

Program Notes

Piano Quartet in A Minor, op. 67 (1931)

Joaquín Turina (1882-1949)

Like many so-called nationalist composers, Joaquín Turina strove to infuse his music with the spirit of his homeland—in his case, Spain—while not abandoning traditional forms. A product of the Royal Conservatory in Madrid, he initially followed a path dominated by French and German models. He even traveled to Paris to study with Vincent d'Indy and d'Indy's teacher, César Franck. One night in a Parisian café, Turina and another young Spaniard, Manuel de Falla, were upbraided by Spain's foremost composer, Isaac Albéniz, for not adequately tapping into the folk music of their own country.

Turina would continue to work in traditional forms, but his concert works, such as the Piano Quartet in A minor, successfully marry Spanish idioms with compositional techniques steeped in mainstream Europe. The first movement, rather than a quick sonata form, is a soulful, lilting evocation of a night in Turina's native Seville. The second movement is dance-like, with plucked strings suggesting the clackety-clack-clack of castanets. The third movement is a broad rhapsody on Spanish melodic types and again reinterprets and reuses material from the opening—a unifying device that was frequently employed by d'Indy and his teacher Franck.

– LA Phil

Toki No Mon (A Gate Into Infinity) (1988)

Somei Satoh (b. 1947)

Somei Satoh is a composer of the post-war generation whose hauntingly evocative musical language is a curious fusion of Japanese timbral sensibilities with 19th century Romanticism and electronic technology. He has been deeply influenced by Shintoism, the writings of the Zen Buddhist scholar DT Suzuki, his Japanese cultural heritage as well as the multimedia art forms of the sixties. Satoh's elegant and passionate style convincingly integrates these diverse elements into an inimitably individual approach to contemporary Japanese music.

– Margaret Leng Tan

My music is limited to certain elements of sound and there are many calm repetitions. There is also much prolongation of a single sound. I think silence and the prolongation of sound is the same thing in terms of space. The only difference is that there is either the presence or absence of sound. More important is whether the space is "living" or not. Our [Japanese] sense of time and space is different from that of the West. For example, in the Shinto religion, there is the term 'imanaka' which is not just the present moment which lies between the stretch of past eternity and future immortality, but also the manifestation of the moment of all time which is multi-layered and multi-dimensional I would like it if the listener could abandon all previous conceptions of time and experience a new sense of time presented in this music as if eternal time can be lived in a single moment.

– Somei Satoh

Toki No Mon is performed at an extremely slow tempo. In actuality, this probably means the slowest tempo that the performer of the piece is able to count. If the tempo slows even slightly beyond this point, there is the danger that the composition will not hold together. The piece always contains this danger. The person who listens to this music must also experience a sense of time completely different from our normal, every day time. For example, the sense that time doesn't simply progress from past into future, but slowly describes a circle.

– Somei Satoh

Sextet for Horn, Clarinet, Strings and Piano in C Major, op. 37 (1935)

Ernst von Dohnányi (1877-1960)

Written during a lengthy period of illness, Ernő Dohnányi's *Sextet in C major, Op. 37* (1935) stands out not only for its unique instrumentation—piano, clarinet, horn, violin, viola, and cello—but also for its diverse range of influences, from lyrical Romanticism to elements of jazz.

The first movement (*Allegro appassionato*) follows a sonata structure. Reminiscent of Mahler's symphonic style, turbulent, emotional contrasts are underscored by the heroic horn theme. Though moments of lightness briefly peek through, the movement is dominated by tension and brooding harmonies. The second movement (*Intermezzo. Adagio*) introduces a sinister march, interrupted by haunting chords in the piano and brief moments of rest. The third movement (*Allegro con sentimento*) echoes Brahms and Mendelssohn and features a theme and variations, with the clarinet and piano leading lyrical exchanges. The finale (*Allegro vivace, giocoso*) brings in a lively jazz swing juxtaposed with a lopsided Viennese waltz, breaking away from tradition.

The *Sextet* captures many of the diverse styles of the era within a playful, yet carefully structured framework. Dohnányi masterfully balances the unusual instrumentation, creating a work that leaves a powerful impression with its humor, drama, and intricate part-writing.

