
IV. Allegro

Jessica Lambert, violin; Sharon Schuman, violin; Lillie Manis, viola;
Kimberlee Uwate, viola; Anne Ridlington, cello

Piano Quartet in E-flat Major, K. 493

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

I. Allegro
II. Larghetto
III. Allegretto

Eunhye Grace Choi, piano; Jessica Lambert, violin;
Lillie Manis, viola; Anne Ridlington, cello

Thank you, Excelsior Inn Ristorante, for supporting Chamber Music Amici
for over 11 seasons; we look forward to serving your desserts in seasons ahead.
Program Notes

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

String Quintet No. 2 in C Minor, K. 406/516b

Choosing the exact instrumentation for a string quintet is usually a simple process—start with a standard quartet and add another string instrument. In some cases, an extra cello is desired (as done by Franz Schubert and Luigi Boccherini). Sometimes bass is added (Dvořák). In others a guitar is called for and occasionally the viola part is doubled up Johannes Brahms and Felix Mendelssohn). Although there were plenty of options, Mozart went with this last approach for each of his string quintets. Violas (and violists) are often the butt of jokes within contemporary musical circles but make no mistake, Mozart loved the instrument. When his friend/mentor F.J. Haydn, the cellist J.B. Wanhal (composer of an underrated concerto for viola), the violinist-composer Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf, and Mozart famously performed string quartets together. Sometime later, when a similar group played through some of his own string quintets both Mozart and Haydn manned the alto clef parts. Whenever the opportunity presented itself—the late, great Wayne Crouse—reveled in pointing out that Mozart’s greatest concerto (his Sinfonia Concertante in E-Flat) was written for violin and VIOLA!

Mozart’s String Quintet No. 2 in C Minor began life as his Serenade No. 12 for Winds—originally scored for pairs of oboes, clarinets, horns and bassoons. Borrowing from one’s own catalogue is definitely not unheard of but why did he choose to do so here? One reason may be that he could have simply been too busy working on Don Giovanni, whose premiere came swiftly on the heels of this opus, to fulfill the commission some other way. Or perhaps he wanted to give the Serenade more of a chance to “survive” by making it available to more instrumentalists. We may never know but giving weight to this latter possibility is the fact that serenades of the time were usually composed for one specific event and rarely if ever heard from again. Whatever the case may be, the first movement (Allegro) begins with a bold opening statement in octaves that sets the serious tone that dominates the section. The writing is at times stern, brooding, and remorseful—especially with the recurring sighs in the first violin part and descending seventh figures there and in the first viola score. (It certainly seems like “Who is the King of Glory?” from Handel’s Messiah is quoted here as well.) The second movement (Andante) is truly lush and romantic. Here the added viola part really pays off as the richness and mid-range colors create a soundscape that is like that of a warm blanket. The third movement (Menuetto in canone and Trio in canone al rovescio) uses interesting rhythmical devices to disguise the pulse (“in three”) that is inherent to these dance forms. Another interesting technique is the use of a canon—staggered entrances that give the appearance of a round but that do not continue to the point of circling back to the start—
in the first part and its inversion (the reflection) in the second. Although the trio of the third movement is cast in C Major, aren’t really filled with the jovial sounds that one might expect for the outdoor soiree, from which the piece was originally conceived, until the final moments of the last (Allegro) movement—a set of variations.

*Piano Quartet in E-flat Major, K. 493*

College students have been taught that W.A. Mozart invented the piano quartet genre during the winter of 1785-86. The true picture is a bit murkier. First, there are a number of pieces that utilize this same instrumentation (violin-viola-cello-piano) from the Mannheim school that clearly predate Mozart’s offerings. An argument can be made, though, that those earlier works aren’t true chamber music compositions given the burden placed on the pianist and the purely accompanimental string parts that remain. Second, Ludwig von Beethoven beat him to the punch. Although not published until 1828 (posthumously), the soon-to-be-famous fifteen-year-old from Bonn finished a set of three piano quartets in 1785—his first known chamber music pieces. There is almost no chance that Mozart, living in Vienna, was aware of these manuscripts by an unknown teenager from Germany. It should also be pointed out that when put side-by-side, Mozart’s piano quartets are superior. (It’s hardly a fair fight given that Wolfgang was twice the age of Ludwig at that time and at the height of his compositional powers.) Whatever the measure, one can honestly say that two of the most important musical geniuses of 18th-Century European Art Music unknowingly innovated in eerily similar ways, nearly simultaneously.

