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**ALBAN GERHARDT**

**ANNE-MARIE McDERMOTT**

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The Library of Congress  
Coolidge Auditorium  
Saturday, January 16, 2016 — 2 pm

THE KINDLER FOUNDATION TRUST FUND  
IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

ALBAN GERHARDT, CELLO  
ANNE-MARIE McDERMOTT, PIANO



## Program

SAMUEL BARBER (1910-1981)

Sonata for cello and piano, op. 6 (1932)

*Allegro ma non troppo*

*Adagio—Presto—Adagio*

*Allegro appassionato*

BENJAMIN BRITTEN (1913-1976)

Sonata in C major for cello and piano, op. 65 (1960-1961)

*Dialogo*

*Scherzo-pizzicato*

*Elegia*

*Marcia*

*Moto perpetuo*

LUKAS FOSS (1922-2009)

*Capriccio* (1946)

INTERMISSION

LEONARD BERNSTEIN (1918-1990)

Three Meditations from *Mass* for cello and piano (1971)

Meditation no. 1 (*Lento assai, molto sostenuto*)

Meditation no. 2 (*Andante sostenuto*)

Meditation no. 3 (*Presto*)

GEORGE GERSHWIN (1898-1937) | ARR. JASCHA HEIFETZ (1901-1987)

Three Preludes (1926, arr. by Heifetz in 1940)

*Allegro ben ritmato e deciso*

*Andante con moto e poco rubato*

*Allegro ben ritmato e deciso*

*The Heifetz version for violin was arranged for cello by Alban Gerhardt.*

ASTOR PIAZZOLLA (1921-1992)

*Le Grand Tango* (1982)



## About the Program

### SAMUEL BARBER, *Sonata for cello and piano, op. 6*

Barber began to compose the Sonata for cello and piano while he toured Central Europe and Italy in 1932 with his friend and colleague Gian Carlo Menotti. He completed portions of the work while in Europe, but continued to develop it over the course of six months. Cellist Orlando Cole was an integral collaborator during the composition process. Cole studied at Curtis and was a student of Felix Salmond. Once Barber returned to Philadelphia he would regularly pass pages of the manuscript draft to Cole who would play through the material and share feedback with the composer.<sup>1</sup> Throughout his career Barber valued input from performer partners whilst composing, as it facilitated his acquaintance with the inherent qualities and technical capabilities of their instruments.<sup>2</sup> Barber completed the sonata on December 9, 1932, which is the date he inscribed on the final page of the holograph manuscript score.<sup>3</sup>

Orlando Cole and Barber gave the first performances of op. 6, first a private performance at the Art Alliance in Philadelphia and the formal public premiere at a League of Composers concert in New York on March 5, 1933. Cellist Felix Salmond (who taught Orlando Cole), Gregor Piatigorsky, and Luigi Silva were early champions of the sonata, which quickly entered standard contemporary repertoire for cellists. As such, Barber's sonata became one of the first prominent cello sonatas composed by an American. According to musicologist Barbara Heyman, the

1 Peter Dickinson, "Postscript 2005: Orlando Cole, Interview with Peter Dickinson" in *Samuel Barber Remembered: A Centenary Tribute*, ed. Peter Dickinson (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2010), 174.

2 Barbara B. Heyman, *Samuel Barber: The Composer and His Music* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1992), 110.

3 The holograph manuscript of the Barber Sonata for cello and piano is held by the Library of Congress Music Division.

composer favored Salmond's performances.<sup>4</sup> Barber dedicated the sonata to his composition teacher Rosario Scalerò, with whom he studied at Curtis. Some published editions of the work list Orlando Cole as the dedicatee, whom Barber deemed the "physician at the birth of this Sonata," given his assistance with playing through drafts.<sup>5</sup>

Though Barber was early into his career when he composed the op. 6 sonata, he had already established his unique neo-Romantic compositional style. His *Dover Beach*, op. 3 for baritone and string quartet (1931) is one of the most well-regarded vocal-chamber works of the twentieth century American repertory. It offers a stunning interpretation of a poem by British poet Matthew Arnold (1822-1888). Also dating from 1931 is the Overture to *The School for Scandal*. By 1936 he produced Symphony no. 1, op. 9 and String Quartet, op. 11 (1936) (the second movement of which Barber transcribed for orchestra as *Adagio for strings* in 1936 and for chorus as *Agnus Dei* in 1967). These works all demonstrate an extremely skilled understanding of each instrument or voice part.

According to Orlando Cole, the op. 6 sonata is "...very cellistic, very singing...It takes advantage of the best qualities of the instrument." Barber chooses to remain within the traditions of Classical and Romantic sonatas by structuring the work in three movements, in a fast-slow-fast sequence. What makes the sonata exquisite is the luscious melodic writing for the cello, dynamic rhythmic foundations, and rich harmonic relationships. Barber's appreciation for Brahms is evident throughout, particularly with the extended lyrical subjects. Heyman emphasizes the similarity between Barber's "turbulent opening" to the sonata and Brahms' Cello Sonata no. 2 in F major, op. 99 (1886).<sup>6</sup> He begins the *Allegro ma non troppo* with an expressive theme in the cello that expands upward while the piano offers a churning rhythmic motive. The harmony is rooted in C minor. Expository phrases follow with searing lines in the cello and the piano acts as the antagonist of the rhythmic drive. A short soloistic transition phrase gives way to a calmer and contemplative melody in the cello. The piano echoes this new thematic material, offering a staggered layering of the motives. A developmental section follows with an elastic rhythmic pace. Barber revisits the original two themes and transitions to C major to close the movement. The final phrases temporarily settle the emotional turmoil, which is set to shift towards the sentimental and frenetic in the **Adagio—Presto—Adagio**.

