

Creating Community Through Great Music 2023-2024

Chamber Music Amici

Mozart and Rossini

Sunday, April 21 • 3:00 PM | Monday, April 22 • 7:30 PM

Wildish Community Theater, Springfield



Art by Chris Pontrelli: Sonata Del Sol

Gioachino Rossini Sonata a Quattro No. 3 in C Major
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Piano Quartet No. 1 in G Minor

Libby Larsen Four on the Floor

Tyler Abbott double bass • **Pilar Bradshaw** violin
Lillie Manis viola • **Steven Pologe** cello • **Brian Hsu** piano

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Additional Support

Chamber Music Amici receives support from the Oregon Arts Commission, a state agency funded by the State of Oregon and the National Endowment for the Arts.



Welcome!

We are thrilled to share with you our eclectic selection of chamber music by Mozart, Rossini, and Libby Larsen today. These are composers of tremendous versatility, but their love and inspiration for operas and vocal music particularly stand out. Although the works featured in today's program may not be their most well-known compositions, they all bring together exceptionally beautiful and vocal musical elements performed by unique instrumentation.

We are very happy to welcome back our returning guest artist and bassist Tylor Abbott as well as UO's new piano faculty Brian Hsu who joins us for the first time. Finally, we are grateful to our founding member and violinist Pilar Bradshaw for joining us for this concert!

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Program

Sonata a Quattro No. 3 in C Major

Gioachino Rossini

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante
- III. Moderato

*Pilar Bradshaw, violin; Lillie Manis, viola
Steven Pologe, cello; Tyler Abbott, double bass*

Four on the Floor

Libby Larsen

*Pilar Bradshaw, violin; Steven Pologe, cello
Tyler Abbott, double bass; Brian Hsu, piano*

Piano Quartet No. 1 in G Minor, K. 478

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante
- III. Rondo. Allegro moderato

*Pilar Bradshaw, violin; Lillie Manis, viola
Steven Pologe, cello; Brian Hsu, piano*



We hope you stay for our post-concert reception by **Sweet Life Patisserie**

Program Notes

by Dr. Terry McQuilkin

Gioachino Rossini: Sonata a Quattro No. 3 in C Major

Born in Pesaro, on the Adriatic, Gioachino Rossini was the only child of Giuseppe Rossini, a trumpeter and horn player, and his wife Anna, a seamstress who became a singer. This region of Italy experienced a fair amount of the turbulence during that time, as papal, French and Austrian forces vied for control. Giuseppe, a lively character whose nationalism and dislike of papal rule prompted him to support the French, found himself briefly imprisoned after Austrian forces overtook Pesaro in late 1799. As struggling musicians, Giuseppe and Anna moved frequently, and after the family relocated to Lugo in 1802, Gioachino received instruction from two priests who allowed the young prodigy access to the Palazzo Malerbi library, where the boy pored over scores by Haydn and Mozart.



During the summer of 1804, the Rossini family sojourned at the country home of Agostino Triossi near Ravenna. Triossi, a 23-year-old merchant and amateur double bass player, invited his young guest to compose some chamber music for his family to play. The 12-year-old composer produced six quartets, called “Sonate a Quattro,” and joined three members of the Triossi family in performing the work at the estate.

When the Rossini family left the Triossi home later in the summer, the manuscript was left behind, but arrangements of the work – for standard string quartet, for woodwind quartet, etc. – were published during Rossini’s lifetime. When, later in life, Rossini was able to retrieve a set of parts in the original version, he appended the music with a humorous note:

Parts for first violin, second violin, cello, double bass; these six horrible sonatas composed by me at the estate (near Ravenna) of my patron friend, Agostino Triossi at the most childish age, having not even taken an accompanying lesson, all composed and copied in three days and played like dogs by Triossi on double bass, Morini (his cousin) on first violin, his brother on cello, and on second violin, me, who was, to be honest, the least doggish. G. Rossini.

While these youthful sonatas lack the sophistication of Rossini’s mature works, they can hardly be called “horrible.” Fast movements effervesce with spirited bonhomie and melodic lines adumbrate the *bel canto* lyricism of the composer’s opera arias.

Like the other five sonatas in the set, **Sonata a Quattro No. 3 in C major** is in three movements. The opening Allegro is not a true sonata-form movement: instead of an actual development, a 22-bar episodic section separates the exposition from the recapitulation. The Andante, in A-B-A form, begins ominously in C minor, with the two tension-filled outer sections bracketing the lyrical middle section in E-flat major. The finale is a theme and variations – the only movement in that form among the six sonatas. The tempo is marked Moderato, but the four variations, each packed with rapid-note passages, provide all four players opportunities for virtuosic display.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Piano Quartet in G Minor, K. 478

It would be hard to overestimate Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's role in establishing the piano quartet – violin, viola, cello and piano – as a standard chamber music configuration. Indeed, one can hardly imagine the existence of the great piano quartets penned by Schumann, Brahms, Dvorak, Fauré, and many others, without the precedent of Mozart's two masterful piano quartets written in the 1780's.

