



Saturday, October 13, 2018, 8pm
First Congregational Church

Jerusalem Quartet with Pinchas Zukerman and Amanda Forsyth

Jerusalem Quartet

Alexander Pavlovsky, *violin*
Sergei Bresler, *violin*
Ori Kam, *viola*
Kyril Zlotnikov, *cello*

with

Pinchas Zukerman, *viola* and Amanda Forsyth, *cello*

PROGRAM

Richard Strauss (1864–1949) String Sextet from *Capriccio*, Op. 85

Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951) *Verklärte Nacht* for String Sextet, Op. 4

INTERMISSION

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893) String Sextet in D minor, Op. 70,
Souvenir de Florence
Allegro con spirito
Adagio cantabile e con moto
Allegretto moderato
Allegro con brio e vivace

The Jerusalem Quartet appears by arrangement with David Rowe Artists.
www.davidroweartists.com

The Jerusalem Quartet records for Harmonia Mundi.
www.jerusalemstringquartet.com

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Richard Strauss**String Sextet from *Capriccio*, Op. 85**

Capriccio was Richard Strauss' last operatic venture, and, like the valedictory works of other great composers—Haydn's oratorios, Verdi's *Falstaff*, Elgar's Cello Concerto—it not only summarizes a lifetime of stylistic achievement, but also addresses concerns that the accumulation of years could not dim. For Strauss in this masterful opera, those concerns were two: one was the cataloging of his greatest musical loves; the other was a consideration of the essential dilemma of all vocal music—the relative importance of words and music. To demonstrate the music that he held in highest regard, Strauss quoted in the score snippets from the works of Mozart, Wagner, Gluck, and Verdi, and he even included fragments from some of his own compositions. (One of the joys of this opera for the knowledgeable listener is the identification of the many musical allusions.) Regarding the words/music controversy, which is the true subject of the opera, Strauss wrote, "The battle between words and music has been the problem of my life from the beginning, and I leave it with *Capriccio* as a question mark."

In his *New Encyclopedia of the Opera*, David Ewen offered the following précis of *Capriccio*: "The almost action-less libretto [set in a chateau in late-18th-century France] is little more than a discussion as to which is more significant in opera, the words or the music. Flamand, the musician, becomes the spokesman for the music; Olivier, the poet, for the words. Both are emotionally involved with the Countess Madeleine. When LaRoche, a producer, plans a series of entertainments to celebrate the Countess' birthday, she suggests that Flamand and Olivier collaborate, using for their material the day's happenings and themselves as principal characters. When they leave to write their 'entertainment,' the Countess (looking in a mirror) asks herself which man she prefers. She comes to the conclusion that both interest her equally. Her conclusion is Strauss' answer to the problem that opened the opera: in opera, the words and music have equal importance."

The libretto—perhaps the best Strauss ever had except for *Der Rosenkavalier*—was written

by the conductor Clemens Krauss under the microscopic scrutiny of the composer, though several other writers, notably Stefan Zweig, also contributed ideas to the finished book. The plot was based on a libretto by Abbate Giovanni Casti titled *Prima la musica, poi le parole* (*First the Music, Then the Words*), which had first been set by Antonio Salieri in 1786 as a one-act opera that was premiered as part of the double bill at the Schönbrunn Palace in Vienna with Mozart's *The Impresario*. Zweig suggested the topic to Strauss as early as 1934, but composition was not begun until 1939; the score was completed on August 3, 1941. The setting is an elegant palace near Paris in 1775, the time when the operatic reforms of Gluck had the words/music controversy consuming the city's intellectual circles. Strauss intended *Capriccio* (subtitled "A Conversation Piece for Music") to be a refined entertainment for his friends rather than a popular theater piece—"no work for the public, only a fine dish for connoisseurs," was his assessment. He was surprised therefore, and certainly pleased, at the excellent success *Capriccio* enjoyed at its premiere in Munich on October 28, 1942 under Krauss' baton.

The lovely string sextet that serves as the introduction to *Capriccio* was first heard six months before the work's official premiere. In 1942, Strauss and his wife moved to Vienna from their Bavarian home in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. Their refusal to hide their disgust with the Nazi leadership had made their position in Garmisch difficult when their Jewish daughter-in-law and her children were threatened with ostracism. The governor of Vienna, Baldur von Schirach, assured Strauss that he would shelter the family if they would make no further public anti-Nazi remarks. In appreciation, Strauss allowed the Sextet to be performed privately at Schirach's house on May 7, 1942. Despite that particular kindness, Schirach was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment for war crimes by the Nuremberg Trials in 1946.

