

Friday, October 14, 2022, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Maxim Vengerov, *violin*
Polina Osetinskaya, *piano*

PROGRAM

- Johann Sebastian BACH (1685–1750) Violin Sonata in B minor, BWV 1014
(1717–23)
Adagio
Allegro
Andante
Allegro
- Ludwig van BEETHOVEN (1770–1827) Sonata in A Major for Violin and Piano,
Op. 47, *Kreutzer* (1802–04)
Adagio sostenuto – Presto
Andante con variazioni
Finale. Presto

INTERMISSION

- Dmitri SHOSTAKOVICH (1906–1975) Ten Preludes from Op. 34 (1932–33)
arr. Dmitri T'ZIGANOV (1903–1992)
No. 2 in A minor: Allegretto
No. 6 in B minor: Allegretto
No. 12 in G-sharp minor: Allegretto non troppo
No. 13 in F-sharp major: Moderato
No. 17 in A-flat major: Largo
No. 18 in F minor: Allegretto
No. 21 in B-flat major: Allegretto poco
moderato
No. 19 in E-flat major: Andantino
No. 20 in C minor: Allegretto furioso
No. 22 in G minor: Adagio
- Piotr Ilyich TCHAIKOVSKY (1840–1893) *Souvenir d'un lieu cher*, Op. 42 (1878)
Méditation
Mélodie
Scherzo

TCHAIKOVSKY *Valse-Scherzo* in C major, Op. 34 (1877)

This performance is made possible, in part, by Taube Philanthropies.

Support for the presentation of Israeli artists is provided by The Sir Jack Lyons Charitable Trust.

COVID-19: Masking is required inside the auditorium, and is strongly recommended, though not required, for indoor lobby/waiting areas as well as outdoor spaces. Up-to-date vaccination is strongly recommended, though not required for entry. The latest information on Cal Performances' COVID-19 safety policies is available at calperformances.org/safety.



Jeremy Geffen

I couldn't be happier to welcome you to this, one of the first programs of Cal Performances' remarkable 2022–23 season. This month, we look forward to visits from gifted classical artists like violinist **Maxim Vengerov** and pianist **Polina Osetinskaya**; Baroque violinist **Rachell Ellen Wong** and her partners, cellist **Coleman Itzkoff** and harpsichordist **David Belkovski**; and harpsichordist and fortepianist **Kristian Bezuidenhout**. We'll also welcome our own **San Francisco Symphony** back to UC Berkeley in a special concert especially appropriate for the Halloween season and featuring music director **Esa-Pekka Salonen** and piano soloist **Bertrand Chamayou**; as well as the brilliant **Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan** with its breathtaking production of *13 Tongues*. I'm proud to launch the season with programming that represents the finest in dance and classical music.

But this is just the start! From now until May 2023—when we close our season with the Bay Area premiere of Octavia E. Butler's powerful folk opera *Parable of the Sower* and a highly anticipated recital with international dramatic soprano sensation **Nina Stemme**—we have a calendar packed with the very best in the live performing arts.

And what a schedule! More than 70 events, with highlights including the return of the legendary **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra** under conductor **Christian Thielemann** (in his Bay Area debut); the beloved **Mark Morris Dance Group** in Morris' new *The Look of Love: An Evening of Dance to the Music of Burt Bacharach*; the US premiere of revered South African artist **William Kentridge's** astonishing new *SIBYL*; and a special concert with chamber music superstars pianist **Emanuel Ax**, violinist **Leonidas Kavakos**, and cellist **Yo-Ma**. And these are only a few of the amazing performances that await you!

Illuminations programming this season will take advantage of Cal Performances' unique positioning as a vital part of the world's top-ranked public university. In the coming months, we'll be engaging communities on and off campus to examine the evolution of tools such as musical instruments and electronics, the complex relationships between the creators and users of technology, the possibilities enabled by technology's impact on the creative process, and questions raised by the growing role of artificial intelligence in our society.

This concept of "Human and Machine" has never been so pertinent to so many. Particularly over the course of the pandemic, the rapid expansion of technology's role in improving communication and in helping us emotionally process unforeseen and, at times, extraordinarily difficult events has made a permanent mark on our human history. Throughout time, our reliance on technology to communicate has—for better and worse—influenced how we understand others as well as ourselves. During this *Illuminations* season, we will investigate how technology has contributed to our capacity for self-expression, as well as the potential dangers it may pose.

