

PROGRAM NOTES BY KEN MELTZER

DANIEL HOPE & FRIENDS II WITH LARS VOGT

Tuesday, April 2 at 6 pm
Trinity United Methodist Church

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)
Fantasy for Piano Four Hands
in F minor, D. 940 (1828)

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906-1975)
Piano Quintet in G minor,
Opus 57 (1940)
I. *Prelude. Lento*
II. *Fugue. Adagio*
III. *Scherzo. Allegretto*
IV. *Intermezzo. Lento*
V. *Finale. Allegretto*

INTERMISSION

REBECCA CLARKE (1886-1979)
***Dumka* (ca. 1941)**

NIELS W. GADE (1817-1890)
String Sextet in E-flat Major,
Opus 44 (1863)
I. *Andante; Allegro vivace*
II. *Scherzo. Allegro non troppo*
III. *Andantino*
IV. *Finale. Allegro molto vivace*

Daniel Hope, violin
Benny Kim, violin
Simos Papanas, violin
Paul Neubauer, viola
CarlaMaria Rodrigues, viola
Eric Kim, cello
Keith Robinson, cello
Simon Crawford-Phillips, piano
Lars Vogt, piano

Fantasy for Piano Four Hands
in F minor, D. 940 (1828)

Franz Schubert was born in Vienna, Austria, on January 31, 1797, and died there on November 19, 1828.

 *Approximate performance time is 19 minutes.*

 *SMF performance history: SMF premiere*

The Fantasy for Piano Four Hands in F minor, D. 940, like the String Quintet, D. 956, the song cycle, *Schwanengesang*, D. 957, and the final three Piano Sonatas, D. 958-60, belongs to the last year of Schubert's tragically brief life. Schubert composed many works for piano duet, usually intended for performance at "Schubertiads," private concerts in Vienna homes featuring music by the Austrian composer. Schubert and fellow composer Franz Lachner introduced the F minor Fantasy on May 9, 1828. Schubert dedicated the Fantasy to his piano student, Countess Karoline Esterhazy, for whom the composer may have had romantic feelings.

While the term "Fantasy" suggests a rather free-form piece, the F minor is a taut, cohesive work that manages to incorporate the elements of a four-movement piano sonata into a continuous span lasting just under twenty minutes. The Fantasy offers a remarkable synthesis of melodic inspiration, thematic unity and development, and a rich, almost orchestral sonority. Schubert's final large-scale work for piano four hands, was also his masterpiece in the genre.

The Fantasy in F minor is in four sections, played without pause. The first (*Allegro molto moderato*) is based upon a melancholy dotted-rhythm melody that will return in the Fantasy's final section. Likewise, a flowing melody presented toward the close of the *Allegro* will play a prominent role in the last section's fugue. A crescendo leads to the second section (*Largo*), which assumes the role of the Fantasy's slow-tempo movement. As in the opening section, the *Largo*'s principal melody features dotted rhythms. But now they are couched in a far more imposing guise, with powerful trills reinforcing the music's stern, Baroque character. A contrasting major-key interlude precedes a recapitulation of the *Largo*'s opening portion. The third section (*Allegro vivace*), set in a vibrant 3/4 meter, is the Fantasy's scherzo and trio. The Fantasy's concluding portion

(*Tempo I*) opens with a reprise of the first section's principal theme. A grand fugue builds to a stunning climax. After a measure of silence, the opening theme makes its final appearance. A powerful crescendo at last yields to the hushed closing bars.

Piano Quintet in G minor,
Opus 57 (1940)

Dmitri Shostakovich was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, on September 25, 1906, and died in Moscow, Russia, on August 9, 1975.

 *Approximate performance time is 31 minutes.*

 *SMF performance history: 3/23/12, 3/29/08*

In the mid 1930s, Dmitri Shostakovich was celebrated as one of the shining lights among young Soviet composers. But in 1936, Shostakovich's controversial opera, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, incurred the wrath of the Communist party and its tyrannical Secretary General, Joseph Stalin. *Pravda*, the official Communist newspaper, branded *Lady Macbeth*—with its dissonant music, explicit sexuality, and biting social satire—as "Muddle Instead of Music." In a flash, Shostakovich had become a Soviet *persona non grata*. Shostakovich was aware this status might cost him his career, and even his life.

