



WASHINGTON
PERFORMING ARTS

2022/23 SEASON THE WORLD IN OUR CITY



JOSHUA BELL, violin

PETER DUGAN, piano

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 8, 8 p.m.

THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
CONCERT HALL



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PERFORMING ARTS

2022/23 SEASON

THE WORLD IN OUR CITY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page	4
Program Notes	5
Bios	9
Supporters	14
Board of Directors / Junior Board / Women's Committee . . .	21
Staff	23

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Presents

JOSHUA BELL, violin
PETER DUGAN, piano

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 8, 8 p.m.

THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
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L. V. BEETHOVEN
(1770-1827)

Violin Sonata No. 1 in D Major, Op. 12
Allegro con brio
Tema con variazioni. Andante con moto
Rondo: Allegro

R. SCHUMANN
(1810-1856)

Violin Sonata No. 2 in D minor, Op. 121
Ziemlich langsam - lebhaft
Sehr lebhaft
Leise, einfach
Bewegt

Intermission

BLOCH
(1880-1959)

"Nigun" from *Baal Shem Suite*

CÉSAR FRANCK
(1822-1890)

Sonata in A Major for Violin and Piano
Allegretto ben moderato
Allegro
Ben moderato: Recitativo-Fantasia
Allegretto poco mosso

This performance is made possible through the generous support of the following sponsors: Dr. Gary Mather and Ms. Christina Co Mather; Dr. Mark Cinnamon and Ms. Doreen Kelly.

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PROGRAM NOTES

Sonata in D Major for Violin and Piano, Opus 12, No. 1 Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Beethoven composed his first violin sonatas in 1798-99, and two centuries later they do not strike us as unusually original music—they sound like the work of an immensely talented young composer gradually learning to make the form his own. To his contemporaries, however, those three sonatas seemed to have come from a different planet. An early reviewer was flattened by them: “After having arduously worked his way through these quite peculiar sonatas, overladen with strange difficulties, he must admit that... he felt like a man who had thought he was going to promenade with an ingenious friend through an inviting forest, was detained every moment by hostile entanglements, and finally emerged, weary, exhausted, and without enjoyment. It is undeniable that Herr van Beethoven goes his own way. But what a bizarre, laborious way! Studied, studied, and perpetually studied, and no nature, no song. Indeed...there is only a mass of learning here, without good method. There is obstinacy for which we feel little interest, a striving for rare modulations...a piling on of difficulty upon difficulty, so that one loses all patience and enjoyment.”

It is easy to smile at such reactions, but listening to the very beginning of Beethoven’s Sonata in D Major, one can understand that reviewer’s concerns: far from offering us “nature” or “song,” the opening of

this sonata seems to explode in a shower of rockets going off in every direction. The first movement is marked *Allegro con brio*, with the emphasis on the *con brio*: this is spirited music, full of busy energy and explosive chords. A flowing second subject seems to promise relief, but the principal impression here is of energy boiling up off the page. After a busy development full of rapid exchanges between the instruments, the movement rushes to its conclusion on the same massive chord with which it began. The second movement, marked *Andante con moto*, is in variation form, and after the hyperactive first movement it brings a measure of calm. At least at first. The piano introduces the gentle eight-measure theme, which is then repeated by the violin. Four variations follow: the first is for piano accompanied by violin, the second for violin with a complex piano accompaniment, the third moves into A minor and turns tempestuous, and the fourth is built on quiet syncopations. A delicate coda draws the movement to its close. The energetic finale, marked simply *Allegro*, is a rondo in 6/8 whose central theme is energized by off-the-beat accents; this is buoyant music, full of subordinate episodes and piquant pauses. Beethoven teases the audience nicely just before the end.

**Violin Sonata No. 2 in D Minor,
Opus 121
Robert Schumann (1810-1856)**

Schumann's three violin sonatas come from very late in his career. He wrote the second in the space of only eight days (October 26–November 2, 1851), during a period of increasing stress. Then 41, Schumann was nearing the end of his turbulent tenure as music director in the city of Düsseldorf and believed himself surrounded by scheming rivals—he had written his *Violin Sonata No. 1* only a month before, describing himself as “very angry with certain people” when he composed it. The *Violin Sonata No. 2* appears to have come from a calmer interval, though it too has moments of turbulence. Schumann dedicated it to Ferdinand David, who had given the premiere of Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto in E minor* in 1845 and had earned Schumann's gratitude by giving the first readings of Schumann's three string quartets in 1841.

