

February 23, 2020, 3:00 pm

1912 Main Road, Westport Point, MA

The image on the cover is Alpine #4 by Little Compton artist Heidi Baxter. She describes her paintings as reflecting work done on two coastlines—one in France and the other in Rhode Island. The fields and farms, rivers and trees, and the rocky shores of both places are jumping off points for her main preoccupations: color, edge, and structure; a balanced tension; and a distillation of the abstract and eternal from the concrete and specific. As you will note from the exhibition of her work in the Church's back parlor, she likes to work large. www.heidibaxter.com

We chose this painting because it makes visible what composers and musicians also seek—color, edge, structure, balance/ tension, the abstract and eternal. Moreover, it is a visual "riff" on the name Walden. The Walden Chamber Players chose to name their ensemble referencing the actual Walden Pond in Concord, Massachusetts, because when they began in 1997, the idea was to play in the towns surrounding Walden Pond and also because the name readily identified them with a certain place close to Boston. There are several versions of how Walden Pond got its name. The German word "wald" translates to english as forest or woods. Another version, according to Thoreau, suggests that the pond was "walled-In," for the way the rocks line the steep shoreline.





SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2020

## **WALDEN CHAMBER PLAYERS**

Marianne Gedigian, flute Mari Lee, violin Christof Huebner, viola Ashima Scripp, cello Jonathan Bass, piano

HANDEL IN THE STRAND

GRAINGER

ASSOBIO A JATO (JET WHISTLE)

VILLA-LOBOS

Allegro non troppo Adagio

Vivo

STRING TRIO IN G MINOR

**SIBELIUS** 

Lento

FLUTE QUARTET IN A MAJOR, KV 298

MOZART

Andante Menuetto

Rondeau: Allegretto grazioso

INTERMISSION ...

BAGATELLE FOR FLUTE, VIOLIN, AND PIANO

SUK

PIANO QUARTET NO. 1 IN D MAJOR, OP. 23

DVORAK

Allegro moderato

Andantino con variazioni Finale. Allegretto scherzando

#### THE PERFORMERS

### WALDEN CHAMBER PLAYERS



Founded in 1997, the Boston-based Walden Chamber Players is a versatile chamber music ensemble of outstanding musicians dedicated to artistic excellence in performance and education. Walden Chamber Players is comprised of twelve artists in various combinations of string, piano, and wind ensembles. The wide variety of instrumental groupings possible with this ensemble allows for great versatility and eclectic programming. Their mission is to communicate the importance of the music as an integral facet of a rich civic life through distinctive and adventurous programming. Walden is committed to the commissioning of new works and collaboration with community partners nationwide.

MARIANNE GEDIGIAN, FLUTE, is a founding member of the Walden Chamber Players and was formerly a member of the Dorian Wind Quintet. She is now Professor of Flute and holder of the Butler Professorship in Music at The University of Texas at Austin Butler School of Music. She was a regular performer with the Boston Symphony Orchestra for over a decade, including several seasons as Acting Principal Flute under Seiji Ozawa. As Principal Flute with the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra and Acting Principal Flute with the Boston Pops, Ms. Gedigian has been heard on dozens of recordings and Evening at Pops television broadcasts as well as the nationally broadcast Fourth of July specials. She has also been heard on several John Williams' movie scores.

Her solo performances have taken her around the world with recitals in Japan, Australia, England, and Armenia and she has appeared as concerto soloist numerous times with the Boston Pops Orchestra and with the Armenian Philharmonic performing her own transcription of the Khachaturian Violin Concerto. She was featured with Ian Anderson of Jethro Tull fame in a performance at the Berklee College of Music in Boston. Her solo recordings include "Voice of the Flute"



and "Revolution", both with pianist Rick Rowley. Ms. Gedigian is on the summer faculty at the Brevard Music Center, and has served on the faculties of Boston University's College of Fine Arts, The Boston Conservatory, the Round Top International Institute, and the Tanglewood Music Center.

