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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 script 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

Additional Sponsors: Richard and Phyllis Whitten, and the

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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-Schubert 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

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RESONANCE

Sunday, September 20 | Live-streamed from Mechanics Hall

String Quartet No. 2

Eleanor Alberga
(b. 1949)

String Quartet No. 1, second movement

George Walker
(1922-2018)

Buckland Reisner, Gregory, Berger, Russell

Piano Trio in D Major, Op. 70, No. 1

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

I. Allegro vivace e con brio

II. Largo assai ed espressivo

III. Presto

Buckland Resiner, Gordon, Hodgkinson



WCMS Musicians

Krista Buckland Reisner, violin 1

Rohan Gregory, violin 2

Mark Berger, viola

David Russell, cello

Joshua Gordon, cello

Randall Hodgkinson, piano

Live-stream production by Timeless Lens Photography, and Mechanics Hall Productions

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Additional Sponsors: Richard and Phyllis Whitten, and the Greater Worcester Community Foundation Cultural Activation grant.

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PROGRAM NOTES

Eleanor Alberga (b. 1949) *String Quartet No. 2 (1994)*



With recent high profile performances at the Proms and commissions for the BBC Symphony and Royal Opera House, among many others, Eleanor Alberga has cemented her reputation as a composer of international stature. Her music is not easy to pigeon-hole, occasionally eliciting comparisons with Bartok, Berg, and Debussy while also at times drawing more obviously on her Jamaican heritage, her experiences as a singer with the Jamaican Folk Singers and as a specialist in African dance. The emotional range of her language, her structural clarity, and assured technique as an orchestrator have always drawn high praise.

Born in Kingston, Jamaica, she decided at the age of five to become a concert pianist but shortly began composing. In 1970 she won the biennial Royal Schools of Music Scholarship for the West Indies which she took up at the Royal Academy of Music in London, studying piano and singing. Her budding career as a solo pianist was augmented by composition with her arrival at The London Contemporary Dance Theatre in 1978 where she became one of the very few pianists with the deepest understanding of modern dance. Her company class improvisations became the stuff of legend. Chamber music, both in the more traditional form of three String Quartets and a Piano Quintet and for more unusual line-ups, abounds. Alberga now lives in the Herefordshire countryside with her husband the violinist Thomas Bowes and together they have founded and nurtured an original festival – Arcadia. In 2019 a prestigious Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award was presented to Eleanor for composition and this year she is to receive the honor of ‘Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music’.

String Quartet No. 2 was commissioned by the Smith Quartet and given its first performance at the Greenwich Festival, UK in 1994. It comprises a single 15-minute movement that traverses a traditional three-part form while maintaining relentless forward energy and vitality.

George Walker (1922-2018)

String Quartet No. 1, second movement (1946)



George Walker's career as a composer, pianist, organist, and educator spanned more than six decades and was marked by a long list of extraordinary "firsts". Just a few of these include being the first black musician accepted to the Curtis Institute of Music, the first black instrumentalist of any kind to perform a debut at New York City's Town Hall and to appear as soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra (both in 1945), the first black tenured faculty member at Smith College in 1961 and, in 1996 for his

vocal work *Lilacs*, the first African American composer to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize. His music and musicianship inspired generations of composers who may have otherwise been left unheard and his own hard-won renown, along with his unique combination of gifts as a performer, composer, and teacher, left an indelible mark on the American music scene.

The second movement to his String Quartet No. 1 is also known as *Lyric for Strings*, and was composed as a tribute to his recently deceased grandmother. The work is also performed in a version for string orchestra that remains one of the most commonly performed of all American compositions for the symphonic stage. George Walker composed more than 90 works in his lifetime and died in 2018 at the age of 96.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Trio in D Major, Op. 70 no. 1 "Ghost" (1809)



Like the cello and piano sonatas, Beethoven's piano trios provide an encapsulated tour of his three compositional periods: the Op.1's representing his subversive Early (can't get much earlier than Op.1!), the Op.70's showing us his heroic Middle and the single Op.97 (the sublime "Archduke") bringing us close to the uncategorizable and ineffable Late. One of the most beloved works of the genre, this first trio of a pair dedicated to Countess Marie von Erdödy brings us all of Beethoven's characteristic

character, washing us in extremes and leaving us at the edge of our seat. Carl Czerny is said to have provided the inspiration for the work's nickname after hearing the famously doleful and spooky slow movement theme and remarking that it brought to mind Hamlet's father. Inspired literary connections aside, the work captures that most elemental of qualities from any great composer: you can't help but take the ride.

Program notes by David Russell

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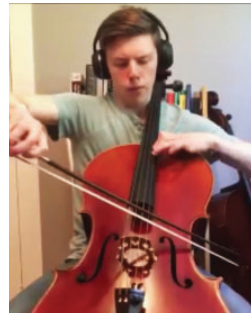
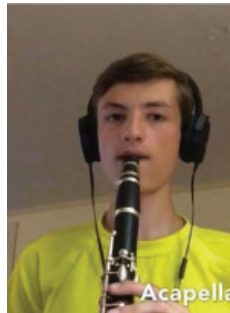
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Violist and composer **Mark Berger** has toured throughout the United States and internationally as a member of the Lydian String Quartet. In addition to his work with the quartet, Berger frequently performs with many of Boston's finest orchestras 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.



