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*THE MCKIM FUND
IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS*

LEFT BANK
CONCERT SOCIETY

SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 2013
8 O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING
COOLIDGE AUDITORIUM
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, THOMAS JEFFERSON BUILDING

The MCKIM FUND in the Library of Congress was created in 1970 through a bequest of Mrs. W. Duncan McKim, concert violinist, who won international prominence under her maiden name, Leonora Jackson; the fund supports the commissioning and performance of chamber music with piano.

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THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
Coolidge Auditorium

SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 2013

THE MCKIM FUND
IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

LEFT BANK CONCERT SOCIETY

Pre-Concert Presentation – 6:15 PM
A CONVERSATION WITH GEORGE WALKER

GEORGE WALKER (b. 1922)

Bleu, for unaccompanied violin (2012) (*World Premiere*)

Gregory Walker, *violin*

This marks the world premiere of the "Oberlin Betts," an exact copy of the Library's "Betts" violin by Antonio Stradivari, Cremona, 1704.



Program – 8:00 PM

GEORGE WALKER (b. 1922)

String Quartet no. 1 (1946)

Allegro

Molto adagio

Allegro con fuoco

The Left Bank Quartet

David Salness and Sally McLain, *violins*

Katherine Murdock, *viola*; Evelyn Elsing, *violoncello*

DINA KOSTON (1929-2009)

Duo in Two Parts, for violin and piano (1997-1998, rev. 1999)

(*McKim Fund Commission*)

With inner excitement (Violin: dolce; Piano: swift)

Light and quick; Dolce

Sally McLain, *violin* and Colette Valentine, *piano*

GEORGE WALKER (b. 1922)

*Poem, for soprano and chamber ensemble (1986),
based on T. S. Eliot's "The Hollow Men" (1925)*

James Ross, *conductor*

Patricia Green, *mezzo-soprano*; Joan McFarland, *soprano*

Alice Kogan Weinreb, *flute*; Lora Ferguson, *clarinet*

David Salness, *violin*; Evelyn Elsing, *violoncello*

Karen Abrahamson Thomas, *harp*; Colette Valentine, *piano and harpsichord*

Lee Hinkle, *percussion and baritone*; Paul Keesling, *percussion*

INTERMISSION

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)

Quintet no. 2 in G major, for two violins, two violas and violoncello,
op. 111 (1890)

Allegro non troppo, ma con brio

Adagio

Un poco Allegretto

Vivace ma non troppo presto

The Left Bank Quartet with Jonathan Richards, *viola*



THE OBERLIN BETTS

A GIFT OF PROFESSOR JUDY SLOAN & DR. WILLIAM SLOAN, 2013

The Oberlin Violinmaker's Workshop is a renowned program for professional luthiers who wish to study, learn and share information and ideas about the craft in order to advance knowledge within the field. The program is jointly sponsored by the Violin Society of America and Oberlin College, and takes place for two weeks every summer on the Oberlin College campus in Ohio. Many of the world's leading makers have participated in the workshop over the past sixteen years of its existence.

One of the key goals of the Oberlin workshop is to research, study and document some of the world's most important stringed instruments. To that extent, an initiative was launched in 2011 between the Library of Congress and Oberlin in order to document and copy one of the finest Stradivari violins in existence—the Betts Stradivari of 1704 from the Library's collection. The team at Oberlin consisted of approximately fifty leading makers from around the world with specific expertise in the fields of instrument construction, history, coatings and conservation. Dr. Steve Sirr, a radiologist with particular expertise in CT scanning of musical instruments, assisted the workshop team in studying the Betts. The CT scans provided valuable information to the group that was previously unknown. The violin is identified with an Oberlin label as well as an internal brand: Oberlin 2011. Additionally, all of the makers who participated have signed the internal rib structure. The Betts copy was completed "in the white" in June 2011. The task of varnishing and setup of the violin took place the following summer and was led by Jeff Phillips and Antoine Nedelec.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

GEORGE WALKER, *Bleu*, for unaccompanied violin (2012)

George Walker and his son Gregory have had a long and successful relationship performing and working together. Aside from performing the premiere of George's Violin Concerto, Gregory has notably recorded the elder's Sonata no. 1, for violin and piano (1958) and Sonata no. 2, for violin and piano (1979), both with George playing the piano. *Bleu* was composed in 2012 for Gregory and recorded that same year. This evening *Bleu* receives its world premiere in live performance in the Coolidge Auditorium.

From the composer:

Bleu, for unaccompanied violin was composed for Gregory Walker after his success in performing the premiere of the Violin Concerto of George Walker with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Neeme Järvi in 2009. The work is comprised of a single movement that is characterized by the alternation of short lyrical phrases with rapid, difficult figurations. A quote in double stops of a popular jazz tune is incorporated in the concluding measures of *Bleu*. –George Walker, 2013



GEORGE WALKER, String Quartet no. 1 (1946)

Completed in 1946, the String Quartet no. 1 was George Walker's first major chamber work to be performed and published, and the first of two quartets he has completed. It was premiered later in 1946 at the Juilliard School in New York. The second movement of the quartet was composed in honor of the composer's grandmother, Malvina King, who was the matriarch of the Walker family in Washington, DC, where Walker was born and raised. A dedication to King is inscribed on the title page of the quartet.

