Valley Classical Concerts

Musicians of the Boston Symphony Orchestra



Sunday, November 22, 2026, 3:00 PM
Chapin Auditorium, Mount Holyoke College
South Hadley, MA

Musicians of the Boston Symphony Orchestra

Lorna McGhee, flute, Jessica Zhou, harp
Richard Ranti, bassoon, David Harding, viola

Program

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Flute Sonata in E-flat major, BWV 1031
I. Allegro moderato
II. Siciliano
III. Allegro

André Jolivet (1905-1974)
Pastorales de Noël
I. L'Étoile
II. Les Mages
III. La Vierge et l'enfant
IV. Entrée et danse des bergers

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)
Sonatine for Flute, Harp, and Viola
I. Modéré
II. Mouvement de menuet
III. Animé

Intermission

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
Duet no. 1 for Flute and Harp in C Major

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)
Fantasie for Flute and Harp, Opus 124

Program (cont.)

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
Sonata for Flute, Viola and Harp

I. Pastorale. Lento, dolce rubato
II. Interlude. Tempo di minuetto
III. Final. Allegro moderato ma risoluto

No audio or video recording of this concert is allowed. Thank you.

About Today's Concert

John Montanari, VCC Artistic Director

The Gallic flavor of today's program befits the Boston Symphony's old sobriquet, "the world's greatest French orchestra." Under conductors Pierre Monteux, Charles Munch, and Seiji Ozawa (check out his superb Ravel recordings with the BSO), the Boston Symphony exemplified the clear textures and sumptuous sonorities that lent an idiomatic flair to their performances of the French repertoire.

First, though, Bach. But ah – which Bach? Though customarily attributed to Johann Sebastian, today's Sonata survives in manuscripts prepared by his son Carl Philipp Emanuel and Papa Bach's pupil Christian Friedrich Penzel, leading some scholars to credit the work to C. P. E., and suggest that it was based in an earlier Sonata by Joseph Joachim Quantz, flute master to C. P. E. Bach's employer, King Frederick the Great. Regardless, the Sonata's central Siciliano can be found on any good "Bach's Greatest Hits" album. Even if he didn't write it.

Also uncertain in its authorship is today's Duet "by Mozart." In February 2026, François-Pierre Guy, a conservator at the National Library of France, was perusing some anonymous manuscripts, and came across a 44-page notebook containing music lessons for a young French musician named Marie-Louise-Philippine de Bonnières de Guînes. Among the notebook's contents were composition exercises for flute and harp written in two different hands, likely pupil and student. M. Guy recognized the teacher's hand as that of, mon Dieu, Mozart, who was known to have taught Mlle de Guînes while visiting Paris in 1778.

About Today's Concert (cont.)

Today's Duet is the most substantial of the exercises, described by Armin Brinzing, Director of the Mozart Library at the International Mozarteum Foundation in Salzburg, as "the most important Mozart discovery in decades."

Over a lifetime of composition, André Jolivet progressed from being a disciple of Debussy and Ravel through an atonal phase, after encountering the music of Arnold Schoenberg. He finally settled on the simple and lyrical style exemplified by the Christmas Pastorales you'll hear today.

Like many a good French composer, Camille Saint-Saëns contributed to the repertoire of the harp. In addition to a Fantasie for solo harp and a Morceau de Concert for harp and orchestra, Saint-Saëns originally combined the harp with the violin in today's Fantasie, written in 1907, the same year as Stravinsky's first major works and Schoenberg's first foray into atonality in his second String Quartet. Lorna McGhee made today's arrangement for flute and harp.

Could there be a better Impressionist combination of instruments than flute, viola and harp? Claude Debussy, creator of the Impressionist style, devised this combo for his 1916 Sonata, one of six planned Sonatas for diverse instruments planned as an homage to such French Baroque composers as Couperin and Rameau, and marking his first chamber works since his String Quartet of 1893. French harpist Carlos Salzedo, composer, conductor and mentor to a generation of well-known harpists, added to this unique trio's repertoire in his arrangement of Maurice Ravel's Sonatine for solo piano.