Schumann's *Violin Sonata No. 2* shows an unusual structure. It is in four movements rather than the customary three: two massive outer movements frame two much shorter inner movements, which are themselves linked in ingenious ways. The sonata opens with a declarative slow introduction, somewhat in the manner of a recitative. The music leaps ahead at the exposition (marked “Lively”), where the main theme is full of propulsive and twisting energy; by contrast, the second subject is melodic and quite long. The troubled development, full of accents and syncopations, focuses

on the first theme; it drives to a massive chordal climax and a coda that Schumann marks “Faster.”

The second movement, a scherzo marked “Very lively,” features pounding chords in the outer sections and two trios. In the first trio Schumann keeps the 6/8 meter in the piano but sets the violin in duple rhythms above it; the second is full of dotted rhythms and springing themes. This movement too drives to a powerful climax on unison chords from both instruments. And then the surprises begin. Schumann marks the third movement “Gentle, simple,” and simple it certainly seems to be, as the violin picks out a tune and the movement turns into a set of variations on this melody. Only gradually does the identity of this tune become clear: it was the massive chordal climax at the end of the scherzo, presented there as a sort of premonition. That melody is itself a variation of the Bach chorale tune *Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ*, and Schumann's variations here are quite imaginative: in the fourth, for example, the pounding opening theme of the scherzo suddenly shows up, and over it Schumann offers the chorale tune, played *poticello* (bowed on top of the bridge to produce a disembodied sound). The variations turn melodic again, but this movement concludes with a brief reminiscence of the scherzo.

After two such imaginative movements, the finale (marked “Animated”) can seem a little conventional. It features torrential washes of sixteenth-notessixteenth

notes, some difficult string-crossings for the violinist, and once again much syncopated writing. The movement is in sonata form, and in its closing moments Schumann moves from its dark D-minor tonality to the bright D major of the cadence.

“Nigun” from *Baal Shem Suite* Ernest Bloch (1880-1959)

From about 1915 to 1926, Bloch was swept up in a musical exploration of his Jewish heritage, and from these years come many of his finest works: *Schelomo* (which he subtitled *A Hebraic Rhapsody for Cello and Orchestra*), the symphony *Israel*, the setting of the sacred service *Avodath Hakadesh*, a suite of pieces for cello and piano called *From Jewish Life*, and many more. Of his urge to write music on Jewish subject, Bloch wrote in 1917:

It is not my purpose, not my desire, to attempt a “reconstitution” of Jewish music or to base my works on melodies more or less authentic. I am not an archaeologist. I hold it of first importance to write good, genuine music, my music. It is the Jewish soul that interests me, the complex, glowing, agitated soul, that I feel vibrating throughout the Bible; the freshness and naivete of the Patriarchs; the violence that is evident in the prophetic books; the Jew’s savage love of justice; the despair of the Preacher of Jerusalem; the sorrow and the immensity of the Book of Job; the sensuality of the Song of Songs. All this is in us; all this is in me, and it is the better part of me. It is all this that I endeavor to hear in myself and to transcribe in my music; the

venerable emotion of the race that slumbers way down in our soul.

Though these remarks were made about *Schelomo*, this same impulse brought *Nigun* to life.

In 1923, Bloch composed a suite of three pieces for violin and piano that he called *Baal Shem* and subtitled *Three Pictures from Chassidic Life*. The first and third of these—*Vidui* and *Simcas Torah*—are not so well known, but the second—*Nigun*—has become one of Bloch’s most famous works. This is big, soaring music, beautifully written for the violin (as a young man, Bloch had studied violin with Eugene Ysaÿe). It opens with a declamatory introduction for the piano before the violin makes its own entrance on the passionate theme that will form the backbone of *Nigun*; there is a good deal of secondary material, much of it of an exotic character. Bloch gives *Nigun* the subtitle *Improvisation*, suggesting that a performance should have a spontaneous character, as if the music is being created at the moment it is performed. With its great leaps, complex multiple-stops, and exciting runs, *Nigun* is a virtuoso piece for the violinist, and it finally subsides to a somber and subdued close.

Sonata in A Major for Violin and Piano Cesar Franck (1822-1890)

Composed in 1886, the Sonata in A Major is one of the finest examples of Franck's use of cyclic form, a technique he had adapted from his friend Franz Liszt, in which themes from one movement are transformed and used over subsequent movements. The Violin Sonata is a particularly ingenious instance of this technique: virtually the entire sonata is derived from the quiet and unassuming opening of the first movement, which then evolves endlessly across the sonata. Even when a new theme seems to arrive, it will gradually be revealed as a subtle variant of one already heard.

