

Concerts at the Point

17TH SEASON 2013-2014



SUSAN WILSON

presents ...

ADASKIN STRING TRIO,
WITH THOMAS GALLANT

SEPTEMBER 22, 2013, 3:00 PM

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Concerts at the Point

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2013

ADASKIN STRING TRIO, WITH THOMAS GALLANT

Emlyn Ngai, violin

Steve Larson, viola

Mark Fraser, cello

Thomas Gallant, oboe

QUARTET IN F MAJOR, OBOE & STRINGS

FIALA

Allegro spirituosissimo

Menuetto, Trio

Andante

Allegro

SERENADE IN D MAJOR FOR STRING TRIO, OP. 8

BEETHOVEN

Marcia: Allegro, Adagio

Menuetto: Allegretto

Adagio - Scherzo: Allegro molto

Allegretto alla Polaca

Thema con Variazioni: Andante quasi Allegretto

Marcia: Allegro

INTERMISSION . . .

STRING TRIO, OP. 19 (1943)

BERKELEY

Moderato

Adagio

Allegro

QUARTET FOR OBOE & STRINGS

MOZART

Allegro

Adagio

Rondeau: Allegro

THE PERFORMERS: THE ADASKIN STRING TRIO



The Adaskin String Trio commands a large string trio repertoire ranging from Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven to Dohnanyi, Rozsa, Villa-Lobos, Schnittke, and composers of today including commissioned works by Murray Adaskin, Robert Carl and David Macbride among others. In addition, the trio enjoys collaborations of the highest level with various artists. The trio and pianist Sally Pinkas have established themselves as powerful interpreters of numerous masterpieces from the piano quartet literature. Other collaborators have included oboist Thomas Gallant, guitarist Eliot Fisk, bassist Robert Black, and accordion virtuoso Joseph Petric with whom they commissioned Raymond Luedeke to write a spectacular new work entitled *Tango Dreams*.

Although the Adaskin String Trio is currently based in New England, the members of the trio are all originally from Canada. They met in Montreal where they each studied chamber music with founding Orford Quartet cellist Marcel Saint-Cyr. They later completed two years as ensemble-in-residence at The Hartt School under the guidance of the Emerson Quartet. The trio is named in honor of Murray Adaskin, one of Canada's most loved and respected composers, and two of his brothers, violinist Harry Adaskin and producer and music educator John Adaskin.

EMLYN NGAI, violin, leads a diverse career as both a modern and historical violinist. In addition to being violinist of the Adaskin String Trio, he is Associate Concertmaster for the Carmel Bach Festival Orchestra and Concertmaster of the Philadelphia Baroque Orchestra and chamber ensemble Tempest di Mare. His historical violin skills have kept him in demand with other groups in North America, including Apollo's Fire, Boston Baroque, the Smithsonian Chamber Players, and the Washington Bach Consort. His involvement with Joshua Rifkin's Bach Ensemble has taken him to Bermuda, Germany, Spain and the UK.

He holds degrees from McGill University, Oberlin College and the Hartt School. He has taught at Boston University, McGill University, and Mount Holyoke College and has been a faculty member of Amherst Early Music, Madison Early Music Festival and the Oberlin Baroque Performance Institute. Currently he teaches modern and baroque violin, chamber music and performance practice at the Hartt School where he also co-directs the Hartt School Collegium Musicum.

STEVE LARSON, viola, is both a highly dedicated teacher and one of the most passionate performers of his generation. The Montreal Gazette has praised him for his "singing tone, eloquent phrasing, expressive dynamics and flawless intonation," and Gramophone Magazine calls his playing "riveting." He is a Senior Artist Teacher at The Hartt School of the University of Hartford, having served as String Department Chair from 2001 to 2006 and as Chamber Music Chair from 2007-2011. In addition to his concerts and recordings with Adaskin, he also performs regularly with his other acclaimed chamber groups, Avery Ensemble and Ensemble Schumann, and has performed as a guest with groups such as the Emerson & Miami String Quartets and the Lions Gate & New World Trios.

He has performed as a soloist internationally and given master classes at numerous conservatories, universities and summer programs. He performs and teaches viola and chamber music each summer at the Wintergreen Festival in Virginia. He studied violin

with Elman Lowe, Howard Leyton-Brown, and Mauricio Fuks, viola with Jutta Puchhammer and Steve Tenenbom, and chamber music with members of the Emerson and Orford String Quartets.

