

# *Concerts at the Point*

25TH SEASON 2021-2022



APRIL 3, 2022, 3:00 PM

UNITED CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

1 COMMONS, LITTLE COMPTON, RHODE ISLAND

THE IMAGE ON THE COVER IS A PAINTING BY WESTPORT ARTIST  
BETSEY LAMONTE HAALAND.

We chose this painting because it is a fitting bouquet  
demonstrating our heartfelt appreciation of our longstanding  
relationship with the splendid MUIR STRING QUARTET. Today's  
concert will be the 11th time the MUIR STRING QUARTET has  
appeared in our series (the spring 2020 concert that was cancelled  
due to COVID-19).

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THIS CONCERT IS UNDERWRITTEN IN PART BY A GRANT  
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# *Concerts at the Point*

SUNDAY, APRIL 3, 2022

## MUIR STRING QUARTET

Peter Zazofsky, violin

Lucia Lin, violin

Steven Ansell, viola

Oliver Aldort, cello

ITALIAN SERENADE

HUGO WOLF

STRING QUARTET IN D MAJOR, K575

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

*Allegretto*

*Andante*

*Menuetto*

*Allegretto*

INTERMISSION . . .

STRING QUARTET IN F MAJOR

MAURICE RAVEL

*Allegro moderato — très doux*

*Assez vif — très rythmé*

*Très lent*

*Vif et agité*

## THE PERFORMERS

In its 40th season, the MUIR STRING QUARTET has long been acknowledged as one of the world's most powerful and insightful ensembles, distinguishing itself among audiences and critics with its "exhilarating involvement" (*Boston Globe*), "impeccable voicing and intonation" (*San Francisco Examiner*), and "unbridled musicality" (*American Record Guide*).

PETER ZAZOFSKY, violin, enjoys a richly varied career that includes performances with many of the great orchestras in America and Europe, recitals in major music centers, and recordings and tours as first violinist of the MUIR STRING QUARTET.

A native of Boston, he studied with Joseph Silverstein and Dorothy Delay, before entering the Curtis Institute, where he studied with Ivan Galamian and Jaime Laredo. Graduating in 1976, Zazofsky went on to win top prizes in several international violin contests, including the 1979 Montreal Competition and 1980 Queen Elisabeth in Brussels. Since then he has performed repeatedly with the Boston Symphony, the Berlin Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the San Francisco Symphony, which also featured him on tour in Hong Kong and Taiwan. Long committed to teaching, Zazofsky holds the position of Professor of Violin and Chamber Music at Boston University.

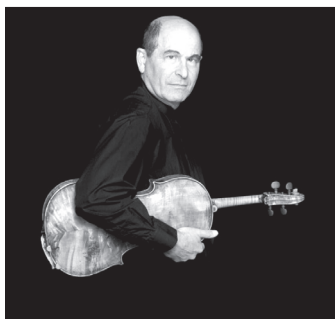


LUCIA LIN, violin, enjoys a multi-faceted career of solo engagements, chamber music performances with the MUIR STRING QUARTET, orchestral concerts with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and teaching at Boston University's College of Fine Arts.

Born in Champaign-Urbana, Lucia Lin made her debut at age eleven, performing the Mendelssohn Concerto with the Chicago Symphony and then went on to be a prize

winner of numerous competitions, including the prestigious International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow. At the age of twenty-two, she won a position in the Boston Symphony Orchestra. She then went on to become acting Concertmaster with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and then spent two years as Concertmaster with the London Symphony Orchestra, where she was leader for numerous recordings and tours, including those to Japan, Italy, Scotland, and Spain.

A return to the U.S. in 1995 brought her back to Boston with a focus toward chamber music, first founding the Boston Piano Trio, and then becoming a member of the renowned MUIR STRING QUARTET in 1998. She is Associate Professor at Boston University's College of Fine Arts, where she teaches applied violin, chamber music, and orchestral studies.