The middle movement has a *Presto* section at its core, flanked by two *Adagio* sections. Based on examinations of the sonata's manuscript, Heyman posits that the *Adagios* were conceived after Barber completed the *Presto*, calling the *Adagios* an "afterthought."<sup>7</sup> In the opening phrases the cello dominates with a lugubrious, supple theme. The piano keeps a distance, offering harmonic support and chordal shifts. Barber sets the slow material in C minor and shifts to F major at the sudden leap into the fast tempo at bar ten. He also changes the time signature from 4/4 (in the *Adagio*) to 12/8 in the *Presto*, which is more conducive to the quick rhythmic chatter that transpires between the two voices. He later moves into an 18/8 time signature in the same tempo. At the conclusion of the *Presto*, Barber pivots back to C minor (and 4/4 time) via octave B-flats in the right hand of the piano. The return of the *Adagio* is heavier in feeling than the opening section. The dynamics have a greater range (from *piano* to *ff*, compared to the earlier *pp* to *mf*) and there is a foreboding sense of finality in the dark characters conveyed by the cello solo and the thick chords of the piano.

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4 Heyman, 115.

5 Ibid., 110.

6 Ibid., 111.

7 Ibid.

In the *Allegro appassionato* Barber elevates the stature of the piano, making it more of an equal duo partner than in the previous two movements. In addition to the opening thematic piano solo, there are several short piano interludes throughout this movement. For the first phrase Barber juxtaposes rolling sequential arpeggios in the left hand of the piano against an airy, quick and legato theme in the right hand. The cello enters with a second statement of the theme, while the piano shifts to play wide arpeggios across both hands. This continues until a shift to a slower *Meno mosso* section. The cello solo throws out melodic snippets while the piano revisits rhythmic motives familiar from the first and second movements. A piano interlude follows in the original tempo and closes with a harp-like flourish. The cello joins to transition to a new *poco scherzando* section. A new staccato thematic figure is played in the cello, while the piano offers harmonic context and light accompaniment. Another piano solo follows and gives way to a slow phrase extension in the cello. From this point Barber builds to a dramatic climax that utilizes the original thematic material. The closing phrase group is a gradual descent from the climax that concludes with two firm C minor chords.

Barber's cello sonata has interesting ties to the Library's Music Division, beyond the fact that the manuscript is housed here. Former chief of the Music Division Carl Engel (1883-1944) held the position of president at the G. Schirmer publishing company.<sup>8</sup> Engel became a strong advocate for Barber's music and career after hearing *Dover Beach* performed at a private residence in 1934. He went on to introduce the first public performance of an all-Barber program, which was given as a radio broadcast on February 4, 1935. That radio broadcast included the cello sonata. Barber also developed a relationship with Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge. In 1933 he sent her copies of the manuscripts of op. 6 and *Dover Beach* for programming consideration. The Music Division eventually acquired many of Barber's important manuscripts. The Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation in the Library of Congress commissioned *Hermit Songs*, op. 29 (1952-1953) and the Koussevitzky Music Foundation in the Library of Congress commissioned *Prayers of Kierkegaard*, op. 30 (1954) for soprano, chorus and orchestra, and *Die Natali*, op. 37 (1960).



## **BENJAMIN BRITTEN, Sonata in C major for cello and piano, op. 65**

“...we encounter here in its purest state Britten's innate feeling for *line* in music—that supple melodic gift which enabled him to expand, contract, elaborate or transform a musical idea in a seemingly endless number of expressive ways, achieving its total fulfilment, across the whole breadth of the composition.” —*Eric Roseberry on Britten's solo chamber music*<sup>9</sup>

Benjamin Britten forged a special working partnership and friendship with cellist and conductor Mstislav Rostropovich during the early 1960s. They were introduced by Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich on September 21, 1960 at a Leningrad Symphony Orchestra performance at Royal Festival Hall in London. The concert featured the British premiere of the Shostakovich Cello Concerto no. 1 in E-flat major (1958) with Rostropovich as the soloist and Gennady Rozhdestvensky conducting. Britten was enraptured by Rostropovich's playing and musicality, and immediately developed an appreciation of his style. On the following day Britten, Rostropovich and Shostakovich met at the cellist's hotel in London. Rostropovich implored Britten to write a solo cello work for him, to which Britten agreed if the premiere could be given at his Aldeburgh Festival in 1961.

8 Engel was the chief of the Music Division from 1922-1934.

9 Eric Roseberry, “The Solo Chamber Music” in *The Britten Companion*, ed. Christopher Palmer (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 375.

Given the political climate in Europe during the Cold War, Britten had to formally request permission to compose a work for Rostropovich from the Soviet Ministry of Culture. Approval was granted, likely a result of back channel efforts by Rostropovich and Shostakovich, and Britten began work on his Sonata in C for cello and piano, op. 65. Britten composed the sonata between December 1960 and January 1961. In the previous year he completed *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, op. 64 (1959-1960). In 1961, following the composition of the cello sonata, several minor works, and two volumes of his folk songs, Britten set out to compose *War Requiem*, op. 66 (1961-1962).

When Rostropovich received the manuscript of the cello sonata in February 1961 he experienced "love at first sight," and reported "Admiring...[Britten's] great Sonata."<sup>10</sup> Rostropovich and Britten performed the world premiere of the cello sonata on July 7, 1961 at Jubilee Hall in Aldeburgh, England for the Aldeburgh Festival. Also on the program were Schubert's *Arpeggione Sonata* and *Five Pieces in Folk Style*, as well as the Debussy Cello Sonata. Based on the "bridge-building affinity"<sup>11</sup> that Britten and Rostropovich developed for each other's musicality, Britten went on to compose four additional solo vehicles for the cellist: Symphony for Cello and Orchestra, op. 68 (1963, rev. 1964); Suite no. 1 for cello, op. 72 (1964); Suite no. 2 for cello, op. 80 (1967); and Suite no. 3 for cello, op. 87 (1971, rev. 1974).<sup>12</sup> All of these works proved to be ideal syntheses of the musical personalities of both Britten and Rostropovich, as well as major contributions to twentieth-century repertory for the cello.

While Britten formally named his first work for Rostropovich a sonata, the work is very similar in organization to a suite. There are five movements, which breaks from the tradition of having three movements (the framework used in Barber's sonata on this program). Donald Mitchell's analysis of Britten's chamber works surmises that the suite form (even if not implied by the cello sonata's title), gave Britten a wider range of options for including divergent musical characterizations in a single work.<sup>13</sup> The cello sonata is sometimes compared structurally to the composer's op. 6 suite for violin and piano (1934-1935), though the sonata dates from a much later and more mature compositional period for Britten.