Some programs this season will bring joy and delight, and others will inspire reflection and stir debate. We are committed to presenting this wide range of artistic expression on our stages because of our faith in the performing arts' power to promote empathy. And it is because of our audiences' openness and curiosity that we have the privilege of bringing such thought-provoking, adventurous performances to our campus. The Cal Performances community wants the arts to engage in important conversations, and to bring us all together as we see and feel the world through the experiences of others.

Please make sure to check out our brochures and our website for complete information about upcoming events. We can't wait to share all the details with you, in print and online.

Welcome back to Cal Performances!

Jeremy Geffen
Executive and Artistic Director, Cal Performances



Johann Sebastian Bach Violin Sonata in B minor, BWV 1014

J. S. Bach's legendary fame as a performer has rested on his prowess at keyboard instruments and especially the organ. Less known is his competency, if not virtuosity, as a violinist and violist. Both his grandfather and father had been celebrated violinists, and Bach from early childhood took lessons from his father. When as a young man he became a musician at the court of Weimar, he was appointed concertmaster of the orchestra as well as chief organist in the chapel.

Thus, when he moved from Weimar to become *kapellmeister* at the court of Cöthen in 1718, Bach brought a thorough understanding of string instruments to his new post. And this served him well for there was little need for his renowned organ playing at this Calvinist court. The organ in the Cöthen chapel had fallen into decrepitude since the Reformed Church severely restricted the use of music during services. However, religious austerity did not affect musical life in the court itself, and Prince Leopold maintained an orchestra of the highest quality. So the composer turned his attention to secular instrumental music. We can thank Cöthen's Calvinism for such masterpieces as the *Brandenburg* Concertos, the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, the cello suites, and the extraordinary sonatas and partitas for unaccompanied violin.

To this list we must also add the six impressive sonatas for piano and clavier, from which Maxim Vengerov and Polina Osetinskaya have chosen the first to open this program. As is the case with its five siblings, this is a work in which violin and piano are equal partners, both sharing roles as melodic leader as well as accompanist. The result is a texture like that of the three-instrument trio sonata so popular in this period, with the pianist's right hand often becoming a second soloist dovetailing with the violin.

The four movements follow the *sonata da chiesa* pattern of slow/fast/slow/fast. In the beautiful opening Adagio, the pianist introduces the grave, downward-rocking melody while the violinist enters slowly, building a sustained *cantabile* melody above and only later adopting the piano's melody. In a buoyant rhythm and fast tempo, movement two is a vivacious fugue in which the pianist's bursts of trills spur on the violin. Movement three is a lyrical Andante in which the two instruments sing a tenderly responsive duet, their melodic lines curving sensuously around each other. In the brilliant fugal finale, the piano's blazing counterpoint drives the music forward, accented by the violin's punctuating commentary.

—Janet E. Bedell © 2022

Janet E. Bedell is a program annotator and feature writer who writes for Carnegie Hall, the Metropolitan Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Caramoor Festival of the Arts, and other musical organizations.

Ludwig van Beethoven Sonata in A major for Violin and Piano, Op. 47, *Kreutzer*

In 1803, Ludwig van Beethoven was introduced to a brilliant 24-year-old violinist by the composer's patron Prince Karl Lichnowsky, George Bridgetower. Bridgetower was an extroverted and exotic personality of mixed racial origins (his father was from the West Indies, his mother European). And he was a fiery virtuoso—a protégé of the Franco-Italian master violinist Giovanni Battista Viotti, who had developed a more powerful French school of violin playing that utilized the revolutionary "Viotti" bow.

Beethoven was captivated by Bridgetower as both a musician and a man. The two frequented taverns together, and soon Bridgetower convinced the composer to write a violin sonata for them to perform together. However, the proposed concert

date was looming fast. Fortunately, Beethoven had an orphan finale he'd rejected for a violin sonata composed in 1802; its wildly virtuosic style would be ideal for Bridgetower if he could only write two other movements. And so at breakneck speed he was able to concoct the extraordinary work that by rights should be called the *Bridgetower* Sonata, but today is known as the *Kreutzer*. It was a sensational success at its Vienna debut on May 24, 1803. However, a subsequent quarrel with Bridgetower caused Beethoven to change the dedication to the French violinist Rodolphe Kreutzer—who ironically disliked the work and never played it.