STEVEN ANSELL, viola, has a versatile career involving work as a chamber musician, solo artist, and orchestral musician. He is Principal Violist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, a position he has held since September 1996. Ansell is also a founding member of the MUIR STRING QUARTET. He teaches at the Boston University

College of Fine Arts and is a member of the Boston Symphony Chamber Players.

OLIVER ALDORT, cello, received his Bachelor of Music degree from the Curtis Institute of Music in May, 2015, and shortly thereafter joined the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He is now the Assistant Principal Cello of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Principal Cello of the Boston Pops Orchestra. He recently joined the group after the founding cellist of the MUIR STRING QUARTET, Michael Reynolds, withdrew from performing.



## PROGRAM NOTES

### HUGO PHILIPP JACOB WOLF (1860-1903)

#### ITALIAN SERENADE

Hugo Philipp Jacob Wolf was an Austrian composer of Slovene origin, particularly noted for his art songs or “lieder.” He brought to this form a concentrated expressive intensity which was unique in late Romantic music. Though he had several bursts of extraordinary productivity, particularly in 1888 and 1889, depression frequently interrupted his creative periods, and his last composition was written in 1898, before he suffered a mental collapse caused by syphilis.

Romantic music is a stylistic movement in Western Classical Music associated with the period of the 19th century commonly referred to as the Romantic era. Romantic composers sought to create music that was individualistic, emotional, dramatic, and often programmatic, reflecting broader trends within the movements of Romantic literature, poetry, art, and philosophy. Romantic music was often ostensibly inspired by (or else sought to evoke) non-musical stimuli, such as nature, literature, poetry, super-natural elements, or the fine arts.



The inspiration for the *Italian Serenade* came to Wolf from the novella *Leben eines Taugenichts* (Memoirs of a Good-for-Nothing) by the German romantic writer Joseph Eichendorff. Its protagonist is a young

violinist who leaves his grumbling father and his country home in the pursuit of fortune. He is a rather dubious character, charming some with his talent, and antagonizing others with his simplicity. Wolf himself gave no 'program' or story to accompany this single movement work, but he chose a rondo form with repeated themes and recitative-like passages that created the effect of a narrative. The tone of the work seems to come from the world of Italian comic opera giving an overall impression of playful irony. The main theme is said to have been based on an old Italian melody played on an obsolete form of oboe called the piffero. Robert W. Gutman has written that "The essence of the delicious *Italian Serenade* is its antithesis of romantic sentiment and mocking wit."

*Sources: musictales.club; Wikipedia; static1.squarespace.co.*

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## WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

### STRING QUARTET IN D MAJOR, K575

*Allegretto*

*Andante*

*Menuetto*

*Allegretto*

Mozart was a prolific and influential composer of the Classical period. Despite his short life, his rapid pace of composition resulted in more than 600 works of virtually every genre of his time. Many of these compositions are acknowledged as pinnacles of the symphonic, concertante, chamber, operatic, and choral repertoire. Mozart was among the greatest composers in the history of Western music and his elder colleague Joseph Haydn wrote: "posterity will not see such a talent again in 100 years."

Mozart's final three string quartets, known as the Prussian quartets nos. 21-23, K. 575, 589, and 590 written in 1789-1790, have often been



assumed to have been written for and dedicated to Friedrich Wilhelm II, King of Prussia, who was an amateur cellist. The string quartet genre was still in its early formative period. These quartets differ from Mozart's six earlier Haydn quartets, due to the greater prominence given to the cello.

The Prussian quartets are known for the unique balance

between all the voices in the quartet and the cello's cantabile and virtuosic writing. Due to the restructuring of voicing, roles in the quartet are switched, turning the quartet upside down in a way. The expectation of a typical conversation in a quartet, where the first violin is the star of the show, the cello providing a bass line, and the violin II and viola as the middle voices, is challenged greatly in Mozart's Prussian quartets. The evolution of the cello in chamber music, and even the idea of viewing each voice more equally, would perhaps not be as developed as today if Mozart had not written these quartets. The cello recognized often as a basso continuo from the beginning of its origin could in fact be the solo voice and leading the melodies of the string quartet.

