

Young Concert Artists
BIG ARTS
January 22, 2026

YOUNG CONCERT ARTISTS

Oliver Neubauer, violin
Benett Tsai, cello
Zhu Wang, piano

Piano Trio in C major, H. XV:27..... Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
Allegro
Andante
Finale: Presto
Duration: 18 minutes

From Jewish Life, Three Sketches for Cello and Piano..... Ernest Bloch (1880-1959)
Prayer
Supplication
Jewish Song
Duration: 8 minutes

"Garden Scene" from the Incidental Music toErich Wolfgang Korngold
Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* for Violin and Piano, Op. 11 (1897-1957)
Duration: 3 minutes

Three Preludes for Violin and Piano Goerge Gershwin (1898-1937)
Prelude No. 1: Allegro ben ritmato e deciso Arranged by Jascha Heifetz
Blue Lullaby: Andante con moto e poco rubato (1901-1987)
Spanish Prelude: Allegro ben ritmato e deciso
Duration: 7 minutes

~~~~~intermission~~~~~

Three Pieces for Cello and Piano ..... Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979)  
Modéré  
Sans vitesse et à l'aise  
Vite et nerveusement rythme  
Duration: 7 minutes

*Ramble on the Last Love-Duet from* .....Richard Strauss (1864-1949)  
*Strauss' "Der Rosenkavalier"* for Piano Percy Grainger (1882-1961)

Duration: 7 minutes

Piano Trio No. 1 in D minor, Op. 49..... Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Molto allegro ed agitato

Andante con moto tranquillo

Scherzo: Leggiero e vivace

Finale: Allegro assai appassionato

Duration: 29 minutes

## Notes on the Program by Dr. Richard E. Rodda

### Piano Trio in C major, H. XV:27 Joseph Haydn

Born March 31, 1732 in Rohrau, Austria.

Died May 31, 1809 in Vienna.

*Composed in 1796 or 1797.*

The Piano Trio in C major (XV:27 in Hoboken's catalog; H.C. Robbins Landon places it as No. 43 in his chronological listing of the trios) was composed soon after Haydn left England for the second time, in 1795. The piece was one of three such works (Nos. 43-45; H. XV:27-29) written for publication by the firm of Longman & Broderip, and advertised for sale on April 20, 1797 in the London *Oracle*. The set was dedicated to the gifted pianist Therese Bartolozzi (*née* Jansen), a native of Aachen, Germany who had settled in London to study with Clementi. She became one of the city's most sought-after performers and piano teachers, and both Clementi and Dussek dedicated important sonatas to her. Haydn met Therese early in his second London sojourn, and became close enough to her to serve as a witness at her wedding on May 16, 1795 to Gaetano Bartolozzi, son of the well-known engraver Francesco Bartolozzi. The difficulty of the piano part in these three compositions, the most challenging in all of Haydn's trios, attests to Therese's skill and musicianship.

The C major Piano Trio opens with a sonata-form movement built from a leaping, intricately decorated main theme for the keyboard and a triplet-rhythm subsidiary subject for violin and piano. The *Andante* is a carefully detailed three-part form (A-B-A) in which the central section modulates to a dramatic minor mode. "Everything about the finale is unexpected," wrote pianist Charles Rosen. "The opening theme is an enchanting joke, with the harmony changing to make accents on off-beats, an angular melody that appears at times in the wrong register, and a scherzando rhythm that allows the melody to start when one is least ready for it."

### *From Jewish Life*, Three Sketches for Cello and Piano Ernest Bloch

Born July 24, 1880 in Geneva, Switzerland.

Died July 15, 1959 in Portland, Oregon.

*Composed in 1924.*

"It is the Jewish soul that interests me, the complex, glowing, agitated soul that I feel vibrating throughout the Bible," wrote Swiss-American composer Ernest Bloch. "The freshness and naïveté of the Patriarchs; the violence that is evident in the prophetic books; the Jew's savage love of justice; the despair of the Preacher in Jerusalem; the sorrow and immensity of the Book of Job; the sensuality of the Song of Songs — all this is in us; all this is in me, and it is the better part of me. It is all this that I endeavor to hear in myself and to transcribe in my music."