The opening sextet brings Strauss' opulent harmonic palette and rich instrumental textures to his stylized recreation of elegant Rococo chamber music. In the opera, the music begins before the stage is revealed. As it continues, the



curtain rises to show the characters listening to the music played by an off-stage ensemble as the musician Flamand's birthday offering to the Countess. The words of Michael Kennedy about the complete opera apply equally well to this beautiful sextet: "*Capriccio* is Strauss' most enchanting opera. It is also the nearest he came to unflawed perfection in a work of art. It is an anthology or synthesis of all that he did best, and it is as if he put his creative process into a crucible, refining away coarseness, bombast and excess of vitality."

Arnold Schoenberg

Verklärte Nacht for String Sextet, Op. 4

At the age of 16, in 1890, Arnold Schoenberg decided to become a professional musician, having already dabbled in composition, taught himself to play the violin and cello, and participated in some chamber music concerts with his friends. His father's death just at that time threw him into rather serious financial distress, however, and he had to scratch out a livelihood after leaving school in 1891 by working in a bank and conducting local choruses and theater orchestras for a few schillings per performance. In 1893 he met Alexander Zemlinsky, who had already established a Viennese reputation as a composer, conductor, and teacher though he was only two years Schoenberg's senior. Schoenberg showed his new friend some of his

manuscripts and Zemlinsky was so impressed with his talent that he offered to take him on as a counterpoint student, and secured him a position in the cello section of the Polyhymnia Orchestra to help earn a little money. Zemlinsky assumed the role of guardian to Schoenberg, introducing the young man to his circle of professional colleagues and offering advice and encouragement. In 1901, Schoenberg married Zemlinsky's sister, Mathilde.

During the summer of 1899, Schoenberg and Zemlinsky were on holiday in the mountain village of Payerbach, south of Vienna, and it was there that Schoenberg began a work for string sextet based on a poem by Richard Dehmel: "*Verklärte Nacht*" ("Transfigured Night"), which had appeared three years earlier in a collection called *Weib und die Welt* (*Woman and the World*). Dehmel was one of the most distinguished German poets of the day, whose verses bridged the sensuous Impressionism of the preceding generation and the intense spirituality of encroaching Expressionism. "*Verklärte Nacht*" matches well the Viennese *fin-de-siècle* temperament, when Sigmund Freud was intellectualizing sex with his systematic explorations into the subconscious and Gustav Klimt was painting full-length portraits of his female subjects as he imagined they would look totally nude before applying layers of elaborate, gold-sparkled costumes to finish the canvas. The fol-

lowing translated excerpt from Dehmel's poem appears in Schoenberg's printed score:

"Two people walk through the bare, cold woods; the moon runs along, they gaze at it. The moon runs over tall oaks, no cloudlet dulls the heavenly light into which the black peaks reach. A woman's voice speaks:

"I bear a child, but not by you. I walk in sin alongside you. I sinned against myself mightily. I believed no longer in good fortune but still had mighty longing for a full life, mother's joy, and duty; then I grew shameless, then horror-stricken, I let my sex be taken by a stranger and even blessed myself for it. Now life has taken its revenge: Now I have met you, you."

"She walks with clumsy gait. She gazes upward; the moon runs along. Her somber glance drowns in the light. A man's voice speaks:

"The child that you conceived be to your soul no burden. Oh look, how clear the universe glitters! There is a glory around All, you drift with me on a cold sea, but a peculiar warmth sparkles from you in me, from me in you. It will transfigure the strange child you will bear for me, from me; you brought the glory into me, you made myself into a child."

"He holds her around her strong hips. Their breath kisses in the air. Two people walk through the high, light night."