About the Artists

Lorna McGhee became principal flute of the Boston Symphony Orchestra at the start of the 2024-2025 season. She previously played principal flute with the Pittsburgh Symphony, with which she recorded symphonies of Beethoven, Bruckner, Brahms, Dvořák, and Tchaikovsky, as well as the PSO's Grammy award-winning Shostakovich Symphony No. 5. She has performed as guest principal with Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Minnesota

Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, London Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic, Philharmonia, Academy of St-Martin-in-the-Fields, and Chamber Orchestra of Europe, among others. Before emigrating to North America, McGhee was co-principal flute of the London's BBC Symphony Orchestra.

As a concerto soloist, Lorna McGhee has appeared with orchestras in Japan, Taiwan, Canada, the UK, and the U.S. with such groups as the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Victoria Symphony, Manitoba Chamber Orchestra, Oregon Bach Festival Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, and Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. As winner of the Shell/LSO Scholarship, she performed the Ibert Concerto with London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican Center in London and in a gala concert in Glasgow's Royal Concert Hall. Other career highlights include performances of Penderecki's Flute Concerto under the baton of the composer, Bach's Orchestral Suite No. 2 with both Yannick Nézet-Séguin and Nicholas McGegan, Saariaho's concerto Aile du songe with Osmo Vänskä, and Mozart's G major concerto with Manfred Honeck.

Lorna McGhee's love of chamber music has led to performances in Europe, North America, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, India, Sri Lanka, and Australia, in such venues as the Wigmore Hall, Edinburgh International Festival, the Louvre, the Schubertsaal of Vienna's Konzerthaus, and the Library of Congress. She has participated in festivals including the Australian Festival of Chamber Music, Ottawa Chamberfest, Cleveland Chamberfest, Sitka Festival, and Seattle Chamber Music Society.

Dedicated to nurturing the upcoming generation of musicians, McGhee has taught flute performance at the University of Michigan, the University of British Columbia, and Carnegie Mellon University, and has given masterclasses for educational institutions and flute festivals around the world. She studied with David Nicholson at the Junior Department of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and later with Michie and William Bennett at the Royal Academy of Music in London.

Born in Beijing, China, BSO principal harp **Jessica Zhou** joined the Boston Symphony Orchestra in the fall of 2009. In 2001, Zhou became the first and only Chinese harpist ever to win top prizes in three of the most prestigious harp competitions in the world. That same year she won the 2001 Pro Musicis

About the Artists (cont.)

International Award, leading to her critically acclaimed New York debut in Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall. She is a two-time winner of the Anne Adams Award National Harp Competition sponsored by the American Harp Society, which presented her in recitals in Boston, New York City, San Diego, Mexico, and Taipei, Taiwan, where she also served as chairman of the jury in the First Taiwan National Harp Competition.

As a soloist, Zhou has performed with the Israel Philharmonic, New York City Opera Orchestra, and Geneva Chamber Orchestra, where she gave the world premiere of Haim Permont's Double Harp Concerto during the 2002 World Harp Congress. Her appearances as concerto soloist with the BSO include performances of Mozart's Concerto for Flute and Harp in C major with BSO principal flute Elizabeth Rowe, at Symphony Hall in January 2016; in August 2016 at Tanglewood; and in November 2017 in Tokyo's Suntory Hall during the BSO's Japan tour with Andris Nelsons conducting. From 2004 until 2009 when she joined the Boston Symphony Orchestra, she was principal harpist of New York City Opera. Zhou is a graduate of the Interlochen Arts Academy, where she studied with Joan Holland. A faculty member at Tanglewood Music Center, Boston University, and New England Conservatory, she holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the Juilliard School, where she was a student of Nancy Allen.

Richard "Rick" Ranti is a highly distinguished orchestral musician, chamber artist, and educator who capped off a remarkable 40-year classical music career with his retirement from the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) in the summer of 2023. Born into a deeply musical family, he refined his immense talent at the Interlochen Arts Academy and the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music before launching his professional career. Ranti served as the BSO's Associate Principal Bassoon and the Boston Pops' Principal Bassoon for 34 years, having previously performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra and made guest appearances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Toronto Symphony. Beyond his orchestral tenure, he has been a prolific chamber musician, performing at renowned festivals like Tanglewood and Marlboro, and a dedicated educator shaping the next generation of woodwind players on the faculties of the New

England Conservatory and Boston University. Following his retirement at the conclusion of the BSO's 2023 European tour, Ranti has continued to influence the musical community through select guest appearances, masterclasses, and active service on various arts boards including Valley Classical Concerts.

