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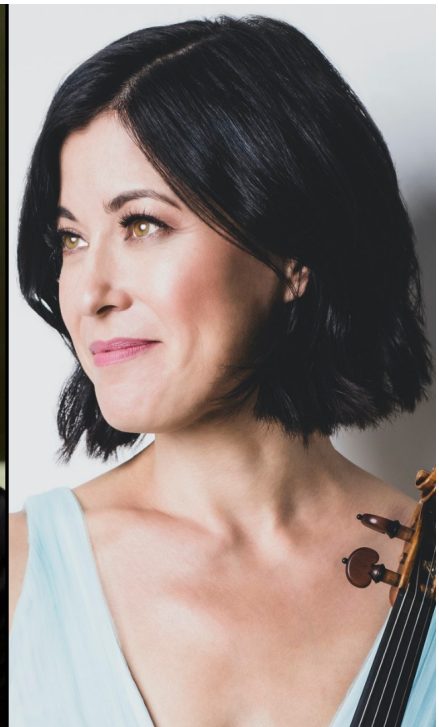
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Sophie Shao & Friends

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2024

7:30 PM ET

ROBISON HALL, MAHANEY ARTS CENTER



Sophie Shao and Friends

Jennifer Frautschi, Violin · Sophie Shao, Cello · Christina Dahl, Piano

Three Pieces for Cello and Piano (1914)

Nadia Boulanger

- I. Modéré (1887–1979)
- II. Sans vitesse et à l'aise
- III. Vite et nerveusement

Sophie Shao, Cello · Christina Dahl, Piano

Castillo Interior (*The Interior Castle*) (2013)

Pēteris Tāks

(*b.* 1946)

Christina Dahl, Piano

Sonata for Violin and Piano (1922)

Marguerite Canal

- I. Andantino (1890–1978)
- II. Sourd et haletant
- III. Adagio espressivo
- IV. Allegro con bravura

Jennifer Frautschi, Violin · Christina Dahl, Piano

❧ *Intermission* ❧

Piano Trio No. 1 in B-flat Major, D.898 (1828)

Franz Schubert

- I. Allegro Moderato (1797–1828)
II. Andante, un poco mosso
III. Scherzo: Allegro
IV. Rondo: Allegro vivace

Jennifer Frautschi, Violin · Sophie Shao, Cello · Christina Dahl, Piano



*This performance is made possible with generous support
from the Paul Nelson Performance Endowment and the Rothrock Family Residency Fund.*

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Program Notes

BOULANGER Three Pieces for Cello and Piano (1914)

Note courtesy of the musical score publisher

Nadia Boulanger was an organist, composer, and conductor and one of the most influential teachers of the 20th century. Among her students were many important composers, soloists, arrangers, and conductors including Daniel Barenboim, Elliott Carter, Aaron Copland, John Eliot Gardiner, Philip Glass, Roy Harris, Quincy Jones, Astor Piazzolla, and Virgil Thomson, to name a few. Her Three Pieces, originally for organ, were later transcribed by Boulanger for cello and piano, and perhaps best described as a post-impressionist work. The opening piece—Modéré—is a delicate, mysterious moderato. The middle work, *Sas vitesse et à l'aise*, resembles a peaceful lament, while the finale—Vite et nerveusement—is edgy and almost frenetic, resembling the tumultuousness of modern life.

TASKS Castillo Interior (*The Interior Castle*) (2013)

Note courtesy of pianist/commissioner Awadagin Pratt

Castillo Interior for solo piano is part of the commissioning project *Stillpoint* in which pianist Awadagin Pratt asked six composers to take inspiration from five lines from the “Four Quartets” of T.S. Eliot:

*At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is,
But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,
Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor towards,
Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still point,
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.*

Pēteris Vasks chose to transcribe his piece *Castillo Interior*, originally written in 2013 for violin and cello, for solo piano. The title refers to Vasks’s musical depiction of “The Interior Castle,” the 1577 text by the Spanish Carmelite nun and Christian mystic St. Teresa of Avila. Her prose proves to be a formidable counterpoint to Eliot’s poetry, as both challenge listeners to reflect on the dwellings of our interior lives and how we connect across the expanse of humanity (and perhaps beyond) and in Pratt’s own words, “serves as a great expression of an aspirational quality of life.”