The first movement of the cello sonata, *Dialogo*, is a dialogue between the cello and piano. Britten begins with an expository section (marked *Allegro*) that contains two principal subjects and a closing phrase group. His opening theme emulates the awkward rhythm of human speech in dialogue. The rhythms are manipulated to imply the ebbs and flows of organic conversation. Britten carefully off-sets the rhythms from the bar lines, in order to blur the regular metrical unit that is visible on the printed sheet music. His second thematic subject is marked *animato* ("animated") and consists of a lyrical line in the cello above roving triplet figures in the piano. It is followed by a transition phrase of a drone in the cello and march-like piano accompaniment. The closing phrases of the expository material are marked *tranquillo* ("tranquil"), and return to beautiful lyricism in the cello and piano. Harmonically this movement is certainly rooted in the key of C, however Britten is constantly shifting in and out of that framework by tonicizing keys related to C. In a return of the speech-like subject, Britten uses three short phrases to push the cello and piano up into their respective high registers, while building the dynamics from *pianissimo* to *fortissimo* with a crescendo. The drone motive from the second subject is

10 Neil Powell, *Benjamin Britten: A Life for Music* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2013), 361.

11 Arnold Whittall, "Britten's Rhetoric of Resistance: The Works for Rostropovich" in *Rethinking Britten*, ed. Philip Rupprecht (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 187.

12 Rostropovich delivered the world premieres of all these works.

13 Donald Mitchell, "The Chamber Music: An Introduction" in *The Britten Companion*, ed. Christopher Palmer (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 371.

explored with a hushed murmuring in the cello, while the piano expands melodic motives. An extended section based on the *tranquillo* closing phrase group is employed at the conclusion of *Dialogo*. It revisits bits of the principal subjects in a more subdued manner and tempo, ultimately resting on long pedal Cs in the left hand of the piano.

Britten sets an *Allegretto* tempo in the second movement, *Scherzo-pizzicato*. He begins with a guitar-like theme that finds the cello plucking along in a jazzy manner that Peter Evans calls "phantasmal."<sup>14</sup> A second theme is introduced that has a whirlwind effect, scampering about with fast runs in both instruments. Britten reverts to a modified version of the guitar-strumming material, giving the piano more dominance this second time around. The central movement of the suite-like cello sonata is *Elegia* ("elegy"). Marked *Lento* ("slow"), this music focuses on the virtuosity of the cello, which conveys rich and slowly evolving melodies throughout the movement. At times the piano sounds as if it is competing with the cello, by exploring material that is not obviously related to the cello line. This is contrasted with the piano's role at the outset and conclusion of the movement, which reinforces the rhythmic and melodic contour of the cello solo.

An energetic, off-kilter march forms the fourth movement, *Marcia*. The first part of the march is heavy and forceful, with the cello and piano nagging at each other with edgy rhythmic motives. After a transition phrase the music shifts to a more delicate version of a march. The cello plays *sul ponticello* ("on the bridge" of the instrument) and the piano part is marked *chiaro* ("clear"), offering a crystal dreamscape sound. Britten enhances this mystical sound quality by having the cello play harmonics.<sup>15</sup> The piano gets quieter and twinkles its way to silence. In the closing movement, *Moto perpetuo* ("perpetual motion"), Britten returns to the anxious rhythmic impulse of the early drone-like figures. The cello part is initially marked *saltando* ("jumping"), which refers to a technique of using a quick bow stroke so that the bow jumps off the strings. Initially the piano fills out the harmony with warm, heavy chords, only to launch into a modified version of the musical "charge!" theme. This movement is about precision, and the complete synchronicity of the cellist and pianist, no matter who takes the thematic lead at any given moment. Britten treats the instruments as partners that must be equal technical virtuosos. After one ultimate rush through the driving rhythmic theme, Britten wraps-up the sonata with a march-like closing stinger.



## LUKAS FOSS, *Capriccio*

Born Lukas Fuchs, Foss came to the United States with his family as an émigré in 1937. He previously lived in Paris for four years and spent his childhood in Berlin, which his family fled as persecution increased against the Jewish people. Foss was a student at Curtis and Tanglewood (then known as the Berkshire Music Center), and studied with some of the leading pedagogues in America: Paul Hindemith, Rosario Scalero and Randall Thompson (composition); Fritz Reiner and Serge Koussevitzky (conducting); and Isabelle Vengerova (piano). Foss operated within the social and musical circle of Jewish-American composers that included Aaron Copland, Leonard Bernstein, Irving Fine, Harold Shapero and Arthur Berger. Collectively, these composers and others advanced a distinctly American neo-classical sound that was influenced by Nadia Boulanger and Igor Stravinsky.

<sup>14</sup> Peter Evans, *The Music of Benjamin Britten* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1979), 311.

<sup>15</sup> Essentially when a stringed instrument plays a note in order to make a higher frequency (than the original pitch) sound.

As with many of his contemporaries, Foss' music moved away from neo-classicism in the mid-twentieth century, exploring a variety of styles that included minimalism, serialism and electronic music. His success came from the fact that he made a mark on most of the major art music movements in America during the twentieth century. Allan Kozinn's obituary on Foss for *The New York Times* references musicologist Wilfrid Mellers' description of Foss' music as being "a pocket history of American music during the 20th century."<sup>16</sup> While his diverse stylistic range may be viewed as having limited Foss' achievement in any one type of music, it was in fact a strength that separated him from many of his colleagues. Foss maintained a consistent level of excellence throughout the different periods and styles of his composition career. David Del Tredici describes Foss' "eclecticism" positively: "In a sense, pluralism *is* his style."<sup>17</sup>

Besides his extensive work as a composer, Foss was a distinguished conductor, pianist and educator. After working with Foss at Tanglewood, Koussevitzky hired him as pianist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, a post he held from 1944-1950. Foss also gave important performances of contemporary music throughout his career. Most notable were his early performances of Bernstein's Symphony no. 2: *The Age of Anxiety* (1949, rev. 1965) as the piano soloist. He was also the pianist for a landmark 1950 recording of *The Age of Anxiety* on Columbia Records with the New York Philharmonic (Bernstein conducting). Koussevitzky, who commissioned *The Age of Anxiety* via the Koussevitzky Music Foundation, conducted the work's world premiere with Bernstein as the soloist. These important moments in Foss' career highlight how deep his professional relationships ran with Koussevitzky and Bernstein. Koussevitzky receives a great deal of credit for helping to propel Foss into prominence.