MARK FRASER, cello, originally from Montreal, studied with Walter Joachim, Aldo Parisot, Yuli Turovsky, and David Finckel; he holds degrees from McGill University, l'Université de Montréal, and The Hartt School. For many years he was the Artistic Director of Project Renaissance, an arts festival near Montreal. Recording credits include a CD of works by Bach, Schumann, and Prokofiev with pianist Sooka Wang. Mark also performs frequently as a soloist and in recital in Western Massachusetts, where he now lives. In 2007, he founded Valley Concerts in Northampton, Massachusetts, which has featured the Adaskin String Trio and guests in numerous well-received concerts.

THOMAS GALLANT, oboe, is one of the world's few virtuoso solo and chamber music performers on the oboe. His astonishing technique and breath control have often been compared to the greatest violinist and singers. His performances have taken him around the world and back again. He has collaborated with flutists Jean-Pierre Rampal and Paula Robison, and with the Colorado and Lark Quartets, in addition to the Adaskin String Trio. Upcoming concerts include a tour across the US as soloist with the Martinu Chamber Orchestra from Prague and a concert of solo and chamber music works for oboe at the Library of Congress.



Thomas Gallant is known for his unique performance style that combines the American and European traditions of oboe playing. He plays on an “Evoluzione” oboe made by the Italian maker Fratelli Patricola.

THE OBOE

The double reed ancestors to the oboe are likely some of the oldest instruments. Similar double-reed instruments appear in artwork and are referenced in literature from India, Mongolia, China and Japan as well as the Arabs and Greeks. From there, its influence spread westward into Europe probably by means of the Silk Road and Medieval troubadours during the time of the Crusades. The oboe near to the form we know today first appeared in the mid-17th century, when it was called hautbois – French for high and wood. Its timbre is derived from the oboe's conical bore (as opposed to the generally cylindrical bore of flutes and clarinets). As a result, oboes are readily audible over other instruments in large ensembles.

Music for the oboe is written in concert pitch (i.e., it is not a transposing instrument), and the instrument has a soprano range. Orchestras frequently tune to a concert A played by the oboe, because the pitch of the oboe is secure and its penetrating sound makes it ideal for tuning purposes.

The oboe has several siblings. The most widely known today is the cor anglais, or English horn, the tenor (or alto) member of the family. A transposing instrument; it is pitched in F, a perfect fifth lower than the oboe. The oboe d'amore, the alto (or mezzo-soprano) member of the family, is pitched in A, a minor third lower than the oboe. Even less common is the bass oboe (also called baritone oboe), which sounds one octave lower than the oboe. Similar to the bass oboe is the more powerful heckelphone, which has a wider bore and larger tone than the baritone oboe. The least common of all are the musette (also called oboe musette or piccolo oboe), the sopranino member of the family (it is usually pitched in E-flat or F above the oboe), and the contrabass oboe (typically pitched in C, two octaves deeper than the standard oboe). *Source: wikipedia; Covey & Ramsay*

PROGRAM NOTES

JOSEF FIALA (1748– 1816)

QUARTET IN F MAJOR

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Allegro spirituosso

Menuetto, Trio

Andante

Allegro

Josef Fiala was a composer, oboist, viola da gamba virtuoso, cellist, and pedagogue. He was born in Lochovice in Bohemia and began his professional career as an oboist in the service of Countess Netolicka. In 1777 he moved to Munich to serve in the court orchestra of Elector Maximilian Joseph. That year in Munich, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was greatly impressed by the wind band trained by Fiala, and helped Fiala secure a position in 1778 after the death of the Elector. In 1785 Fiala moved to Vienna, and in 1786 to Saint Petersburg where he worked in the court of Catherine the Great. In 1790 he moved to Prussia where he served as a viola da gamba player in the court of Friedrich Wilhelm II. Finally in 1792 he became Kapellmeister in Donaueschingen, where he spent the rest of his life.

Orchestral compositions by Fiala include concertos for oboe and for cor anglais and a double horn concerto. He wrote a number of works for wind band. Chamber music by Fiala includes string quartets and quartets with oboe, as well as sets of duos for violin and cello.

The Quartet in F Major is, broadly speaking, early to middle classical in form and style, of a rather light and pleasant character, with short inner movements. The oboe has a very fluent solo line throughout and the accompaniment in the three string instruments is rather subdued. Some have likened the oboe's role as similar to that of the first violin in string quartet formation.