CANAL Sonata for Violin and Piano (1922)

Note with input from violinist Jennifer Frautshi

In 1917, French composer Marguerite Canal earned the unique distinction of being the first woman to conduct an orchestra in France. She was the second woman ever to win the prestigious Prix de Rome in composition (1920)—the first being Lily Boulanger in 1913. Canal composed this four-movement sonata two years later, while in Rome for her multi-year residency at the Villa Medici

that was awarded by the Prix de Rome. During her career, Canal wrote chamber works, works for orchestra, an opera, and more than 100 songs for voice and piano, some of which are unpublished. Trained as a singer, she composed vocal music with lyricism and expression while often revealing her experiences in love, feelings for children, and love of the sea near Brittany. Canal's exceptional lyricism is evident in this dreamy Sonata for violin and piano—one of her most played and beloved pieces.

SCHUBERT Piano Trio No. 1 in B-flat Major, D.898 (1828)

Note courtesy of the L.A. Philharmonic

The Piano Trio in B-flat is a large-scale work that doesn't feel like one; it feels intimate. Schubert began composing it in 1827, the year before his death, and worked on it simultaneously with the song cycle *Die Winterreise*. Perhaps Schubert needed a lighter project to divert his attention, and from the illness and melancholy that filled the composer's life in his last months; Op. 99 is a lively, buoyant work, with unrivaled lyricism throughout. The first movement, an *Allegro Moderato*, is supremely balanced, perfectly orchestrated. The piano takes the first theme with strings providing staccato accompaniment. An upward scale on the piano leads to the second theme, first stated by the cello. Minor incarnations of the theme ensue with increasing longing. The movement is both vigorous and mellifluous, and is the longest of the Trio.

The second movement, marked *Andante un poco mosso*, starts with a beautiful lullaby-like melody on cello that moves to the violin. After growing and increasing in tempo, passing the theme among each instrument, a more elegant section starts, then becomes more agitated, entwining through minor keys, developing ideas. There is a return to the lilting melody from the beginning of the movement and the *Andante* ends sweetly.

The third movement is a *Scherzo Allegro* that borrows from the *Ländler*—a folk-dance in 3/4 time that features hopping, stomping, and, occasionally, yodeling. The *Ländler* was popular in Austria at the end of the 18th century and is thought to have contributed to the evolution of the waltz. A mellower, more refined Trio section in the middle shows off violin and cello trading the melody, while piano plays staccato pairs of chords. The more rugged *Scherzo* returns with a piano call and twirls to the finish. The movement is vintage Schubert—just the sort of music he loved to improvise to accompany dancing at his regular soirées.

The finale is a rondo, though it is close to a developmental sonata form. It is also dance-like and the three instruments follow one another throughout, playing tripping dotted figures, arpeggios, and trills. The music continues to develop and vary, changing keys, making declarative pronouncements and adding to the picturesque flight—one of the most unique and beautiful in Schubert. After whirlwinds of material, the finale settles, walks merrily along in a conversational way, then interrupts itself loudly and leaps to a cadence.

Robert Schumann said of it: “One glance at Schubert’s Trio (Op. 99) and the troubles of our human existence disappear and all the world is fresh and bright again.” The Trio is suggestive of things to come in the genre—composers such as Brahms and Dvořák would go on to write piano trios in a similar, intimate vein. And although the Op. 99 Trio is now one of the most revered chamber works in the classical repertoire, it was never performed publicly during Schubert’s lifetime; the only performance Schubert heard was in the context of one of his “Schubertiad” evenings.



Biographies

Jennifer Frautschi, Violin

Two-time GRAMMY nominee and Avery Fisher career grant recipient violinist Jennifer Frautschi has appeared as a soloist with innumerable orchestras including the Cincinnati Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Milwaukee Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. As a chamber musician, she has performed with the Boston Chamber Music Society and Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and has appeared at Chamber Music Northwest, La Jolla Summerfest, Music@Menlo, Tippet Rise Art Center, Toronto Summer Music, and the Bridgehampton, Charlottesville, Lake Champlain, Moab, Ojai, Santa Fe, Seattle, and Spoleto Music Festivals.



