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## FALL SEASON



We hope you and your loved ones are well and safe during this challenging time! It was our dearest hope that we would be performing in-person for you this fall. We miss the concert stage, and we miss you.

We are excited to bring you six concerts performed live on the beautiful stages of Mechanics Hall and Shapiro Hall at Joy of Music. These concerts will be professionally live-streamed in HD. You will have a front row seat in the comfort and safety of your home.

Settle in with your favorite beverage, a good pair of headphones and be sure to check your internet connection!

In keeping with our commitment to racial diversity and equity in our organization, we are proud to perform the music of two celebrated black composers: Eleanor Alberga and George Walker. Our new Spotlight series shines a light on our amazing core musicians. Finally, we are celebrating Beethoven's 250th this season with his "Ghost" and "Archduke" Piano Trios to honor the great master.

Stay on this journey with us, and together we will experience the beauty and joy of music!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tracy Kraus". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Tracy Kraus  
*Executive Director*

## ABOUT US

The experience of live classical music can be powerful and transformative. WCMS is committed to engaging audiences through the highest standard of performance and empowering youth through intensive education programs.

Our unique concert experiences are designed to appeal to diverse audiences. This fall, we are offering an array of live-streamed concerts **performed live on stage**. Our new **Spotlight Concerts** are curated programs by the individual members of our core and shine a light on the world-class musicianship that embodies the essence of WCMS.

WCMS offers three educational programs. **Neighborhood Strings**, an award-winning community-based program that offers free music lessons in violin, viola, and cello to at-risk youth from Worcester's Main South and Downtown neighborhoods. **ChamberFest Music Camp** is an innovative, fun classical chamber music camp for strings, woodwinds and pianists age 12 through adult.

And finally, **Musician as Citizen**, connecting Neighborhood Strings and ChamberFest, seeks to develop mentorship skills that provide leadership opportunities and build community awareness.



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## 2020-2021 SEASON 15 | FALL CONCERTS

### **RESONANCE** – Tom Keil Memorial Concert

**Sunday, September 20 at 4:00 PM**

Live-streamed from the stage of Mechanics Hall

Eleanor Alberga, George Walker, and Ludwig van Beethoven

*Presenting Sponsor: Nora Keil*

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### **THE SPOTLIGHT CONCERTS**

**Thursdays at 7:30 PM**

Live-streamed from the stage of Shapiro Hall, Joy of Music

*Concert sponsors: Nora Keil, Lisa Piehler and David Schnare*

#### **October 8**

Mark Berger, viola | Randall Hodgkinson, piano

Arvo Pärt, Mark Berger, and Johannes Brahms

#### **October 22**

Tracy Kraus, flute | Ariana Falk, cello | Randall Hodgkinson, piano

All-Shubert program

#### **November 5**

David Russell, cello

Carolyn Shaw, David Sanford, Laurie San Martin, Tamar Diesendruck and Roger Zahab

#### **November 19**

Krista Buckland Reisner and Rohan Gregory, violins

Bela Bartok, Heinrich Ignaz Franz Von Biber, Astor Piazzolla

### **BACH AND BRAHMS**

**Friday, December 11 at 7:30 PM**

Live-streamed from the stage of Mechanics Hall

Guest Mark Mummert, harpsichord

Bach, Corelli and Brahms

*Concert sponsors: Ruth Westheimer, Richard and Phyllis Whitten*

**Full program information at [worcesterchambermusic.org](http://worcesterchambermusic.org)**

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# SPOTLIGHT: Mark Berger and Randall Hodgkinson

October 8 | Live-streamed from Shapiro Hall at Joy of Music

## Program

Fratres	Arvo Pärt (b. 1935)
Spirit Animals – Atelerix	Mark Berger (b. 1977)
Viola Sonata in F minor, Op. 120, No. 1	Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)
I. Allegro appassionato	
II. Andante un poco adagio	
III. Allegretto grazioso	
IV. Vivace	

Mark Berger, viola  
Randall Hodgkinson, piano

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## PROGRAM NOTES

### Arvo Pärt's *Fratres* (“brethren”)

*Fratres* was composed in 1977 and premiered by the Estonian early music ensemble Hortus musicus in its original version with no specified instrumentation. The work is one of the first of Pärt's compositions to utilize his technique that he describes as “tintinnabuli.” Tintinnabuli is a simple and emotionally direct style in which a melodic voice moves primarily by step around a central pitch while the tintinnabuli voice sounds the notes of a tonic triad. Pärt explains:

“Tintinnabulation is an area I sometimes wander into when I am searching for answers—in my life, my music, my work. In my dark hours, I have the certain feeling that everything outside this one thing has no meaning... Tintinnabulation is like this. Here I am alone with silence. I have discovered that it is enough when a single note is beautifully played. This one note, or a silent beat, or a moment of silence, comforts me. I work with very few elements—with one voice, with two voices. I build with the most primitive materials—with the triad, with one specific tonality. The three notes of the triad are like bells. And that is why I called it tintinnabulation.”

This technique evolved from Pärt's intense interest in monophonic plainchant and early polyphony, and his increasing engagement with the mystical and ritualistic aspects of the Russian Orthodox Church.

This work has gone on to become one of the most widely performed works of the late 20th century, and has been arranged and orchestrated for countless ensembles, mostly unchanged from its simple, original form. In 1980, Pärt made a virtuosic version for violin and piano, premiered by Gidon Kremer at the Salzburg Festival, where the original material is played by the piano, with a virtuosic series of variations overlaid in the violin part. The result is a unique work that is both a show stopping display of instrumental dexterity and a serenely spiritual meditation.

