

Creating Community Through Great Music 2023-2024

Chamber Music Amici

Opus One

3:00 PM Sunday, June 9 • 7:30 PM Monday, June 10

Wildish Community Theater, 630 Main St. Springfield



Artwork by Chris Pontrelli: *Nocturn in Blue* PONTRELLI

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor Piano Quintet in G Minor, Op.1

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

Jessica Lambert violin **Lillie Manis** viola **Steven Pologe** cello

Sharon Schuman violin **Alexander Tutunov** piano

Season Sponsor



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!

Whether it is the first work ever written or categorized later as the first published work, every composer must write an “Opus one.” In today’s program, I am excited to share with you two highly accomplished piano quintets, both Op. 1, by Ernő Dohnányi and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. The Hungarian composer and pianist Dohnányi and the London-born Coleridge-Taylor, one of the first mixed-race composers who achieved prominence, both deserve the highest recognition for their originality and craft. For this unique program, we welcome the eminent pianist Alexander Tutunov from Southern Oregon University who will be performing with us for the first time. It is a great way to celebrate our season finale by having our All-Amici musicians, including the former Artistic Director and violinist Jessica Lambert, join Dr. Tutunov on the stage. Have a wonderful summer and see you next season!

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Program

Piano Quintet in G Minor, Op. 1

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor

- I. Allegro con moto
- II. Larghetto
- III. Scherzo
- IV. Allegro molto

Jessica Lambert, violin; Sharon Schuman, violin; Lillie Manis, viola
Steven Pologe, cello; Alexander Tutunov, piano

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

Ernő Dohnányi

- I. Allegro
- II. Scherzo: Allegro vivace
- III. Adagio, quasi andante
- IV. Finale: Allegro animato - Allegro

Jessica Lambert, violin; Sharon Schuman, violin; Lillie Manis, viola
Steven Pologe, cello; Alexander Tutunov, piano



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

Program Notes

by Dr. Terry McQuilkin

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor: Piano Quintet in G Minor, Op. 1

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor was born in London in 1875. His mother was a white Englishwoman, and his father was a Sierra Leonean medical student who had come to London to complete his training but returned to Sierra Leone around the time his son was born. He had no part in the boy's upbringing.

As a child growing up in Croydon, South London, Coleridge-Taylor took violin lessons and sang in church choirs. His talent caught the attention of Hubert Walters, a silk merchant and retired army officer, who financed the boy's attendance at the Royal College of Music. The 15-year-old enrolled initially as a violin student but at Colonel Walter's prompting, the college principal arranged for him to study composition formally with Sir Charles Stanford, under whose guidance he thrived.

Coleridge-Taylor's reputation as a composer rose rapidly. *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast*, a cantata he composed in 1898, became as popular as Handel's *Messiah* and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. During a trip to the United States in 1904, he conducted performances of his own works and visited President Theodore Roosevelt at the White House. He toured the U.S. again in 1906 and 1910.

Starting in 1897, Coleridge-Taylor began focusing much of his creative energy on his African heritage, producing such works as *African Romances*, a song cycle on texts by Paul Lawrence Dunbar, *24 Negro Melodies* for Piano and *The Bomboula* for orchestra. He composed at a prodigious rate, and continued to teach and conduct throughout his short life. Perhaps due to overwork, he died in 1912, after contracting pneumonia at the age of 37.

Coleridge-Taylor composed his Piano Quintet in G Minor in 1893, while he was a student at the RCM. The premiere took place on October 9 in Croydon, at a concert devoted mostly to Coleridge-Taylor's music, with the 18-year-old composer playing the piano part. There is no record of any subsequent performances for another century, and the Quintet was not published until 2002.

Coleridge-Taylor admired Antonín Dvořák's music, and traces of the Czech composer's "DNA" can be heard in the Piano Quintet. The opening Allegro con moto, a concise sonata-form movement, begins with a vigorous theme, played by the strings in octaves. The piano introduces the lyrical, Schubertian second theme, in B-flat major, with the strings playing supportive lines. After the development and recapitulation, the movement ends with a slow but fervent unison statement of the work's opening phrase.



The Larghetto, structured in ABA form, begins with a lyrical, introspective melody played by the cello, garnished by the piano's delicate accompanying line. The movement is nominally in E-flat, but the composer takes us on frequent detours to G major, E major and other keys. It is not long before the musical expression becomes more heated, and the emotional intensity is even greater in the middle section.

The fiery Scherzo (in G minor) might remind listeners of the more rustic passages in some of Dvořák's music, but with a more agitated, less predictable narrative line. That feverishness is largely absent in the trio, in G major, which has the aspect of a graceful *Ländler*.

Whereas traditional classical forms provide the blueprints for the first three movements, the finale's architecture is an outlier. Following a convulsive introduction and brief pause, a prankish theme in G minor, shared by the violin and piano, sets things in motion. In short order, the viola delivers a melancholy theme in D minor. Following a repeat of the exposition, the first violin inaugurates a fugal section, whose subject is simply a supercharged version of the melody from the third movement's trio. Following a brief return to the mischievous theme heard earlier, an *accelerando* drives the music to an exciting close.