As a conductor Foss was renowned for advocacy of new music. He served as music director of the Ojai Festival, created the Improvisation Chamber Ensemble, and was music director or chief conductor of the Buffalo Philharmonic, Brooklyn Philharmonic (then Brooklyn Philharmonia), Jerusalem Philharmonic (then Kol Yisrael Orchestra), and the Milwaukee Symphony. All of this baton-waving was carried out simultaneously with important work in the Academy. In 1953 he was appointed to lead UCLA's composition department, following Arnold Schoenberg. While in Buffalo he founded SUNY Buffalo's Center for Creative and Performing Arts. He also taught in various capacities at major institutions like Harvard, Manhattan School of Music and Tanglewood.

Foss received three commissions from the Koussevitzky Music Foundation: *Capriccio* for violoncello and piano (1946), *Symphony of Chorales* (1955-1958) and String Quartet no. 5 (2000). Foss, Alexander Goehr, Darius Milhaud, Bernard Rands, Chinary Ung and Charles Wuorinen are the only composers to have received three commissions from the foundation. *Capriccio* is dedicated "in memory of Natalie Koussevitzky." The Koussevitzky Music Foundation was founded in honor of Natalie, Serge's first wife, who died in 1942. Foss composed the work for Ukrainian-American cellist Gregor Piatigorsky. Foss and Piatigorsky premiered *Capriccio* at Tanglewood in 1946 and later recorded it together. Piatigorsky edited the published score of *Capriccio*, which was first released by G. Schirmer in 1948.

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16 Allan Kozinn, "Lukas Foss, Composer at Home in Many Stylistic Currents, Dies at 86," *The New York Times* 1 February 2009 <[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/02/arts/music/02foss.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/02/arts/music/02foss.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)>.

17 Neil W. Levin, "Lukas Foss," *Milken Archive of Jewish Music* <<http://www.milkenarchive.org/people/view/all/569/Foss,+Lukas>>. Foss served on the editorial board of the Milken Archive until his death in 2009.

*Capriccio* opens with a quick shout in the piano that the cello launches from with a boisterous theme. The *Allegro vivo* shifts to *Quasi allegro* and the cello begins to play a repeated rhythmic motive in sequences. The cello entry is marked "with humor," furthered by the piano entry that expands the repeated jovial material. The opening material returns at a different pitch level, making way quickly for the repeated motive pattern. This time the cello transforms the simplistic motive into a glorious lyrical melody. Foss shifts the meter from cut time (2/2) to 3/4, indicating in the score that the new section should be played "like a waltz." The piano forces the repeated rhythmic motive into the new time signature. However this is confused momentarily as the cello continues to play in a duple meter. From this point on Foss shifts meter frequently, emulating the irregular dance rhythms of Stravinsky's ballets. He has the cello repeat the opening theme again, but in a modified form. This gives way to a rollicking set of quick rhythmic sequences in the piano, while the cello hilariously channels the personality of a down country folk fiddle player. Some of this material might sound similar to the original version (13 instruments) of Copland's *Appalachian Spring*, in the way that the instruments bounce material off each other, the thin harmonic texture, and the manner in which tempi and rhythmic pace contrast between sections. Foss' short work manages to capture the unique energy at Tanglewood, with its combination of youthful creativity, frenzy, blue skies, pastoral landscape and the irresistible vista of the Stockbridge Bowl from the lawn.

*Capriccio* most recently performed at the Library by Fred Sherry (cello) and Ursula Oppens (piano) during the May 2, 2014 Koussevitzky Legacy Celebration. It was also performed on May 9, 1986 by Sharon Robinson (cello) and Margo Garrett (piano), as part of "The 1986 Festival of American Chamber Music."<sup>18</sup> The Library holds the Lukas Foss Collection, which includes the manuscripts and sketches for the majority of his compositions. Also in the collection are Foss' business papers and personal correspondence, which include his conversations with Berio, Bernstein, Cage, Carter, Crumb, Hindemith, Knussen, Messiaen, Milhaud, Rostropovich, Stravinsky and Wuorinen.<sup>19</sup>



## LEONARD BERNSTEIN, *Three Meditations from Mass* for cello and piano

"Here is Uncle Lenny trying to make sense of it all. You have to love the guy."

—Anthony Tommasini/*The New York Times*<sup>20</sup>

Leonard Bernstein's *Mass* (1970-1971) proved to be one of the most provocative works in his body of compositions. The *Mass* was created based on an invitation from Jacqueline Kennedy to create a work for the inauguration of The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The subtitle of the work is indicative of its unorthodoxy for the traditional dramatic stage: "A Theater Piece for Singers, Players and Dancers." Bernstein wrote the lyrics in collaboration with Stephen Schwartz, who had recently met success with *Godspell*.<sup>21</sup> *Mass* was premiered at

18 Sharon Robinson most recently performed at the Library on March 21, 2014 with Joel Smirnoff, Joan Kwuon and Sergei Babayan.

19 For more on the Lukas Foss Collection visit [www.loc.gov/performingarts](http://www.loc.gov/performingarts).

20 Anthony Tommasini, "Recent Events and Meaning to Bernstein's *Mass*" in *The New York Times*

25 November 2002 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/11/25/arts/music-review-recent-events-add-new-resonance-to-bernstein-s-mass.html>>.

21 According to Meryle Secrest, Stephen Sondheim (who collaborated with Bernstein on *West Side Story*) was initially offered a lyricist role for *Mass*, but he declined. He was not a fan of the Bernstein/Schwartz lyrics after seeing the work performed. (Secrest, 329).

the Kennedy Center on September 8, 1971 with a cast that included Alan Titus as Celebrant, the Norman Scribner Choir, the Berkshire Boy Choir, and conductor Maurice Peress. Alvin Ailey was the choreographer, the scenic design was by Oliver Smith (whose collection is housed in the Library of Congress), and the production was directed by Gordon Davidson. While the work uses the Roman Catholic Mass liturgy as its launching point, Bernstein steers far from Christian doctrine and this is in no way a traditional mass, beyond the eclectic array of musical styles represented in the score.