Schoenberg glossed this richly emotional poem with music influenced by Wagner's lush *Tristan* chromaticism, Brahms' intellectual rigor, and the intense expression of Late Romanticism to create a vast one-movement piece for strings that is virtually a programmatic tone poem. The work was premiered on March 15, 1902 when the augmented Arnold Rosé Quartet performed it under the auspices of the Vienna Tonkünstler Society. Schoenberg had already acquired a reputation as an unrepentant modernist, and the audience insisted on being put off by the music's ripe harmony and the lubricity of its subject. The Hungarian violinist Francis Aranyi reported that the premiere was greeted "with much blowing of whistles, heaving of rotten eggs, etc.," but that Rosé valiantly took his bows at the end "just as all hell broke loose." Over time, however, *Verklärte Nacht*

came to be viewed not as an avant-garde aberration but as one of the foremost creations of the Post-Romantic era.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
String Sextet in D minor, Op. 70,
Souvenir de Florence

Tchaikovsky's soul was seldom at rest in the years following his marital disaster in 1877, and he sought distraction in frequent travel abroad; Paris and Italy were his favorite destinations. In January 1890 he settled in Florence, and spent the next three months in that beautiful city working on his latest operatic venture, *Pique Dame* (*The Queen of Spades*). He took long walks along the Arno, marveled that spring flowers sprouted in February, and savored the food. "I have found here all I need for satisfactory work," he wrote to his brother Modeste. After a brief stay in Rome, he arrived back in Russia on May 1, noting five days later to a friend that after finishing *Pique Dame*, "I want to make sketches for a sextet for strings." The orchestration of the opera was completed by early the next month, and on June 12 he told Modeste that he was "starting the string sextet tomorrow."

Almost immediately he admitted to his brother that he was running into problems: "I started working on it the day before yesterday, and am writing under great strain, the difficulty being not necessarily a lack of ideas, but the new format. Six independent voices are needed, and, moreover, they have to be homogeneous. This is very difficult. Haydn was never able to overcome such difficulties, and never wrote any chamber music other than quartets.... I definitely do not want to write just any old tune and then arrange it for six instruments, I want a sextet—that is, six independent voices, so that it can never be anything but a sextet." (Tchaikovsky was wrong about Haydn, who wrote at least one sextet and several quintets). Still, he persevered, and by the end of the month he had completed the first draft. "Up to now I am very pleased with it," he told Modeste. A week later his enthusiasm had not dimmed: "It is some Sextet. What a great fugue there is at the end—a real delight. I am tremendously pleased with



Photos by Cheryl Mazak

myself.” He began the orchestration of the score on July 13 in anticipation of its performance the next month in St. Petersburg, but that concert never materialized, and he did not hear the Sextet until it was played for him by some friends in his St. Petersburg apartment in November. As with other of his works, his initial pleasure with the piece evaporated after hearing it. “It will be necessary to change the String Sextet radically,” he reported to the composer Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov. “It turned out to be extremely poor in all respects.” He began a revision early in 1891, but had to put it aside for his tour to the United States in April and May, and then for the composition and production of *The Nutcracker* and the opera *Iolanthe*; the new version was not finished until January 1892 in Paris. It was at that time that Tchaikovsky, without further explanation, appended the phrase “Souvenir de Florence” to its title. Jurgenson published the score and parts in June, and the *Souvenir de Florence* was given its public premiere, with good success, in St. Petersburg on December 7, 1892 by an ensemble including the celebrated violinist Leopold Auer.

In their biography of Tchaikovsky, Lawrence and Elisabeth Hanson wrote, “The *Souvenir de Florence* is...suffused with an atmosphere not often associated with this composer, of a calm geniality.” It is probably this quality that prompted Tchaikovsky, who often wrote in his letters of the “heavenly” Italian climate, to add the sobriquet to the work’s original title. The music itself is decidedly Russian in mood and melody, with only a certain lightness of spirit in the first two movements showing any possible Italianate traits. Indeed, if anything the work exhibits a strong German influence in the richness of its string sonorities and thematic development, which frequently recall Brahms’ chamber music. The opening movement is a full sonata structure given in the style of a bustling waltz. The following Adagio is disposed in a three-part form whose brief center section is constructed from a delightful, fluttering rhythmic figuration. The two closing movements are based on folk-like themes, the first a sad song that is the subject of considerable elaboration as it progresses, the other a bounding Cossack dance.

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Jerusalem Quartet

“Passion, precision, warmth, a gold blend: these are the trademarks of this excellent Israeli string quartet.”