Ernő Dohnányi: Piano Quintet No. 1 in C Minor, Op. 1

Hungarian musician Ernő Dohnányi, composer, conductor, teacher, and one of the greatest pianists of his time, was born in 1877 in Poszony (now Bratislava, Slovakia). In 1897 he enrolled at the Budapest Music Academy, where he studied piano with István Thomán and composition with Hans Koessler, who also taught Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály.

After completing his studies in 1897, Dohnányi performed as a pianist throughout England, and between 1905 and 1915 taught in Berlin. In 1915 he returned to Budapest, where he was active in promoting the music of Hungarian composers. In 1919 he was appointed director of the Academy, but in 1920 the new fascist regime dismissed him. He remained active as a pianist, conductor and composer, and between 1921 and 1927 made several successful tours to the United States.

Dohnányi returned to the Academy in 1928, serving as its director from 1931 to 1941. In 1944, amidst the backdrop of Nazi restrictions and Russia's invasion of Hungary, he and his wife moved to Austria. As the war drew to a close, Dohnányi was accused of having committed war crimes. These claims were later discredited, but the immediate effect was that Dohnányi was in effect blacklisted in Hungary. After touring England again, Dohnányi emigrated to the United States, and from 1949 until his death in 1960, he taught at Florida State University.

Dohnányi was still a 17-year-old student at the Budapest Academy when he composed his Piano Quintet in C Minor in 1895, which he dedicated to Koessler. The composition professor's friendship with Brahms prompted the latter to arrange for a Vienna performance of the work, after which Brahms told Koessler, "I could not have written it better myself."

The opening Allegro begins softly, with anticipation, as the piano introduces the march-like main theme in C minor. Following a *fortissimo* restatement of this theme, a transition passage leads to a lyrical, Brahmsian theme in E-flat (the relative major); both themes are explored in the development section. As the movement nears the coda, the tempo slows dramatically, and the strings play the main theme forcefully and in unison. The piano then reprises the movement's opening bars, softly again, but this time in C major, and following a rapid crescendo, the movement ends heroically.

The second movement is a scherzo and trio. The scherzo, with its galvanic energy, mercurial dynamic changes and occasional metric ambiguity, calls to mind the scherzo movements of Beethoven and Brahms. The trio, dominated by a flowing melody, offers some temporary calm before the kinetic scherzo returns.

The Adagio quasi andante, in ABA form, begins with an ardent theme, first played by the viola. The violin and cello interweave the melody as a lovely duet, evoking the spirit of Robert Schumann. The middle section begins softly but becomes increasingly louder and more dramatic.

The finale is a rondo anchored by a dance-like refrain in 5/4 meter. The first episodic section has the feel of a slow waltz. The second episode is an extended fugato whose subject springs from the opening movement's main theme. After a reprise of the waltz-like theme and a final restatement of the refrain, we hear the first movement's main theme, presented exactly as it had been at the start of the piece – except now it is in C major. A powerful crescendo propels the music to a glorious conclusion.

Musicians

Guests

Jessica Lambert played with Amici for seven years and completed her rotation as Artistic Director in 2020. 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.

Alexander Tutunov is one of the most outstanding virtuosos of the former Soviet Union. His playing was described by Soviet Culture, Moscow, as “exhilarating and inspired, and which demonstrated a unique talent”. Dr. Tutunov maintains a busy performing schedule worldwide as a recitalist, soloist with orchestra, and on radio and television and is also in demand as an adjudicator for piano competitions.



Tutunov's recording of the Abeliovich *Piano Concerto* was featured as part of the Emmy award winning soundtrack for the History Channel documentary, *Russia: Land of Tsars*, and his performance of the Tchaikovsky *Concert Fantasy* with the Russian Philharmonic Orchestra on CD was described as “sensitive and idiomatic” by the International Piano magazine (London). Other recordings include: *Concerto for Piano & Orchestra* by Peter Sacco with the Czech National Symphony Orchestra (Albany Records) and the solo piano works of Lev Abeliovich *Sonatas & Frescoes, Trio, Songs* (Altarus Records).

Tutunov graduated *magna cum laude* from the Central Music School of the Moscow Conservatory (studies with Anna Artobolevskaya and Lev Naumov) and University of North Texas (piano studies with Joseph Banowetz). Awarded his doctoral diploma with honors in concert performance from the Belarusian State Conservatory, Dr. Tutunov has taught at the Minsk College of Music, the University of North Texas, and Illinois Wesleyan University.

Alexander Tutunov now lives in Ashland, where he is Professor of Piano and Artist in Residence at Southern Oregon University. A successful piano pedagogue, he continues to prepare award-winning students. Dr. Tutunov has been the Artist in Residence at the University of Alaska Southeast, Principal Guest Soloist with the Port Angeles Symphony orchestra, and the Director of the Chinese-American International Piano Institute in Chengdu, China.

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.

Sharon Schuman 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 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 graduated with a degree in English, she earned a Ph.D. in that discipline at the University of Chicago. She has performed in a master class for Vladimir Spivakov and as concerto soloist with Oregon Mozart Players and the

Salem Chamber Orchestra. She has also performed with the Oregon Bach Festival and Eugene Symphony, 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. After publishing *Freedom and Dialogue in a Polarized World* (2014), she edited *A Voice for Justice: Writings of David Schuman* (2021). Sharon is the 2021 recipient of the Eugene Arts and Letters Award.

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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