CCMS | Concord Chamber Music Society



# 2023–2024

## CONCERT SEASON

# Letter From the Director

I am delighted to welcome you to the twenty-fourth season of the Concord Chamber Music Society. We offer an exciting season—featuring extraordinary musicians and two concerts in the beautiful new Groton Hill Music Center. Performances by the Jerusalem Quartet, the Hermitage Trio, and a long-awaited recital by renowned pianist Yefim Bronfman will make the 2023–24 season both enjoyable and memorable. In addition, a collaborative program with music and cultural historian Jeremy Eichler aims to explore the relationship between music and remembrance in conjunction with the release of his poignant new book, *Time's Echo*.

As many of you know, our beloved concert venue of many years, the Concord Academy Performing Arts Center, will likely be unavailable to CCMS for regular concerts soon. Concord Academy is starting construction of a new performance arts building that will include a concert hall with reduced capacity. As we carefully consider both the needs of our audience and our organization within the context of growth and sustainability, we have begun to explore nearby locations with the goal of securing new, regular performance venues within the next two to three years. I look forward to sharing more information about this in upcoming months, and we will be asking for your input as we move forward.

I am so glad that you are here with us today! With great appreciation for your ongoing support and patronage of the Concord Chamber Music Society,

*Wendy L. Putnam*

Wendy L. Putnam
CCMS Founder and Director

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## Mission

To enhance cultural life in Concord and communities north and west of Boston by presenting accessible concerts of the highest caliber and educational outreach in local venues.

## Founder and Artistic Director

Wendy L. Putnam

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# HERMITAGE PIANO TRIO

Misha Keylin, violin; Sergey Antonov, cello; Ilya Kazantsev, piano

## Piano Trio No. 2 in B minor, Op. 76

Joaquín Turina (1882–1949)

*Lento – Allegro molto moderato*
*Molto vivace*
*Lento – Andante musso – Allegro molto moderato*

## Trio élégiaque No. 1 in G minor

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943)

*Lento lugubre*

## Tres Impresiones

Mariano Perelló (1885–1960)

*Pensando en Albéniz (Poco allegro)*
*Capricho Andaluz (Allegro)*
*Escenas Gitanas (Allegro)*

# Hermitage Piano Trio

Misha Keylin, violin
Sergey Antonov, cello
Ilya Kazantsev, piano



Now entering their second decade, the United States-based Hermitage Piano Trio has solidified its place as one of the world's leading piano trios, garnering multiple GRAMMY® Award nominations and receiving both audience and press accolades for their performances that The Washington Post singled out for "such power and sweeping passion that it left you nearly out of breath."

The Trio is a champion of immense repertoire ranging from the works of the great European tradition to more contemporary American pieces. Hallmarks of the Hermitage Piano Trio are their impeccable musicianship, sumptuous sound and interpretative range, which have led to demand for many repeat performances. They have appeared on major chamber music series and festivals in Los Angeles, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Miami, Washington, D.C., Tucson, Portland (OR), Tulsa, San Diego, Corpus Christi, Newport (RI), San Miguel de Allende (Mexico), Winnipeg (Canada), New Orleans, and many others. In addition to their extensive touring engagements, the Trio is involved in educational and outreach projects.

Highlights for the 2023–2024 concert season include performances at Newport Classical, VCU Arts, Chicago Chamber Music Society, Concord Chamber Music Society, Friends of Chamber Music Miami, Harvard Musical Association, Ladies' Morning Musical Club (Montréal), and other notable series.

Hermitage Piano Trio began its multiple-album recording deal with Reference Recordings, debuting its CD titled "Rachmaninoff," which featured Sergei Rachmaninoff's two trios and his unforgettable Vocalise. Echoing many enthusiastic reviews of the "Rachmaninoff" recording, The Strad lauded the Trio's "outstanding playing in intense, heartfelt performances," and American Record Guide praised that "the

Hermitage wants to burst forth with passion, to let the whole world know! I am really glad that someone can still play that way in our utterly unromantic age." Their second album "Spanish Impressions," released in September 2023, has the Trio exploring the rich and diverse musical heritage of early 20th century Spanish composers, including works by Arbós, Turina, Cassadó and Perelló.