MARI LEE, VIOLIN, is dedicated to engaging her audience by instilling curiosity for music. A concert violinist, chamber musician, and a teaching artist, she aims to bridge the gap between the audience, the performer, and the composer. She has performed extensively throughout the UK, Europe, and the United States in such prominent venues as the South Bank Centre, Wigmore Hall, Le Festival de Radio France Montpellier, Philharmonie de Paris, and Carnegie Hall. She appeared as a soloist with the London Mozart Players and Baden-Baden Philharmonic Orchestra. An avid chamber musician, she has been invited to internationally renowned festivals and has collaborated with musicians such as Mitsuko Uchida, Kim Kashkashian, and members of the Cleveland, Guarneri, and Juilliard String Quartets.

Ms.Lee is a co-creator of Salon Séance, a concept-concert that brings together an actor with musicians, performing curated programs centered around a theme that is still relevant today. It has received multiple awards including Britten-Pears Foundation's Britten Award and Tarisio Trust's Young Artists Grants.

Born in Japan in 1990, Ms. Lee entered the Yehudi Menuhin School at the age of 11; she completed her Bachelor's degree at the New England Conservatory of Music. She earned her Master's degree at the Universität der Künste Berlin. From 2016-2018, she was a Fellow of Carnegie Hall's Ensemble Connect, a program that combines performing, professional development, entrepreneurship, and community outreach. Ms. Lee plays on a 1863 Jean-Baptiste Villaume violin.





CHRISTOF HUEBNER, VIOLA, is a founding member of the Walden Chamber Players and its Artistic Director Emeritus. He is a member of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and currently a member of the Handel and Haydn Society Orchestra. He has performed with the Smithsonian Chamber Players, Concert Royal and Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra of Canada. He is a frequent performer at music festivals in the US and abroad.

Huebner was born in Vienna, where he attended the Vienna Conservatory and subsequently the Wiener Musikhochschule. Continuing his studies with Michael Tree at the Saint Louis Conservatory as a Fulbright Scholar, he received his artist diploma. Before coming to the US, he played with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, the Vienna State Opera Orchestra, and the Vienna Chamber Orchestra.

ASHIMA SCRIPP, CELLO, was invited to join the Walden Chamber Players in 2004 and became the ensemble's Artistic Director in 2012. She is a dedicated and sought-after chamber music collaborator, and has performed hundreds of works from Bach to Schoenberg for audiences around the country. Walden is also well known for their work in chamber music education and Ms. Scripp has been central to the creation of many of the ensemble's successful chamber music residency programs.

Ms. Scripp has served on the cello and chamber music faculty of the Longy School of Music and Concord Academy as well as the Killington Music Festival, the Chamber Music Conference and Composer's Forum of the East, and the International Summer Music Academy in Regensberg, Germany. She is the co-founder of the "Cellobration Festival" in Cambridge, MA, now in its 5th year and "Music at the Lake", a workshop for amateur adult cellists in Meredith, NH. Ms. Scripp received her Bachelor of Music degree from the Manhattan School of Music and her Master of Music degree from Northwestern University.



JONATHAN BASS, PIANO, has appeared frequently throughout the United States as soloist and chamber musician. As a young pianist, he won major competitions, including American Pianists Association Beethoven Fellowship Competition, first prize in the American National Chopin Competition, and Bronze Medal and the Mozart Prize at the Robert Casadesus International Piano Competition. Mr. Bass gave his New York debut at Carnegie Hall's Weill Hall as first-prize winner of the 1993 Joanna Hodges International Piano Competition. Recitals in other major cities include Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, and internationally, he has performed in Canada, Israel, Japan, Poland, and Russia. Collaborative highlights include guest appearances with the Boston Symphony Chamber Players at Ozawa Hall at Tanglewood and at Jordan Hall in Boston, recitals with violinist Joseph Silverstein, and recitals with many past and present members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Of his first piano CD, Gramophone Magazine wrote: "Superbly played Bach and Chopin with haunting music by Pinkham." Of his second CD, Larry Bell's "Reminiscences and Reflections", Music Web wrote, "Jonathan Bass plays superbly throughout and proves an eminent and convincing advocate of Bell's consistently fine and attractive music."