The piano's quiet fragmented chords at the beginning of the Allegretto ben moderato suggest a theme-shape that the violin takes over as it enters: this will be the thematic cell of the entire sonata. The piano has a more animated second subject (it takes on the shape of the germinal theme as it proceeds), but the gently-rocking violin figure from the opening dominates this movement, and Franck reminds the performers constantly to play *molto dolce, sempre dolce, dolcissimo*. The mood changes completely at the fiery second movement, marked *passionato*. This movement contrasts its blazing opening with more lyric episodes, and listeners will detect the original theme-shape flowing through some of these.

The Recitativo-Fantasia is the most original movement in the sonata. The piano's quiet introduction seems at first a re-visiting of the germinal

theme, though it is—ingeniously—a variant of the *passionato* opening of the second movement. The violin makes its entrance with an improvisation-like passage (this is the fantasia of the title), and the entire movement is quite free in both structure and expression: moments of whimsy alternate with passionate outbursts.

After the expressive freedom of the third movement, the finale restores order with pristine clarity: it is a canon in octaves, with one voice following the other at the interval of a measure. The stately canon theme, marked *dolce cantabile*, is a direct descendant of the sonata's opening theme, and as this movement proceeds it recalls thematic material from earlier movements. Gradually, the music takes on unexpected power and drives to a massive coda and a thunderous close.

Franck wrote this sonata for his fellow Belgian, the great violinist Eugene Ysaÿe, who gave the premiere in Brussels in November 1886. The composer Vincent D'Indy recalled that premiere: "The violin and piano sonata was performed... in one of the rooms of the Museum of Modern Painting at Brussels. The seance, which began at three o'clock, had been very long, and it was rapidly growing dark. After the first Allegretto of the sonata, the performers could scarcely read the music. Now the official regulations forbade any light whatever in rooms which contained paintings. Even the striking of a match would have been matter for offense. The public was about to be asked to leave, but the audience, already full of

enthusiasm, refused to budge. Then Ysaÿe was heard to strike his music stand with his bow, exclaiming [to the pianist], "Allons! Allons!" [Let's go!] And then, unheard-of marvel, the two artists, plunged in gloom... performed the last three movements from memory, with a fire and passion the more astounding to the listeners in that there was an absence of all

externals which could enhance the performance. Music, wondrous and alone, held sovereign sway in the darkness of night."

Program notes by Eric Bromberger

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



With a career spanning almost four decades, Grammy Award-winning violinist Joshua Bell is one of the most celebrated artists

of his era. Having performed with virtually every major orchestra in the world, Bell continues to maintain engagements as soloist, recitalist, chamber musician, conductor, and Music Director of the Academy of St Martin in the Fields.

Bell's highlights in the 2022-23 season include leading the Academy of St Martin in the Fields on tour in South America to Sao Paulo, Bogotá, and Montevideo as well in Europe, in Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Denmark, and the United Kingdom. Joshua appears in guest performances with the Berlin Philharmonic, Orchestre National de France, Sofia Philharmonic, Franz Schubert Filharmonia as well as a European tour with pianist Peter Dugan. This season in the U.S., Bell

will perform alongside the New York Philharmonic, as well as the San Francisco, Pittsburgh, Houston, Baltimore, and New Jersey Symphony Orchestras.

In 2011, Bell was named Music Director of the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, succeeding Sir Neville Marriner, who formed the orchestra in 1959. Bell's history with the Academy dates back to 1986, when he first recorded the Bruch and Mendelsohn concertos with Mariner and the orchestra. Bell has since directed the orchestra on several albums, including Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, *Voice of the Violin*, *For the Love of Brahms*, and most recently, *Bruch: Scottish Fantasy*, which was nominated for a 2019 Grammy Award.

In summer 2020, PBS presented *Joshua Bell: At Home With Music*, a nationwide broadcast produced entirely in lockdown, directed by Tony and Emmy award winner Dori Berinstein. The program included core classical repertoire as well as new arrangements of beloved works, including a *West Side Story* medley.

The special features guest artists Larisa Martínez, Jeremy Denk, Peter Dugan, and Kamal Khan. In August 2020, Sony Classical released the companion album to the special, *Joshua Bell: At Home With Music*.

Bell has been active in commissioning new works from living composers and has premiered works by John Corigliano, Edgar Meyer, Behzad Ranjbaran, and the Nicholas Maw Violin Concerto, for which his recording received a Grammy award.

