

# *Concerts at the Point*



*presents ...*

THE ADASKIN STRING TRIO  
WITH PIANIST SALLY PINKAS

FEBRUARY 21, 2016, 3:00 PM

1912 MAIN ROAD, WESTPORT POINT, MASSACHUSETTS

The image on the cover is a painting, "Early Spring" by Tom Thomson, Canadian artist of the early 20th century. He was employed initially as a graphic designer, but spent increasing time away at Algonquin Park, northwest of Toronto, then worked intermitantly as a fire fighter, ranger, and guide in the park, taking more and more time to explore the rugged, unkempt natural scenery, and to paint the stark beauty and vibrant colour of the Ontario landscape.

We chose this painting in part for its beauty and its resemblance to parts of Westport, especially in winter. But the main consideration was as a gesture of thanks to the Adaskin Trio and recognition of their Canadian origins. The Trio recently completed its 21st year as an ensemble, and today's performance will be their sixth visit to Concerts at the Point.

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THIS CONCERT IS SUPPORTED BY GRANTS FROM CHARITABLE FOUNDATIONS AND BY GIFTS FROM OUR GENEROUS AUDIENCE MEMBERS AND BUSINESS SUPPORTERS.

Since our Annual Report in September, 2015, Concerts at the Point has received additional donations which we would like to gratefully acknowledged below:

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# *Concerts at the Point*

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2016

## THE ADASKIN STRING TRIO

Emlyn Ngai, violin

Steve Larson, viola

Mark Fraser, cello

Sally Pinkas, piano

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## STRING TRIO IN D MAJOR, OP. 9, NO. 2

BEETHOVEN

*Allegretto*

*Andante quasi Allegretto*

*Menuetto Allegro*

*Rondo Allegro*

## A SEPHARDIC LIFE

WHITE

*A Sprig of Life*

*I Fell in Love*

*Night, and My Guitar*

*The Dark-Skinned Girl*

*The Bridegroom Dances*

## STRING TRIO

KLEIN

*Allegro*

*Variations*

*Molto vivace*

INTERMISSION ...

## QUATUOR IN B FLAT MAJOR, OP. 41

SAINT-SAENS

*Allegretto*

*Andante Maestoso, ma con moto*

*Poco allegro, piu tosto moderato*

*Allegro*

## THE PERFORMERS



SUSAN WILSON

### **EMLYN NGAI, VIOLIN**

Emlyn Ngai 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 *Tempesta di Mare*. 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**

Steve Larson 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.



### **MARK FRASER, CELLO**

Mark Fraser is originally from Montreal, and 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.

### **SALLY PINKAS, PIANO**

Following her Wigmore Hall debut, Israeli-born pianist Sally Pinkas has been heard as recitalist and chamber musician throughout the USA, Europe, China, Russia and Nigeria. Described by *Gramophone Magazine* as “an artist who melds lucid textures with subtle expressive detailing, minus hints of bombast or mannerism.” She has appeared with the Boston Pops, the Aspen Philharmonia, Jupiter Symphony and the Bulgarian Chamber Orchestra and many summer festivals world-wide. Pinkas’ extensive discography includes works by Debussy (Centaur), Christian Wolff (Mode), Rochberg, Gaubert, Martinu (Naxos), Fauré (Musica Omnia) and Schumann (MSR). She is a member of the Hirsch-Pinkas Piano Duo, Ensemble Schumann, and Trio Tremonti, and collaborates regularly with the Adaskin String Trio. Trained in the USA, Pinkas holds performance degrees from Indiana University and the New England Conservatory of Music, and a Ph.D. in Composition from Brandeis University. She is Pianist-in-residence at the Hopkins Center at Dartmouth College.

## PROGRAM NOTES

### **LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN** (1770-1827)

STRING TRIO IN D MAJOR, OP. 9, NO. 2

*Allegretto*

*Andante quasi allegretto*

*Menuetto. Allegro*

*Rondo Allegro*

Beethoven's works of chamber music for strings (trios, string quartets, and quintets) began with the Op. 9 set of three trios, composed when he was not yet 30 years old. They mark his musical development in a new direction—his gradual loosening of reliance on the piano as the anchor of his compositional style. Perhaps this set of works functioned for Beethoven as a stepping stone to the quartet, for he never returned to writing string trios.