Often described as neo-Romantic, the quartet is more appropriately approached as a representation of the trend among some American composers in the 1930s and 1940s of remaining rooted in tonality and traditional forms. The composers who represented this trend included—in large part—students of Nadia Boulanger, such as Arthur Berger, Elliott Carter, Aaron Copland and Irving Fine. The terms that are used to describe their work from this period fail to accurately categorize the music. Sometimes referred to as neo-Classical, neo-Romantic or populist, these labels can be used to describe varying periods and styles, and therefore do not serve as the most helpful categorizations. Walker spent a period studying with Boulanger, but his principal composition teacher was Rosario Scalero of the Curtis Institute, who also taught Samuel Barber. His first quartet at times suggests influences from the impressionist composers, including Ravel, particularly with the juxtaposition of mellifluous themes, texture and rhythmic motives.

The *Allegro* opening movement begins with a rich theme in the first violin and bold underlying harmonies in the three lower voices. Walker quickly establishes a vocabulary of rhythmic patterns and harmonic progressions that work both simultaneously and separately, within a contained texture palette. The texture is at times light in color and breathy, only to be transformed into dark and intense encounters. The push and pull between these two worlds can make the first movement a deeply gripping and exhausting emotional experience.

Musicologist Bonnie Jo Dopp has referred to the *Molto adagio* of Walker's quartet as "meditative."¹ The slowly unfolding theme is uncomplicated rhythmically and supported by a relatively static harmony. These treatments of the theme and harmony have a calming effect, particularly after the unsettled nature of the *Allegro*. The central section, marked *Più mosso*, features a brief escalation in intensity as all of the voices progress towards the *fortissimo* peak in the higher register. After the summit is reached, the principal subject shared by the two violins recedes into the reprise of an earlier transitory figure to connect with the closing section. The final moments of the *Molto adagio* express optimism, followed by a settling upon the final F-sharp major tonality that has a cocooning effect, of drawing the listener inwards. This movement is frequently compared to the serene *Adagio* from Barber's String Quartet, op. 11 (1936)—known as the *Adagio for Strings* in its orchestral setting. Similarly, Walker extracted this movement and set it for string orchestra. That version is known as *Lyrical* for strings and was premiered in 1947. It is one of Walker's most widely performed works and has been recorded by ensembles such as the London Symphony Orchestra and New York Philharmonic.

The Allegro con fuoco incorporates elements of the first two movements: moments of dense rhythmic texture from the first and the reflective nature of the *Molto adagio*. This combination may be intended to provide contrast for the charging scalar runs, which culminate in momentary and slower paced lyrical flashes. After finally arriving at an uplifting section, the sentiment is quickly subsumed by a gritty rhythmic charge, led by the first violin, to a closing harmonic settling.



DINA KOSTON, *Duo in Two Parts*, for violin and piano (1997-1998, rev. 1999)

Dina Koston's *Duo in Two Parts* was the result of a Library of Congress McKim Fund Commission. It was premiered on March 10, 2000 in the Coolidge Auditorium by violinist Rolf Schulte and pianist Alan Feinberg. *Duo in Two Parts* places Koston in a long legacy of noteworthy composers who received McKim commissions, such as Milton Babbitt, John Cage, Elliot Carter, Jeffrey Mumford, Ned Rorem, Gunther Schuller, Morton Subotnick and Ellen Taaffe Zwillich. Koston, who was known mainly as a composer and pianist, was an integral cultural force in the Washington, DC music scene for decades.

As the founder and co-director of the Theater Chamber Players, Koston's artistic sensibilities sought to feature unusual repertoire with standard repertoire. This is a feat that seems normal in the current musical climate, but was rather novel in the metropolitan-Washington, DC area in the early decades of the Theater Chamber Players. Her co-director and former teacher Leon Fleisher said of Koston that she was "complicated, compulsive, wacky,"²—intended as a compliment. Those traits earned Koston a place as a force to be reckoned with and earned her a great deal of influence, in terms of performance trends, locally and nationally.

Koston was recognized with commissions from the Kennedy Center, Library of Congress, Cygnus Ensemble, Wolf Trap Foundation and New York New Music Ensemble. As a student of Nadia Boulanger and Luciano Berio, she certainly has the pedigree of a significant twenty-first-century composer. She also taught at the Peabody Conservatory and Tanglewood Music Center. Koston's music, which can be

¹ Dopp, Bonnie Jo. "Program Note: George Walker String Quartet No. 1." Unpublished, 2013.

² Fleisher, Leon. Quoted in Joan Reinthaler's "Friends, Colleagues Gather for a Memorial Concert for Dina Koston of the Theater Chamber Players." *The Washington Post*, August 31, 2009.

classified as firmly modernist, is largely comprised of works for chamber ensembles, solo instruments and voice. Her official oeuvre encompasses twenty-nine works, all of which were composed over the course of 1995-2009. This excludes any student compositions or works that remain unpublished.

The Library of Congress is home to the Dina Koston and Roger Shapiro Fund for New Music, a trust established by Koston in honor of her husband. This fund is “intended to promote music in the Western modernist tradition [and] further knowledge and appreciation of the music of Dina Koston.” Major projects that the fund has supported at the Library include the 2012 Samuel Beckett *Ohio Impromptu* project with the Cygnus Ensemble and the forthcoming John Adams Residency (May 2013).