Despite the speed with which it was composed, this sonata is one of the most impressive and innovative Beethoven created for any instrument. He described it as being written more in the highly virtuosic style of a concerto than a traditional sonata. In his superb recent biography, Jan Swafford calls it “an exercise in sustained intensity”—a work of high drama and bold expressiveness that corresponded to such piano sonatas as the *Appassionata* and *Waldstein*. Later, Leo Tolstoy used it as the inspiration for his short story “The Kreutzer Sonata” about music’s ability to arouse dangerous erotic passions.

Though the first movement will be in a turbulent A minor, it opens with a slow, pensive introduction in A major. Its arresting opening features the violinist playing big multi-stopped chords, as full-bodied as those the pianist will use. A little sighing motive grows increasingly prominent and eventually culminates with the violin rising to a dissonant F-natural.

That idea then launches the boldly masculine principal theme of the Presto main section, the violin completing it with slashing chords. The intensity cools briefly for a lyrically sustained second theme. And Beethoven adds yet a third theme, introduced by the piano: a dashing ascending melody

with a gypsy flavor and strong, thwacking accents plucked by the violin. Beethoven then conjures up a spectacularly adventurous development section, which wanders all over the harmonic universe while constantly challenging both players to more feverish feats. In the movement’s concluding race, the momentum is briefly halted by a slow, meditative passage musing on the once bold principal theme.

The second movement, a set of four variations on a gentle song-like theme, gives the two perspiring players a chance to recover before tackling the exertions of the finale. The dissonant note of F that appeared at the sonata’s beginning now finds its goal as the movement’s F-major key. This slow movement culminates in an exquisite reverie of a coda.

In A major, the finale is a white-hot Presto in the whirlwind rhythm of a Neapolitan *tarantella* dance. The exuberantly playful theme generates a battle of virtuosity between the two players that—as in the first movement—is briefly slowed by an unexpected passage of nostalgic beauty.

—J.E.B.

Dmitri Shostakovich Ten Preludes from Op. 34

As of 1932, Dmitri Shostakovich had every reason to feel confident about his future prospects. The unchallenged golden boy of Soviet music, accolades and approval had come his way ever since his 1925 graduation piece, Symphony No. 1 in F minor, had taken the international concert world by storm. A splendid if idiosyncratic pianist, he challenged traditional norms with his crystalline and unsentimental performances of Chopin and other Romantics; as a composer, he gleefully upended appercarts far and wide as he embraced the anarchistic vibe of the 1920s. Even if works such as his savagely funny 1928 opera *The Nose* elicited howls of bourgeois umbrage, he was always newsworthy, never ignored.

In December 1932, Shostakovich put the finishing touches on his verismo opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, which he expected to be his crowning success so far. While waiting for its premiere, he busied himself with a number of other projects, among which was a set of 24 preludes for solo piano, one in each of the major and minor keys. His model was only too clearly Chopin (whose model, in turn, was only too clearly Bach.)

Anyone seeking an entrée to Shostakovich's musical world could do a lot worse than the Op. 34 Preludes. Deft and concise miniatures, they encapsulate his language, his harmonic and melodic idioms, his tropes, his obsessions. One hears echoes (or premonitions) of larger Shostakovich works throughout the set—the Adagio No. 14 that previews the shattering slow movement of the Fifth Symphony, or the sardonic snap of the Ninth Symphony's opening in Prelude No. 24. Mournful laments. Folk-like song settings. Melancholy waltzes. Nightmare waltzes. Glittering scherzos. Hysterical scherzos. Sinister marches. Nervous marches. Grotesque marches. Silly marches. Brief though they may be, these pieces cover a lot of ground.

Violinist-composer Dmitri Tziganov, leader of the Beethoven String Quartet, began arranging this music for violin and piano in 1937. Shostakovich was duly impressed: “My preludes for piano have been superbly transcribed for violin and piano by Dmitri Mikhajlovich Tziganov,” he wrote. “When I first heard these pieces in their new form, I was no more aware that I had actually written them for piano.” Very much one to put his money where his mouth was, in 1968 Shostakovich dedicated his 12th string quartet to Tziganov.

Tziganov began with just five of the preludes; eventually he added two more volumes—one with ten preludes, and a final set of four. (The remaining five preludes were eventually transcribed by other composers.)

