



GEORGIAN
CHAMBER
PLAYERS

A MUSICAL RESPITE: BEETHOVEN & BRAHMS

November 15, 2020 at 2:00PM
First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta

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LUDVIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Piano and Violin Sonata no. 1 in D major

I. Allegro con Brio

II. Tema con Variazioni: Andante con moto

III. Rondo: Allegro

Julie Coucheron - piano

David Coucheron - violin

LUDVIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Duet with two obligato eyeglasses WoO 32 for viola and violoncello

Zhenwei Shi - viola

Rainer Eudekis - cello

JOHANNES BRAHMS

String Sextet no. 1 in Bb major

I. Allegro ma non troppo

II. Andante, ma moderato

III. Scherzo: Allegro molto in F major

IV. Rondo: poco allegretto e grazioso

David Coucheron - violin

Helen Kim - violin

Zhenwei Shi - viola

Paul Murphy - viola

Rainer Eudekis - cello

Christopher Rex - cello

The Georgian Chamber Players extend sincere appreciation to First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta for graciously hosting this performance.

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Program Notes

Ludwig van Beethoven

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) was a German composer and pianist. He was a crucial figure in the transition between the Classical and Romantic eras in music, and he remains one of the most recognized and influential composers. His compositions widened the scope of the standard forms of sonatas, symphonies, concertos, and quartets. During his lifetime, he wrote nine symphonies, five piano concertos, thirty-two piano sonatas, sixteen string quartets, and many other works.

Overall, Beethoven composed ten violin sonatas. The first set of three, Opus 12, were written during his early years of composing, and they have similar characteristics to his Classical predecessors Haydn and Mozart. The first violin sonata, Op. 12 no. 1, is in D major and has three movements.

The first movement, *Allegro con brio*, begins with a grand statement shared by the two instruments, followed by a continuous intertwining of technical abilities showcased by the duo. The second movement, *Andante con moto*, is a Theme with four Variations. The theme is first played by the piano and repeated by the violin. Each variation explores different rhythmic changes. The third movement, *Allegro*, is an energetic Rondo that displays Beethoven's more humorous side.

The Duo for Viola and Cello, or "Eyeglasses Duo," is a piece Beethoven wrote for his friend and cello player Baron Nikolaus Zmeskall von Domanovecz. Joining him on viola was Beethoven himself, and since the two of them needed glasses to read the music, he jokingly called it the *Duet with two eyeglasses obbligato*. The piece has two movements, *Allegro*, and *Minuetto & Trio*. Overall, it has a mostly playful attitude, as if the two friends are teasing each other throughout.

Johannes Brahms

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) was a German composer and pianist of the Romantic era. One of the most famous composers of the time, he is mostly known for his blend of traditional “Classical” styles with the innovative compositional styles of the Romantic era. His compositions include four symphonies, four concerti, a multitude of works for solo piano, vocal works and *lieder*, works for chamber ensembles, and more. Many of these pieces have become staples of the modern concert repertoire.

The String Sextet No. 1 in B-flat major, Op. 18, was written in 1860, and it premiered in Hanover by an ensemble led by Joseph Joachim, one of the most famous violinists of the 19th century. The piece is scored for two violins, two violas, and two cellos, and it has four movements.

The first movement, *Allegro ma non troppo*, takes the listener on an exciting journey filled with passionate moments brought to life by Brahms’ often lush melodies and harmonies. The second movement, *Andante, ma moderato*, is in variation form, exploring the many different ways to develop a melodic phrase. The third movement, *Allegro molto*, is a *Scherzo*, which typically have a joking quality. It is very playful and energetic, with a trio section that is marked *animato*, meaning animated and lively. The fourth movement, *Poco allegretto e grazioso* is a Rondo. It is similar to the first movement in terms of lush melody and harmony, and it builds to a fast and exciting finale.

