



presents

The Israeli Chamber Project



Sunday, October 20, 2024, at 3:00 PM,
Sweeney Concert Hall / Sage Hall, Smith
College, Northampton, MA

About Today's Concert

John Montanari, Artistic Director

Jörg Widmann's works, which number over a hundred in virtually every genre from solo to opera, can be characterized by the term “polystylism,” meaning you never know whether you’re going to get lots of dissonance, extended technique (e.g., string players making scratchy sounds with their bows), good old-fashioned tonality, or maybe all that and more in one piece. Of his 24 Duos (2008), Widmann wrote “Everything is interwoven, and everything one instrument does has consequences for the other.”

The musical products of Robert Schumann’s troubled final years, including his two Sonatas for Violin and Piano, have, after decades of relative neglect, turned up on concert programs and recordings far more frequently. The Violin Sonata in D minor of 1851/52 was premiered by Clara Schumann and violinist Joseph Joachim, the latter of whom wrote, in a letter to a friend, “I must not fail to tell you about the new Sonata in D minor . . . I consider it one of the finest compositions of our times in respect of its marvelous unity of feeling and its thematic significance. It overflows with noble passion, almost harsh and bitter in expression, and the last movement reminds one of the sea with its glorious waves of sound.”

Maurice Ravel, who was of partial Basque heritage, drew on the Basque zortziko dance for the first movement of his Piano Trio – note the swaying effect of the frequent subdivision of its eight-beat measure into three beats + two beats + three beats. The name of the second movement, Pantoum, refers to a Malaysian verse form, though the use of the term may be more impressionistic than descriptive. The third movement is a passacaille (Italian: passacaglia), a set of variations over a repeated bass line. And the final movement, with no fancy title or reference, demonstrates, as do the other three, that Ravel’s genius at orchestration shines forth from three instruments as much as a hundred.

The Israeli Chamber Project

Carmit Zori, Violin
Raman Ramakrishnan , Cello
Assaff Weisman, Piano

PROGRAM

Jörg Widmann (b. 1973)

Selections from Duos for Violin and Cello (2008)

- I. Dunkler Tanz
- II. Frage
- III. Scherzando
- IV. Capriccio
- V. Valse bavaroise

Robert Schumann (1810 - 1856)

Sonata for Violin and Piano in D minor, Op. 121 (1851)

- I. Ziemlich langsam - lebhaft
- II. Sehr lebhaft
- III. Leise, einfach
- IV. Bewegt

INTERMISSION

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Piano Trio in A minor, M. 67(1914)

- I. Modéré
- II. Pantoum: Assez vif
- III. Passacaille: Très large
- IV. Final: Animé

Israeli Chamber Project:
1755 Broadway, FRONT 3, #1087
New York, NY 10019
www.israelichamberproject.org

Artist Information

RAMAN RAMAKRISHNAN, cello

Cellist Raman Ramakrishnan enjoys performing chamber music, old and new, around the world. For two decades, as a founding member of the Horszowski Trio and the Daedalus Quartet, he toured extensively through North and South America, Europe, and Asia. He recorded for Bridge Records and Avie Records, including the complete piano trios of Robert Schumann and the complete string quartets of Fred Lerdahl. Mr. Ramakrishnan is currently an artist member of the Boston Chamber Music Society, and is on the faculty of the Bard College Conservatory of Music

Mr. Ramakrishnan has given solo recitals in New York, Boston, Seattle, and Washington, D.C. He has performed at Caramoor, at Bargemusic, with the Chicago Chamber Musicians, and at the Aspen, Bard, Charlottesville, Four Seasons, Kingston, Lincolnshire (UK), Marlboro, Mehli Mehta (India), Oklahoma Mozart, Portland, Skaneateles, and Vail Music Festivals. Ramakrishnan has toured with Musicians from Marlboro and has performed, as guest principal cellist, with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. As a guest member of Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble, he has performed in New Delhi and Agra, India, and in Cairo, Egypt. He has served on the faculties of the Kneisel Hall, Norfolk, and Taconic Chamber Music Festivals, as well as in the Music Performance Program of Columbia University

Mr. Ramakrishnan was born in Athens, Ohio and grew up in East Patchogue, New York. His father is a molecular biologist and his mother is the children's book author and illustrator Vera Rosenberry. He holds a Bachelor's degree in physics from Harvard University and a Master's degree in music from The Juilliard School. His principal teachers have been Fred Sherry, Andrés Díaz, and André Emelianoff.

He lives in New York City with his wife, the violist Melissa Reardon, and their son. He plays a Neapolitan cello made by Vincenzo Jorio in 1837.

ASSAFF WEISMAN, piano

Pianist Assaff Weisman's performances have taken him to some of the major venues in Europe, the Middle East and the Americas. These include appearances at the Rudolfinum in Prague, Beethovenhalle in Bonn, Philips Hall in The Hague, and Lincoln Center in New York. As first prize winner in the 2006 Iowa International Piano Competition, he has appeared as soloist with the Orchestre Métropolitain (Montreal), Sioux City Symphony, the American Chamber Orchestra, the Connecticut Valley Chamber Orchestra and the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional of Peru. His radio credits include WQXR's "Young Artist Showcase" and "The Voice of Music" in Israel, as well as multiple appearances on WGBH radio in Boston, where he has recorded repertoire ranging from Bach to André Previn.

