

Sunday, March 1, 2026, 3pm  
Hertz Hall

**Geneva Lewis, *violin***  
**Evren Ozel, *piano***

**PROGRAM**

Johann Sebastian BACH (1685–1750) Violin Sonata in E major, BWV 1016  
(1717-23)  
Adagio  
Allegro  
Adagio ma non tanto  
Allegro

Robert SCHUMANN (1810–1856) Violin Sonata in A minor, WoO 27 (1853)  
Ziemlich langsam – [Lebhaft]  
Scherzo. Lebhaft  
Intermezzo. Bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell  
Finale. Markiertes, ziemlich lebhaftes Tempo

*INTERMISSION*

Arnold SCHOENBERG (1874–1951) *Phantasy*, Op. 47 (1949)

Franz SCHUBERT (1797–1828) Fantasy for Violin and Piano in C major,  
D. 934 (1827)  
Andante molto  
Allegretto  
Andantino  
Allegro Vivace

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## JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH Violin Sonata in E major, BWV 1016

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 1717, 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. Therefore, the composer turned his attention to creating 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 must be added the six impressive sonatas for piano and clavier, from which Geneva Lewis and Evren Ozel have chosen one of the richest and most inventive to open this program. Though these sonatas were probably composed at Cöthen between 1720 and 1723, there is evidence that they were also performed later at Bach's Collegium Musicum chamber programs in Leipzig.

As is the case with its five siblings, the Violin Sonata in E major 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 (two solo instruments plus bass continuo) so popular during this period, with the pianist's right hand often becoming a second soloist dovetailing with the violin while the left hand provides the harmonic bass line and is an active participant in the counterpoint of the fast movements as well.

The four movements follow the *sonata da chiesa* pattern of slow/fast/slow/fast. The two slow movements contain some of the loveliest music Bach ever wrote while the two fast movements are vivacious fugues demonstrating his contrapuntal genius. The Adagio first movement breaks away from the trio-sonata texture with the violin as the soloist singing a beautifully ornamented legato aria while the piano plays the accompaniment featuring a gentle rocking motive. The Allegro second movement moves us to the trio-sonata texture with the piano right hand introducing a merry, hyperactive fugue subject in partnership with the violin.

Moving to C-sharp minor, the third movement is a chaconne or passacaglia, with a repeating bass pattern in the left hand whose subtle adjustments allow the music to modulate. In the two upper solo parts, the violin and the piano right hand share solo and accompaniment roles with the violin introducing a wide-ranging aria while the piano counters it with a syncopated repeated-note pattern. Both of these elements are then traded back and forth between the two soloists.

The final Allegro outdoes the second movement in rhythmic vivacity and contrapuntal excitement. Here, the whirlwind fugue subject opens with a hiccup that misses the downbeat. In a middle section, Bach adds more rhythmic conflict by introducing triplet figures against the original hiccupping duple pattern of the subject. This is an ebullient fugue that is as captivating (if also difficult!) for the players as it is for the listeners.



**ROBERT SCHUMANN****Violin Sonata in A minor, WoO 27**

From 1852 on, Robert Schumann's brave fight against his mental demons slowed his formerly prodigious creative output. Bouts of tinnitus tormented his hearing, along with dizziness and fierce headaches. However, there was one final surge of composing late in 1853 that was stimulated by his friendship with the superb young violinist Joseph Joachim and then amplified by the arrival of the 20-year-old Johannes Brahms—recommended to the Schumanns by Joachim—at his doorstep that September.

Joachim inspired a violin concerto and a set of violin sonatas, including an unusual joint production of a sonata named the *F–A–E* Sonata to celebrate Joachim's return to the Schumann home in October. "F–A–E" was Joachim's personal theme, embodied in those three notes and in his motto "Frei, aber einsam" ("Free, but lonely") expressing his unhappiness with his bachelor status. Schumann concocted this scheme of a four-movement work for violin and piano, with another young musical friend, Albert Dietrich, composing the first movement; Brahms the Scherzo; and Schumann the slow Intermezzo and fast Finale.