From the composer:

“The performance directions for Part I give an indication of one characteristic of the *Duo*: the violin and the piano are treated as the very different instruments that they are. Only at the beginning of Part II do the two instruments share the same kind of material. The two parts of the *Duo* are themselves contrasting: the first part is lyrical, the second part, very fast-moving, with nervous energy. The coda returns to the *Dolce* of the violin opening section, with the piano now playing chords rather than arpeggios.

The pitch organization is a particular variety of twelve-tone writing which does not eschew repetition. The violin and the piano share the same pitches in the same register within each section, and each section occupies a particular range of pitch.

I am deeply grateful to the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts (VCCA), a working retreat for artists, where *Duo in Two Parts* was composed in 1997-1998.”

-Dina Koston, 1999³



**GEORGE WALKER, *Poem*, for soprano and chamber ensemble (1986),
based on T. S. Eliot’s “The Hollow Men” (1925)**

George Walker’s settings of texts for voice have proven to be highlights of his career. His accomplishments in this genre were marked by his being awarded the 1996 Pulitzer Prize in Music for *Lilacs*, for voice and orchestra (1995). His vocal works have set texts by a wide range of American and Anglo-European poets, such as Robert Burns, Emily Dickinson and T. S. Eliot. This corpus of compositions holds a significant place in the broader spectrum of American song. Walker’s music embodies the connections between Western European art song traditions and American tropes, such as the treatment of folk music.

From the composer:

Poem, for soprano and chamber ensemble was commissioned by the National Endowment for the Arts as a consortium grant with the Capitol Chamber Artists of Albany, New York. It was completed in the summer of 1986. The premiere occurred on February 8, 1987. The theatrical performance of *Poem*, reviewed by

³ Koston, Dina. “Note from the Composer: *Duo in Two Parts*.” Concerts from the Library of Congress Program (Washington, DC: Library of Congress Music Division, March 10, 2000), 3.

B. A. Nilsson in *The Schenectady Gazette*, was pronounced "a masterpiece....a devastating work, deserving greater attention." The work is scored for flute, clarinet in B-flat, violin, cello, guitar, harpsichord, piano and a large percussion section. In addition to the solo soprano part, a bass and a light soprano are used.

The three divisions of the musical setting of "The Hollow Men" by T. S. Eliot encompass the five sections of the text. A brief percussion cadenza utilizing xylophone, tom-toms, vibraphone, snare drum and maracas is introduced in the third section of the text. A fragment of the hymn, "At the River," by the Reverend Robert Lowry, is quoted in the fourth section. A transformation of the instrumental introduction that follows the opening preface appears in the middle of the fifth section. The work closes as the bass intones "A penny for the Old Guy". –George Walker, 2013

American expatriate poet T. S. Eliot (1888-1965) wrote "The Hollow Men" in 1925, while living in England. He became a British citizen two years later. The Nobel Foundation's biography for Eliot, who received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1948, highlights the poet's interest in representing "the complexities of modern civilization in language."⁴ Eliot witnessed first hand the European struggle to recover from World War I. In a similar vein as *The Waste Land* (1922), "The Hollow Men" is an attempt to address topics relevant to this recovery, to include the insignificance of the human body when a soul is absent, the emptiness felt in society given the colossal human loss associated with armed conflict and the decimation of innocence in the twentieth-century.

Walker's musical setting of Eliot's text communicates the composer's close reading of the poem, while still enabling the listener's individual interpretation. One tool for approaching the composer's setting is to examine his use of text painting through musical devices. There are also musical and literary references, specific to Eliot's original text and the composer's modifications of the text that may inform the listener's interpretation. The introductory line, "Mistah Kurtz—he dead," references the character Mister Kurtz from Joseph Conrad's classic text *Heart of Darkness* (1899). This characterization of a slave dealer who travels Africa establishes, from the very outset of Eliot's poem, that "Hollow" refers to an emptiness of spirit and humanity. Walker's *Poem* assigns this line to a "bass voice (deep),"⁵ that utilizes the sprechstimme technique to deliver the words.

The bass voice is used again only to close Walker's setting, with the words "A penny for the Old Guy," a phrase associated with Guy Fawkes Day in England (November 5). On that day, it is said that children traditionally chant the words while buying fireworks with which "to burn straw figures of Fawkes." He was the notorious man who attempted to destroy the Parliament building in London in 1605.⁶ The opening lines of the main text, "We are the hollow men/We are the stuffed men,"⁷ offer a pictorial reference to the straw versions of Fawkes that are burned down in England. The bass voice in Walker's setting offers a certain inherent hollowness in texture. Walker's treatment of these lines, as bookends to the main body of text, in effect posits that death has to do with the mortality of the soul and human spirit, rather than just the negative connotation of physical mortality. A living body that is

⁴ "Biography: T. S. Eliot." *The Nobel Foundation*, 1948, <http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1948/eliot-bio.html>.

⁵ Walker, George. *Poem for soprano and chamber ensemble* (St. Louis: MMB Music, 1987), 3-4.