*From Jewish Life* of 1924, one of Bloch's most fervent expressions of affection for his paternal Judaism, was among a number of compositions whose inspiration can be traced to the singing he heard at an Orthodox service in a synagogue on New York's Lower East Side soon after his arrival in America in 1916. Bloch found in the keening vocal idiom, the impassioned manner of performance, the gapped scales, and the brooding emotion of traditional Jewish religious song the manifestations of "an inner voice, deep, secret, insistent, ardent," which he attempted to embody in the "Three Sketches" comprising *From Jewish Life* — *Prayer*, *Supplication* and *Jewish Song*.

“Garden Scene” from the Incidental Music to Shakespeare’s *Much Ado About Nothing* for  
Violin and Piano, Op. 11  
Erich Wolfgang Korngold

Born May 29, 1897 in Brünn, Austria (now Brno, Czech Republic).  
Died November 29, 1957 in Hollywood, California.

*Composed in 1918.*  
*Premiered in 1919 in Vienna, conducted by the composer.*

Erich Wolfgang Korngold (his middle name honored Mozart), the son of Julius Korngold, one of Vienna’s most influential music critics at the turn of the 20th century, was playing piano by age five, composing by seven, and at nine produced a cantata (*Gold*) that convinced his father to enroll him at the Vienna Conservatory; his Piano Sonata No. 1 was published in 1908, when he was eleven. The following year he wrote a ballet, *Der Schneemann* (“*The Snowman*”), which was staged at the Vienna Royal Opera at the command of Emperor Franz Josef. In 1911, the budding composer gave a concert of his works in Berlin, in which he also appeared as piano soloist. Korngold was an international celebrity at thirteen. He wrote his first opera in 1915 and five years later produced his dramatic masterpiece, *Die Tote Stadt* (“*The Dead City*”), and was appointed professor at the Vienna Staatsakademie. Korngold settled in Hollywood in 1934, and during the next decade he created an unsurpassed body of film music, winning two Academy Awards (for *Anthony Adverse* and *The Adventures of Robin Hood*). His father’s death in 1945, however, caused him to re-evaluate his career, and he returned to writing concert music with concertos for violin (for Heifetz) and cello, and a large symphony. Korngold died on November 29, 1957; his remains were interred in the Hollywood Cemetery, within a few feet of those of Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., D.W. Griffith and Rudolf Valentino.

Korngold wrote fourteen pieces of incidental music for Shakespeare’s *Much Ado About Nothing* in 1918 for a production at Vienna’s Burgtheater the following year; the 22-year-old composer conducted the premiere. Korngold’s music proved popular with audiences, and he extracted from the score both a concert suite and an arrangement for violin and piano. *The Garden Scene* (Act III) accompanies Beatrice’s realization of her growing love for Benedick.

Three Preludes for Violin and Piano  
George Gershwin

Born September 26, 1898 in Brooklyn, New York.  
Died July 11, 1937 in Hollywood, California.

*Composed for piano in 1926 and arranged for violin and piano by Jascha Heifetz.*  
*Premiered on December 4, 1926 in New York City by the composer.*

Though the 1924 *Rhapsody in Blue* is usually cited as Gershwin’s initial foray into the concert world, he had been dabbling with more serious modes of musical expression for at least a half-dozen years by that time. He started composing piano miniatures — “novelettes” he called them — as early as 1917, and wrote a charming *Lullaby* for strings two years later. In January 1925, he headed a new notebook “Preludes” and started to sketch out some ideas for what he planned to be a set of 24 short piano pieces collectively titled *The Melting Pot*. Late the following year, the British-born (of Peruvian parents) contralto Marguerite d’Alvarez enlisted Gershwin to play in her New York recital, which was to include a set of popular numbers as a foil to her usual repertory of Spanish and French songs. Gershwin agreed to act as accompanist for the popular songs on the program, and also to play three of his new Preludes, which he titled *Prelude No. 1*, *Blue Lullaby* and *Spanish Prelude*. The recital on December 4, 1926 at the fashionable Hotel Roosevelt was a success, and Gershwin and d’Alvarez performed the same program in Buffalo and

Boston early the following year. Shortly thereafter, Gershwin published the three Preludes, his most important concert works for solo piano.