*Source: Hudson Valley Chamber Music Circle program notes*

The opening material serves as something of an introduction, followed by the presentation of the main theme, a five-note turn that becomes predominant in the movement. The second theme provides contrast with a calm repeated-note viola accompaniment as the violin and cello sing a duet around the middle voice. The development explores the harmonic implications of the movement's opening gesture until the return of the five-note theme in the recapitulation.

The highly rhetorical second movement opens with a series of questioning chords. Once they have received their answer, the movement proceeds with a rapturous theme in the violin, answered by the cello in its highest register, and completed finally by the violin and viola in unison at the octave. After the opening chords return in a more dramatic version, a dropping arpeggiated\* motive comes to the fore, leading to a coda\*\* which gently brings the movement to a close.





The Menuetto is full of slurs\*\*\* over the bar-line; its trio is minimal, a bare outline of a few progressions spelled out with as little effort as possible, the whole thing marked pianissimo. The main theme of the brilliant Rondo is presented each time by the cello in its high register and marked "solo."

*Source: The Chamber Music Society of Williamsburg*

\*  
*Arpeggiated notes of a chord are not played exactly at the same time, but are spread out.*

\*\*  
*An ending part of a piece of music that is separate from the earlier parts.  
In seismograms, the gradual return to baseline after a seismic event.*

\*\*\*  
*Symbol indicating that the notes it embraces are to be played without separation.*

**MICHAEL WHITE** (1931- )

A SEPHARDIC LIFE

*A Sprig of Life*

*I Fell in Love*

*Night, and My Guitar*

*The Dark-Skinned Girl*

*The Bridegroom Dances*



Michael White was born in Chicago and received his musical training at the Oberlin Conservatory, Chicago Musical College, and the Julliard School. Included in his large and varied body of works are five operas, numerous chamber and vocal works, and works that involve the guitar, either as solo instrument or as a member of a chamber ensemble. He has also been very involved with Jewish music from the Sephardic and Hasidic repertoires as well as music of modern day Israel. Michael White now teaches graduate seminars at Julliard on music theory and analysis and the music of Bach and Mozart.

The history of the Sephardim, or Spanish-speaking Jews, is one of co-existence with both Christian and Moslem rule in Spain. With the eventual victory over the Moslems at Granada in 1492, the Christians completed their reconquest. The victors, distrustful of the Sephardim's political allegiances and intolerant of their Jewish religion, issued edicts expelling any Jew who did not convert to Christianity in that same year, 1492. The Sephardim's collective legacy reveals a repertoire of secular songs springing from medieval Jewish Spain.



**GIDEON KLEIN** (1919-1945)

STRING TRIO

*Allegro*

*Variations*

*Molto vivace*



Klein was born into a Moravian Jewish family in eastern Czechoslovakia. He was forced to abort his university studies in 1940 when the Nazis closed all institutions of higher learning following their occupation of Czechoslovakia in March 1939. In 1940 he was offered a scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music in London, but by that time, anti-Jewish legislation prevented his emigration.

In December 1941 he was deported by the Nazis to Terezín concentration camp, one of the few in which artistic activity occurred on any scale. His works from these years include music for string quartet, a string trio, and a piano sonata, among others. Moreover, Klein performed as solo pianist at approximately 15 recitals, and also participated in chamber music performances (member of piano trio, piano quartet). Klein died in the Furstengrube concentration camp in January 1945 at the age of 25.

The String Trio was Gideon Klein's last composition, completed on October 9, 1944, nine days before he was shipped off to Auschwitz. It is a tribute to Klein and the human spirit that such a wonderful life-affirming work could be written under such circumstances.

The first and third movements of this three movement work are filled with allusions to the folk music of his native region, and indeed the second movement is a set of variations on a Moravian folk song.