Mozart’s writing in the first movement (Allegro) of his *Piano Quartet in E-flat Major, K. 493* is both overtly elegant and casual—such was his gift. The piano texture throughout the movement gives clues as to the fortepiano’s infancy. Only in the next century, as the instrument develops, do we get the dense writing that we typically associate with the genre. Continuing a trend from the onset of the work, the second movement (Larghetto) often utilizes juxtaposing statements that pit the piano and strings in call-and-response groups. The moments where the two sides connect are made that much more meaningful by their previous distance. The final movement (Allegretto), a rondo, is anchored by the opening material which seems to be increasingly joyful at each repetition. The contrasting sections are at times mysterious, playful, dark, and ultimately triumphant. It is hard to fathom but Mozart’s original publisher—unhappy with the results of this work and the *G-minor Piano Quartet* that he wrote around the same time—allowed the composer to keep his advance payment for the proposed set of three and, otherwise, canceled the contract.

Program notes by Dr. M. Brent Williams
Amici

**Eunhye Grace Choi** (piano) joined Chamber Music Amici as a core musician in 2019, and is now Artistic Director. She has performed extensively throughout the United States, France, Belgium, the UK, and South Korea, and has recorded for Naxos, Emeritus, and Origin Classical. Her performances have also been broadcast on NPR’s Performance Today.

A versatile keyboardist, she was harpsichord soloist for J. S. Bach’s Brandenburg Concerto cycle and collaborated with Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg in Vivaldi’s Four Seasons at the Eastern Music Festival. She is frequently invited as a resident pianist at competitions and conventions, including the International Clarinet Association’s ClarinetFest and the Meg Quigley Vivaldi Competition and Bassoon Symposium.

Grace served as Collaborative Piano Faculty for six years at Eastern Music Festival, where she was the principal keyboardist of the Festival Orchestra with conductor Gerard Schwarz. She has also served as music faculty and collaborative pianist at The University of Oregon (2017-2018) and Tennessee Tech University (2013/2017). Here in Oregon, in addition to Amici, Grace performs regularly with the Oregon Bach Festival and Eugene Symphony.

**Jessica Lambert** (violin) has played with Amici for five years and has just completed her tenure as Artistic Director for Chamber Music Amici. She is a graduate of The Eastman School of Music, where she studied with Zvi Zeitlin and members of the Cleveland Quartet. Other major teachers include Alice Schoenfeld and Alexander Treger. Concertmaster of the Corvallis Symphony Orchestra since 2007, she is also the Artistic Director of the OSU Chamber Music Workshop, an intensive quartet program held in Corvallis in July.

Jessica is widely recognized as a teacher and maintains a private studio in Corvallis. Her students have won regional and national competitions and have matriculated to the nation’s most prestigious conservatories and summer programs. She has played viola with the Oregon Symphony and violin with the El Paso Symphony. She was concertmaster of the El Paso Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra, for which she was a featured soloist in the New Music series. A frequent guest of the Chintimini Music Festival since 2004, she performs as a soloist and chamber player throughout the Northwest.
**Lillie Manis** (viola) is widely recognized for her work as a Suzuki educator and is currently completing her doctorate at Teachers College, Columbia University, where her research focuses on studio teachers’ holistic strategies for cultivating expressive performance in young violinists. From 2009-2020, she was a faculty member at the University of Oregon School of Music and Dance, where she mentored graduate violin and viola pedagogy students and served as the Assistant Director of the Community Music Institute. Lillie is currently on the faculty at the Willamette Violin Academy in Eugene.