Source: [wikipedia](https://www.wikipedia.org); [uticachambermusic.org](https://www.uticachambermusic.org); [ionarts](https://www.ionarts.org)

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770 – 1827)

SERENADE IN D MAJOR FOR STRING TRIO, OP. 8

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Marcia: Allegro, Adagio

Menuetto: Allegretto

Adagio – Scherzo: Allegro molto, Adagio

Allegretto alla Polaca

Thema con Variazioni: Andante quasi Allegretto

Marcia: Allegro

Because Beethoven's early published works are so meaty, we sometimes tend to think of the composer as having emerged full-blown. But a closer look reveals that he didn't leap feet-first into symphonic textures, for example, until he'd worked through certain stylistic and formal problems that he later explored in works of ever increasing size. Most of his first twenty published works are piano sonatas or chamber works, and he achieved an almost unprecedented level of formal and technical sophistication in these genres before tackling the large-scale First Symphony in 1799. Among these chamber pieces were several works for string trio composed during the late 1790s (Opp. 3, 8, and 9), which were themselves a sort of preparation for his first set of String Quartets, Op. 18.

Beethoven probably took up the work he called a Serenade in 1797. Like Mozart's Divertimento, the Serenade follows a plan more in keeping with the incidental music of the day—that is, instead of a traditional four-movement sonata form (Allegro, Slow movement, Minuet, Rondo), it consists of a free sequence of compound movements that are all or nearly all derived from some dance type or other.

Beethoven begins Op. 8 with an introductory Marcia: Allegro, a sort of throwback to the days when outdoor courtly music began and ended with a march, giving the musicians an opportunity to parade on and off the grounds. This leads directly into a touching and intense Adagio, which forms the main part of this movement. Then comes a brief and witty Menuetto: Allegretto, openly Haydnesque in its

inspiration, but with the easy audacity that we associate with Beethoven, even in his youngest years.

The third movement is another curious compound: An almost tragic Adagio in minor-mode alternates with a buffoonish Scherzo: Allegro molto. The Allegretto alla Polacca is a nod to another favorite 18th-century dance, supposedly Polish in origin, and the Andante quasi allegretto is an elegant set of variations on a discursive subject. The initial Marcia is reprised. *Source: Kennedy Center Program Notes*

LENNOX BERKELEY (1903 – 1989)

STRING TRIO, OP. 19 (1943)

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Moderato

Adagio

Allegro



A contemporary of Walton and Tippett, Lennox Berkeley initially studied modern languages at Oxford University before studying composition with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. There he met and was influenced by Ravel, Poulenc and Stravinsky, and much of his work has a refinement and precision that is distinctly French in flavor. In 1928 he joined the Roman Catholic Church, which was to inspire much of his vocal music. He enjoyed a long association with Benjamin Britten, with whom he collaborated on a number of works.

The String Trio, Op. 19 is a neo-classical work. The first movement is a 'moderato' written in sonata form. There is a good contrast between the irregular rhythm of the second subject and the 'languid lyricism' of the opening theme. The 'adagio' is the heart of the work. This is deeply felt music that reflects wartime concerns and tragedies. However, this mood is swept away by the final 'allegro' which is a good old-fashioned rondo. It is vibrant music that balances 'rumbustiousness' with episodes that are more serious in their effect. The overall impression of the work is of a stylistic tension between a Gallic influence and nods to Mozart. *Source: James Rushton; arkivmusic*

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756 – 1791)

QUARTET IN F MAJOR FOR OBOE & STRINGS, K370

...

Allegro

Adagio

Rondeau: Allegro

Mozart spent the winter of 1780-1781 in Munich, putting the finishing touches on his opera *Idomeneo* in preparation for its premiere, in January, 1781. While there he met Friedrich Ramm, who was by all accounts an extraordinary oboist; Mozart composed this Quartet for him, giving the oboe the greatest possible level of prominence.

The importance of the oboe part in the quartet does not, however, mean that the string parts are negligible. On the contrary, Mozart gives them a greater role in the dialectic of the piece than he does in the Flute Quartets, making the Oboe Quartet rank among his best-integrated chamber compositions.

Ramm's artistry must have been exceptional, judging by the Quartet's opening Allegro. Not surprisingly, the oboe is charged with most of the thematic presentation, although the violin and viola share in the musical argument throughout this sonata-form movement.

The Adagio slow movement illustrates the wide range of expression we find in the Quartet. It is set in D minor (the relative minor), a key in which Mozart wrote some of his most expressive music, and which in his operatic arias is generally associated with vengeance.

The work closes with a spirited Rondo, in which contrasting episodes see the trading of musical material between instruments. The most notable feature of the movement is an unusual, thirteen-measure polymetric segment in which the oboe plays in 4/4 meter while the strings continue in 6/8, not noticing that one of their number has gone astray. Otherwise, the movement is bright cheerful in mood.

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