About the Artists



David Coucheron

violin

Concertmaster of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, David Coucheron is originally from Oslo, Norway, where he began playing violin at age three. He earned his Bachelor of Music from the Curtis Institute of Music, his Master of Music from the Juilliard School, and his Master of Musical Performance from London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama, studying with teachers including Igor Ozim, Aaron Rosand, Lewis Kaplan and David Takeno. Mr. Coucheron has worked with conductors including Robert Spano, Alan Gilbert, Michael Tilson Thomas, Sir Simon Rattle, Mstislav Rostropovich, David Zinman, Sir Roger Norrington, Simone Young and Charles Dutoit, and he has performed as a soloist with orchestras including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra (Maxim Vengerov conducting), Sendai Symphony Orchestra, Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra and Trondheim Symphony Orchestra.

In recent seasons with the ASO, he has performed the Violin Concerto by Samuel Barber, The Lark Ascending by Ralph Vaughan Williams (also recorded for a Grammy-winning ASO Media CD) and the Bruch Violin Concerto No. 1. Mr. Coucheron has played solo recitals at the Oslo Chamber Music Festival, Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall (London), the Kennedy Center and the Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City, as well as in Beograd, Serbia, and Shanghai, China. His chamber music performances have included appearances at Suntory Hall, Wigmore Hall, the Oslo Chamber Music Festival, and Alice Tully Hall. He serves as the artistic director of the Kon-Tiki Classical Music Fest in Oslo. Among Mr. Coucheron's awards and recognitions are first prize at the Concorso Internazionale di Musica "Città di Pinerolo" competition in 2009 (Turin, Italy), first prize at the Princess Astrid Competition in 2002 (Trondheim, Norway), and third prize at the Manchester International Violin Competition in 2005 (Manchester, U.K.). His instrument is a 1725 Stradivarius.



Helen Hwaya Kim

violin

Helen Hwaya Kim joined the music faculty in 2006 at Kennesaw State University with a stellar performance background. She made her orchestral debut with the Calgary Philharmonic at the age of six, and has gone on to become a respected and sought-after artist. She has appeared as a soloist with the Boston Pops at Boston's Symphony Hall, as well as with the Milwaukee and Atlanta Symphony Orchestras.

Ms. Kim earned her Bachelor and Master's Degree from the Juilliard School, where her teachers included Cho-Liang Lin and Dorothy DeLay. While at Juilliard, she served as Concertmaster of the Juilliard Orchestra and was the winner of the Juilliard Concerto Competition at both the Pre-College and College levels. She is the recipient of more than one hundred national and international awards. She won the prestigious Artists International Competition in New York and, as a result, gave debut recitals at Carnegie Weill Hall and the Aspen Summer Music Festival.

A native of Canada, Ms. Kim has been engaged by many of Canada's leading orchestras, including the National Arts Center Orchestra, Montreal Metropolitan Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, McGill Chamber Orchestra, and the Windsor, Regina, Victoria and Prince George Symphonies. She has also appeared with the DeKalb, New Orleans, Aspen and Banff Festival Orchestras, and with orchestras in the United Kingdom, Germany and Poland.

Ms. Kim has been profiled on national and international television and has appeared on CBC, PBS and CBS networks. Her performances have been aired on NPR and CBC radio networks.

Ms. Kim has toured extensively throughout Canada and the United States, including performances at Alice Tully Hall and the Santa Fe and La Jolla International Music Festivals, where she performed with Cho-Liang Lin, Gary Hoffman, Andre Previn, and the Orion String Quartet. She performed Bach's Double violin concerto with Hilary Hahn at the Amelia Island Chamber music festival. Other festival highlights include performances at the Highlands-Cashiers, Banff, Zenith and Sitka International Chamber Music Festivals.

An avid performer of new music, she can be heard on the recent CD release of the works of Alvin Singleton on Albany records. Helen

performed the world premiere of the “Concertino” by Chen Yi, scored for solo violin and orchestra that was commissioned especially for her and the KSU Orchestra and was recently released by Centaur in 2016.

Ms. Kim currently resides in Atlanta, Georgia, where she served as Assistant and Associate Concertmaster for the Atlanta Symphony for three seasons. She is currently the Assistant Concertmaster of the Atlanta Opera Orchestra and recently joined the roster of the Atlanta Chamber Players.