A rarity in the chamber music world, this elite Trio brings together three accomplished soloists in their own right. An established soloist, violinist Misha Keylin has performed in forty-five countries spanning five continents. He has captured special attention with his world-premiere CD series, released by Naxos, of Henri Vieuxtemps seven violin concertos and showpieces. These recordings have already sold hundreds of thousands of copies worldwide and have garnered numerous press accolades and awards, including "Critic's Choice" by *The New York Time*s, *Gramophone*, and *The Strad*. Hailed as "a brilliant cellist" by the legendary Mstislav Rostropovich, Sergey Antonov went on to prove his mentor's proclamation when he became one of the youngest cellists ever awarded the gold medal at the world's premier musical contest, the quadrennial International Tchaikovsky Competition. Antonov's entry into this elite stratum of sought-after classical artists has already placed him on stages at world-renowned venues from Russia's Great Hall at the Moscow Conservatory to Suntory Hall in Tokyo. And pianist Ilya Kazantsev, praised by *The Washington Post* as "virtually flawless," has performed as a recitalist and a soloist with orchestras in Russia, Canada, Europe, and the United States. Mr. Kazantsev's many awards and honors include first prize at the Nikolai Rubinstein International Competition (France) as well as top prizes at the International Chopin Competition (Russia) and the World Piano Competition (USA).

# Program Notes

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## Piano Trio No. 2 in B minor, Op. 76

Joaquín Turina (1882–1949)

It was a chance meeting in Paris with Isaac Albéniz and Manuel de Falla that made Joaquín Turina into the Spanish composer that he became. Though he had been born in Seville and had studied there, Turina showed no particular interest in the music of his native land at first. He chose to undertake his advanced studies in Paris with Vincent d'Indy and was infatuated with the music of Debussy. In 1907, Turina performed his own Piano Quintet, Opus 1, in Paris. It was a solid piece of work, cast in the style of d'Indy's own teacher and idol, César Franck.

Albéniz, who had attended the concert with Falla, spoke to the young Spanish composer afterward, and suggested that he should look homeward, to Spanish folk material, as a basic resource for his music. The young man took this advice to heart and found that his newer pieces were well received. Eventually he returned to Spain with Falla and remained in Madrid for the rest of his life, producing scores for the stage and symphony orchestra, chamber music, and songs, as well as vast number of solo piano works. In these works, he absorbed the Andalusian style of his native Seville (though he never lived there after the age of twenty), yet concerned himself as well with composing works in the "standard" forms of European music.

Despite its label as No. 2, the Op. 76 piano trio is Turina's third work in the genre. In 1904 (when he was 22), he had composed a youthful work, Trio in F, that was not published at the time, though it was performed in Seville. It still showed very much the influence of Franck, his idol at the time, especially in its cyclical use of themes in different movements. The first trio that he explicitly recognized, No.1 in D major, dates from 1926, when it was the winning work in a national competition.

The trio in B minor, labeled No. 2 by the composer, dates from 1933 and was dedicated to the French music publisher Jacques Lerolle, nephew of Ernest Chausson.

The first movement asserts a yearning Lento for just three measures before moving into a pensive Allegro molto moderato, with rolling piano accompaniment under a gently passionate figure passed among the three players. The second theme comes in soon as a somewhat livelier Allegretto. This leads to a Lento passage introduced by the cello, with a

melancholy theme, backed by the violin and later the piano with a gently pressing dotted figure. The opening theme returns, followed again by the second theme.

The second movement, Molto vivace, races in 5/8 time, with two stringed instruments playing a rapid tremolo against the strong dance character in the piano. A middle section turns serene for a brief passage that returns to the vivace character.

The finale begins, like the first movement, with a Lento passage (though it is rather more assertive in mood), moving to heavily ominous chords in the piano, later moving to violin. These materials change in mood and character continually: roughly dynamic, gently swaying, and everything in between to the confident close. Turina's Spanish rhythm and French coloration are fused throughout the trio in his utterly characteristic way.