⁶ Balaguer, Rubén. "Analysis and Interpretation of *The Hollow Men*" (Valencia: University of Valencia, web, December 30, 2011), <<http://mural.uv.es/rubafa/hollowmen.htm>>.

⁷ Eliot, T. S. "The Hollow Men." *Poems 1909-1925* (London: Faber & Gwyer, 1925).

devoid of compassion and the capacity to feel emotions is in effect dead. The act of children gaining joy from tossing an insignificant coin at a destitute “Old Guy” indicates that this moral and spiritual death has no link to age. The young and vibrant in physical appearance (i.e. the young men who fought on the front lines in World War I) have lost their innocence at the hands of a society that used them for geo-political purposes.

The text painting devices that Walker employs throughout *Poem* are quite apparent. They include woodwind runs to represent wind passing through barren landscapes, like “wind in dry grass,” and sets of undulating thirty-second notes in the harpsichord, representing “rats’ feet over broken glass/in our dry cellar.” Walker employs these devices in modified forms throughout the work. In the second section of text “the wind’s singing” is sung with a descending grace note that gives the effect of a short gust of wind. The scurrying of the rats’ feet return in this section, except now the “rat’s coat” is described as a symbolic disguise of the speaker, who is but a speck on the earth. Earth, here with its destitute form of humanity, is actually limbo, a “dead land...cactus land.” The speaker struggles between the spheres of the “twilight kingdom” of heaven and “death’s other kingdom,” where there are “no eyes...In this valley of dying stars.”⁸ Walker’s use of these musico-poetic devices, which only begin to explore his reading of “The Hollow Men,” can serve to engage the listener to a point of self-identification with the speaker. The composer provides the musical entrée for individuals to contemplate their existence in relation to the different strata of mortality, morality and meaning that Eliot establishes in the text.

In the setting of the fourth section of “The Hollow Men,” beginning “The eyes are not here...,” Walker inserts the thematic phrase from the traditional American song “At the River.” This choice connects the complex Eliot text with a melody familiar in American folk culture. The brief utterance—sung by a soprano—is paired with a line from Eliot, “Gathered on this beach of the tumid river.” This imagery connects with the previous textual mention of a “hollow valley,” which would have been carved out by a tremendously powerful river. Now an evaporated and “tumid” river, the absence of water symbolizes a departure of life that occurred in a distant past.⁹

Eliot’s final section of text begins with a debauched version of the children’s rhyme “Here we go round the Mulberry Bush,” instead set as “Here we go round the prickly pear.”¹⁰ Walker uses rhythm, offset from the main structural beats, to create the sense of children moving in circles around the “prickly pear” singing their rhyme. He repeats the rhyme at the very close of *Poem*, this time with whistling included to possibly indicate the church bells that ring “At five o’clock in the morning.” Rubén Balaguer’s analysis of “The Hollow Men” suggests that this line reveals “the time of resurrection, of returning to life, of hope for the empty men.”¹¹ The repeated lines of the closing, “*This is the way the world ends/Not with a bang but a whimper,*” indicate a forced acceptance of a new reality, devoid of spirit and without a departure to a different “Kingdom.”¹²

June 17th is George Walker Day in Washington, DC! Proclaimed in 1997 by Marion Barry, then Mayor of Washington, DC, this annual celebration honors Walker’s accomplishments as a leading composer, pianist and native-Washingtonian.

⁸ Eliot.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Balaguer.

¹² Ibid.

JOHANNES BRAHMS, Quintet no. 2 in G major, for two violins, two violas and violoncello, op. 111 (1890)

Brahms spent the summer of 1890 at the idyllic Alpine town of Bad Ischl, in the Salzkammergut region of Austria (located approximately 52 kilometers southeast of Salzburg). During that time he intended to compose a final chamber work, the Quintet no. 2 in G major, prior to taking a leave from composing. Luckily for us, the quintet would be followed by such treasures as the Trio in A minor, for clarinet (or viola), violoncello and piano, op. 114 (1891) and the Quintet in B minor, for clarinet (or viola) and two violins, viola and violoncello, op. 115 (1891). The G-major quintet was premiered on November 11, 1890 in Vienna by the Rosé Quartet with violist Robert Hausmann. The Rosé, known to champion new music in Vienna at the time, maintained a strong association with Brahms in his later years. Of note, the quartet delivered the premiere of Arnold Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*, op. 4 (1899).

Brahms' approach to the second quintet, as a sort of culminating musical expression, offers a tangible biographical interpretation of the work. He simultaneously sought to look back at classical traditions while pushing the capabilities of string chamber music further than even he had forayed in his preceding works. His decision to include two violas, rather than the more common two cellos of the period, was a look back at Mozart's treatments of the string quintet (K. 174, 406, 515, 516, 593 and 614).¹³ Interestingly, Brahms did not choose to broach the string quintet genre until the 1880s. The G-major is the second of two quintets, preceded by the String Quintet no. 1 in F major, op. 88, for two violins, two violas and violoncello (1882). The distinction between the two quintets is that the first is much more rooted in Classical era traditions. Musicologist Michael Musgrave describes the F-major as containing "a distinctly historical character through its classically inclined fugal finale."¹⁴ The G-major is considerably more Romantic in its exploration of harmony and flexibility of form, while maintaining clear ties to Classical traditions.