Piano quartets had appeared during the previous two decades, but those quartets, usually written at the behest of highly skilled amateur pianists, relegated the strings to the status of accompanists; they were, in essence, piano concertos. Mozart's quartets, on the other hand, are true chamber works. Even though the pianist has the principal role, the strings are given near-equal status.

In 1785 Mozart had started work on *Le Nozze di Figaro*, but he set aside time to compose his first piano quartet – the **Quartet in G minor, K. 478** – at the invitation of Viennese publisher Franz Hoffmeister, who published it later that year. According to Georg Nissen, an early Mozart biographer (and second husband of Constanze Mozart), Hoffmeister had commissioned from Mozart three piano quartets, but found that sales of the G minor Quartet were lackluster. Mozart requested – and received from Hoffmeister – an advance for the second quartet, but released him from the obligation to publish the second and third quartets. Mozart then turned most of his attention back to *Figaro*, but he did complete a second piano quartet six months later (which the Viennese firm Artaria published). He never composed a third.

The Quartet, K. 478 opens boldly and solemnly with a unison statement. After the melancholic main theme, the secondary melody in B-flat provides some comfort, but when that theme returns in the minor in the recapitulation, the tragic mood persists. A coda of some 29 measures brings the movement to a somber close.

The Andante movement in B-flat major, by contrast, is peaceful and relaxed. A lyrical theme is stated first by the piano, then the strings. That theme is then combined with a cascading line in thirty-second notes.

Instead of following his usual practice of returning to the key of the opening movement, Mozart chose to cast the finale in G major. The movement is in rondo form, and the recurring refrain is relaxed and cheerful, as are most of the episodic themes. But a contrasting idea is in E minor, played in octaves by the piano and recalling the gravitas of the first movement's opening union, sets in motion a quasi-development section, with both this new theme and the refrain treated contrapuntally and in many different keys. In the coda, a brief shift to E-flat major provides a delightful surprise before the work ends with panache.

Libby Larsen: *Four on the Floor*

Having written more than 500 works and been the recipient of many awards, Libby Larson has become one of the most recognized names among living American composers.

Born in 1950 in Wilmington, Delaware, Larson moved with her family to Minneapolis when she was three years old. This was a pivotal time in American culture. Televisions became a staple in most households, families moved to suburbia, and rock and roll began to emerge as the commercially dominant expression of American music. The postwar era was also a time when the automobile became central to American life, and the tightknit Larson family embraced that car culture with gusto.

Four on the Floor, written in 1983 and commissioned by the Minneapolis Artists Ensemble, is an homage to that culture. It was perhaps the family's beloved 1957 Thunderbird convertible that Larson had in mind in writing the work. "Inspired by boogie-woogie," writes the composer in the score's prefatory note, "*Four on the Floor* is a celebration of American music and American musicians." Just over five minutes in duration, the work is like a wild ride in a high-speed sports car. A driving boogie-woogie bass line, played by the pianist, propels the work; over that, the violin, cello and double bass play rhythmically complex counterpoint, interjecting myriad coloristic effects. About four and a half minutes into the piece, listen as the pianist plays repeated notes, followed by a long descending glissando – an overt tribute to Jerry Lee Lewis.



Musicians

Guests

Tyler Abbott

Tyler Abbott, a jazz bassist, has performed with Ben Monder, Randy Porter, Roswell Rudd, Danilo Perez, Dave Pietro, Nancy King, George Mitchell, Arnie Caruthers, Ryan Keberle, Dick Hyman, Howard Levy, Warren Rand, John Stowell, and many others. He regularly performs in jazz festivals and on radio broadcasts. His recording with Toby Koenigsberg, *Sense*, was released by Origin Records and was met with numerous favorable reviews. He maintains a private teaching studio in Eugene, Oregon. Tyler has studied double bass with Roma Vayspapir, Bruce Bransby, Jeff Bradetich, Don Hermanns, Lynn Seaton, Dave Captein, Ken Baldwin, Curtis Daily, and Eugene Jablonsky.

Pilar Bradshaw

Pilar joined the Oregon Bach Festival at age 19 as the youngest instrumentalist in its history. She studied at the Royal College of Music in London before returning to Eugene to double major in music and chemistry at the U of O as a National Merit Scholar, Ruth Lorraine Close Scholar in Music, Outstanding Chemistry Student in both her freshman and senior years, Phi Beta Kappa scholar, and the UO Female Valedictorian during her senior year. She studied at the Aspen Summer School of Music in the studio of legendary Juilliard Conservatory violin Professor Dorothy DeLay. Pilar is the owner and senior partner at Eugene Pediatric Associates. In 2014 she was voted by over 13 million readers of *Parents Magazine* to be “1 of 7 Favorite Pediatricians in America” based on thousands of letters written by grateful parents in her practice. She plays on both an award-winning violin made by her great-grandfather Holzapfel and a 1681 Andreas Guarnerius violin.