The ten preludes on this program form an excellent cross-section of the whole, from waltzes to marches, heartfelt melodies, sardonic scherzos, a gondola song, and even one (No. 20) that could stand as the opening of something larger like a concerto or symphony.

Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District premiered in 1934, and it quickly proved to be the blockbuster hit Shostakovich had expected. But after Stalin attended—and walked out of—a 1936 performance, the hammerblow of official disapproval came down hard. Shostakovich was at least spared the Gulag—or worse. It was a catastrophe nonetheless. He was able to crawl back into the party's good graces in 1937 with his Fifth Symphony, but the erstwhile golden boy's days of carefree and daring insouciance were over forever.

—Scott Foglesong

Scott Foglesong, *Chair of Musicianship and Music Theory at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music*, writes program notes for numerous organizations including the San Francisco Symphony, California Symphony, Grand Teton Music Festival, Maestro Foundation, and the Las Vegas Philharmonic.

Piotr Ilych Tchaikovsky *Souvenir d'un lieu cher*, Op. 42

When Tchaikovsky was completing the Violin Concerto—one of his most popular pieces—in 1877, he decided its original slow movement was not strong enough to match that work's vivacious outer movements. So in two days he created another one, the lyrical Andante we hear today. But what happened to that discarded movement? Fortunately, the composer recognized its merit, and so it began a new life as the first movement, “Méditation,” of his *Souvenir d'un lieu cher* (“Memory of a Dear Place”) for violin and piano, composed as a thank you gift to his extraordinarily generous benefactress Nadezda von Meck in 1878.

The “dear place” was Brailovo, von Meck’s lavish estate in Ukraine, to which she had recently invited Tchaikovsky to stay in order to compose and recover from his recent disastrous marriage. It became a favorite creative oasis for him.

The relationship between the composer and Mme von Meck was one of the strangest and most fruitful in music. Highly musical herself, she became passionately devoted to Tchaikovsky’s music. The two found they were soul mates, yet they decided to communicate exclusively through letters and never to meet. For 14 years, they poured out their innermost feelings to each other. She gave him a generous annual stipend that freed him from financial worries. He stayed at her estates when she was away. Years later, when they accidentally encountered each other on a street in Florence, they raced past each other in embarrassment!

Marked *Andante molto cantabile*, “Méditation” is a song of love and nostalgia and a touching example of Tchaikovsky’s supreme gifts as a melodist. Beginning in its earthy low range, the violin will soar over its entire range, ultimately hovering in its otherworldly highest register. The lightest and most lyrical of the movements, “Mélodie”

is a charming bit of undemanding salon music. Tchaikovsky intended it to be the last of the set, but Vengerov and Osetinskaya have opted to finish instead with the more impressive second piece: the buzzing Scherzo in the wild tempo of a *tarantella*. The players’ virtuoso exertions here are only temporarily relieved by the trio section’s romantic melody.

—J.E.B.

Valse-Scherzo in C major

Composed early in 1877, the *Valse-Scherzo* in C major also has a connection with the Violin Concerto as it was written for the young Yosif Kotek, former composition pupil of Tchaikovsky at the Moscow Conservatory who would a year later inspire and collaborate in creating the great work. Tchaikovsky scored it for violin and orchestra, and apparently Kotek aided him in orchestrating it for its debut at the Paris World Exhibition in 1878.

The combining of a waltz rhythm with the playfulness of a scherzo form lends charm to this engaging piece that wears its virtuosity lightly. Particularly lovely is the slightly slower trio section, which has a wonderful quality of intimacy and wit.

—J.E.B.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Universally hailed as one of the world’s finest musicians, and often referred to as today’s greatest living string player, Grammy award winner **Maxim Vengerov** (*violin*) is one of today’s most in-demand soloists and also enjoys international acclaim as a conductor.

Born in 1974, he began his career as a solo violinist at the age of five, won the Wieniawski and Carl Flesch international competitions at ages 10 and 15 respectively, studied with Galina Tourchaninova and Zakhar Bron, made his first recording at the age of 10, and went on to record extensively for

high-profile labels including Melodia, Teldec and EMI, earning among others, Grammy and *Gramophone* artist of the year awards.

In 2007, he followed in the footsteps of his mentor, the late Mstislav Rostropovich, by turning his attention to conducting, and in 2010, he was appointed the first chief conductor of the Gstaad Festival Orchestra. June 2014 saw Vengerov graduate with a Diploma of Excellence from the Moscow Institute of Ippolitov-Ivanov with Professor Yuri Simonov and he has since finished a further two-year program in opera conducting.