His 2002 release of an all-Schubert recording for Yamaha's "NYC Rising Star" series quickly became one of its best sellers. An avid chamber musician, Mr. Weisman has collaborated with Isidore Cohen, Peter Wiley, and Michael Tree, among others. He has taken part in the Aspen Music Festival, Campos do Jordão (Brazil), Lima Chamber Music Festival (Peru), The Music Festival of the Hamptons, and Verbier (Switzerland). Weisman is a founding member and the Executive Director of the award-winning Israeli Chamber Project, with which he has toured since 2008.

Mr. Weisman is a graduate of The Juilliard School, where he received both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees as a student of Herbert Stessin, and where he now is a member of the Evening Division piano faculty.

Prior to his studies in New York, he studied with Professor Victor Derevianko in Israel, where he was a winner of the America-Israel Cultural Foundation Scholarships. Mr. Weisman is a Yamaha Artist.

CARMIT ZORI, violin

Violinist Carmit Zori is the recipient of a Leventritt Foundation Award, a Pro Musicis International Award, and the top prize in the Walter W. Naumburg International Violin Competition. She has appeared as a soloist with the New York Philharmonic, the Rochester Philharmonic, and the Philadelphia Orchestra, among many others. She has given solo recitals at Lincoln Center, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, the Phillips Collection in Washington D.C., the Tel Aviv Museum, and the Jerusalem Center for the Performing Arts.

Her performances have taken her throughout Latin America and Europe, as well as Israel, Japan, Taiwan, and Australia, where she premiered the Violin Concerto by Marc Neikrug. In addition to her appearances with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Ms. Zori has been a guest at chamber music festivals and concert series around the world, including the Chamber Music at the Y series in New York City, Festival Casals in Puerto Rico, the Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival, the Bard Music Festival, Chamber Music Northwest, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, the Seattle Chamber Music Festival, the Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival, Bach Dancing and Dynamite chamber music festival in Madison, Wisconsin, and the Marlboro Music Festival in Vermont.

After hearing the fifteen-year-old Ms. Zori, Isaac Stern arranged for her to come to the United States from her native Israel to study at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where her teachers included Ivan Galamian, Jaime Laredo, and Arnold Steinhardt.

Ms. Zori, who for ten years was an artistic director at Bargemusic, founded the Brooklyn Chamber Music Society in 2002. She has recorded on the Arabesque, Koch International, and Elektra-Nonesuch labels. She is professor of violin at Rutgers University and at SUNY Purchase, where she also serves on the chamber music faculty.

ABOUT THE ISRAELI CHAMBER PROJECT

Now in its second decade, the Israeli Chamber Project is a dynamic ensemble comprising strings, winds, harp, and piano, bringing together some of today's most distinguished musicians for chamber music concerts and educational and outreach programs both in Israel and abroad. It was named the winner of the 2011 Israeli Ministry of Culture Outstanding Ensemble Award and the 2017 Partos Prize in recognition of its passionate musicianship, creative programming, and commitment to educational outreach.

Based both in Israel and in New York, the ensemble was created as a means for its members to give something back to the community where they began their musical education and to showcase Israeli culture, through its music and musicians, to concertgoers overseas. Among its members are prize-winners at the Tchaikovsky International Competition in Russia, the Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award, Avery Fisher Career Grant, and the Gaspar Cassado Cello Competition.

An important part of the Israeli Chamber Project's mission is to expand the chamber music literature by commissioning both new works as well as new arrangements of existing works. Original commissions have included works by Lowell Liebermann, Matan Porat, Jonathan Keren, Gilad Cohen, Yohanan Chendler, Amit Gilutz, and Zohar Sharon. New arrangements of works by Debussy, Ravel, Barber, Stravinsky, Schumann, and Bernstein, created by Yuval Shapiro, Jonathan Keren, and Sivan Magen have become a cornerstone of the ensemble's programming.

From the Valley Classical Concerts President

On behalf of the Board of Valley Classical Concerts, I would like to welcome you to our 2024-25 season. Founded as Music in Deerfield, VCC is now celebrating its 45th year of presenting internationally known classical chamber music ensembles for the enjoyment of music lovers in the Pioneer Valley and beyond.

We hope you are as excited as we are to hear these fabulous artists, from young prizewinners to musicians who have played together for decades. Many of them are returning simply because they appreciate the enthusiasm of our audience, and the marvelous acoustics of Sweeney Concert Hall.

I would like to thank and to acknowledge gratefully our many generous corporate sponsors, individual and Board donors, and Smith College, who have helped make this season possible and who have supported VCC over the years. They are all listed in the playbill.

Enjoy the music, encourage friends and family and younger adults and students to come to the concerts, and please consider donating to Valley Classical Concerts! Without continued financial support from our loyal patrons and lovers of chamber music, Valley Classical Concerts would not exist.

Dr. William Harbison, Board President

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Saturday October 26, 2024 at 7:00 PM at Wesley Methodist Church, Hadley

Messiah and a Chandos Anthem
Saturday December 21, 2024 at 7:30 at Grace Church, Amherst

Vermeer's "The Concert"
March 7-8, 2025 in the Warbeke Room, Pratt Hall, Mount Holyoke College,
South Hadley
Two performances: Friday March 7 at 7:30pm and Saturday March 8 at 3pm

Venetian Vespers
Saturday May 3, 2025 at 7:30 at Grace Church, Amherst

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The Israeli Chamber Project

Saturday, November 2, 7:30 pm

*The Ciompi String Quartet with
pianist Ieva Jokūbavičiūtė*

Sunday, December 15, 3:00 pm

*The Lysander Trio
(note date change)*

Sunday, February 9, 3:00 pm

*The Lydian String Quartet with pianist
Jiayan Sun*

Sunday, March 9, 3:00 pm

Espressivo! Piano Quartet

March 30, 3:00 pm *The Ulysses
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