Max Kalbeck, a close friend of Brahms and a leading German author and music critic, wrote in his biography of the composer that the thematic and textural elements of the *Allegro ma non troppo, ma con brio*, derived from sketches for a possible fifth symphony.¹⁵ If accepted as fact, this report enhances the notion that the opening of the quintet is inherently symphonic. The cello has to challenge two violins and two violas that are plowing through *forte* tremelandi to surface with the principal theme. This dense string texture at the very opening recedes into moments of soloistic and improvisatory-like playing from the different voices. The call and response effect of shared thematic fragments, between the cello and violins, contribute to creating a sentiment of openness and a vast aural space, perhaps a symbolic homage to the Alps at Bad Ischl.

Musgrave describes the importance of the first thematic statement as "quite without precedent in [Brahms'] work," given the expansive shifts around the principal G-major tonality, including the relative minor of E, the C major subdominant and F-sharp minor.¹⁶ The development section of this sonata form movement expands upon the textures and thematic material of the exposition. Fragments of the themes are passed around unabashedly, with an even quicker rate of harmonic transformation, almost as an unusual long-distance sprint back to the G major of the

¹³ Musgrave, Michael. *The Music of Brahms* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985), 200-201.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Musgrave, 203.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 206.

recapitulation. The cello's push to trump the higher voices with its presentation of the theme is followed by warm thematic fragments in the violas. Brahms' choice of two violas adds a depth to the middle range of the string quintet range of sound. Francis Pott describes the coda as "a gradual withdrawal into self-communing stillness...followed by two brusque final chords."¹⁷

The *Adagio* is a luscious set of free variations. The theme is set in D minor and introduced by a rich and engrossing treatment of the first viola part. Brahms' expertise as one of the greatest composers for strings is in evidence here. Absolute clarity exists in every moment, with each individual voice acting as an integral component, regardless of whether it is serving as accompaniment or commanding the melody. The first two movements of the quintet boldly identify Brahms as a stalwart of the Austro-German string chamber music tradition. A hallmark of that tradition, going beyond just refined Viennese style, is the incorporation of Eastern European folk music. Musgrave's comment (which interprets Kalbeck's writings) that the quintet combines "Slavic feeling with German moods"¹⁸ is a hint towards experiencing the closing two movements of the quintet fully.

While heavily influenced by Viennese waltz music, the third movement—*Un poco Allegretto*—has subtle hints of rustic folk melodies. Brahms synthesizes these two currents by composing the first violin's opening theme with a chromatic sprinkling of folk flavor, above a firmly waltz-like accompaniment. The blend of the bucolic and sadness in this movement may be a reflection of nostalgic personal emotions Brahms was experiencing while composing the quintet, as if it were to be his final composition. This effect of contrasting moods is achieved through quite standard means, the use of parallel minor and major keys in G.

Brahms suggested to Kalbeck that the finale, *Vivace ma non troppo presto*, might be called "Brahms in the Prater."¹⁹ This refers to the public park in the second district of Vienna that contains a popular Ferris wheel. Indicating a sense of joy, leisure and vitality, this association with the Prater connects to the rustic flavor of the movement. Structured in rondo form, the *finale* incorporates Hungarian dance and gypsy-like elements, known as a Csárdás when combined. This fitting categorization of Austro-German interpretations of Hungarian folk music describes a type of aristocratic "idealized evocation of peasant dances" that is intended for social gatherings and official functions.²⁰ If the quintet is a summation of Brahms's career as a composer, this closing movement is a momentous example of his life-long commitment to incorporating folk music in forms associated with Western art music.

Nicholas Alexander Brown
Music Specialist
Library of Congress, Music Division

¹⁷ Pott, Francis. "Brahms String Quintet No 2 in G major, Op 111." Liner notes, *Brahms: String Quartets, The Raphael Ensemble* (London: Hyperion Records, 1995).

¹⁸ Musgrave, 201.

¹⁹ Kalbeck, Max. *Johannes Brahms* vol. 4 (Berlin: Deutsche Brahms Gesellschaft, 1908), 211.

²⁰ Bellman, Jonathan. "Csárdás." *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online* (web, 2013), <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/06918>>.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Composer **George Walker** was born in Washington, DC of West Indian-American parentage. He began studying piano when he was five years old. He was admitted to Oberlin College at age 14 and graduated with the highest honors in his class four years later. He was accepted into the Curtis Institute of Music where he was a pupil of Rudolf Serkin in piano and Rosario Scalero in composition. After graduating from Curtis, in 1945, he made his "notable" debut in Town Hall, New York in a piano recital sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Efrem Zimbalist. Two weeks later he performed the 3rd Piano Concerto of Rachmaninoff with the Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Eugene Ormandy, as the winner of the Philadelphia Youth Auditions.

In 1953 he made a tour of seven European countries with great acclaim as a pianist under the aegis of his management, the National Concert Artists. In 1956 he obtained a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Eastman School of Music and received Fulbright and John Hay Whitney Fellowships to Paris to study composition with Nadia Boulanger.