As the pianist and a founding member of the Walden Chamber Players, he has performed extensively in residencies and concert series throughout the country. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the Juilliard School, and a doctor of music degree from the Indiana University School of Music, where he was a student of, and teaching assistant to Menahem Pressler of the Beaux Arts Trio. He also studied at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow. Since 2008 Jonathan Bass has been the Chair of the Piano Department at the Boston Conservatory, where he has been on the faculty since 1993.

#### PROGRAM NOTES



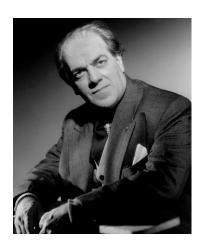


PERCY GRAINGER (1882-1961) HANDEL IN THE STRAND

Grainger was an Australian-born composer, arranger and pianist who lived in the United States from 1914 on and became a citizen in 1918. In the course of a long and innovative career, he played a prominent role in the revival of interest in British folk music in the early years of the 20th century. Although much of his work was experimental and unusual, the piece with which he is most generally associated is his piano arrangement of the folk-dance tune "Country Gardens."

Handel in the Strand is one of Grainger's early light orchestral pieces, written in 1911. Grainger had no trouble allowing other musicians to arrange his music to suit their needs, so Handel in the Strand exists in several different versions. After its original massed piano and string orchestra setting came versions for full orchestra, piano (solo and 4 hands), organ, trombone choir, and two different settings for band (Goldman and Sousa). Grainger shared an amusing anecdote on its origin: "My title was originally *Clog Dance*. But my dear friend William Gair Rathbone (to whom the piece is dedicated) suggested the title *Handel in the Strand*, because the music seemed to reflect both Handel and English musical comedy (the Strand, a street in London, is the home of London musical comedy), as if jovial old Handel were careering down the Strand to the strains of modern English popular music."

Sources: Wikipedia; https://windliterature.org/2010/11/28/handel-in-the-strand-by-percy-grainger



HEITOR VILLA LOBOS (1887-1959) ASSOBIO A JATO (The Jet Whistle) Allegro non troppo Adagio Vivo - poco meno

Brazilian composer Villa-Lobos was one of the foremost Latin American composers of the 20th century, whose music combines indigenous melodic and rhythmic elements with Western classical music. "I learned music from a bird in the jungles of Brazil, not from academies." Primarily self-taught, he spent his early years absorbing the styles of Brazilian popular music as a guitarist in street "choros," or village bands. During an expedition along the Amazon to the interior of Brazil, he pursued an interest in native chant, rites, and music. Later, established as an educator and prolific composer, he traveled widely and lived in both New York and Paris, though he remained immersed in the spirit and culture of Brazil. His love of Bach and of Brazilian folk music are manifest in several works, particularly his works for cello and orchestra, Bachianas Brasileiras No. 1 and Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5.

This fantasy piece for flute and cello, Assobio a Jato (The Jet Whistle), was written in 1950 in New York and was first performed on 13 March 1950 in Rio de Janeiro. It is dedicated to Elizabeth and Carleton Sprague Smith (flautist and musicologist), and continues Villa-Lobos's predilection for writing high- and low-voiced instrumental duos. The piece is primarily a musical joke, playing on the natural characteristics of both instruments. Divided into three short movements, the colorfully lyrical, bustling world of the eclectic Villa-Lobos is encapsulated here in the fluid lines and virtuosity of both partners.

Sources:britannica.com; musicsalesclassical.com; notes by Simon Wright; hyperion-records.co.uk/





JEAN SIBELIUS (1865-1957) STRING TRIO IN G MINOR Lento

Sibelius was a Finnish composer and violinist of the late Romantic and early-modern periods. He is widely recognized as his country's greatest composer and, through his music, is often credited with having helped Finland to develop a national identity during its struggle for independence from Russia.