"Things done right.."(Boston Globe), "...Excellent left hand.."(Toronto Star), and "...lovely tonal bloom..."(LeDROIT), describe performances of violinist **Krista Buckland Reisner**. Over the past 25 years, she has performed with well-known and diverse musicians from Leonard Bernstein to John Williams, Anton Kuerti, Plácido Domingo, Brian Wilson, Smokey Robinson, and Diana Krall. Krista has performed across North

America, Europe, Russian and New Zealand, including performances at Carnegie Hall, La Scala, and the Boston Esplanade on July 4th with the Boston Pops. Krista's early career was opera-focused; she served as Principal Second Violin of the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra, Concertmaster of Opera Boston, performed Wagner's "Ring Cycle" with the Arizona Opera and played in the Santa Fe Opera Orchestra. Also an early music aficionado, Krista performed with Canada's Aradia, Boston Baroque, and is currently a tenured member of the Handel and Haydn Society. Krista's love of chamber music led her to join WCMS nine years ago, after playing in the QX string quartet for many years prior with fellow WCMSers Peter Sulski and Rohan Gregory.



WCMS cellist **Joshua Gordon** is equally at home whether performing on stage in famous concert halls around the world, in an Australian limestone arch cave, or with dancers on a Boston housing project basketball court. He joined the Lydian String Quartet and the music faculty of Brandeis University in 2002, and has been resident cellist at the annual Wellesley Composers Conference since 1989. He has been a guest of many ensembles

including the Apple Hill, Cassatt, DaPonte, Juilliard, and Ying Quartets, Boston Baroque, Boston Chamber Music Society, Chameleon Arts Ensemble, Emmanuel Music, Fromm Players at Harvard University, North Country Chamber Players, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Portland Chamber Music Festival, Rockport Chamber Music Festival, and Speculum Musicae. Joshua Gordon's duo with pianist Randall Hodgkinson has been described as "insightful and impassioned" by *The New Yorker*, and their New World recording Leo Ornstein: Complete Works For Cello and Piano was named one of the top 10 classical recordings of 2007 by the *All Music Guide*.



Rohan Gregory is a violinist that has cultivated wide-ranging expertise in chamber music, new music, and world music. He has played with the Apple Hill Chamber Players, the Ancora Ensemble and award-winning Boccherini Ensemble and was also a founding member for ten years of the Arden String Quartet, performing new music concerts in New York, Boston, Amsterdam and St. Petersburg, Russia. On the world music scene, Rohan

has toured extensively. His travels have taken him to Europe with the Klezmatics, to Thailand with multi-ethnic flute player Abbie Rabinowitz, to India with the Indo-jazz group Natraj and to the U.S. west coast with Sophia Bilides Greek Folk Ensemble. Recently he has played nationally and internationally with the flamenco guitarist Juanito Pascual. Locally, Rohan is a member of the Lyric Opera Company and the Pedroia Quartet.



“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. 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™.



Hailed as “superb”, “incisive” and “sonorous and panoramic” (Boston Globe), **David Russell** maintains a vigorous schedule both as a soloist and as a collaborator in the U.S. and Europe. He was appointed to the teaching faculty of Wellesley College in 2005 and currently serves as Lecturer and Director of Chamber Music. He has served as Principal cello of the orchestras of Odyssey Opera and Opera Boston since 2010 and performs regularly with many ensembles based in New England such

as Cantata Singers and Ensemble, the Worcester Chamber Music Society and Emmanuel Music. A strong advocate of new music, Russell has performed and recorded with contemporary ensembles such as Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Firebird Ensemble, Ludovico Ensemble, Callithumpian Consort, Music on the Edge, Dinosaur Annex, Collage, the Fromm Players at Harvard, and entelechron. Recent projects include recordings of cello concertos by Chen Yi and Lukas Foss, recordings of solo and chamber works by Lee Hyla, Eric Moe, Tamar Diesendruck, Donald Crockett, Andrew Rindfleisch and Roger Zahab as well as premieres of music by David Lang, Barbara White, Marti Epstein, Daron Hagen, José-Luis Hurtado, Robert Carl, Gilda Lyons, and Jorge Martin. Russell has also recently premiered works for cello and orchestra by Laurie San Martin and Samuel Nichols, as well as works for solo cello by Tamar Diesendruck, Andrew Rindfleisch, and John Mallia. Russell has recorded for the Tzaddik, Albany, BMOPSound, CRI, Centaur and New World Records labels.



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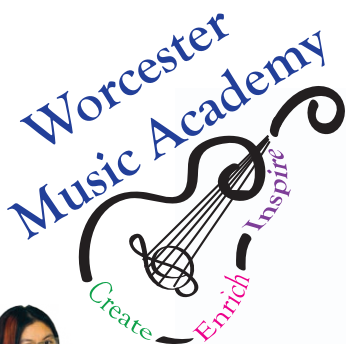
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