Upon his return to the United States he held teaching positions at Dillard University, the New School for Social Research, Smith College, the University of Colorado, Rutgers University (Chairman of the Music Department), the University of Delaware (Distinguished Chair) and the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University. His numerous awards include two Rockefeller Fellowships, two Koussevitsky Fellowships, five National Endowment for the Arts grants, an American Academy of Arts and Letters award, fellowships from the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, Smith College, Rutgers University and the Council for the Arts of New Jersey.

George Walker has received commissions from the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony, the Cleveland Orchestra, the New Jersey Symphony, the Eastman School of Music, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Washington Performing Arts Society, the Kindler Foundation, the Las Vegas Philharmonic, the orchestras of Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, the National Symphony and many other ensembles. He has published over 90 works in virtually every medium except opera. In 1996 he received the Pulitzer Prize in Music for *Lilacs* for voice and orchestra. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 2000 he was inducted into the American Classical Music Hall of Fame.

George Walker's music has been performed by every major American orchestra and has been recorded on many labels: Columbia Records, Sony, BIS, Albany, Klavier, Naxos, Centaur, Desto, Mastersound, Serenus and many others. Albany Records has produced a dozen CDs of his music and his performances of works from the standard piano repertoire, including as part of the *Great American Orchestral Works* and *Great American Chamber Works* series.

George Walker is the recipient of honorary doctorate degrees from Lafayette College, Oberlin College, Montclair State University, Bloomfield College, the Curtis Institute of Music, Spelman College and the Eastman School of Music. In May of 2012 he received the Aaron Copland Award from ASCAP. His autobiography, *George Walker: American Composer and Pianist*, is published by the Scarecrow Press.



Since his critically-acclaimed 2009 Philadelphia Orchestra debut performing on the 1718 "ex-Székel" Stradivarius, praised by the American Record Guide as a performance of "precision and rapturous immediacy," violinist **Gregory Walker** has gained international recognition as a violinist. Critics have described his playing as having "beautifully calibrated phrasing," "ravishingly beautiful" tone, and "sheer virtuoso force." He has developed collaborations with Poland's Filharmonia Sudecka

and the Encuentro Musical de los Americas in Havana, as well as the Colorado Symphony, Cleveland Chamber Symphony, Breckenridge Festival Orchestra, Fort Collins Symphony, Yaquina Chamber Orchestra, and the Colorado Music Festival Orchestra. Walker has appeared at the Spoleto Festival, the Centro Mexicano para la Música y las Artes Sonoras and the Tromsø Cathedral Series in Norway.

Profiled in the internationally-distributed 2012 Chuck Fryberger documentary, *Song of the Untouchable*, he is an official NS Design and Zeta electric violin artist. His discography includes critically-acclaimed releases from the Newport Classic, CRI, Orion, Centaur and Leonarda labels. He has performed with pop star Lyle Lovett and, as former concertmaster of the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra, appeared with Mstislav Rostropovich, Itzhak Perlman, Doc Severinsen and the Marcus Roberts Trio. He has been featured on National Public Radio, in *Strings Magazine*, and on the cover of the April 2007 issue of *International Musician*. Praised as an “excellent soloist” by *The New York Times*, Walker recorded the world-premiere of Pulitzer Prize-winning composer George Walker’s Violin Concerto in Warsaw with the Sinfonia Varsovia in 2010.



The Left Bank Quartet

David Salness attended the Cleveland Institute of Music and graduated from the Curtis Institute. He was a member of the Audubon Quartet from 1985 to 1997 and is currently Professor of Violin and Head of Chamber Music Activities at the University of Maryland School of Music.

Sally McLain graduated with distinction from Indiana University. As a member of the Potomac String Quartet, she recently completed a five-year recording project of the twelve quartets of David Diamond.

Katherine Murdock, a graduate of Yale University, served for six years as a member of the Mendelssohn Quartet and is currently violist of the Los Angeles Quartet. She is on the faculty of the University of Maryland School of Music.

Evelyn Elsing holds two degrees from the University of Michigan and also studied at the Juilliard School. Her piano trio, Ecco Trio, concertized for many years in the United States and Japan. She is a Professor of Cello and the Barbara K. Steppel Memorial Faculty Fellow at the University of Maryland School of Music.

These four musicians, with their diverse and colorful backgrounds, came together through the auspices of the Theater Chamber Players, and rather unexpectedly discovered the joys of a vibrant and enthusiastic collaboration. They have been The Left Bank Quartet since 1999, taking their name from the fact that the Kennedy Center, their first regular venue, is situated on the left bank of the Potomac River. Their combined experiences include participation in the major festivals of the musical world—Aspen, Banff, Chautauqua, Marlboro, Mostly Mozart, Prussia Cove, Ravinia, Santa Fe, Spoleto and Yellow Barn. Their teaching experiences, collaborations, national and international tours, recital and concerto performances, and success in international competitions give this quartet a rich and varied tapestry as they weave their musical message.

The Left Bank Quartet’s repertoire encompasses an eclectic range, with quartets of composers such as Chavez, Crumb, Durkó, Dutilleux, Ginastera, Jalbert, Kirchner, Kurtág, Korngold, Ligeti, Meriläinen, Nancarrow and Revueltas augmenting the

standard fare. Compositions written for and premiered by the quartet include Mark Wilson's *Time Variations* (Capstone Records) and String Quartet no. 4 by Lawrence Moss (Innova). *Gramophone Magazine's* review praised the composition for its "charm" and "dazzle," stating, "Moss uses the instruments with idiomatic mastery, ranging from kittenish endearments to electric flashes of energy...played by the Left Bank Quartet with brilliant focus and timbral variety..."