## Trio élégiaque No. 1 in G minor

### Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943)

Rachmaninoff left two piano trios, both of them labeled "élégiaque"—intended, as expressions of mourning. The full-scale second trio in D minor was published as Rachmaninoff's Opus 9; it was intended as a specific elegy in memory of Tchaikovsky, whose sudden death at the age of 53 on November 6, 1893, had been a terrible blow to the young Rachmaninoff, because Tchaikovsky had not only praised his early work at the conservatory, but also asked if the newly graduated composer "would mind" if Tchaikovsky placed his graduation piece—a short opera called *Aleko*—on the same bill as Tchaikovsky's own last opera, *Yolanta*. What an honor for a young musician just starting on his career! So it was only natural that, after Tchaikovsky's death, Rachmaninoff would commemorate him with a piano trio, just as Tchaikovsky himself had memorialized his old friend Nikolai Rubinstein with a similar work.

But even before he had a specific reason to write such a memorial work, Rachmaninoff composed a short piece in the same expressive mood—possibly inspired by Tchaikovsky's tribute to Rubinstein, and little realizing how soon there would be occasion to write an actual memorial trio. Rachmaninoff composed the G-minor trio in 1890–91. The manuscript is dated January 18–21, 1892, though this short span of three days probably only refers to a period of touching up and polishing the score before it was to go into rehearsal for an important performance at the end of the month—Rachmaninoff's first public concert outside the conservatory where he was a student.

It is clear that Rachmaninoff intended the piano part for himself, and he tends to overbalance the two stringed instruments—faults of youthful inexperience and exuberance. Still the opening theme, presented in the piano over a rustling figure in the strings, moves to cello and then to violin (in a low register) to maintain the dark expression of the opening. When the violin sings the second theme, we are in the territory of sweet salon music, less impressively rich than the opening, but still carrying forward the songfulness that was always a mark of Rachmaninoff's style. The single movement of the Trio has many changes of tempo and brings back the basic thematic materials in many guises, but always with the brilliant writing that Rachmaninoff learned early to provide for his own instrument, while the violin and cello parts are less superbly conceived—a relative weakness that Rachmaninoff overcame with more experience.

The final tempo marking for the coda, Alla Marcia funebre ("In the style of a funeral march"), justifies the "élégiaque" title, and it allows the young composer to learn his art by setting up an expressive situation as a challenge to his growing talents.

## Tres impresiones, for piano trio

### Mariano Perelló (1885–1960)

Mariano Perelló was a Catalan violinist and composer born in Barcelona and educated there in all the standard elements of music after showing considerable talent at an early age. Already at the age of nine he was asked to participate in a series of concerts organized to raise funds in aid of families of Spanish reservists affected by the Cuban war of independence (1895–1898). At that time he met two major Spanish composers who greatly affected his later life: Enrique Granados and Isaac Albéniz. The latter suggested that he study with the Belgian violinist Mathieu Crickboom, who had recently established residence in Barcelona and led Perelló to divide a good deal of his mature career between Spain and Belgium. In 1897 Perelló received a diploma in piano, whereafter he performed regularly on both instruments, playing piano in chamber music and violin in both with orchestras and in chamber music.

For 25 years he toured widely in Europe and South America as the violinist of the Trio Barcelona—with the pianist Ricardo Vines and the cellist Joaquim Peres Martes—which was the basis of his fame as a performer. He eventually had to give it up because a painful joint in his left hand inhibited the freedom required to continue in his main activity. For the rest of his life, he remained active in juries for musical competitions and

promoting young artists and special events. Shortly before his death in 1960, he gave a presentation about his old friend Albéniz during a celebration of that composer's centennial.

Perelló's best-known composition, "Three Impressions," written in 1922, is dedicated to his two partners in the Trio Barcelona. Not surprisingly, it gives each of the three musicians a leading role at various times evokes three significant aspects of the Spanish music of his early years. The first movement, "Thinking of Albéniz," explicitly calls up the style of the composer who so shaped his early career. The second movement, "Andalusian Caprice," suggests two dancers, a graceful sinuous woman being observed and echoed by a lithe man. The finale, "Gypsy Scene," calls up the colorful, vivid life of gypsies in Granada.