– Alex De Biasio

Performer Biographies

In Order of Appearance

Praised in Gramophone magazine for “disciplined virtuosity,” violinist **Joanna Kurkowicz** enjoys an active and versatile career as an award-winning soloist, recitalist, chamber musician and concertmistress. Ms. Kurkowicz currently serves as concertmistress of the Boston Philharmonic and the Berkshire Symphony Orchestra, and previously held the same post for the Boston Modern Orchestra Project and the Vermont Symphony. Since the fall of 2002 she has been Artist in Residence at Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts, recently joined the faculty at Tufts University, she served on faculty of the New England Conservatory of Music. She has performed on many of the great concert stages of the world, including Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Jordan Hall, Boston and the Grosse Saal, Salzburg, and has appeared as a soloist with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Boston Philharmonic, Brussels Philharmonic, Metamorphosen Chamber Orchestra, the Jefferson Symphony, the San Luis Obispo Symphony, the New England String Ensemble, the Berkshire Symphony, the Poznan Philharmonic, the Polish National Radio Orchestra in Katowice and Warsaw, and others. She has received awards from the Samuel Chester, Presser, Saint Botolph, Kosciuszko, and Olevsky Foundations, the Harvard Musical Association, the Irving McKlein International Competition, the Carmel and Coleman Chamber Music Competitions, and in Poland, the Henryk Wieniawski and Tadeusz Wronski International Competitions.

Ah Ling Neu’s performing career has spanned the U.S., Europe, Asia, and Australia. She is presently a member of the Cassatt String Quartet, the North County Chamber Players, and the Brooklyn Library Chamber Players, as well as a former member of the Ridge String Quartet and a longtime veteran of the New York Philomusica. She has participated in prestigious music festivals such as the Bridgehampton Festival, the White Mountains Music Festival, the Manchester Music Festival, and the International Musician’s Seminar.

Hailed as “...haunting and mesmerizing...” by USA Today, **Julian Müller** appeared as soloist with the Louisville Orchestra, giving world premiere performances of the ballet *How They Fade*, composed by him and art-pop band, YASSOU, on a commission from the Louisville Ballet Company. Julian has been presented on NPR Live, with Sergei Babayan. Other chamber music collaborations include performances with Simone Dinnerstein, Matt Haimovitz, Peter Salaff, and members of the Cleveland Orchestra. Julian has made festival appearances at the Aspen Music Festival, Heifetz International Music Institute, and Caroga Lake Music Festival, among others. Julian appears frequently with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s, has served as principal cellist of the Cleveland Institute of Music Orchestra, Mannes Orchestra, was a member of the New York String Orchestra Seminar, and is principal cello of the Berkshire Symphony. Julian holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music and a Master of Music and Professional Studies Diplomas from the Mannes School of Music, and will receive a Doctorate of Musical Arts from Rutgers University. Principal mentors include Timothy Eddy, Georg Faust, Ronald Feldman, Sharon Robinson and Jonathan Spitz.

Doris Stevenson has won lavish praise from critics and audiences alike in performances around the world. She has soloed with the Boston Pops and appeared at Carnegie Hall in New York, the Kennedy Center in Washington, D. C., Salle Pleyel in Paris, and Suntory Hall in Tokyo. Her acute sensitivity and musicianship have made her a sought-after collaborative pianist, and she has performed with such greats as Jascha Heifetz, Gregor Piatigorsky, Ruggiero Ricci, and Paul Tortelier. Her many recordings include six major works by Williams Professor Emeritus, David Kechley, the Saint-Saens sonatas for violin and piano with Andres Cardenes, the complete Mendelssohn cello works with Jeffrey Solow and two major works by fellow Williams faculty member Ileana Perez-Velazquez. Ms. Stevenson has served as the Lyell B. Clay Artist in Residence at Williams College since 1987.

Percussionist **Matthew Gold** is a performer, ensemble director, and educator committed to exploring new sounds and presenting innovative and adventurous programs featuring new voices. He is a member of the acclaimed New York-based contemporary music group Talea Ensemble, with whom he appears across the U.S. and at international festivals, and of the pioneering Talujon percussion group. Mr. Gold is an Artist in Residence in Percussion and Contemporary Music Performance at Williams College where he directs the Williams Percussion Ensemble and is the Artistic Director of the annual I/O Festival of New Music. He serves on the faculty of the Composers Conference and Contemporary Performance Institute at Brandeis University and is an Artist in Residence at the Walden School's Creative Musicians Retreat. Mr. Gold has been a featured artist on recent festivals including Time:Spans 2019, Le Festival Les Musiques in Marseille, and Festival Musiques Démesurées in Clermont-Ferrand, and has appeared with the New York Philharmonic on its "Philharmonic 360" program at the Park Avenue Armory. He performs regularly with, among others, the Mark Morris Dance Group, the New York City Ballet, and the Albany Symphony.