Such was the *New York Times*’ impression of the Jerusalem Quartet. Since the ensemble’s founding in 1993 and subsequent 1996 debut, the four Israeli musicians have embarked on a journey of growth and maturation. This has resulted in a wide repertoire and an impressive depth of expression, which carries on the rich string quartet tradition in a unique manner. The ensemble has found its core in a warm, full, human sound and an egalitarian balance between high and low voices. This approach allows the quartet to maintain a healthy relationship between individual expression and a transparent and respectful presentation of the composer’s work. It is also the drive and motivation for the continuing refinement of the group’s interpretations of the classical repertoire as well as its exploration of new epochs.

The Jerusalem Quartet is a regular guest on the world’s great concert stages. With regular biannual visits to North America, the quartet has performed in cities such as New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Washington (DC), and Cleveland, as well as at the Ravinia Festival. In Europe, the quartet enjoys an enthusiastic following with regular appearances in London’s Wigmore Hall, the Tonhalle Zürich, Munich’s Herkulessaal, and the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, as well as in special guest performances at the Auditorium du Louvre Paris, the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, and festivals such as Salzburg, Verbier, Schleswig-Holstein, Schubertiade Schwarzenberg, Rheingau, Saint Petersburg White Nights, and many others.

The Jerusalem Quartet records exclusively for Harmonia Mundi. The ensemble’s recordings, particularly those featuring Haydn’s string quartets and Schubert’s *Death and the Maiden*, have been honored with awards such as the Diapason d’Or and the *BBC Music Magazine* Award for chamber music. In 2018 the quartet released two recordings, one of Dvořák’s String Quintet, Op. 97 and Sextet, Op. 48, and the other the celebrated quartets by Ravel and Debussy. In the spring of 2019, the quartet will

release a unique album exploring Jewish music in Central Europe between the wars and its far-reaching influence. Israeli soprano Hila Baggio will join the ensemble to perform a collection of Yiddish cabaret songs from Warsaw in the 1920s. The quartet has commissioned composer Leonid Desyatnikov to arrange these songs, which will be sung in Yiddish. Schulhoff’s *Five Pieces* (1924), a collection of short and light cabaret-like works, and Korngold’s *Quartet No. 2* (1937) will complete the program.

The group’s 2018–19 season opens with a premiere of the new Yiddish program. March will include a return of the ensemble’s Brahms project, featuring quartets, sonatas, and quintets together with clarinetist Sharon Kam and pianist Matan Porat. After a second US tour in April, the ensemble will perform Bartók’s six string quartets at London’s Wigmore Hall in May and then, combined with Beethoven, in various venues in Bavaria.

With a celebrated career encompassing five decades, **Pinchas Zukerman** reigns as one of today’s most sought after and versatile musicians—violin and viola soloist, conductor, and chamber musician. He is renowned as a virtuoso, and admired for the expressive lyricism of his playing, his singular beauty of tone, and his impeccable musicianship, which can be heard throughout his discography of over 100 recordings. A devoted teacher and champion of young musicians, he has served as chair of the Pinchas Zukerman Performance Program at the Manhattan School of Music for 25 years. He singularly pioneered the use of distance-learning technology with the first technological installment at the Manhattan School and has established an advanced training program for gifted young artists as part of the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. Zukerman has taught at prominent music education programs in London, Israel, and China, among others, and was appointed as the first instrumentalist mentor in music of the prestigious Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative.

The 2018–19 season marks Zukerman’s tenth season as principal guest conductor of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in London and his

fourth as artist-in-association with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra in Australia. He leads the RPO on a tour of the United Kingdom and Ireland, conducting works by Mozart and Vaughan Williams and performing as soloist in Beethoven's Violin Concerto. Zukerman joins the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra in performances of Bruch's Violin Concerto in G minor, on tour in Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. He appears as soloist and conductor with the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa and the symphony orchestras of Toronto and Indianapolis. Zukerman makes concerto appearances in North America with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Colorado Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and New World Symphony, and in Europe with the Gulbenkian Orchestra, Orquesta Nacional de España, NDR Radiophilharmonie, Salzburg Camerata, and Moscow State Symphony Orchestra. Zukerman conducts the Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz, and conducts and is soloist with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra on a tour of South Korea.

As a founding member of the Zukerman Trio, along with cellist Amanda Forsyth and pianist Angela Cheng, Zukerman appears in Baltimore and at New York's 92nd Street Y; tours Italy, including Bologna, Milan, and Naples; and gives performances in Germany, at Villa Musica in the Rhineland-Palatinate and in Mönchengladbach. Zukerman and Forsyth join the Jerusalem Quartet in a program of Strauss, Schoenberg, and Tchaikovsky sextets in (along with Berkeley) Chicago, Houston, Atlanta, Princeton, and Vancouver. Zukerman also appears with Forsyth in performances of the Brahms Double Concerto with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and joins violinist Viviane Hagner and the National Centre Arts Orchestra for performances of the Mozart Sinfonia Concertante.