Sibelius's music grew out of the Romantic tradition of Tchaikovsky, Berlioz and Wagner. The core of his oeuvre is his set of seven symphonies and his symphonic poems. He developed a personal and cogent symphonic style: every symphony has its own individual distinction which culminates in the 7th symphony—the pinnacle of his technique in which he condenses the entire symphonic form into one movement.

The G Minor String Trio is a work of Sibelius's mature chamber music period. It was never finished, and the only completed movement is the first, Lento. The work is a combination of various forms and in itself traces a symphonic span.

Sources: wikipedia; www.sheetmusicplus.com; musicsalesclassical.com



## **WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART** (1756-1791) FLUTE QUARTET IN A MAJOR, KV 298 Andante

Andante Menuetto

Rondeau: Allegretto grazioso

Born in Salzburg, Mozart showed prodigious ability from his earliest childhood. Already competent on keyboard and violin, he composed from the age of five and performed before European royalty. At 17, Mozart was engaged as a musician at the Salzburg court but grew restless and travelled in search of a better position. While visiting Vienna in 1781, he was dismissed from his Salzburg position. He chose to stay in the capital, where he achieved fame but little financial security. During his final years in Vienna, he composed many of his best-known symphonies, concertos, and operas, and portions of the Requiem, which was largely unfinished at the time of his early death at the age of 35. The circumstances of his death have been much mythologized.

Mozart's fourth and last flute quartet is a parody work introducing themes connected with several of his friends, and was almost certainly composed for them. Such a theory is supported by the composer's detailed and humorous heading for the last of the three movements. It reads: "Rondieaoux—Allegretto grazioso, ma non

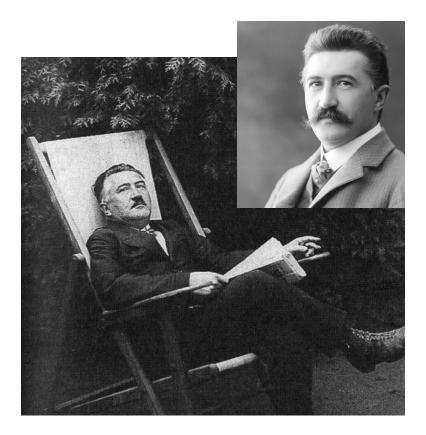
troppo presto, pero non troppo adagio. Così-così—non molto garbo ed espressione" ("A joke rondo—Allegretto grazioso, but not too fast, nor too slow. So-so—with great elegance and expression"). An autograph copy of the score states that the original manuscript was received from Baron von Jacquin. The Jacquin family members were close friends of Mozart's in Vienna, leaving little room for doubt that the quartet was designed for convivial domestic occasions at their home. The opening Andante is a set of variations on "An die Natur," a song by Franz-Anton Hoffmeister, a Viennese publisher and flautist with whom Mozart had close connections during the period when the guartet arose—1786 and 1787. The menuetto middle movement introduces a French folk song, while the final movement is a parody of an arietta from Paisiello's opera buffa Le gare generose, which Mozart heard in Prague in January 1787. The arietta was particularly associated with Nancy Storace, the creator of the role of Susanna in Le nozze di Figaro and another of Mozart's friends.

Sources: wikipedia; allmusic.com-Brian Robins;

## JOSEF SUK (1874-1935) BAGATELLE FOR FLUTE, VIOLIN AND PIANO

Czech composer Josef Suk was born in Bohemia, where his father was a choral director. The elder Josef Suk taught his son to play the piano, violin, and organ. In 1885, at the age of 11, Suk entered the Prague Conservatory. By 1888, he had composed a mass; he received his degree in 1891, with what became the Op. 1 piano quartet as his thesis. When Antonín Dvorák became a professor at the Conservatory, Suk stayed an extra year to study with him. Dvorák considered Suk his best student, and the two became personally close. In 1898, Suk married Dvorák's daughter Otilie.