The following year, Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony premiered in Leningrad, as part of a festival celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Soviet Republic. A seemingly penitent Shostakovich offered the following subtitle for the work: "A Soviet Artist's Practical Creative Reply to Just Criticism." The Fifth Symphony's dramatic journey from its dark opening to the blazing final measures pleased both the audience and the Soviet government. To this day, however, the intended "message" of the Shostakovich Fifth remains the subject of heated debate.

Likewise, the Sixth Symphony, which premiered in November of 1939, is a controversial work. Shostakovich originally announced that the Symphony would be a tribute to Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin. Shostakovich envisioned a grand composition, featuring large orchestral and choral forces. Instead, the Sixth became a purely orchestral

work, opening with an expansive, intense slow-tempo movement that occupies more than half the Symphony. The Sixth concludes with two brief movements, both radiating a playful spirit that at times seems to border on the frivolous. Needless to say, both the Soviet audience and press viewed the work as an enigma.



No such ambivalence surrounded the reaction to one of Shostakovich's next compositions, the Piano Quintet, Opus 57. Shostakovich, a superb pianist, composed the Quintet for himself and the Beethoven Quartet, a Russian ensemble led by Dmitri Tsiganov (the Beethoven Quartet premiered all but the first and last of the Shostakovich Fifteen String Quartets).

Shostakovich completed the Quintet on September 14, 1940. He and the Beethoven Quartet gave the work's premiere in Moscow on November 23, 1940. The audience demanded, and received, encores of the Quintet's *Scherzo* and *Finale*. The following March, the Piano Quintet won the Stalin Prize. It soon became one of Shostakovich's most popular works.

The Quintet, Opus 57, is scored for piano, two violins, viola, and cello. The work opens with a weighty, slow-tempo *Prelude (Lento)* that also includes a somewhat lighter middle section. The second movement is an extended *Fugue (Adagio)*, again in slow tempo, and constructed as a grand musical and emotional arch. A contrasting, energetic *Scherzo (Allegretto)* follows. The *Intermezzo (Lento)* features a haunting melody, played over the repeated tread of pizzicato accompaniment. The *Finale (Allegretto)* follows without pause. By turns lyrical and boisterous, the *Finale* resolves to a wistful conclusion.

***Dumka* (ca. 1941)**

Rebecca Clarke was born in Harrow, near London, England, on August 27, 1886, and died in New York on October 13, 1979.

 Approximate performance time is 10 minutes.
 SMF performance history: 3/29/12

Rebecca Clarke, daughter of a German mother and American father, was born and raised in England. Both of Clarke's parents were amateur musicians. As a child, Clarke studied violin. Rebecca Clarke entered the Royal Academy of

Music in 1903. In 1907, she enrolled at the Royal College of Music. There, Clarke became the first female composition student of the prominent English composer Charles Villiers Stanford, teacher of Ralph Vaughan Williams and Gustav Holst. It was also at Stanford's suggestion that Clarke switched from the violin to viola.

In the first few decades of the 20th century, Rebecca Clarke enjoyed a successful career as a performing violist, both in orchestral and chamber repertoire. During this period, Clarke was also quite active as a composer. Her breakthrough occurred in 1919. That year, Clarke composed a Sonata for Viola and Piano, an entry in a competition sponsored by Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge for her annual chamber music festival in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Clarke's Sonata finished second among the 73 entries (first place went to Ernest Bloch's Suite for Viola). This led to Coolidge commissioning Clarke's Rhapsody for Cello and Piano (1923).

In 1939, Rebecca Clarke was visiting her brothers in the United States. Due to the outbreak of the war, she decided to remain in America. Clarke continued composing for a while, but ceased in 1942, when she took a job as a nanny in Connecticut. In 1944, Clarke married pianist James Friskin, whom she had first met at the Royal College of Music. From then until her death in 1979 at the age of 93, Rebecca Clarke lived in New York City.



Clarke's estate contains approximately 80 compositions, only 20 of which were published during her lifetime. One of the unpublished works is *Dumka*, scored for violin, viola, and piano. Nothing is known for certain about the circumstances of *Dumka*'s creation. Scholars place the work around 1941, and conjecture that Clarke wrote it to perform with family members.