Frautschi's extensive discography includes several discs for Naxos: the Stravinsky Violin Concerto with the Philharmonia Orchestra of London, conducted by the legendary Robert Craft, and two GRAMMY-nominated recordings with the Fred Sherry Quartet: Schoenberg's Concerto for String Quartet and Orchestra, and the Schoenberg Third String Quartet. Her most recent releases are with pianist John Blacklow on Albany Records, the first devoted to the three sonatas of Robert Schumann, the second, *American Duos*, is an exploration of recent additions to the violin and piano repertoire by contemporary American composers Barbara White, Steven Mackey, Elena Ruehr, Dan Coleman, and Stephen Hartke. She also recorded three widely

praised CDs for Artek: an orchestral recording of the Prokofiev concerti with Gerard Schwarz and the Seattle Symphony, the violin music of Ravel and Stravinsky, and 20th century works for solo violin. Other recordings include a disc of Romantic Horn Trios, with hornist Eric Ruske and pianist Stephen Prutsman, and the Stravinsky Duo Concertant with pianist Jeremy Denk.

Born in Pasadena, California, Frautschi attended the Colburn School, Harvard, the New England Conservatory, and the Juilliard School. She performs on a 1722 Antonio Stradivarius violin known as the “ex-Cadiz,” on generous loan from a private American foundation with support from Rare Violins in Consortium. She currently teaches in the graduate program at Stony Brook University.

Sophie Shao, Cello

Cellist Sophie Shao, winner of the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant and top prizes at the Rostropovich and Tchaikovsky competitions, is a versatile and passionate artist whose performances the *New York Times* has described as “eloquent, powerful,” the *LA Times* noted as “impressive”, and the *Washington Post* called “deeply satisfying.” Shao has appeared as soloist



to critical acclaim throughout the United States and has commissioned Howard Shore’s cello concerto *Mythic Gardens*, performing the premiere with Leon Botstein and the American Symphony Orchestra, the UK premiere with Keith Lockhart and the BBC Concert Orchestra, and the European premiere with

Ludwig Wicki and the 21st Century Orchestra. She also premiered Richard Wilson's *The Cello Has Many Secrets* and Shih-Hui Chen's multimedia concerto *Our Son is Not Coming Home to Dinner*.

Shao has given recitals in Suntory Hall in Tokyo, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Middlebury College, Phillips Collection, University of Notre Dame, Lyric Society of New York, Lincoln Center, Bargemusic, and performed the complete Bach Suites at Union College. Her dedication to chamber music has conceived her popular "Sophie Shao and Friends" groups, performing in festivals around the country such as Chamber Music Northwest and Festival Mosaic. She has attended the Marlboro Music Festival, Ravinia Steans Institute, and the Bowers Program (formerly Chamber Music Society Two)—a young artist residency of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

She is a dedicated music educator, presenting a lecture "Why Bach is Still Relevant in the 21st Century" and a recital at the National Gallery of Art, serving as artist-in-residence at the Zeta Charter Schools in the Bronx, and conducting masterclasses at the University of Michigan, Juilliard, and Indiana University. Shao is on faculty at the University of Connecticut, where she teaches cello and chamber music, and is the winner of the 2024 UConn School of Fine Arts Outstanding Faculty Award. She has previously been on the faculty of Vassar College, Princeton University, and Bard Conservatory.

Shao's recordings include the Complete Bach Suites, Andre Previn's "Reflections" for Cello and English Horn and Orchestra on EMI

Classics, Richard Wilson's *Diablerie* and *Brash Attacks*, Barbara White's *My Barn Having Burned to the Ground, I Can Now See the Moon* on Albany Records, Howard Shore's original score for the movie *The Betrayal* on Howe Records, *Marlboro Music Festival's 50th Anniversary* on Bridge Records, Herschel Garfein's *The Layers* on Acis Records, and Howard Shore's *Mythic Gardens* on Sony Classical. Her new solo album *CanCan Macabre* has been released on Centaur Records.