However, Schumann was not content to stop with this hybrid work and decided to transform it into his Violin Sonata No. 3 in A minor by replacing Dietrich's first movement with his own and likewise Brahms' Scherzo. It was to be his final major work before his attempted suicide early in 1854. But it was probably never played in Schumann's lifetime and not published until 1956, the 100th anniversary of his death.

Marked "Ziemlich langsam" ("rather slow"), the impassioned first movement opens with the rich sound of chords establishing the key of A minor played by both instruments, the violin in double stops. Immediately, the pianist is the driving force countering the rather reticent violin with forceful chords adorned with virtuosic

flourishes and an important motive of quick, detached three-note patterns. However, the violin is soon animated by the piano and introduces a lovely, flowing second theme. Rather than clearly marking out the sonata sections, this music is more a free rhapsody in which development and recapitulation are mingled together.

The second movement, marked "Lebhaft" ("lively"), replaces Brahms' scherzo in the *F–A–E* Sonata. Though it's already in three beats, the piano doubles the effect with triplet rhythms, giving the music an uneasy, slightly seasick feeling and intriguing rhythmic conflicts with the violin. It contains several more lyrical episodes between the returns of the main scherzo theme.

In F major, the Intermezzo is one of Schumann's original movements from the *F–A–E* Sonata and contains Joachim's musical motto using those three pitches. The violin introduces this motto in its smoothly flowing theme, underpinned by the piano's rocking arpeggios that give this music an intriguing three against two rhythmic feeling.

The sonata closes with the Finale Schumann originally used in the *F–A–E*. And from the piano's first three vigorous chords, this movement is saturated with the *F–A–E* motive, whose rhythm and angularity will identify it even when the original pitches are no longer there. Virtuosity reigns as the two instruments compete with each other in force and dexterity. Fortunately, Schumann also levens the drama with more lyrical reveries and ultimately moves this stentorian minor-mode music to the joyful brightness of A major.

**ARNOLD SCHOENBERG*****Phantasy, Op. 47***

Written in March 1949 as he approached his 75th birthday, the *Phantasy* was the last instrumental work Arnold Schoenberg composed. For most of the previous decade, he had been in frail health and in 1946 suffered an almost fatal heart attack. Restricted to

periods when he was physically stronger, his compositions were less frequent, but when they came, they were worth waiting for. Such a work was the *Phantasy*, written for his friend the American violinist Adolf Koldofsky, which distilled his twelve-tone harmonic system to produce its loveliest and most delicate effects. That September, Koldofsky premiered it at a concert sponsored by the International Society for Contemporary Music commemorating Schoenberg's 75th birthday.

Special attention needs to be paid to this work's title. Schoenberg did not call it a "sonata for violin and piano"; instead, he emphasizes the violin's status as the principal soloist in this work and the melodic leader, with the piano in the subsidiary role of filling out the tone-row's activity. In fact, he created the violin part first, then wrote the piano part a week later. And though this one-movement piece has aspects suggesting a sonata form, even returning to the opening music at the end, he chose to call it a freer fantasia. That corresponds well with its mercurial style, which moves rapidly through different tempos, meters, and moods. Schoenberg marks those mood changes with precise expressive markings such as "Grave"/"Furioso"/"Grazioso"/"Scherzando."

Many analysts have commented that this brief piece subdivides into four distinct sections. The first, marked "grave," is the most dramatic as it establishes the theme, which incorporates the tone row. The violin leads off with powerful leaps and plunges covering its full range. Schoenberg scholar Dika Newlin describes it as "one of Schoenberg's most fiery and *youthful* thematic conceptions." Throughout, the composer makes imaginative use of extended playing techniques that produce a rainbow of colors.

Serving as a slow movement, the first episode, beginning "cantabile," moves to a dancelike triple meter, and is generally more flowing and lyrical. A more forceful transition leads to the third section, marked

"scherzando": spikier, playful music that adopts the style of a scherzo and trio via a bouncing 6/8 meter. Abruptly, the music then reprises a variant of the opening "grave" section, with its angular leaps, followed by a virtuoso coda filled with shivering tremolandos.