*Sources: Sierra Chamber Music program notes; Wikipedia*

**CHARLES-CAMILLE SAINT-SAENS** (1835 - 1921)

QUATUOR IN B FLAT MAJOR, OP. 41

*Allegretto*

*Andante Maestoso, ma con moto*

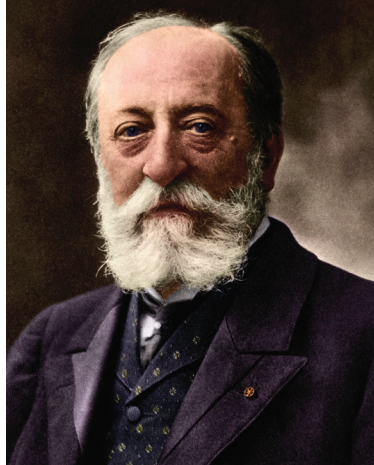
*Poco allegro, piu tosto moderato*

*Allegro*

To an extraordinary degree, Saint-Saëns mastered every field of endeavour to which he turned his eclectic mind. In addition to being a virtuoso pianist and organist, he was also a conductor, caricaturist, playwright, poet, philosopher and essayist on botany and ancient music. He wrote with authority on science, mathematics, astronomy and archaeology. He was a critic and a scholarly editor of music and composed nearly 400 works, touching every field of music, including the first significant score by a major composer for the fledgling art of the cinema (*L'assassinat du duc de Guise*, 1908). When he announced his retirement in August 1921, he had been before the public for 75 years.

He wrote with a distinctive voice in an immediately recognizable style—and with an ease and technical fluency that have rarely been matched. But his very facility, his conservative musical language, and the fact that his music does not, by and large, plumb the depths of human experience, have made him less well regarded than he merits. He was a conservative who wrote many popular scores scattered throughout the various genres: the Piano Concerto No. 2, Symphony No. 3 (“Organ”), the symphonic poem *Danse Macabre*, the opera *Samson et Dalila*, and probably his most widely performed work, *The Carnival of The Animals*. They are considered quintessentially French pieces: clear, ordered, and intellectually profound.

Sources: *GramophoneUK*; [www.classical-music.com](http://www.classical-music.com)



The majestic opening movement, provides two themes of different character: the first somewhat improvisational in feeling with its interchanges between the piano and strings, the second an undulating melody more lyrical in nature. These themes are developed and repeated with the first bringing the movement to a pianissimo close. The slower second movement, in G minor, contrasts two motifs, the forceful rhythmic one enunciated by the piano and the chorale-like one in the strings, providing much dialogue, fugal entries, and imitations between the various voices in learned fashion.

The third movement, in D minor, a scherzo in rondo form, starts in unison motion with unusual rhythmic effects increasing the tempo to Prestissimo and evaporating the sound to a pianissimo at the end. The grand Allegro finale is a spirited fantasy-like movement with many skillful contrapuntal effects. Elements of the theme of the Andante are included in the recapitulation, while in the coda the two themes of the Allegretto are joined by the chorale-like theme of the Andante and engage in a joyful fugato.

*Source: [www.hyperion-records.co.uk](http://www.hyperion-records.co.uk)*

# *Concerts at the Point*

19TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON 2015-2016

DOVER STRING QUARTET MARCH 13, 2016

EMIL ALTSCHULER & THOMAS PANDOFI APRIL 24, 2016

20TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON 2016-2017

MUIR STRING QUARTET SEPTEMBER 2016

THE NEAVE PIANO TRIO OCTOBER 2016

JOHANNES FLEISCHMANN & PHILIPPE RASKIN NOVEMBER 2016

FREDERICK MOYER DECEMBER 2016

THE CLAREMONT TRIO FEBRUARY 2017

MUSICIANS FROM THE HANDEL & HAYDN SOCIETY MARCH 2017

RYU GOTO WITH CARMEN RODRIGUEZ-PERALTA APRIL 2017

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