Brian Hsu

Brian has gone on to establish himself as a pianist of great energy since his debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra at the age of 16. An experienced performer, Mr. Hsu has performed throughout the US, Europe, Asia, and South Africa. He has appeared with such ensembles as the Philadelphia Orchestra, Taiwan National Symphony, Juilliard Orchestra, Haddonfield Symphony, Sendai Philharmonic, and University of Michigan Symphony Orchestra. He has been a guest on WQXR radio station in New York and performed



in music festivals including Amalfi Coast Music Festival, Gijon International Piano Festival, Eastern Music Festival, Banff Festival, and PianoFest. His US debut recording, *Night at the opera: Part I*, was released in the fall of 2018.

An avid chamber musician and collaborator, Mr. Hsu frequently perform with colleagues throughout the music world. In 2011, he participated in the world premiere of Paul Schoenfeld's Piano quintet with members of the Pro Arte quartet and recorded for Albany Records, released in 2014. In 2016, He premiered Logan Skelton's *Letters to Santa* with voice alumni of Loyola University New Orleans. His piano trio, Ensemble Peri, completed its inaugural tour in Korea during the summer of 2019.

Mr. Hsu received his bachelor's and master's degrees from The Juilliard School, Artist Diploma from Yale University, Doctoral of Musical Arts degree from the University of Michigan. He is currently the associate professor of piano at University of Oregon. Prior to Oregon, he was associate professor and keyboard coordinator at Loyola University New Orleans.

Amici

Lillie Manis 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.



Steven Pologe has performed throughout the United States, and in Italy, Sweden, Taiwan, South Korea, Thailand, New Zealand, and Canada. His CDs include quartets by William Grant Still and All That Jazz (both with the Oregon String Quartet), works by Jon Deak for solo cello and piano trio, and the piano trio of Lev Abeliovich. Steven is professor of Cello at the University of Oregon. He has frequently performed with the Oregon Bach Festival, Grand Teton Music Festival, Aspen Music Festival, Rome Festival Orchestra, and the Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival. In 2006, Pologe and Emeritus Professor Marjorie Woollacott (neuroscience), won a grant from the organization behind the coveted Grammy awards, the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. The award supported his research and publications documenting the precise movements of string players. Prior to moving to Oregon, Pologe was principal cellist with the Honolulu Symphony and faculty member at the University of Hawaii. To keep up with all Steven's activities, find him here, on his website, www.stevenpologe-cello.com.

Pre-Concert Speaker Terry McQuilkin, DMA, received degrees in music composition from the University of Southern California and the University of Oregon. His catalogue of original compositions and arrangements include works for piano solo, chamber ensembles, wind band, orchestra and chorus, including commissions from Downingtown (Pennsylvania) Public Schools and the Delgani String Quartet. In 2006, the Oregon Music Teachers Association recognized him as the organization's Composer of the Year. Dr. McQuilkin taught music composition at the University of Oregon for 19 years. As a writer and music critic, he contributed hundreds of reviews and features for the music pages of the Los Angeles Times and the (Eugene) Register Guard.

Featured Artist Chris Pontrelli: "I'm drawn to the power of simple icons generated by our society. I greatly admire the work of mid-20th century designers. Some believe they were taking cues from the jazz and bebop musicians of that same era. There is a quick, lightness to their forms – abbreviated, yet complete. It is with this visual shorthand that I express my own artistic vision. Like many artists and musicians throughout history, I'm fascinated by the comparison of the two genres. We hear of musicians trying to "paint" melodies with color. And we see artists striving to bring music into a visual form.

As a life-long musician I find it natural to include qualities found in music when painting. Like a popular song I want my artwork to have an accessible beat and a colorful rhythm. I strive to create motion where there would otherwise be stillness. With each piece I ask, 'Can your eyes dance to this?' "

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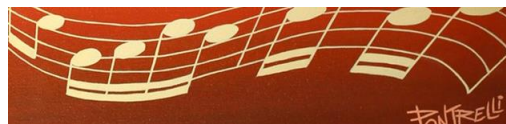
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Samuel Coleridge-Taylor

Piano Quintet in G Minor, Op. 1

Erno Dohnanyi

Piano Quintet No. 1 in C Minor, Op. 1

Musicians

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Sharon Schuman **violin**

Alexander Tutunov **piano**

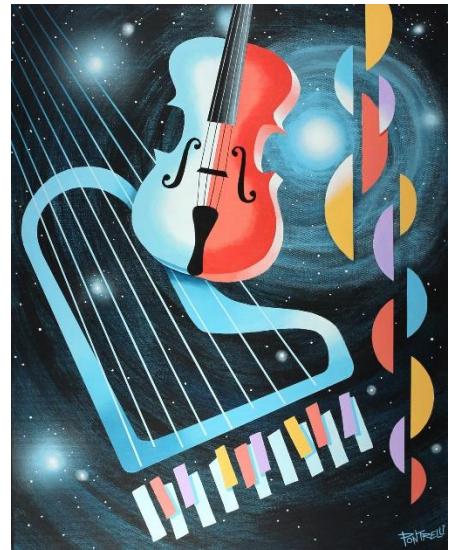
Lillie Manis **viola**

Steven Pologe **cello**

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Dr. Terry McQuilkin



Nocturne in Blue, by Chris Pontrelli

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