Born in Tel Aviv, Pinchas Zukerman came to the United States, where he studied at the Juilliard School with Ivan Galamian as a recipient of the American-Israel Cultural Foundation scholarship. An alumnus of the Young Concert Artists program, he has also received honorary doctorates from Brown University,

Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, and the University of Calgary. He received the National Medal of Arts from President Ronald Reagan as well as the Isaac Stern Award for Artistic Excellence in Classical Music. Zukerman's extensive discography includes more than 100 titles, for which he gained two Grammy awards and 21 nominations. His complete recordings for Deutsche Grammophon and Philips were released in July 2016 in a 22-disc set comprising Baroque, Classical, and Romantic concertos and chamber music. Recent albums include *Baroque Treasury* on the Analekta label with the National Arts Centre Orchestra, cellist Amanda Forsyth, and oboist Charles Hamann in works by Handel, Bach, Vivaldi, Telemann, and Tartini; Brahms' Symphony No. 4 and Double Concerto with the National Arts Centre Orchestra and Forsyth, recorded live at Ottawa's Southam Hall; and a critically acclaimed album of works by Elgar and Vaughan Williams with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Canadian Juno Award-winning **Amanda Forsyth** is considered one of North America's most dynamic cellists. She achieved an international reputation as soloist, chamber musician, and principal cellist of Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra from 1999 to 2015. Her intense richness of tone, remarkable technique, and exceptional musicality combine to enthrall audiences and critics alike.

Forsyth has performed on international tours with the Royal Philharmonic and Israel Philharmonic. Other orchestral appearances include the Orchestre Radio de France, English Chamber Orchestra, Calgary Philharmonic, Toronto Symphony, National Arts Centre Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony, Luxembourg Philharmonic, and Gyeonggi Philharmonic. With multiple tours in Australia, Forsyth has also appeared with the symphony orchestras of Sydney, Perth, and Adelaide. In the United States she has performed with the Chicago, Washington National, San Diego, Colorado, Oregon, New West, Dallas, and Grand Rapids symphony orchestras. Forsyth has appeared numerous times on tour and in St. Petersburg with

the Mariinsky Orchestra, conducted by Valery Gergiev. In 2014 she made her Carnegie Hall debut with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

As a founding member of the Zukerman ChamberPlayers Forsyth has visited Germany, Israel, Italy, Finland, Holland, Switzerland, New Zealand, and Turkey, and cities such as London, Vienna, Paris, Belgrade, Budapest, Dubrovnik, Warsaw, and Barcelona. As cellist of the Zukerman Trio, she has performed on six continents and appeared at prestigious music festivals including Edinburgh, Miyazaki, Verbier, BBC Proms, Tanglewood, Ravinia, Spring Festival of St. Petersburg, White Night Festival, and La Jolla Summer Fest. Her current season includes Zukerman Trio engagements with Chamber Music Sedona, the Detroit Chamber Music Society, the Music Institute of Chicago, and the Savannah Music Festival.

Next season, the Zukerman Trio will embark on an East Coast tour, culminating in New York at the 92nd Street Y, in addition to a tour in Italy.

Highlights from this season include the world premiere of Marjan Mozetich's Cello Concerto with the National Arts Centre Orchestra, as well as Forsyth's debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, performing the Brahms Double Concerto with Zubin Mehta conducting.

Amanda Forsyth's recordings appear on the Sony Classics, Naxos, Altara, Fanfare, Marquis, Pro Arte, and CBC labels. Her recording of Schubert's *Trout* Quintet with the Zukerman ChamberPlayers and Yefim Bronfman was released by Sony in 2008. Her most recent disc features the Brahms Double Concerto with Pinchas Zukerman and the National Arts Centre Orchestra, released by Analekta Records.

Born in South Africa, Forsyth moved to Canada as a child and began playing cello at age three. She became a protege of William Pleeth in London, and later studied with Harvey Shapiro at the Juilliard School. Forsyth performs on a rare 1699 Italian cello by Carlo Giuseppe Testore.