Jack Gottlieb, a friend and colleague of Bernstein, refers to *Mass* as "...the most significant breakthrough in the musical theater of our time."<sup>22</sup> Bernstein turns preconceptions of the Mass upside down and explores many topics that merit full theological analyses. One interpretation of *Mass* suggests that it is a revelation of the "crisis of faith" between Bernstein's Judaism and the Christian doctrines that pervade society. Gottlieb comments that the composer's theology is reflective of his being "a self-conscious Jew—not the same thing as conscientious." This quip stems from the fact that Bernstein even included the *Credo* from Catholic liturgy, which blames the Jewish people with Jesus' persecution. Bernstein's position was that the *Credo* contradicts itself and is more useful in questioning whether or not God actually believes in the believers.<sup>23</sup> The work also explores irreconcilable conflicts and challenges that any person of faith might grapple with (in their own religion or others). Representatives of the Catholic Church found *Mass* to be blasphemous. The Archbishop of Cincinnati was particularly vocal with his disdain, though he did not attend the first performance. He called *Mass* "a blatant sacrilege against all we hold sacred." Regardless of this position, America's most-prominent Catholic family (the Kennedys) remained positive about the work, and Jackie Kennedy was rumored to have personally bank-rolled creation expenses such as lodging the copyists in Washington, DC while the work was being completed. Beyond the validation of the Kennedy clan, Bernstein could not have harmed his position with the Catholic Church too severely, as he was invited by Pope Paul VI to perform *Chichester Psalms* and other works at the Vatican in 1973.<sup>24</sup>

*From the composer:*

Since *Mass* is primarily a dramatic stage production, these excerpts can convey at best only a certain limited aspect of its scope and intention. Essentially it is concerned with a celebration of the Roman ritual using the Latin text of the Catholic liturgy; but simultaneously there is a subtext in English reflecting the reactions, doubts, protests and questionings—positive and negative—of all who are attending and perceiving this ritual. By "all of us" I mean to include all who are assembled on stage and, by extension, the audience itself.

The ritual is conducted by a young man of mysterious simplicity (called the Celebrant) who throughout the drama is invested by his acolytes with increasingly ornate robes and symbols which connote both an increase in the superficial formalism of his obligation and of the burden that he bears. There is a parallel increase in the resistance of the Congregants—in the sharpness of their reactions—and in deterioration of his own faith. At the climax of Communion, all ceremony breaks down and the Mass is shattered. It then remains for each individual on the stage to find a new seed of faith within himself through painful meditation, enabling each individual to pass on the embrace of peace (Pax) to his neighbor. This chain of embrace grows and spreads through the entire stage, ultimately into the audience and hopefully into the world outside. The disposition of forces at the original production was in the pit: an orchestra of strings only, plus two organs and a percussion

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22 Jack Gottlieb, *Working with Bernstein: A Memoir* (New York: Amadeus Press, 2010), 137.

23 Ibid., 131-132.

24 Meryle Secrest, *Leonard Bernstein: A Life* (London: Bloomsbury, 1995), 328.

section. All other instrumentalists are on stage in costume and function as members of the cast. These include wind, brass and percussion players, as well as Rock instrumentalists. There are three choruses: a formal choir seated in pews, a Boys' Choir and a so-called Street Chorus, many of whom function as vocal or dancing soloists and groups. All these forces perform with, against, or around the Celebrant. At certain moments of extreme tension, the Celebrant tries to control the situation by saying "let us pray," and it is at these moments that the Meditations are played by the pit orchestra, while the entire company remains motionless in attitudes of prayer. —*Leonard Bernstein*<sup>25</sup>

In addition to theological debates about the *Mass*, the premiere production at the Kennedy Center set off some political turmoil in Washington, DC (hardly surprising, especially given the FBI's attempts to make a case against Bernstein for Communist activity). During the summer of 1971 a memo was circulated at the FBI focused on "Proposed plans of antiwar elements to embarrass the United States Government," which they were convinced would be expressed in *Mass* and at the inauguration of the Kennedy Center. The memos conveyed suspicions that Bernstein was plotting to shame President Nixon and other federal officials by making a mockery of their politics through this contemporary setting of the Catholic Mass, which they expected would contain an "antiadministration bombshell."<sup>26</sup> While these baffling accusations seem far-fetched in 2016, they were in keeping with Cold War era paranoia among some factions of the political class. Pat Buchanan, then an official in the Nixon Administration, circulated a memo urging colleagues to find a proper Jesuit priest to translate the Latin in Bernstein's *Mass*, to protect the President from exposure to negativity if he were to attend the premiere at the Kennedy Center.<sup>27</sup> President Nixon was even recorded bashing Bernstein in the Nixon Tapes on August 9 and September 29 of 1971.<sup>28</sup> Bernstein's declassified FBI file is available for study and perusal via the FBI's website (<https://vault.fbi.gov/leonard-berstein>). These documents were released to the public via Freedom of Information Act requests.

Three Meditations from *Mass* for cello and piano was arranged in 1971 by Bernstein. The composer gave the premiere with cellist Stephen Kates on March 28, 1972. In 1977 Bernstein also arranged Three Meditations for cello and orchestra, dedicating the work to Mstislav Rostropovich and the National Symphony Orchestra. The duo version offers the most intimate encounter of the three settings (cello and piano, cello and orchestra, complete *Mass*). The first two meditations were pulled directly from the full version of *Mass*, with the first (*Lento assai, molto sostenuto*) originally situated between *Mass'* *Confession* and *Gloria* sections. The second meditation (*Andante sostenuto*) separates the *Gloria* and *Epistle* sections. The third meditation draws material from the *Epiphany*, *In Nomine Patris* and *Chorale: Almighty Father* sections of the stage work.<sup>29</sup>

In the first meditation Bernstein's music sounds as if he is seeking answers to recurring existential questions, symbolized by the repetitive and slowly evolving thematic motives. The music shifts back and forth from intense, brooding contemplation to ethereal reflection. He begins the second meditation with a solo *pizzicato* statement of a theme in the cello. The piano continues with the short, peckish figure while the cello launches into a *legato* and expressive

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25 Leonard Bernstein quoted in Gottlieb, 139-140.