Guest violist **David Harding** has an extensive solo and chamber music career, having performed throughout Europe, the United States, Canada, Central America and Australia, in such renowned venues as Berlin's Philharmonie, the Beethovenhaus in Bonn, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and New York's 92nd Street Y and Metropolitan Museum of Art. Noted for his "eloquent viola playing" (The Scotsman), David has performed at music festivals around the world, including the Edinburgh International Festival, Ottawa International Chamber Music Festival, Seattle Chamber Music Society, Sitka Chamber Music Festival, Australian Festival of Chamber Music, and Philip Glass' "Days and Nights Festival" in Big Sur, California. David's career has involved collaborations with leading instrumentalists and ensembles such as the Pacifica, Shanghai, Cypress, Dover, Fine Arts and Miro Quartets as well as the Gryphon Trio. David was formerly a member of the Toronto String Quartet and the Chester String Quartet ("one of the country's best and brightest young string quartets" — Boston Globe)

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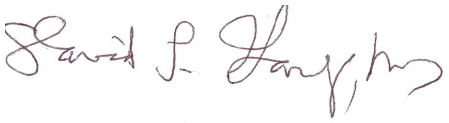
VCC is a virtual organization, so there is no office to commute to. Just bring your own computer! If you are interested in volunteering, write us at office@valleyclassicalconcerts.org or leave a message at (413) 239-0417.

From Valley Classical Concerts' Vice-President

Welcome to our second concert of the 2026-27 season at Mt. Holyoke. In this season of gratitude and Thanksgiving, we are delighted to be hosting some truly gifted performers from the Boston Symphony. The program is exciting and varied – flute, harp, viola, and bassoon. The VCC audience will be among the first to hear a premier of a newly discovered work by Mozart!

We again express our gratitude to the businesses listed in our program who all support our concerts. Please thank them and patronize them. And if it is possible for you to send us a donation to keep these wonderful concerts going, please consider it. Revenue from ticket sales alone is not enough to sustain VCC. Your monetary contributions permit us to maintain the highest musical standards as well provide free tickets to young people 18 and under, and to Card to Culture patrons.

There is nothing like the excitement and intimacy of experiencing live chamber music. It brings us together, lifts our spirits, and enriches our life in the Pioneer Valley. Enjoy!



David L. Gang, MD
Vice-President, Valley Classical Concerts

A quote from Albert Einstein:

"If I were not a physicist, I would probably be a musician. I often think in music. I live my daydreams in music. I see my life in terms of music."

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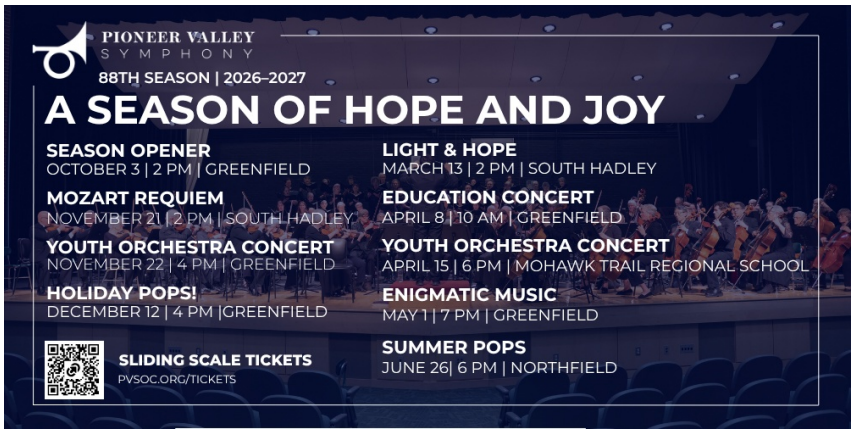



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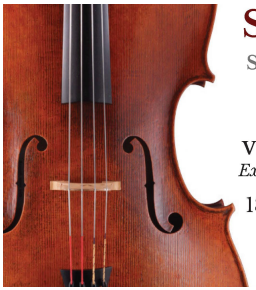

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