Keyboardist **Colette Valentine** has performed extensively throughout the United States, Asia, and Europe, in settings such as New York City's Merkin Concert Hall and Weill Recital Hall; the National Gallery and the Kennedy Center Terrace Theatre in Washington, DC; Suntory Hall and Casals Hall in Tokyo; Hoam Hall in Seoul; and the Louvre in Paris. She has been featured as a guest artist in chamber music concerts with the Grand Teton Music Festival, Meet the Composer, the Walden Chamber Players and the Left Bank Concert Society. For many years she toured and performed with her ensemble, Ecco Trio. She has served as assisting pianist for numerous national and international competitions and events, including the Washington International Competition for Strings, the International Clarinet Association ClarinetFest, the National Flute Association Convention and Competition, as well as the William Kapell International Piano Competition. She has collaborated on recordings for the Naxos, Albany, Antara, CRI, fontec, and Well-Tempered labels. She teaches and performs each summer at the Interlochen Adult Chamber Music Camp. For two decades, Valentine was a freelance musician in New York City, and in the fall of 2008, she joined the faculty of the newly created Collaborative Piano Department at the University of Texas at Austin Butler School of Music. She received her B.M. and M.M. degrees from the University of Maryland, under Nelita True, and a D.M.A. from Stony Brook University, under Gilbert Kalish.



James Ross is presently Director of Orchestral Activities and Associate Professor at the University of Maryland at College Park, Associate Director of the Juilliard Conducting program, as well as Orchestra Director of the National Youth Orchestra USA through Carnegie Hall. His principal conducting teachers included Kurt Masur, Otto-Werner Mueller, Seiji Ozawa and Leonard Bernstein. He began his conducting studies with Kurt Masur in Leipzig while serving as solo-horn of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. He was Music Director of the Yale Symphony Orchestra from 1990-94 and has worked as assistant conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Parisian period instrument group, Les Arts Florissants. He has taught at Yale University, at Haverford and Bryn Mawr Colleges, as well as the Curtis Institute of Music. Through his work with the New Lights initiative at the University of Maryland, Ross is involved with new thinking about the future of orchestras.



Mezzo-soprano **Patricia Green** has gained international renown for her remarkable versatility and exceptional musicianship. Her busy career has taken her to Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, the Glenn Gould Studio, the Kennedy Center, the National Centre of the Performing Arts in Mumbai, Glazunov Hall (St. Petersburg, Russia) and the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam—performing with the Dutch Radio Philharmonic, the National Symphony, l'Orchestre de Radio-France, and the Northern Israel Symphony. She "brilliantly conveyed" (*Opera Canada*) the role of Marie in Berg's *Wozzeck* in San Francisco with Ensemble Parallele and at the Astoria Festival (Oregon).

Green has performed more than thirty world premieres, working with composers Boulez, Schafer, Ligeti, Dusapin, Laitman, Walker, Ran, Thoresen, Del Tredici, Tann, Schwendinger and Goehr. She has performed new works with New Music Concerts, Robert Helps Festival, Vancouver New Music, Esprit Orchestra, Ensemble Parallele, Cygnus Ensemble, Theater Chamber Players, Posthoornkerk Concerts (Amsterdam), Musica Festival (Strasbourg), Nouvelles Musiques Montréal and Continuum in London (U.K.). In chamber music and oratorio, Green has been a featured soloist with the Cathedral Choral Society, Washington Bach Consort, Concerts from the Library of Congress, Washington Choral Arts, Bethlehem Bach Society, Westchester Mastersingers, Russian Chamber Arts, Left Bank Chamber Music, Baltimore Choral Arts, the U.S. Memorial Holocaust Museum Chamber Music series, and at many summer festivals. A passionate and successful educator, she is Associate Professor of Voice and Coordinator of the Vocal Arts Division at the University of Western Ontario.



Soprano **Joan McFarland** has been active as a soloist and professional chorister in a myriad of ensembles in the Washington area for almost two decades. A frequent performer of early music, recent solo appearances featuring music of Bach, Purcell, Hildegard Von Bingen, Rameau, and Gluck have been made with Opera Lafayette, the Alexandria Symphony, Fairfax Choral Society, Washington Bach Consort and Folger Consort. McFarland's operatic experience has been with the Washington Opera, Opera Americana and Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia. Her professional church and temple choir positions have included the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, St. John's Church (Lafayette Square), St. Alban's Church and Washington Hebrew Congregation. McFarland was the featured soprano soloist on the St. John's Choir recording *Anthems and Motets*. She received a GRAMMY Award in 2000 for her conducting work with the Maryland Boy Choir on a recording of Britten's *War Requiem* with the Washington Chorus. McFarland is a member of the voice faculty at St. Mary's College of Maryland and the Academy of Music in Gaithersburg, Maryland.