26 Nigel Simeone, ed., *The Leonard Bernstein Letters* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 301.

27 *Ibid.*, 502.

28 Gottlieb, 95.

29 According to Jack Gottlieb, Bernstein's principal collaborators for the premiere production of *Mass* were displeased by the two orchestral meditations interrupting the narrative flow of the work. Bernstein did not accept their requests to cut the meditations. (Gottlieb, 140).

theme statement. The changes in character and different layerings that Bernstein employs emerge as different points of emotional cycles, from calm understanding through bursts of energy. In the final meditation Bernstein launches the music with a percussive tapping sound that is paired with a pastiche of a thematic subject in the cello. After several phrases of solo cello material the piano exerts itself with a clashing set of chords. In the following section the piano and cello engage in an upbeat rhythmic dance that features pseudo-Latin and Hebrew inflections. The bustling dance music gives way to a new *cantabile* theme in the cello, that is occasionally supported subtly by the earlier rhythmic motive. The thematic strands are interwoven through to the introspective ending.



## GEORGE GERSHWIN, Three Preludes

George Gershwin composed Three Preludes for piano between 1925-1926. A perusal of Gershwin biographical literature, press reports and private archival materials reveals that there are discrepancies and open questions as to Gershwin's decision to compose piano preludes. The Three Preludes that are known today were published in 1927 by Harms. They were originally performed by Gershwin during a concert at the Grand Ballroom of the Hotel Roosevelt in New York City on December 4, 1926. The program began with a two-piano version of *Rhapsody in Blue*, and included French and Spanish songs performed by contralto Marguerite D'Alvarez, and a set of Kern and Gershwin Songs performed with Gershwin at the piano. The second pianist (according to the program sheet) was Edward Hart.<sup>30</sup> Press announcements for the 1926 concert advertised that six preludes would be performed, but the concert program listed Five Piano Preludes immediately prior to the intermission. Reviews of the concert indicate that five were likely performed, which means that two of the preludes were eliminated for the purposes of the Harms publication. Gershwin dedicated the printed score to William Daly, a friend and colleague who worked as a composer, orchestrator and pianist.

Robert Wyatt's definitive study of Gershwin's piano preludes, "The Seven Jazz Preludes of George Gershwin: A Historical Narrative," offers a comprehensive comparison of the press narratives that recounted the preludes' performance and the three preludes that were selected for publication. His analysis indicates that the first prelude in the published set, *Allegro ben ritmato e deciso* (in B-flat major), was the last performed on December 4, 1926. The third prelude in the published set, *Allegro ben ritmato e deciso* (in E-flat minor), opened the set of preludes during the premiere. The C#-minor prelude (published second) was either performed second or fourth on the concert.<sup>31</sup> Regardless of these musicological minutiae, the Three Preludes met fast success after the world premiere in New York and subsequent tour performances in Buffalo and Boston. Once the sheet music hit the market the collection became "...a cornerstone of American piano repertoire."<sup>32</sup> Gershwin's jazz, blues and Latin-infused piano preludes proved appealing to audiences and pianists alike.

30 William Daly was mentioned as being the second pianist for *Rhapsody in Blue* in the concert listing that appeared in *The New York Times*.

31 Robert Wyatt, *The Seven Jazz Preludes of George Gershwin: A Historical Narrative* in *American Music* 7:1 (1989), 82.

32 Howard Pollack, *George Gershwin: His Life and Works* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2006), 392.

Three Preludes begins with *Allegro ben ritmato e deciso* in the key of B-flat major. After a short introductory signal phrase and the establishment of a foundational pulse the principal theme enters. The rhythms are rambunctious and filled with Latin-like vigor, while the thematic lines flow in and out of prominence. Gershwin concludes with a short rising scale that ends on a forceful chord. He continues into the second prelude, marked *Andante con moto e poco rubato* and set in C-sharp minor. Gershwin again establishes the pulse first, with a one-bar rhythmic motive that repeats constantly. The blues-like melody is simple yet seductive, emerging above the walking bass line. The theme is eventually passed back and forth between registers, almost like a set variations. Gershwin's genius with melodic development seeps through every moment and every note in this prelude. In the final prelude, *Allegro ben ritmato e deciso* (E-flat minor), Gershwin pays indirect tribute to Debussy's *Golliwogg's Cakewalk*. He conveys juvenile wonder and rabble-rousing with this charmer of a ditty. The tune sounds fresh as Gershwin repeatedly reconfigures how it is heard.

Violinist Jascha Heifetz (1901-1987), who was a friend of Gershwin, completed the most widely-known transcription of Three Preludes in 1940. The Heifetz version, for violin and piano, has been further arranged by several major performers. Yo-Yo Ma's arrangement (of the Heifetz transcription) is the most prominent version for cello and piano. Alban Gerhardt and Anne-Marie McDermott are performing Gerhardt's arrangement of the Heifetz transcription. The Library of Congress Music Division holds the holograph manuscripts of Gershwin's original preludes and Heifetz's transcription. A high-resolution scan of one page from the Gershwin manuscript for the E-flat minor prelude is available via this QR code:

SCAN HERE:



George Gershwin (1898-1937)  
*Allegro ben ritmato e deciso* (Prelude no. 3 in E-flat minor)  
Holograph Manuscript  
George and Ira Gershwin Collection (Box 51, Folder 11)  
Library of Congress, Music Division



## ASTOR PIAZZOLLA, *Le Grand Tango*

Described as "the man who revitalized tango,"<sup>33</sup> Astor Piazzolla's music holds a unique place in Western musical culture. His success came through leading a movement to revitalize and modernize Argentinean tango that first gained traction in the United States and France. The dichotomy of this success is that for a time Piazzolla wanted nothing more than to be a serious art music composer, on the level of the great Europeans. He interacted with the great tango master Carlos Gardel, was a band leader and a bandoneón player, while on the other hand

33 Natalio Gorin, *Astor Piazzolla: A Memoir*, transl. Fernando Gonzalez (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 2001), 12.