Gershwin's Three Preludes, arranged in the classical ordering of fast-slow-fast, were spawned from the familiar popular idioms of the 1920s. The first is a blend of Charleston and tango; the second is a deeply nostalgic blues; and the third is jazzy with a strong Spanish inflection. The Preludes have been transcribed for orchestra (several times), for piano trio, for trumpet, and for saxophone, but the best-known arrangement is the one Jascha Heifetz made for violin and piano, which he recorded and frequently used as an encore.

### Three Pieces for Cello and Piano Nadia Boulanger

Born September 16, 1887 in Paris.

Died there October 22, 1979.

*Composed in 1915.*

Nadia Boulanger was born in 1887 into a musically sophisticated family. Her father won the *Prix de Rome* in 1835, became a successful opera composer in Paris and a teacher of singing at the Conservatoire, and was awarded the *Légion d'Honneur* in 1870; Gounod, Fauré, Massenet and Saint-Saëns were frequent visitors to their home. Nadia entered the Paris Conservatoire when she was ten; in 1904, she won first prizes in harmony, counterpoint, organ, fugue and piano accompaniment. She composed industriously and performed as a pianist and organist during the following years, but abandoned composition in 1922 when she discovered her true genius in teaching. She taught at the Paris Conservatoire but began her incomparable impact on 20th-century music when she joined the faculty of the American Conservatory at Fontainebleau in 1921. Aaron Copland and Virgil Thomson were her first American students, and then literally hundreds more came for the next half-century, from Piston, Carter and Harris to Diamond, Bernstein, Piazzolla and Glass. Among Boulanger's many honors were the Order of St. Charles of Monaco, Order of the Crown of Belgium, honorary doctorates from Oxford and Harvard, an honorary fellowship in the Royal College of Music, membership in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and nomination as a *Grand Officier de la Légion d'Honneur*.

Boulanger held as early-20th-century models for her students the works of Ravel, Debussy and Stravinsky, but her own compositions, all completed before she turned 35 in 1922, are most heavily indebted to the lyrical and subtle idiom of her teacher Gabriel Fauré, qualities heard in her lovely Three Pieces for Cello and Piano of 1915.

### *Ramble on the Last Love-Duet from Strauss' "Der Rosenkavalier"* for Piano Percy Grainger

Born July 8, 1882 in Melbourne, Australia.

Died February 20, 1961 in White Plains, New York.

*Composed in 1920 and 1927.*

Percy Grainger was one of the 20th-century's most individualistic and intriguing musical personalities. Born in Melbourne, Australia on July 8, 1882, he studied with the noted German pianist Louis Pabst at his newly established Melbourne Conservatory before traveling to Germany at the age of twelve to study piano and composition at the Hoch School of Music in Frankfurt; he also took some private lessons from Ferruccio Busoni in Berlin. Grainger settled in London in 1901 and began an acclaimed career as a pianist, appearing throughout Britain, Scandinavia, Central Europe, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa; his signature piece was the Piano Concerto by Edvard Grieg, a mutually

admiring friend. Grainger also devoted much time to composing and to collecting British folksongs before moving to the United States in 1914, working the tunes he discovered into distinctive arrangements and synthesizing elements of their styles in his original compositions. Grainger served as a bandsman in the United States Army during World War I, became an American citizen in 1918, and settled permanently in White Plains, New York three years later. During the 1920s, he continued to compose, extended his folksong researches to Denmark and Australia, taught piano at the Chicago Musical College, and married the Swedish poetess and painter Ella Viola Ström at a ceremony at the Hollywood Bowl before 22,000 spectators, conducting his new *To a Nordic Princess* as a gift to his bride. He subsequently taught at New York University, lectured and performed widely, and established a Grainger Museum at the University of Melbourne to house his manuscripts, papers, memorabilia and musical souvenirs before his death from cancer, in White Plains on February 20, 1961.