Alice Kogan Weinreb is a member of the National Symphony Orchestra and a founding member of both the Capitol Woodwind Quintet and the Eclipse Chamber Orchestra. Weinreb studied in France under a Fulbright Fellowship and was awarded First Prize in Flute at the École Normale de Musique in Paris. She is the featured artist in the recordings of Margaret Brouwer's *Diary of an Alien* for solo flute and *Skyriding*. She can also be heard on the Capitol Woodwind Quintet's CD, *A Musical Toast*. She has appeared as soloist with the Eclipse Chamber Orchestra in premieres of *Concertino*, written for her by Washington, DC, composer Truman Harris, and in David Teie's *Butterfly Concerto*. Weinreb began her career as principal flute of the Rhode Island Philharmonic and later was the piccolo player of the Richmond Symphony. She has performed as guest principal flute with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and toured as guest flutist with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra in South America. In the summers she performs with the Grand Teton Festival Orchestra in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Weinreb teaches at the Catholic University of America and in the National Symphony's Youth Fellowship Program.



Lora Ferguson, a native of Washington, DC, received a Bachelor of Music from Oberlin College and a Master of Music from the Catholic University of America. She

has been assistant principal clarinetist of the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra since 1980. Lora teaches clarinet at the Levine School of Music and is an adjunct professor of clarinet at George Washington University and George Mason University. She is the clarinetist of the Capitol Woodwind Quintet and has been a member of several chamber ensembles in the metropolitan Washington area. She performs often in chamber music concerts with her orchestra colleagues on the Millennium Stage at the Kennedy Center.



Karen Abrahamson Thomas, winner of the Alice Chalifoux Prize in Harp, is an active chamber and orchestral performer. She has performed with the Allentown Symphony, Wheeling Philharmonic and the Firelands Symphony, among others. Former harpist of the Cleveland Pops Orchestra, Thomas was a featured performer on NBC's televised Christmas Special with Peter Cetera. As an avid supporter of promoting and performing new works, Thomas can be heard on the Sounds Familyre record label and *Horse and Rider: A Journey Towards Freedom*, a documentary by Ben Stamper. Thomas is currently pursuing her D.M.A. at the University of Maryland as a student of Sarah Fuller and holds degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music and Baylor University. Previous teachers include Grammy nominated harpist Yolanda Kondonassis and Alice Chalifoux, former harpist with the Cleveland Orchestra. As Grand Prize Winner of the 2012 University of Maryland Concerto Competition, Thomas will be performing Alberto Ginastera's dynamic Concerto for Harp in November, 2013.



Lee Hinkle is a percussionist and baritone vocalist whose percussion playing has been called "rock-steady" by *The Washington Post*. Hinkle currently serves as the percussionist with the 21st Century Consort and regularly performs recitals and master classes across the US. His notable performances have included regular engagements with the National Symphony Orchestra, as well as tours with Bebe Neuwirth, Bernadette Peters, and the American Wind Symphony Orchestra. With several CDs to his credit, Hinkle's recordings can be heard on the Capstone Records, Town Hall Records and C. F. Peter's Corporation labels. Hinkle serves on the faculty of the University of Maryland.



Percussionist **Paul Keesling** is a native Floridian who holds a bachelor's degree in music performance from the University of South Florida. While in Florida, Keesling honed his skills by performing with touring shows including *West Side Story*, *Young Frankenstein*, Idena Menzel, and Three Irish Tenors. He formed his love for opera with St. Petersburg's Opera Company as their principal timpanist from 2007-2011. He also enjoyed performing with jazz ensembles including the Grammy-nominated Jazz Surge Orchestra both as drummer and vibraphonist. At USF he performed regularly in the Robert Helps International New Music Festival including a performance with cellist Rhonda Rider. Keesling will receive his Master's degree from the University of Maryland in May of 2013 under the tutelage of the National Symphony's principal timpanist Jauvon Gilliam. While in D.C., he has been engaged as a principal drummer with Signature Theatre in Arlington, including their performance at the Kennedy Center's Eisenhower Theater, and as a percussionist at the National Gallery of Art. You can find Keesling playing drums and vibraphone in local establishments around the Shaw-Howard area.

Violist **Jonathan Richards** received his Bachelor's degree in violin performance from Northern Illinois University, where he studied with Mathias Tacke and Shmuel Ashkenasi of the Vermeer Quartet. He has won numerous competitions including the CSA Symphonia Concerto Competition, Elgin Symphony Young Artist Competition, Northern Illinois University Philharmonic Concerto Competition and the Mary Graham Lasley Scholarship Competition. He has appeared as soloist with the Kishwaukee Symphony, the Orchestra of St. Vincent's of Chicago, the Judson College Symphony and the Northern Illinois University Philharmonic. As an orchestral musician Richards has performed with the Quad City Symphony, Rockford Symphony and Elgin Symphony. He now performs regularly with the Fairfax Symphony, Annapolis Symphony, Alexandria Symphony, Chesapeake Symphony, National Philharmonic, Concert Artists of Baltimore and the New Music Ensemble of DC. An avid chamber musician, Richards performs frequently with various ensembles throughout the DC area, in addition to regular performances with the Annapolis Chamber Players. Richards received his Master of Music in violin performance from the University of Maryland, under James Stern, and is currently pursuing a D.M.A. under David Salness.



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