he was a student of classical music and studied with Alberto Ginastera and Nadia Boulanger. It was Boulanger who helped solidify Piazzolla's path to greatness by encouraging him to apply art music compositional techniques to the traditional tango idiom. Piazzolla went on to become notorious among tango purists,<sup>34</sup> for he infused his tango with jazz, a movement that became known as "nuevo tango" ("new tango"). A key ingredient in the mix was the bandoneón, an instrument similar to the accordion that differs in that its buttons play single pitches, whereas accordion keys sound chords when pressed. As a bandoneón performer Piazzolla played jazz-infused tango that blurred the lines of the traditional tango genre. Though the instrument was invented in Germany (during the mid to late 19th century), its "intellectual development" took place in Argentina beginning in the early 20th century.<sup>35</sup>

Piazzolla composed *Le Grand Tango*<sup>36</sup> for cellist Mstislav Rostropovich (1927-2007) in 1982 (during his tenure as music director of the National Symphony), at the suggestion of pianist Martha Argerich. Rostropovich premiered the work in 1990 and recorded it in 1996. *Le Grand Tango* consists of a single movement that is divided into three principal sections (that can be further subdivided). The first section is marked *Tempo di Tango* (quarter note = 116). Piazzolla begins with a stately tango melody in the cello. The left hand of the piano plays a repeating rhythmic motive while the right hand offers some inner machinations to the harmony and supports the contour of the melodic line. After a second expository phrase the cello spits out quick sixteenth-note quadruplets on the downbeats of two bars, evoking the stomping of hard soles on the dance floor. By this point you have the sense that rhythm is at the core of this music, with multiple patterns occurring simultaneously (across instruments) that in no way compromise the melodies. The layering has the effect of creating the constant swirl of motion of a pair of dancers consumed by the music.

Piazzolla relaxes the tempo for the middle section of *Le Grand Tango*, marking *Meno mosso* (quarter note = 80) with a style instruction of *libero e cantabile* ("free and song-like"). Here Piazzolla flexes his sappy soap opera muscles. The melody in the cello is very nostalgic and sentimental, and the piano dwells on several rhythmic motives that build angst under the melody and keep the pulse moving forward. After a short statement of the melody using cello harmonics, Piazzolla gets heavier and sappier (in such a wonderful way). He marks a new thematic section *Pesante* ("heavy") and *Tristamente* ("sadly"), which continues through a tempo acceleration and quickening to a *Più mosso* (quarter note=120) phrase group. This new closing thematic group links the middle section of *Le Grand Tango* to the closing *Giocoso* ("playful") section. Much of the *Giocoso* material sounds inspired by improvisation, particularly in the piano. Piazzolla allows the cellist to get flashy with vivid, intense double-stops,<sup>37</sup> bringing the music to a close in full tango glory.

Nicholas Alexander Brown  
Music Specialist  
Library of Congress, Music Division

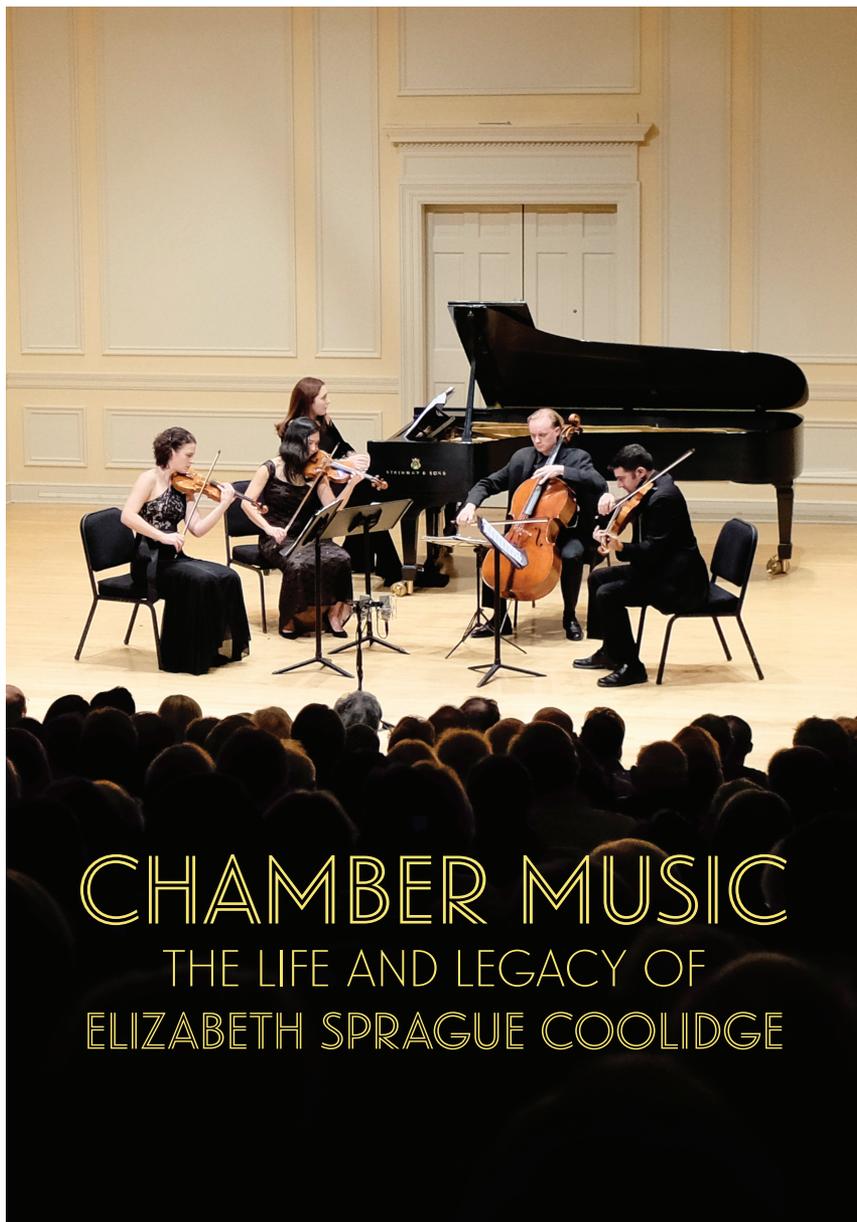
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34 They existed and continue to exist, just like purists in the classical music world!

35 Gorin, 34-35.

36 The work retained a French language title because it was first published in Paris. The Spanish title is *El Gran Tango*.