A native of Houston, Texas, Shao began playing the cello at age six and studied with Shirley Trepel, the principal cellist of the Houston Symphony. At age thirteen she enrolled at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, studying cello with David Soyer and chamber music with Felix Galimir. After graduating from the Curtis Institute, she continued her cello studies with Aldo Parisot at Yale University, receiving a B.A. in Religious Studies from Yale College and an M.M. from the Yale School of Music, where she was enrolled as a Paul and Daisy Soros Fellow.

Christina Dahl, Piano

Christina Dahl is a chamber musician, soloist, and teacher who has spent 28 years on the piano faculty at Stony Brook University. She has spent summers at the Aspen Music Festival, been a collaborating artist at the Steans Institute of the Ravinia Festival, was a two-time fellow at the Tanglewood Center, and a fellow at the Banff Center. Dahl was both a faculty member and chair of the



piano department at the Eastern Music Festival for nine years, and following her tenure at Eastern, joined the faculty at the Icicle Creek Music Center and Yellow Barn Festival and School. She has been a visiting faculty member variously at the Cleveland Institute, Peabody Conservatory, and Ithaca College, and for three years was on the piano faculty at Lawrence University.

Dahl has twice been a cultural ambassador for the U.S. State Department and has toured and taught master classes in Africa, South America, and the United States. She has played at Aspen, the Banff Centre, the Steans Institute at Ravinia, and Tanglewood, has collaborated with her distinguished colleagues at Stony Brook in promoting new music, and has premiered pieces written specifically for her and Gilbert Kalish by composers on the faculty. She has performed at Weill Hall, the National Gallery in Washington DC, Merkin Hall in New York, and was invited to give master classes most recently at New England Conservatory, the Royal College of Music Stockholm, the Steinhardt Series at NYU, and the Art of Piano at Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. In 2015 she spoke at the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) conference as a panelist discussing non-traditional views of pedagogy and education.

Dahl has been invited to such noted series and festivals as the Gilmore International Piano Festival, Chicago Art Institute, and the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, and has played at universities and conservatories across the country, particularly with two different piano duo teams—one with her longtime colleague Gilbert Kalish, and with Oksana Ezokhina, artistic director

of the Icicle Creek Center for the Arts. Other prominent collaborators include Joshua Smith, principal flute of the Cleveland Orchestra, and Philip Setzer, Darrett Adkins, Ani Kavafian, Joel Krosnick, Meta Weiss, Eduardo Leandro, Curtis Macomber, as well as countless colleagues at various summer festivals. In 2012 she released a collaborative recording called *Decreasing Radius* with her husband, Richard Stout, a member of the Cleveland Orchestra. Dahl can be heard on the Bridge, Albany, Tzadik, and Gotta Groove labels.

She is a core member of Ensemble HD, which was founded by Joshua Smith and includes members of the Cleveland Orchestra. The Ensemble performs in concert halls as well as nontraditional venues, including bars, parks, festivals, and schools. Ensemble HD released its first double vinyl album in May 2013, *Live at the Happy Dog*. It was recorded at The Happy Dog, a local bar/restaurant in Cleveland's Gordon Square Arts District, which provided both an inspiring home base and an enthusiastic crowd for many appearances. The album was hailed by *Audiophile Review* as “a recording of lovingly performed chamber music” and by the *Economist*, which noted that the “challenging, ambitious pieces by 20th-century composers such as Dmitri Shostakovich, Anton Webern and Arvo Pärt divert the crowd from their beers and the awed silence after a piece, before the applause, can be as beautiful as the music itself.” Ensemble HD has been featured on NPR's Weekend Edition, BBC and PBS, and in The New York Times and The Philadelphia Inquirer, among others.

Dahl's work with Gilbert Kalish at Stony Brook—crafting an artisanal graduate program for pianists that emphasizes collaboration, immersion in new music,

and a comprehensive performance outlook—has yielded a staggering number of successful pianists who have gone into the profession as university professors, chamber music players, and members of new music ensembles such as Yarn/Wire and Bang on a Can. Despite the versatility of the pianists coming out of Stony Brook in a steady stream, the program has steadfastly adhered to a performance emphasis—and does not offer specific degrees in collaboration or education—focusing instead on a holistic approach to both performance and teaching.



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