Grainger was a great admirer of Richard Strauss and his music ("a humane soul whose music overflowed with the milk of human kindness," Grainger called him), and met him several times; Strauss returned the regard and conducted Grainger's works on at least two of his concerts in Germany. Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* created a sensation when it was premiered in Dresden in January 1911, and in 1920 Grainger began what he described as a "Ramble" — a free transcription — on the magnificent duet that closes the opera, in which Sophie and Octavian declare their love and marvel at the richness and intensity of their youthful feelings. Grainger did not complete his *Ramble on the Last Love-Duet from Strauss' "Der Rosenkavalier"* until 1927, however, when he dedicated the score to the memory of his beloved mother, Rose, who had taken her own life five years before and whose name is embedded in the work's title. Far more than a simple transfer of the notes of the duet to the keyboard, Grainger's *Ramble* conjures the opulent sound-world of Strauss' opera through delicate arpeggios ("harping," Grainger called this technique), masterful voicing of chords, and meticulous use of the piano's pedals to create luminous effects of resonance.

## Piano Trio No. 1 in D minor, Op. 49 Felix Mendelssohn

Born February 3, 1809 in Hamburg.  
Died November 4, 1847 in Leipzig.

*Composed in 1839.*

The most intensely busy time of Mendelssohn's life was ushered in by his appointment in 1835 as the administrator, music director and conductor of the Leipzig Gewandhaus concerts. In very short order, he raised the quality of musical life in Leipzig to equal that of any city in Europe, and in 1842 he founded the local Conservatory to maintain his standards of excellence. (The school was to be the most highly regarded institution of its kind in the world for the next half century.) In 1841, he was named director of the Music Section of the Academy of Arts in Berlin, a cultural venture newly instituted by King Frederick William IV of Prussia, which required him not only to supervise and conduct a wide variety of programs but also to compose upon royal demand — the incidental music that complements his dazzling 1826 *Overture to "A Midsummer Night's Dream"* was sparked by one of Frederick's requests. Mendelssohn toured, guest conducted, and composed incessantly, and on March 28, 1837 took on the additional responsibilities of family life when he married Cécile Jeanrenaud. Mendelssohn's duties kept him close to Leipzig for most of 1839, but he did manage to escape in May to conduct at the Lower Rhine Music Festival in Düsseldorf and in September to oversee the presentation of his oratorio *St. Paul* in Brunswick. The D minor Piano Trio was completed in July, between those two engagements. The work has remained one of Mendelssohn's most popular and beloved instrumental creations — Pablo Casals chose to play it with Mieczyslaw Horszowski and Alexander Schneider when he was invited by President John F. Kennedy to perform at the White House in 1961.

Though Mendelssohn was careful to involve all of the participants equally in the D minor Trio in the presentation and development of the thematic material, the piano is granted the most brilliant of the three

parts. The opening D minor movement, heroic rather than mournful, is in a closely worked sonata form. The cello presents the graceful main theme at the outset. The complementary subject, also initiated by the cello, is a gently arched strain in a brighter tonality. The extensive development section is an ingenious elaboration of these two lyrical inspirations. A full recapitulation of the principal themes rounds out the movement. The *Andante*, led by the piano, is reminiscent in its three-part structure and melodic style of the *Songs Without Words*. The *Scherzo* is an elfin essay in the quicksilver, effervescent manner of which Mendelssohn was the peerless master. The dactylic motive (long-short-short) given at the outset of the Finale by the piano serves as the germ from which most of the movement grows. A brief but energetic coda spawned by the same motive brings the Trio to a triumphant close.

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