37 A double stop is when two notes on a stringed instrument are played simultaneously (can be bowed or plucked, as in *pizzicato*).



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## About the Artists

Described by *Tagesspiegel* as “a magician of cantabile playing and a master of virtuosic panache,” **Alban Gerhardt** has, for twenty-five years, made a unique impact on audiences worldwide with his intense musicality, compelling stage presence and insatiable artistic curiosity. His gift for shedding fresh light on familiar scores, along with his appetite for investigating new repertoire from centuries past and present, truly set him apart from his peers. Recent and forthcoming highlights include concerts with the Boston Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony, Finnish Radio Symphony, Philharmonia Orchestra, Czech Philharmonic and Oslo Philharmonic. Gerhardt will also perform in Hong Kong, Melbourne and Perth as well as giving recitals in Montreal and the Konzerthaus Berlin.

Gerhardt is passionate about sharing his discoveries with audiences far beyond the traditional concert hall: outreach projects undertaken in Europe and the U.S. have involved performances and workshops, not only in schools and hospitals, but also pioneering sessions in public spaces and young offender institutions. His collaboration with Deutsche Bahn, involving live performances on the main commuter routes in Germany, vividly demonstrates his commitment to challenging traditional expectations of classical music.

Following early competition success, Gerhardt’s international career was launched by his debut with Berliner Philharmoniker and Semyon Bychkov in 1991. Notable orchestra collaborations since include Royal Concertgebouw, London Philharmonic, NHK Symphony, the Cleveland, Philadelphia and Chicago Symphony orchestras, and Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, under conductors such as Kurt Masur, Christoph von Dohnányi, Christian Thielemann, Christoph Eschenbach, Myung-Whun Chung, Michael Tilson-Thomas, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Vladimir Jurowski, Kirill Petrenko and Andris Nelsons.

Gerhardt has collaborated with composers including Thomas Larcher, Brett Dean, Jörg Widmann, and Matthias Pintscher; and in almost every case he commits to memorizing their scores before world premiere performances. In spring 2014 he made his third visit to Berliner Philharmoniker, performing Unsuk Chin’s Cello Concerto—originally premiered by Gerhardt at the 2009 BBC Proms. He also completed a ground-breaking, three-year residency with Oregon Symphony Orchestra and was the subject of a *Focus* at London’s Wigmore Hall.

A highly acclaimed recording artist, Gerhardt has won three ECHO Klassik Awards as well as ICMA and MIDEM Classic awards, and his recording of Unsuk Chin’s Cello Concerto, released by Deutsche Grammophon, won the *BBC Music Magazine Award* and was short-listed for a *Gramophone Award* in 2015. He has recorded extensively for Hyperion, spearheading the label’s *Romantic Cello Concertos* series. Alban Gerhardt plays a Matteo Goffriller cello dating from 1710.



Pianist **Anne-Marie McDermott** is a consummate artist who balances a versatile career as a soloist and collaborator. She performs over 100 concerts a year in a combination of solo recitals, concerti and chamber music. Her repertoire choices are eclectic, spanning from Bach and Haydn to Prokofiev and Scriabin to Kernis, Hartke, Tower and Wuorinen.

With over 50 concerti in her repertoire, McDermott has performed with many leading orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra, Dallas Symphony, Columbus Symphony, Seattle Symphony, National Symphony, Houston Symphony, Colorado Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Moscow Virtuosi, Hong Kong Philharmonic, San Diego Symphony, New Jersey Symphony and Baltimore Symphony, among others. McDermott has toured with the Australian Chamber Orchestra and the Moscow Virtuosi.

In recent seasons, McDermott performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic, North Carolina Symphony, Charlotte Symphony, Huntsville Symphony, Alabama Symphony, San Diego Symphony, the Oregon Mozart Players, and the New Century Chamber Orchestra.

Recital engagements have included the 92nd Street Y, Alice Tully Hall, Town Hall, the Schubert Club, the Kennedy Center, and universities across the country. McDermott has curated and performed in a number of intense projects including the complete Prokofiev piano sonatas and *Chamber Music*, a three-concert series of Shostakovich chamber music, as well as a recital series of Haydn and Beethoven piano sonatas. Most recently, she commissioned works of Charles Wuorinen and Clarice Assad which were premiered in May 2009 at Town Hall, in conjunction with Bach's *Goldberg Variations*, BWV 988.

As a soloist, McDermott has recorded the complete Prokofiev piano sonatas, Bach's English suites and partitas (which was named *Gramophone* magazine's editor's choice), and most recently, *Gershwin Complete Works for Piano and Orchestra* with the Dallas Symphony and Justin Brown.

In addition to her many achievements, McDermott has been named the artistic director of the Vail Valley Music Festival in Colorado, which hosts the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Dallas Symphony, in addition to presenting over 40 chamber music concerts throughout the summer. She is also artistic director of two new festivals; the Ocean Reef Chamber Music Festival and the Avila Chamber Music Celebration in Curaçao.

As a chamber music performer, McDermott was named an artist member of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center (CMS) in 1995 and performs and tours extensively with CMS each season. She continues a long-standing collaboration with the highly acclaimed violinist, Nadja Salerno Sonnenberg. As a duo, they have released a CD titled *Live* on the NSS label and plan to release the *Complete Brahms Violin and Piano Sonatas* in the future. McDermott is also a member of the renowned piano quartet, Opus One, with colleagues Ida Kavafian, Steven Tenenbom and Peter Wiley. She continues to perform each season with her sisters, Maureen McDermott and Kerry McDermott in the McDermott Trio. McDermott has also released an all-Schumann CD with violist Paul Neubauer, as well as the *Complete Chamber Music of Debussy* with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

McDermott studied at the Manhattan School of Music with Dalmo Carra, Constance Keene and John Browning. She was a winner of the Young Concert Artists auditions and was awarded an Avery Fisher Career Grant. McDermott regularly performs at festivals across the United States, including Spoleto, Mainly Mozart, Sante Fe, La Jolla Summerfest, Mostly Mozart, Newport, Caramoor, Bravo, Chamber Music Northwest, Aspen, Music from Angelfire, and the Festival Casals in Puerto Rico, among others.

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