### Mark Berger: *Spirit Animals* (2020)

*Spirit Animals* is a projected collection of evocative pieces for piano based on my children's' highly charismatic house pets. *Aterlix* (Hedgehog) is the first of the set that I composed, in part as a creative release from the strains of pandemic isolation, and is a bit of a humorous and somewhat fantastical portrait of my son's quixotic pet hedgehog, Zilla (short for Godzilla, of course!). The form roughly follows a typical play session of Zilla: bursts of frenetic energy when first released from her cage involving much scurrying, chuffing, burrowing and occasional munching of snacks, interspersed with moments of philosophical repose (my interpretation). Eventually, the little animal tires and, looking increasingly dreamy, eventually snuggles into her favorite blanket and happily falls asleep.

## **Johannes Brahms: *Viola Sonata in F minor, Op. 120, No. 1***

Johannes Brahms, perhaps the most self-critical of all late-Romantic era composers, was notorious for his perfectionism, carefully considering and meticulously editing his works to ensure that everything published met only the highest possible standards of taste and craftsmanship (a complex he undoubtedly developed when, as a very young man with very few compositions under his belt, Schumann crowned him as heir to the throne of Beethoven). Brahms was especially conscious of his legacy in the rich, Viennese musical tradition, and by the early 1890s, felt that he had made his mark, essentially retiring from large-scale composition following his G major string quintet in 1890. Thankfully, in 1891, Brahms encountered Richard Mülfeld, the principal clarinetist of the Meiningen Court Orchestra and the Bayreuth Festival Orchestra, performing a Weber concerto and the Mozart quintet and was so taken with his playing that he responded with a burst of inspiration resulting in the four chamber music masterpieces for clarinet composed in the years 1891-1894.

The two sonatas for clarinet (F minor and E-flat major) represent the final chamber music compositions of Brahms, and are rightly revered as among the greatest masterpieces of the entire duo sonata repertoire. The F minor sonata is cast in a traditional four-movement form and is a journey from darkness into light. The first movement is an impassioned sonata-form movement filled, the tragic tone of which is established at the outset by the piano playing a theme in bare octaves in the Phrygian mode (Brahms was an ardent historian with a vast library of Renaissance polyphonic works, so his use of the old church modes—particularly Phrygian, which was often used in dirges and laments—is significant). The brooding intensity of the large, complex opening movement is counterbalanced by the remaining three movements, all of which are considerably smaller in scale, and all in the major mode. The slow movement is a masterclass in generating emotional complexity with very few notes, while the third movement begins with a recall of the first movement's opening, now transformed into an amiable Austrian Ländler. The final movement is a joyful romp of a rondo, brimming with contrapuntal virtuosity that brings the sonata full circle back to the home key, this time in the sunny major mode.

*Program notes by Mark Berger*

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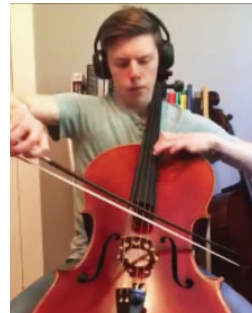
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Violist and composer **Mark Berger** has toured throughout the United States and internationally as a member of the Lydian String Quartet. In addition to his work with the quartet, Berger frequently performs with many of Boston's finest orchestras and chamber ensembles including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Boston Pops, Emmanuel Music, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Worcester Chamber Music Society, and

Music at Eden's Edge. He has recently appeared as a guest artist with the Boston Symphony Chamber Players, Boston Musica Viva, Chameleon Arts ensemble, and Radius Ensemble. Strongly devoted to the performance of new music, Berger has performed with many of Boston's new music ensembles including Sound Icon, Dinosaur Annex, Ludovico Ensemble, and ALEA III. He has recorded solo and chamber works for Albany, Bridge and Innova records. An acclaimed composer, Berger's works have been presented by many of the leading contemporary ensembles in the Boston area. His compositions have received awards and recognition from the League of Composers/ISCM, ASCAP, and the Rapido! Composition Competition. Berger is currently chair of the music department at Brandeis University, where he is also Associate Professor of the Practice.



"The finest performance I have ever heard of this very difficult piece. It was as if he was reading my mind..." Aaron Copland on hearing pianist **Randall Hodgkinson** performing his Piano Fantasy in Jordan Hall. While a student at the New England Conservatory Hodgkinson became grand prizewinner of the International American Music Competition sponsored by Carnegie Hall and the Rockefeller Foundation. He has performed with orchestras in Atlanta, Philadelphia, Buffalo, Boston,

Cleveland and abroad in Italy and Iceland, and also numerous recital programs spanning the repertoire from J.S. Bach to Mark Berger. A frequent guest of the Boston Symphony Chamber Players, he also performs the four-hand and two-piano repertoire with his wife, Leslie Amper. Festival appearances include Ravinia, Bargemusic, Chestnut Hill Concerts in Madison Connecticut, Seattle Chamber Music Festival, and Chamber Music Northwest (Portland, OR). Solo recordings on the Ongaku, New World, and Albany labels have garnered much critical acclaim. Mr. Hodgkinson is on the faculties of the New England Conservatory of Music and Wellesley College and is currently studying to become a certified Feldenkrais Practitioner™.



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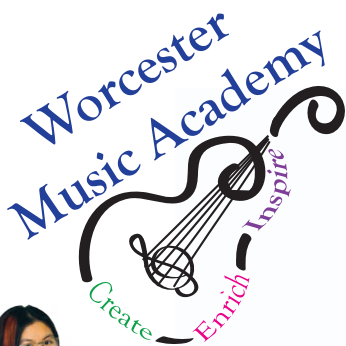
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