#### FRANZ SCHUBERT

##### **Fantasy for Violin and Piano in C major, D. 934**

Throughout his career, Franz Schubert was fascinated by the fantasia genre: an unfettered style that gave free rein to his imagination without constraining it within rigid formal boundaries. The fantasia is a type of composition that, although carefully planned, attempts to recreate the spirit of an improvised piece and also to capture the virtuoso brilliance of execution such a piece would emphasize. Traditional formal schemes are relatively unimportant; the composer is encouraged instead to use his own fancy to link together a free flow of musical ideas.

Such freedom produced several of Schubert's greatest piano works, notably his great *Wanderer Fantasy* of 1822 and the *Fantasy in F minor for Piano Four-Hands* of 1828. Shortly before the F-minor Fantasy, it also inspired a work of stunning virtuosity for violin and piano, the *Fantasy in C major, D. 934* written in December 1827. This work was created specifically to show off the talents of two members of Schubert's musical circle, the pianist Karl Maria von Bocklet and 21-year-old Bohemian violinist Josef Slavik, at one of the composer's legendary Schubertiad evenings. The Fantasy's first performance took place in Vienna on January 20, 1828, and, sadly, it was not a success even among Schubert's devoted coterie. Thus, it was not published until decades after Schubert's death.

Though it is technically in one interconnected movement, the Fantasy actually breaks down into four contrasting move-

ment-like sections. At its center is an extended theme and variations based on one of Schubert's songs, "Sei mir gegrüsst" ("I Greet You"). It opens with a prelude-like section in C major marked "Andante molto." Over a dramatic piano tremolo, the violin sings a soulful melody that soars ever higher. It is wonderful example of Schubertian song, including the shadows of minor mode that is one of his trademarks.

The tempo increases in the Allegretto second movement and the key shifts to A minor and major for the second section: a blithe dance in Hungarian folk style introduced by the two instruments in close canon. Virtuosity comes to the fore in this exuberant dance, as both instruments urge each other on through thickets of intricate fast figurations.

The music slides into the distant key of A-flat major for the heart of the work, the Andantino theme and variations based on "Sei mir gegrüsst." The piano is the leader in presenting this warmly expressive theme. Four variations follow, with each of their sections also repeated. The first three are highly ornamental in style, pushing both instrumentalists to their limits in terms of fleetness and accuracy of execution. The loveliest variation is the rhapsodic

last one, rising upward on a series of trills. But before it has progressed very far, it is interrupted by the return of the work's opening section, with its piano tremolo and soulful violin theme. Rising higher and higher, the violin then flows into the Fantasy's final section.

In a fast "Allegro vivace" tempo and the home key of C major, the piano introduces a bold, thickly chorded melody with a firm foursquare shape that suggests Schubert's idol Beethoven. But before long there is yet another interruption. Remembering he hasn't finished his theme and variations section, Schubert suddenly wrenches the tonality back to A-flat major and tenderly reprises its core melody. But a virtuoso piece needs a virtuoso finish, and so the music soon returns to C major and a breakneck "Presto" tempo for a blaze of two-fisted double octaves for the pianist and crunchy multiple stops for the violinist.

—Janet E. Bedell © 2026

*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.*

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

American/New Zealand violinist Geneva Lewis has forged a reputation as a musician of consummate artistry whose performances speak from and to the heart and who has been lauded for the "remarkable mastery of her instrument" (CVNC) and hailed as "clearly one to watch" (*Musical America*).

Named a BBC New Generation Artist (2022–24), Lewis is also the recipient of a 2022 Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award and a 2021 Avery Fisher Career Grant. She was also Grand Prize winner of the 2020 Concert Artists Guild Competition, winner of

the Kronberg Academy's Prince of Hesse Prize (2021), *Musical America's* New Artist of the Month (June 2021), a Performance Today Young Artist in Residence, and a YCAT Concordia Artist.