*Sources: [hdl.handle.net](http://hdl.handle.net); Wikipedia.*

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## JOSEPH MAURICE RAVEL (1875-1937)

### STRING QUARTET IN F MAJOR

*Allegro moderato — très doux*

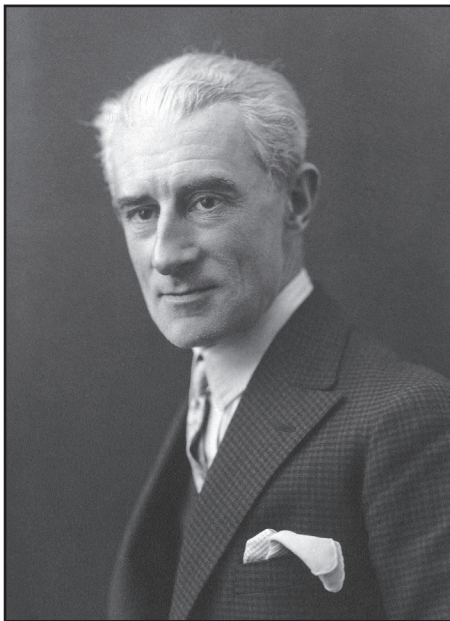
*Assez vif — très rythmé*

*Très lent*

*Vif et agité*

Maurice Ravel was a French composer, pianist, and conductor. He is often associated with Impressionism along with his elder contemporary Claude Debussy, although both composers rejected the term.

Born to a music-loving family, Ravel attended France's premier music college, the Paris Conservatoire; he was not well regarded by its conservative establishment, whose biased treatment of him caused a scandal. After leaving the Conservatoire, Ravel found his own way as a composer, developing a style of great clarity and incorporating elements of modernism, baroque, neo-classicism and, in his later works, jazz. Renowned for his abilities in orchestration, Ravel made some orchestral arrangements of other composers' piano music, of which his 1922 version of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* is the best known.



A slow and painstaking worker, Ravel composed fewer pieces than many of his contemporaries. Among his works to enter the repertoire

are pieces for piano, chamber music, two piano concertos, ballet music, two operas, and eight song cycles; he wrote no symphonies or church music. Many of his works exist in two versions: first, a piano score and later an orchestration.

Ravel completed his only string quartet in 1903 at the age of twenty-eight. *STRING QUARTET IN F MAJOR* premiered in Paris in March 1904. Ravel was greatly influenced by Claude Debussy's *String Quartet*, composed ten years earlier. Both feature novel harmonies, a whole new range of string quartet textures and colors, and a cyclic design where themes recur throughout the entire quartet. Debussy appreciated Ravel's work, and sent him a letter of encouragement; however the same could not be said for Ravel's tutor, Gabriel Fauré, to whom the piece is dedicated.

The quartet is set in four movements and shows Ravel's approaches to harmonic language, texture balancing, and melodic writing. The opening movement, in traditional sonata form, presents two contrasting themes that occur again later in the work. The first is played by all four instruments at the beginning and taken over by the first violin, with harmonies in the lower instruments. The second theme, more reflective in character, is played two octaves apart by the first violin and viola. The second movement, a playful scherzo, begins with a theme on plucked strings (*pizzicato*). This is followed by a slow, wistful section led by the cello. Ravel uses cross rhythms, with figures in triple and double time played simultaneously. The lyrical third movement, marked "very slow," actually changes tempo several times and has strong thematic links to the first movement. The finale reintroduces themes from the earlier movements and ends the work vigorously.

Sources: [gulfcoastsymphony.org](http://gulfcoastsymphony.org); [classicalexburns.com](http://classicalexburns.com); [earsense.org](http://earsense.org); Wikipedia.

CONCERTS AT THE POINT WOULD LIKE TO  
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The Helen Ellis Charitable Trust  
Westport Cultural Council

The John Clarke Trust

These grants, as well as generous donations from our loyal audience and friends, make this concert series and our educational program possible. We sincerely appreciate this support and extend our heartfelt thanks.



*Concerts at the Point*  
25TH SEASON 2021-2022

UPCOMING CONCERT

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