Bell has also collaborated with artists across a multitude of genres. He has partnered with peers including Renée Fleming, Chick Corea, Regina Spektor, Wynton Marsalis, Chris Botti, Anoushka Shankar, Frankie Moreno, Josh Groban, and Sting, among others. In 2019, Bell joined his longtime friends and musical partners, cellist Steven Isserlis and pianist Jeremy Denk, for a ten-city American trio tour; the trio recorded Mendelssohn's piano trios at Capitol Studios in Hollywood, slated for release next season. Following Bell's second collaboration with the Singapore Chinese Orchestra and Maestro Tsung Yeh in 2018, an upcoming album release features Bell as soloist alongside traditional Chinese instruments performing Western repertoire and *The Butterfly Lovers' Violin Concerto*, one of the most renowned violin works in Chinese cultural heritage.

In 1998, Bell partnered with composer John Corigliano and recorded the soundtrack for the film *The Red Violin*, which elevated Bell to a household name and garnered Corigliano an Academy Award. Since then, Bell has appeared on several

other film soundtracks, including *Ladies in Lavender* (2004) and *Defiance* (2008). In 2018-19, Bell commemorated the 20th anniversary of *The Red Violin* (1998), bringing the film with live orchestra to various festivals and the New York Philharmonic.

Bell has also appeared three times as a guest star on *The Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson and made numerous appearances on the Amazon series *Mozart in the Jungle*. Bell is featured on a total of six *Live From Lincoln Center* specials, as well as a PBS Great Performances episode, "Joshua Bell: West Side Story in Central Park."

In August 2021, Bell announced his new partnership with Trala, the tech-powered violin learning app, which Bell will work with to develop a unique music education curriculum. Bell maintains active involvement with Education Through Music and Turnaround Arts, which provide instruments and arts education to children who may not otherwise experience classical music firsthand. In 2014, Bell mentored and performed alongside National YoungArts Foundation string musicians in an HBO Family Documentary special, *Joshua Bell: A YoungArts Masterclass*. Bell received the 2019 Glashütte Original Music Festival Award, presented in conjunction with the Dresden Music Festival, for his commitment to arts education.

Bell's interest in technology led him to partner with Embertone, the leading virtual instrument sampling company, on the Joshua Bell Virtual Violin, a sampler

created for producers, engineers, artists, and composers. Bell also collaborated with Sony on the Joshua Bell VR experience. Featuring Bell performing with pianist Sam Haywood in full 360-degrees VR, the software is available on Sony PlayStation 4 VR.

As an exclusive Sony Classical artist, Bell has recorded more than 40 albums, garnering Grammy, Mercury®, Gramophone, and OPUS KLASSIK awards. Bell's 2019 Amazon Originals new Chopin Nocturne arrangement was the first classical release of its kind on Amazon Music. Bell's 2016 release, *For the Love of Brahms*, features recordings with the Academy, Steven Isserlis, and Jeremy Denk. Bell's 2013 album with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, featuring Bell directing Beethoven's Fourth and Seventh symphonies, debuted at No. 1 on the *Billboard* charts.

In 2007, a Pulitzer Prize-winning *Washington Post* story, centered on Bell performing incognito in a Washington, D.C. metro station, sparked an ongoing conversation regarding artistic reception and context. The feature inspired Kathy Stinson's 2013 children's book, *The Man With The Violin*, and a newly-commissioned animated film, with music by Academy Award-winning composer Anne Dudley. Stinson's subsequent 2017 book, *Dance With The Violin*, illustrated by Dušan Petričić, offers a glimpse into one of Bell's competition experiences at age 12. Bell debuted *The Man With The Violin* festival at the Kennedy Center in 2017, and, in March 2019, presented a *Man With The Violin*

family concert with the Seattle Symphony.

Born in Bloomington, Indiana, Bell began the violin at age four, and at age twelve, began studies with his mentor, Josef Gingold. At age 14, Bell debuted with Riccardo Muti and the Philadelphia Orchestra, and made his Carnegie Hall debut at age 17 with the St. Louis Symphony. At age 18, Bell signed with his first label, London Decca, and received the Avery Fisher Career Grant. In the years following, Bell has been named 2010 "Instrumentalist of the Year" by Musical America, a 2007 "Young Global Leader" by the World Economic Forum, nominated for six Grammy awards, and received the 2007 Avery Fisher Prize. He has also received the 2003 Indiana Governor's Arts Award and a Distinguished Alumni Service Award in 1991 from the Jacobs School of Music. In 2000, he was named an "Indiana Living Legend."