Zhenwei Shi

viola

Zhenwei Shi, from Changsha, China, received first prize in the 2010 International String Players Competition in Hong Kong and third prize in the 2014 Johansen International Young String Players Competition in the USA. He was also awarded the Special Jury Prize from the 2016 XII Lionel Tertis Viola International Competition, the Regent's Award from Duchess of Gloucester of British Royalty and Royal Academy of Music, and a scholar from Drake Calleja Trust and ABRSM in UK from 2016.

Mr. Shi started his viola with Professor Li Sheng at the Middle school of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. He attended the Royal Academy of Music with full scholarship for his undergraduate studies with Professor Paul Silverthorne, Roger Chase and Juan-Miguel Hernandez. After he graduated with a first-class honor degree, he received full scholarship offers from San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Royal Academy of Music, and The Julliard School for his master degree study.

Mr. Shi has performed as a solo violist and chamber musician at prestigious venues such as Buckingham Palace, Wigmore Hall, Royal Festival Hall, and Shanghai Concert Hall. Mr. Shi has been invited to be a guest player in the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra since 2018. Mr. Shi was appointed by Maestro Robert Spano as Principal Viola at the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra in 2019.



Paul Murphy

viola

Paul Murphy is the Associate Principal Viola with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, having held that position since 1986. Previously he held principal positions with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Kansas City Philharmonic, the Caracas (Venezuela) Philharmonic, and was a regular player with the St. Louis Symphony. He has also performed as Guest Principal for the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Murphy is a native of Pensacola, Florida, where he studied with the renowned Anna Tringas. He later graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Music where his principal teachers were David Cerone and Robert Vernon. During college he also served as an assistant teacher at the prestigious Meadowmount School of Music.

Mr. Murphy is an avid chamber music performer and has played extensively with the Emory Chamber Music Society, the Atlanta Chamber Players, the Georgian Chamber Players, and the Minneapolis Artists' Ensemble. He has collaborated with such artists as Yo-Yo Ma, Sadao Harada, Robert McDuffie, Alan Gilbert, and Robert Spano. He can be heard in chamber music performances on the Innova, GM, Arundax, and ACA labels and is a featured performer on the short children's film, "The Orchestra Gets Dressed". Mr. Murphy has participated regularly in music festivals such as the Grand Teton Music Festival, the Strings Festival in Steamboat Springs, the Bellingham Festival of Music the Wintergreen Music Festival, the Highlands Music Festival, and the Pensacola Chamber Music Festival. On a different note, he has recorded extensively with the rock bands R.E.M. and Collective Soul, and has also worked with Stone Temple Pilots, Indigo Girls, and Usher, Widespread Panic, and Outkast. He has soloed with the Atlanta Symphony in works by Mozart, Gubaidulina, Rorem, Bruch, and Freddy Mercury.

A dedicated teacher, Murphy has served as an Artist Affiliate at Emory University, a Distinguished Artist at the McDuffie Center for Strings at Mercer University, as well as Adjunct Professor at Kennesaw State University. He also maintains a private studio. He lives with his wife, Christina Smith, in Vinings.



Rainer Eudeikis

cello

Rainer Eudeikis was appointed Principal Cellist of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra in 2019. He was previously the Principal Cellist of the Utah Symphony for five seasons, and has performed in the same role at the Mainly Mozart Festival, Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, and the Central City Opera.

Recent performance highlights include Schumann's Cello Concerto in A minor and Strauss' Don Quixote with the Utah Symphony, and C.P.E. Bach's Cello Concerto in A Major for NOVA in Salt Lake City. He has participated in numerous international festivals, including the Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival (Germany), Britten-Pears Programme at Aldeburgh (UK), and the Académie Musicale Internationale de Vaison-la-Romaine (France). Rainer was a two-year fellowship recipient at the Aspen Music Festival, and was a member of the New York String Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, where he was Principal Cellist in 2011.