The *dumka* is a melancholy folk song of Eastern European origin. Czech composer Antonín Dvořák frequently incorporated the *dumka* into his classical works, most notably in his 1891 "Dumky" Piano Trio, Opus 90 (*dumky* is the plural of *dumka*). One potential source of inspiration for Clarke's *Dumka* may have been her editing and proofreading of a book concerning Bohuslav Martinů, a 20th-century Czech composer who also wrote many instrumental *dumky*. As with Dvořák, Rebecca Clarke's *Dumka* contrasts the

slow-tempo folk melody with far more vibrant music.

String Sextet in E-flat Major, Opus 44 (1863)

Niels W. Gade was born in Copenhagen, Denmark, on February 22, 1817, and died there on December 21, 1890.

 Approximate performance time is 30 minutes.
 SMF performance history: SMF premiere

Niels Wilhelm Gade was one of the most prominent and influential Danish musicians of the 19th century. As a youth, Gade studied violin, composition, and theory in his native Copenhagen. In the early 1840s, Gade began to make a name for himself in Denmark as a composer. But when his Symphony No. 1, Opus 5 (1841–2) was not accepted for performance in his native land, Gade forwarded the score to Felix Mendelssohn. Mendelssohn, then music director of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, led a successful performance of the Symphony in March of 1843. That year, Gade also received a grant to travel to Leipzig. Mendelssohn hired Gade as assistant conductor of the Gewandhaus Orchestra, and secured him a teaching position at the city's music conservatory.

On December 8, 1844, in Leipzig, Gade played viola in the first performance of Robert Schumann's Piano Quartet, Opus 47. The ensemble also included Robert's wife, Clara, as pianist, and violinist Ferdinand David. On March 13, 1845, David was the soloist, and Gade the conductor, in the Leipzig world premiere of Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto, Opus 64.

After Mendelssohn died in 1847, Gade was appointed principal conductor of the Gewandhaus Orchestra. But the onset of war in 1848 between Denmark and Prussia forced Gade to return to Copenhagen. For the remainder of his life, Gade was a fixture in Denmark as a composer, conductor, organist, and educator. Gade served as joint director of the Copenhagen Conservatory, and in 1866, became director of the Copenhagen Academy of Music. Both Edvard Grieg and Carl Nielsen were students of Gade, who helped to nurture their budding careers.

Among Gade's compositions are numerous

orchestral works (including eight symphonies), chamber music, solo piano works, cantatas, and songs. The String Sextet, Opus 44, is a mature work dating from the years following Gade's return to Copenhagen. The Sextet is scored for pairs of violins, violas, and cellos.

I. *Andante; Allegro vivace*—The Sextet opens with a minor-key, slow-tempo introduction (*Andante*) in 4/4 time, spotlighting the interval of a semitone that plays a central role throughout the work. The meter changes to 6/8, as the ensemble launches the principal E-flat Major *Allegro*, with the introduction of the energetic, vivacious opening theme. A broad chorale-like theme provides contrast. An intense development yields to the recapitulation of the *Allegro vivace*'s principal themes. The final coda begins softly, but quickly builds to the emphatic final measures.

II. *Scherzo. Allegro non troppo*—The second-movement *Scherzo (Allegro non troppo)* is based upon quicksilver music, in C minor, with delightful brief excursions into the major key, and forceful syncopation. The principal *Scherzo* music alternates with two episodes; the first evoking a state of lyrical repose (*espressivo*), while the second is in the spirit of a solemn march. A final reprise of the *Scherzo* sprints to a *pianissimo* conclusion.

III. *Andantino*—The slow-tempo third movement, in G minor, features two central themes. The first, introduced at the outset, is a flowing, wide-ranging melody, laden with pathos. The second melody, in the major, is to be played sweetly (*dolce*). A varied restatement of the two melodies leads to an introspective close.

IV. *Finale. Allegro molto vivace*—A vigorous three-note ascending motif launches the *Finale (Allegro molto vivace)*, in the home key of E-flat Major, and once again contrasting lively and more introspective thematic material. Notable throughout for its high spirits and rich and varied instrumental sonorities, the *Finale* culminates in the thrilling final bars.