Bell has performed for three American presidents and the justices of the Supreme Court of the United States. He participated in former president Barack Obama's Committee on the Arts and Humanities' first cultural mission to Cuba, joining Cuban and American musicians on a 2017 Live from Lincoln Center Emmy nominated PBS special, *Joshua Bell: Seasons of Cuba*, celebrating renewed cultural diplomacy between Cuba and the United States.

Bell performs on the 1713 Huberman Stradivarius violin.



Pianist Peter Dugan's debut performances with Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony were described by the

Los Angeles Times as "stunning" and by the *SF Chronicle* as "fearlessly athletic." He is heard every week across America as the host of National Public Radio's beloved program *From the Top*. Mr. Dugan has appeared as a soloist, recitalist, and chamber musician across North America and abroad. In 2020, he joined acclaimed violinist Joshua Bell for *At Home With Music*, a national PBS broadcast and live album release on Sony Classical. This season Mr. Dugan continues his collaboration with Bell, touring internationally with recitals at London's Wigmore Hall, Taipei's National Theater and Concert Hall, and the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

Prizing stylistic versatility as the hallmark of a 21st century musician, Mr. Dugan is equally at home in classical, jazz, and pop idioms, and has collaborated with artists ranging from Jesse Colin Young, to Renée Fleming, to Paquito D'Rivera. Mr. Dugan performs regularly in partnership with friends and artists who share a passion for expanding the world of classical music. *The Wall Street Journal* described Mr. Dugan's collaboration with violinist and vocalist Charles Yang as a "classical-meets-rockstar duo." In Mr. Dugan's performances with his wife, mezzo-soprano Kara Dugan,

repertoire ranges from art song, to American Songbook, to original songs and world premieres. The Dugans have appeared at Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, WQXR's Greene Space, and on PBS Great Performances' *Now Hear This*. Mr. Dugan's latest album with baritone John Brancy, *The Journey Home: Live from the Kennedy Center*, was released on Avie Records in 2021 along with an accompanying documentary film from WNET's *AllArts*. Brancy and Dugan have given recitals at Alice Tully Hall, Carnegie Hall, and the Kennedy Center, and together won first prize at the 2018 Montreal International Music Competition. Mr. Dugan's latest project with violinist Sean Lee was *Paganini X Schumann*, a digital EP release that accompanied a live performance at Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center of all 24 Paganini Caprices with piano parts written by Robert Schumann. Mr. Dugan appeared as the piano soloist in Charles Ives' 4th Symphony with the Houston Symphony, the San Francisco Symphony, and on an album with Michael Tilson Thomas and the SFS.

Mr. Dugan advocates for a classical music culture that is inclusive and welcoming to all, from a community's concert halls and theaters, to its schools and hospitals. As a founding creator of *Operation Superpower*, a superhero opera for children, he has travelled to dozens of schools in the greater New York area, performing for students and encouraging them to use their talents—their superpowers—for good. He is head of the Artist in Residence program at

pianoSonoma and a founding faculty member of the Resonance and Soundboard Institutes at Honeywell Arts Academy.

Mr. Dugan holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees from The Juilliard School, where he studied under Matti Raekallio. He resides in New York City and is a Yamaha Artist.

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One of the most established and honored performing arts institutions in America, Washington Performing Arts has engaged for more than half a century with artists, audiences, students, and civic life. The city is truly our stage: for decades, in venues ranging from concert halls and clubs to public parks, we have presented a tremendous range of artists and art forms, from the most distinguished symphony orchestras to both renowned and emerging artists in classical music, gospel music, jazz, international genres, and more. Washington Performing Arts also has an ever-expanding artistic and educational presence on the internet, addressing the programming challenges of this time of pandemic while envisioning ongoing opportunities for online connection and community in a post-COVID world.

Washington Performing Arts deeply values its partnerships with

local organizations and other arts institutions. Through events online and in a myriad of performance venues and neighborhoods, Washington Performing Arts engages international visiting artists in community programs and introduces local artists to wider audiences. We place a premium on establishing artists as a continuing presence in the lives of both young people and adults through residencies and education programs.

For its achievements, Washington Performing Arts has been recognized with a National Medal of Arts and with three Mayor's Arts Awards from the D.C. Government. We have now embarked upon our second half-century, ever inspired by the motto of our founder, Patrick Hayes: "Everybody in, nobody out."

For more information, please visit washingtonperformingarts.org.

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