Bulgarian violinist **Joana Genova** is the second violinist of The Indianapolis Quartet, Assistant Professor of Violin at University of Indianapolis (IN) and Artistic Director of Taconic Music in Manchester (VT). Ms. Genova began playing violin at the age of six, made her solo debut at the age of twelve with the Plovdiv Chamber Orchestra, and is a prizewinner of the National Competition in Bulgaria. She received her Bachelor of Music at the Conservatory of Amsterdam and her Master's degree in chamber music at the Rotterdam Conservatory in the Netherlands. Since 2000, Ms. Genova has lived in the U.S., maintaining an active career as a chamber musician, orchestral player, teacher and soloist. In 2007 she became Artist Associate at Williams College and principal second violin of the Berkshire Symphony Orchestra.

Victor Sungarian, Artist Associate in Horn at Williams College, began his music studies with piano and voice lessons at the age of 5. Through the years of study at the Plovdiv City Music School (Bulgaria), Mr. Sungarian won two Young Talent competitions and the First Prize at the Golden Diana chamber music competition in Yambol City (Bulgaria). Once in the United States, Mr. Sungarian was accepted as a scholarship student at the Juilliard School pre-college division, where he won their annual Wind Instrument Competition. Subsequently Mr. Sungarian was accepted into the college division at Juilliard on full scholarship and completed both his Bachelors and Masters degrees. He was the recipient of the James Chambers Scholarship for outstanding achievements in French Horn performance. As a professional musician, Mr. Sungarian has actively performed with orchestras in Japan, Korea, the Dominican Republic,

Venezuela, and Brazil, as well as throughout the United States. He is currently a member of the Albany Symphony, and performs as Principal Horn with the Schenectady Symphony, Catskill Symphony, Glens Falls Symphony, Hudson Valley Philharmonic, and the Berkshire Symphony orchestras. Victor regularly performs chamber music with the Williams Chamber Players, the St. Rose Camerata, and the Empire Brass. Mr. Sungarian is on the music faculty at College of St. Rose and Williams College and resides in Latham, New York.

Las Vegas born clarinetist, **Michael Dee**, is a versatile soloist, chamber, and orchestral musician based in New York's Capital Region. Since graduating from Manhattan School of Music's Orchestral Performance Program in 2013, under the tutelage of Mark Nuccio, Michael has performed with the New York Philharmonic, West Point Military Academy Band, served as the principal clarinetist for Bergen County Symphony Orchestra and Washington Heights Chamber Orchestra, and is currently a regular substitute musician with the Albany, Schenectady, and Glens Falls Symphony Orchestras and is on faculty at Skidmore College.

Illustrator Wilhelm Busch's "Der Virtuos" (The Virtuoso) hangs in pianist **Drew Petersen**'s bedroom. Petersen still chuckles at the piece. While he can relate to the musician's passion, gesturally his style couldn't be more different. Rather than flashy and dramatic, Petersen is more deliberate and thoughtful, in control. Perhaps that's what propelled Petersen to several recent career successes, notably a 2018 Avery Fisher Career Grant and the top prize at the 2017 American Pianists Awards of the American Pianists Association. Petersen was also a top prizewinner in the Leeds International Piano Competition, the Hilton Head International Piano Competition, Kosciuszko Foundation Chopin Competition, and the New York Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition, among others. Petersen graduated cum laude from Harvard at age 19 with a bachelor of liberal arts in social science and did his graduate music studies at the Juilliard School, where he recently completed his Artist Diploma as a recipient of the prestigious Kovner Fellowship. Overseas appearances include recitals at the Musica e Arte Festival in Tolentino, Italy, Verbier Festival in Verbier, Switzerland, and Euro Arts Music Festival in Leipzig, Germany. The expanse of the rolling ocean is as much an inspiration for music as it is an escape for Petersen. He raced competitively as a child and continues his love of swimming with regular open water swims.