In the first decade of her teaching career, both the members of her vibrant pre-college studio and her graduate student mentees have achieved noteworthy musical and professional success, including competition wins, full scholarships to major music schools and summer programs, and college teaching appointments. Active as a clinician, master class presenter, adjudicator, and conference presenter at both the regional and national levels, she enjoys performing chamber music alongside some of the Northwest’s finest players, and recently joined the editorial committee of the American String Teacher.

**Sharon Schuman** (violin) is co-founder of Chamber Music Amici and served as Artistic Director for the first six years. As a child, she studied violin with Carol Weston, a student of Leopold Auer. After receiving a summer grant to the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, she won a full scholarship in music to Stanford University, where she performed on a resident Strad. After she was graduated in English, she earned a Ph.D. in that discipline at the University of Chicago.

Sharon has performed in a master class for Vladimir Spivakov and as a concerto soloist with Oregon Mozart Players and the Salem Chamber Orchestra. She has also performed with the Oregon Bach Festival and Eugene Symphony Orchestra, and she has served as concertmaster for Eugene Opera, Eugene Ballet, Eugene Concert Choir, and Oregon Mozart Players. She is now Assistant Concertmaster of the Eugene Opera Orchestra. Her book, *Freedom and Dialogue in a Polarized World* (U. Delaware, 2014), was published in paperback in 2016.
Guests

**Kimberlee Uwate** (viola) is dedicated to creating shared musical experiences as both a performer and teacher. As a member of the Delgani Quartet, Kimberlee plays an integral role in all of Delgani’s activities—from curating each concert season and teaching at the Delgani Summer Quartet Academy to commissioning and recording new works for string quartet. She plays with the Eugene Symphony Orchestra and teaches at Willamette University in Salem. Kimberlee was trained at the Manhattan School of Music, University of California at Davis, and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She plays a late eighteenth-century viola nicknamed Abby.

**Anne Ridlington** (cello) is principal cello of the Eugene Symphony and a member and a frequent soloist of the Corvallis-OSU Symphony Orchestra, and she often performs with the Corvallis Repertory Singers. After graduating with a bachelor’s degree from the Indiana University School of Music, she spent a year playing in the Lübeck Philharmonic Orchestra in Germany, and then a year in Santa Barbara, California, playing on the sidewalk for tourist dollars. Since returning to Corvallis, Anne has taught in the Elementary Strings Program at the Corvallis Waldorf School, and gives private lessons.
**Guest Speaker**

**Peter van de Graaff** is a native of the Chicago area he began his radio career at KBYU in Provo, Utah, in 1984 and went to WFMT in Chicago in 1988. In 1989 he began hosting a nationally-syndicated program called the “Beethoven Network”, carried on 150 stations throughout the country.

In September 2010, Peter was awarded the sixth “Karl Haas Award for Musical Education” from Public Radio International, joining other winners Leonard Slatkin, Michael Tilson Thomas, Peter Schickele, Bill McGlaughlin and Martin Bookspan. Peter is now the music director of KWAX.

He has hosted two nationally-syndicated opera series on National Public Radio and has been heard on many other national broadcasts such as the Vienna Philharmonic, the Van Cliburn Competition, Music of the Baroque and others. He was one of the finalists for host of the Metropolitan Opera radio broadcasts.

**Featured Artist**

**Alina Raiskin, Violin**

Alina became interested in art when she was four and began taking art lessons at the Little Owl School, now known as the Multicultural Children's Art Museum and Center. She is currently taking art lessons with Bert Kozlowski.

Her art has been displayed numerous times at the Lane County Fair, Eugene Public Library, The Eugene Commerce Center, The Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art and multiple local eateries. She loves working with acrylics, pastels, and pencils. Recently, Alina has started working with oils and completed an endangered species art project which was published in an issue of Skipping Stones magazine last winter. Alina’s favorite artists are Salvador Dali and Vincent Van Gogh. Lately William Harnett has caught her attention;

“I love the amazing way he captures untraditional objects in his work and I liked taking on that challenge in mimicking his art style, in his work titled The Old Violin, but with my own twist-I did it in pastel.”
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