In the last few seasons Vengerov has performed as soloist and/or conductor with all major orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra, and the Chicago, Montreal and Toronto Symphony Orchestras. He has also toured extensively around the world as a recitalist.

Highlights of 2018–19 saw Vengerov opening the season of the Orchestra Filarmonica della Scala with Maestro Riccardo Chailly, and residences with the Monte Carlo Philharmonic and the Philharmonie in Paris.

In January of last year, Vengerov became Classic FM's first solo Artist in Residence and released a new recording of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto with conductor Myung-Whun Chung and the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, coupled with works by Saint-Saëns and Ravel as well as a live recital from Carnegie Hall. Further recordings will follow to coincide with Vengerov's September 2022 celebration of 40 years on stage at the Royal Albert Hall; for this, he was joined by his colleagues Misha Maiski, Martha Argerich, the Oxford Philharmonic with its music director Marios Papadopoulos and students from the Royal College of Music London.

One of Vengerov's greatest passions is the teaching and encouraging of young talent, and he has held various teaching positions around the world. He currently holds the Stephan and Viktoria Schmidheiny Stiftungsprofessor at the Mozarteum University Salzburg and since September 2016 is also the Polonsky Visiting Professor of Violin at the Royal College of Music in London. In 2018, Vengerov became the Goodwill Ambassador of the Musica Mundi School—a unique institution, that supports talented young artists. With the vision of democratising access to music learning, he launched his own online platform (www.maximvengerov.com) in January 2021, creating an

impact across 170 countries and reaching over 190 million people. His first-year programs include partnerships with musical institutions from around the world, the Lottery Ticket program, guest artist series inaugurated with Brett Yang from TwoSet Violin, as well as his new global community group who's initiatives include the world-leading Mentoring program, rural musical communities initiative, and the Musical Pen Pals program for children.

Vengerov has been profiled in a series of documentaries that include *Playing by Heart*, which was recorded by Channel Four Television and screened at the Cannes Television Festival in 1999, and *Living the Dream*, which was released worldwide and received the *Gramophone* Award for Best Documentary in 2008.

Vengerov has received prestigious fellowships and honors from a number of institutions. Honors include an Honorary Visiting Fellowship at Trinity College Oxford (2012); an honorary doctorate from the Royal College of Music London (2019); and the Order of Cultural Merit from the Palace Monte Carlo (2019).

Other awards include the 2003 Grammy Award for Best Instrumental Soloist Performance (with Orchestra), two *Gramophone* awards (1994, 1995), a Classical Brit Award (2004), five Edison Classical Music Awards (1995, 1996, 1998, 2003, 2004), two ECHO awards (1997, 2003) and a World Economic Forum Crystal award (2007), honoring artists who have used their art to improve the state of the world.

Maxim Vengerov plays the ex-Kreutzer Stradivari (1727).

Polina Osetinskaya (*piano*) began her career at the age of five and was soon acclaimed as a wunderkind in the former Soviet Union. She gave her first concert at the age of six and entered the Central Music School of the Moscow Conservatory at the age of seven. Her first teacher was her father,

Oleg Osetinsky; she continued her studies at the Leningrad Conservatory with Marina Wolf and later at the Moscow Conservatory with Vera Gornostaeva.

Osetinskaya has performed at Carnegie Hall, Vienna's Musikverein, London's Barbican Centre, Rome's Teatro Argentina, as well as in Russia, Germany, Poland, and Israel. She also appears at festivals in Europe, Russia, and the United States.

Osetinskaya has appeared with music Aeterna, the Mariinsky Orchestra, Tatarstan National Symphony Orchestra, St. Peters-

burg Philharmonic Orchestra, State Academic Symphony Orchestra of Russia "Evgeny Svetlanov," and Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, among others. Onstage partners have included Maxim Vengerov, Julian Milikis, Ksenia Rappoport, Teodor Currentzis, Laurent Petitgirard, Vladimir Spivakov, Alexander Sladkovsky, Vassily Sinaisky, Andrey Boreyko, Dmitry Liss, Gerd Albrecht, Yan Pascal Tortelier, and Thomas Sanderling. She has released recordings with the Quartz, Naxos, Sony Music, Bel-Aire, and Melodiya labels.

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