Born in Texas, Rainer began cello studies at the age of six. Following studies in Colorado with Jurgen de Lemos, he attended the University of Michigan as a student of Richard Aaron, completing his B.M. in 3 years with highest honors. He received his M.M. from Indiana University, where he studied with Eric Kim. In 2014, Rainer completed his Artist Diploma at the Curtis Institute of Music, studying with Carter Brey and Peter Wiley.



Christopher Rex

cello

Christopher Rex joined the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra as Principal Cello in 1979, the same year in which he became the first cellist ever to win the string prize in the biennial Young Artists Competition of the National Federation of Music Clubs. Since then he has appeared as recitalist and chamber musician across the nation. Following his studies at the Curtis Institute of Music with Orlando Cole and at the Juilliard School with Leonard Rose, he was a member of the Philadelphia Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy for seven seasons. He has taught at Gettysburg College, the New School of Music in Philadelphia, Georgia State University and the Eastern Music Festival in Greensboro, North Carolina. He shared Acting Principal duties for the New York Philharmonic's European tour in 1988, replacing Lorne Munrow.

Solo performances by Mr. Rex with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra have included works by Brahms, Beethoven, Strauss, Tchaikovsky, Shostakovich, Bloch, Elgar, Schumann, Dvořák, Saint-Saëns, Haydn, Herbert, Hindemith, Prokofiev, Barber, Golijov and the late Stephen Paulus. Last season, with violinists Anne Akiko Meyers and David Coucheron and the Amernet Quartet, he performed in three concerts at the Amelia Island Winterfest. He and David Coucheron also appeared as soloists in the Brahms Double Concerto with the DeKalb Symphony Orchestra.

Mr. Rex directs the Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival in Florida, which he founded, and the Madison Chamber Music Festival in Georgia. A regular performer at the Highlands Chamber Music Festival in North Carolina, he has been Principal Cellist of the orchestras at the Colorado Music Festival in Boulder and the Grand Teton Music Festival in Wyoming. He has appeared at the Montreal Chamber Music Festival, Brevard and Eastern Music Festivals in North Carolina, and Chautauqua Festival in New York. He served on the board of directors of Chamber music America for six years, is head of the Cello Department of Georgia State University's School of Music, and is on the chamber music faculty of the McDuffie Center for Strings at Mercer University in Macon.



Julie Coucheron

piano

At age 29, pianist Julie Coucheron has established an international career, winning prizes in Italy, Germany, and the United States. She has worked with musicians such as Lazar Berman, Claude Frank, Emanuel Ax, Vladimir Feltsman, John O'Connor and Christopher O'Riley, and has toured Europe, America, South America and Asia, playing in great halls like Verizon Hall in Philadelphia, Wigmore Hall in London, the Kennedy Center in Washington and New York's Carnegie Hall.

Born in Oslo, Norway, Ms. Coucheron started playing the piano at age four. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees with honors from the Royal Academy of Music in London, studying with Christopher Elton and Michael Dussek while also gaining her LRAM teaching diploma at the same institution.

Ms. Coucheron regularly performs at festivals such as the Oslo Chamber Music Festival, Bergen International Music Festival and La Jolla SummerFest. She is artistic director of the Fjord Cadenza festival in Skodie, Norway, and the Kon-Tiki Classic Music Fest in Oslo.

She enjoys a close collaboration with her brother, David Coucheron, who is Concertmaster of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. In 2002 the pair released their first recording, *Debut*, on the Naxos label, containing lyrical and virtuoso music from the classical repertoire. Their second recording, *David and Julie*, appeared in 2008 on the Mudi/Naxos label, containing sonatas by Grieg and Brahms. In 2009 they shared first prize at the Pinerolo International Chamber Music Competition in Italy. With cellist Christopher Rex they perform trios regularly in various concert halls around the world.

A member of the Georgian Chamber Players, Ms. Coucheron most recently performed the Franck Piano Quintet with them last April. In August 2014, she was appointed Assistant Professor at Kennesaw State University.

Ms. Coucheron enjoys a various and wide range of styles and repertoire deriving from her highly trained classical background to the more contemporary and popular music. Recent collaborations include performances with artists such as the Steve Miller Band and Elton John.

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