Suk's compositional life may be divided into two periods. His early works are characterized by a late Romantic style that created a general perception of Suk as Dvorák's heir. In 1904, Suk's fatherin-law and mentor died, and 14 months later, his beloved wife Otilie passed away. Their deaths had a devastating impact, and the begin-



nings of a second phase of Suk's career may be discerned in the works that followed. His compositions became more introspective, complex, and infused with emotion. Suk made a living largely as a performer and teacher. The lack of chamber music in his oeuvre is all the more remarkable in view of his long tenure as second violinist of the Czech Quartet. Suk enjoyed international success with the Quartet for forty years, remaining a member until he retired in 1933.

In 1917, Suk wrote the Bagatelle (with a nosegay in hand), a charming short nocturne whose melody is reminiscent of Antonin Dvorak. The piece was written for Suk's 15-year old son, who played the piano, and his two friends, a violinist and flutist, who often played together and were in need of easier repertoire.

Source: allmusic.com







ANTONIN LEOPOLD DVORAK (1841-1904)
PIANO QUARTET NO. 1 IN D MAJOR, OP. 23
Allegro moderato (D major)
Andantino con variazioni (B minor)
Finale. Allegretto scherzando (D major)

Though his music had slowly been gaining recognition in Prague during the early 1870s, Dvorak's reputation and financial situation were still uncertain by the beginning of 1875. But in February of that year he was awarded the lucrative and prestigious Austrian State Prize for his third and fourth symphonies. Buoyed by this first sign of wider recognition, he produced a stream of vital, strongly characterized works over the next twelve months, including the Serenade for strings, the opera Vanda, the fifth symphony and several chamber compositions, including the Piano Quartet in D major.

Dvorak' music of this period is suffused with a highly personal and apparently spontaneous melodic freshness that had emerged only intermittently in his earlier works where Wagner's influence had at times obscured the Czech composer's natural lyricism. The wonder-

fully unfettered melodic invention, markedly Slavonic in flavor, of the fifth symphony and the string Serenade is shared by the Piano Quartet in D major, many of whose themes have the haunting simplicity of folk song. Yet the music also reveals the growing subtlety of his imagination.

In the initial Allegro moderato, the relaxed, syncopated opening theme almost immediately dips into B major, a magical key shift characteristic of Schubert; this is not only a beautiful effect in itself but also presages the importance of B major in the movement's overall tonal scheme. Equally subtle is the way the second theme draws on two separate fragments heard earlier, transforming them into phrases of beguiling lyricism. Characteristically, Dvorak dwells at length on this idea, enhancing it with expressive counter-melodies. In the coda a splendid climax is forged from the grandioso combination of the two main themes.

The Andantino is a set of variations on a grave melody in B minor, the choice of key surely influenced by the prominence of B major in the first movement. The five variations display an imaginative range of textures, from the sparseness of the first, through the gossamer delicacy of the third, in which the theme is inverted, to the full, rich coloring of the fourth, a free lyrical flowering that moves into the distant key of E flat. Dvorak draws an unexpected intensity from his theme in the coda, with its poignant chromatic harmonies and anguished final climax.

Contrary to Dvorak's usual practice in his chamber works, there is no independent scherzo. Instead he ingeniously combines features of both scherzo and finale into a single movement. The scherzo element is represented by the initial waltz theme and a subsequent section in quicker tempo whose biting cross-rhythms evoke the *furiant*, a Czech dance. These two sections alternate with an allegro agitato. The coda's transformation of this expansive lyricism into a short-breathed jig has an almost comical incongruity.

Sources: hyperion-records.co., notes by Richard Wigmore

# Thank you!

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO SUPPORT CONCERTS AT THE POINT. Donations from concert goers, in addition to grants from local non-profits and businesses, help bring world class music and world class musicians to the South Coast, while keeping ticket prices affordable to the larger community. Visiting musicians often comment that Concerts at the Point audiences are knowledgeable, engaged and appreciative. We can say they are generous as well. Listed below are contributions from our friends who made donations since our previous acknowledgements listed in our October 6, 2019 program notes. Thank you for making our wonderful 23rd concert season possible.

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