In 2023, Lewis made her BBC Proms debut in the Royal Albert Hall with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and Jaime Martin. Additional collaborations have included the BBC Symphony and BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestre National de Bordeaux Aquitaine, Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Orquestra Filarmonica



Monti Feng-Bentov

Geneva Lewis

de Minas Gerais, Atlanta Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, and Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. The 2025–26 season sees performances with the Kremerata Baltica, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, San Diego Symphony, Filharmonia Czesłochowska, Orquesta Ciudad de Granada, Utah Symphony, Santa Rosa Symphony, and Orquesta Filarmónica de Jalisco.

Deeply passionate about chamber music, Lewis has had the pleasure of collaborating with prominent musicians such as Jonathan Biss, Glenn Dicterow, Miriam Fried, Kim Kashkashian, Gidon Kremer, Andrés Schiff, and Mitsuko Uchida. She has performed in venues and festivals such as London’s Wigmore Hall, the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Marlboro Music Festival, Kronberg Festival, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Ravinia, and Chamberfest Cleveland.

An advocate of community engagement and music education, Lewis was selected for the New England Conservatory’s Community Performances and Partnerships Program’s Ensemble Fellowship, through which her string quartet created interactive educational programs for audiences throughout the Boston area. The quartet was also chosen for the Virginia Arts Festival Residency, during which it performed and presented master classes in elementary, middle, and high schools.

Lewis received her Artist Diploma from the New England Conservatory as the recipient of the Charlotte F. Rabb Presidential Scholarship, studying with Miriam Fried, and went on to study with Professor Mihaela Martin in the Professional Studies Program at Kronberg Academy. Prior to that, she studied with Aimée Kreston at the Colburn

School of Performing Arts.

Lewis currently performs on a composite violin by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini, c. 1776, generously on loan from a charitable trust.

American pianist Evren Ozel has been described as “an absolute wow” (*Third Coast Review*) and “an artist capable of lifting everyone to another level” (*La Scena Musicale*), praised for his blend of technical mastery and compelling artistry. He is the Bronze Medalist of the 17th Van Cliburn International Piano Competition (2025), where he also received the special prize for the Best Performance of a Mozart Concerto. Ozel has performed extensively throughout the United States and internationally, and is the recipient of a 2023 Avery Fisher Career Grant and a 2022 Salon de Virtuosi Career

Grant. He is currently represented by Concert Artists Guild as an Ambassador Prize Winner of the 2021 Victor Elmaleh Competition.

Since making his orchestral debut with the Minnesota Orchestra at age 11, Ozel has appeared as soloist with the Cleveland Orchestra, Jacksonville Symphony, and Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, performing under conductors such as Marin Alsop, Carlos Miguel Prieto, Hugh Wolff, and Ruth Reinhardt. His debut album—Mozart concertos recorded with the ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra and conductor Howard Griffiths—was released in 2025 on Alpha Classics.

Highlights of Ozel's 2025–26 season include solo recitals for Portland Piano International, the Chopin Society of Minnesota, and Chamber Music Detroit. He made his Cal Performances debut in March 2025 and has previously performed for the Harvard Musical Association, La Jolla Music Society, and at the Gilmore. A laureate of both the Cleveland International Piano Competition and the Dublin International Piano Competition, Ozel gave recitals at Salle Cortot (Paris) and Brandenburgische Sommerkonzerte (Germany) during the 2024–25 season as part of a series of international performances resulting from the Cleveland Competition, and will continue with an appearance at the Vilnius Piano Festival (Lithuania).

A committed chamber musician, Ozel collaborates with artists including David Finckel and Wu Han, Stella Chen, Zlatomir Fung, Paul Huang, Kim Kashkashian, Daniel Phillips, and Marcy Rosen. He spent four summers at the Marlboro Music Festival,



Lisa-Marie Mazlucco

Geneva Lewis

and is currently a 2024–27 Bowers Program Artist with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, with upcoming appearances at Alice Tully Hall. He will also perform in 2025–26 for the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society.

Ozel resides in Boston and holds bachelor's and master's degrees and an Artist Diploma from the New England Conservatory, where he studied with Wha Kyung Byun. His other important mentors include Jonathan Biss, Imogen Cooper, Richard Goode, András Schiff, and Mitsuko Uchida.

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