

Jeremy Denk and Stefan Jackiw play Ives

WHEN:
SUNDAY,
JANUARY 28, 2018
2:30 PM

VENUE:
BING
CONCERT HALL



Program

Charles Ives (1874–1954) **Violin Sonata No. 4 “Children’s Day at the Camp Meeting”**

Allegro

Largo

Allegro

Stites / Sweeney

“Beulah Land”

Lowry / Hawks

“I Need Thee Every Hour”

no pause

Ives

Violin Sonata No. 3

Adagio; Andante; Allegretto; Adagio

Allegro

Adagio cantabile

—INTERMISSION—

Barthélemon / Robinson

“Autumn” (“Mighty God, While Angels Bless Thee”)

no pause

Ives

Violin Sonata No. 2

Autumn

In the Barn

The Revival

Root / Nelson

“Shining Shore” (“My Days Are Gliding Swiftly By”)

Root

“Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! The Boys Are Marching”

Kiallmark / Woodworth

“The Old Oaken Bucket”

Mason / Coghill

“Work Song” (“Work for the Night is Coming”)

no pause

Ives

Violin Sonata No. 1

Andante

Largo cantabile

Allegro

Artists

Jeremy Denk, *artistic director and piano*

Stefan Jackiw, *violin*

Tenors and Basses of the

Stanford Chamber Chorale

Tenor

Tobin Bell

Minseung Choi

Cooper D’Agostino

Jeremy Raven

Joss Saltzman

Christopher Swenson

Bass

Darren Baker

Daniel Borup

Luke Halberstadt

Eric Lebel

James Mayclin

Elekos Praxis

Alexis Rochat

Steinway Piano

Management for Mr. Denk and Mr. Jackiw:

Opus 3 Artists, 470 Park Avenue S, 9th Fl N.,
New York, NY 10016

The hymn and song verses heard in this

program were edited and arranged by

Wilbur Pauley.

PROGRAM SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Please be considerate of others and turn off all phones, pagers, and watch alarms. Photography and recording of any kind are not permitted. Thank you.

This program is generously supported by Trine Sorensen and Michael Jacobson.

Program Notes

Why Ives?

Because Ives is one of the original American originals. Because he's a Founding Father of American "classical music"—whatever that strange term means. But most importantly, I love to play Ives because he's after things that most composers don't dare to attempt, and so he gets to emotional places and states that other composers can't find.

Why these four Violin Sonatas?

Because they feel like a cycle. Mahler's first four Symphonies are similar—they're called the "Wunderhorn" Symphonies because their melodies come from a book of songs Mahler composed called "Des Knaben Wunderhorn"—the youth's magic horn. Mahler's quoting himself, accessing a childlike wonder by reusing earlier material, and weaving together big stories from small, folk-like tunes.

In the Violin Sonatas, Ives keeps trying to deal with beloved musical ideas—hymns, marches, ragtimes—the raw material of his childhood in New England, often just in snippets, like the fragments of memory. Lots of these ideas recur between the Violin Sonatas, like he's trying to deal with them again, trying to find the perfect way to access the complex memory.

Also, these four Sonatas create a portrait of the composer—in four different states. (Ives is nothing if not schizophrenic.). The 3rd Sonata is Ives trying to fit in (as best he can) with the broader European late Romantic music, by writing a serious "Romantic" Sonata. But his oddities and tics can't help interrupting, transforming the Romantic narrative into something more unsettling. The 4th Sonata is more like charming uncle Ives: a miniaturist and satirist, a childlike story-teller. The 2nd and 1st Sonatas represent what you might call "mature" Ives, less compromising, less comprehensible, going after the most ambitious and emotionally fraught climaxes—especially the 1st, which is the wildest, and (to my ear) the greatest.

Why the singing?

I hate to say it, but here goes: Ives is the first postmodern composer. So much of his work is in quotation marks, even the original stuff. The violinist will be playing along, and you will think, yes, that's a gospel singer improvising on a hymn, or the pianist will be banging away, and you'll think, that's a barroom pianist playing at a ragtime in a dive somewhere—everything has the sense of referring to other music, other musicians, music about music, music about the joys and emotional possibilities of music.

Luckily, we still recognize many of the tunes Ives uses. But many of them are no longer popular: the musical world has changed in the last hundred and twenty years. So some of the "footnotes" in Ives have gone missing. We're giving you those footnotes—live!—supplying the missing quotes. But also, we hope you find something emotionally satisfying about hearing the basic tunes, and then launching off in to Ives' crazy, dissonant musical world—entirely based (paradoxically) on these simplistic materials. I find it very moving to travel from the devotional hymns (the neighborhood choir, a barbershop quartet) into Ives' music, which is also devotional in its way, devoted to the highest, usually unattainable ideals. The sense of travel and transformation is important—rehearing, shifting perspectives. Plus, at the simplest level, it's always worthwhile to hear the human voice, and then aspire to that.

What makes these Violin Sonatas so hard?

Ives, to a fault, hated to do things the "normal" way. He loved to turn everything on its head, backwards or upside down. A "normal" composer would start with some tune and then begin to do developments or variations, letting you as listener perceive "something is happening to the tune (which I recognize)." But Ives loves to start with variations and improvisations, gradually

giving way to the tune at the end, so that you *only understand the piece in retrospect*. That poses unique challenges for the performer and the listener, obviously. One thing you have to do when you play Ives is try to untangle what is an improvisation on what: that is, to get in Ives' head a little bit. Pretend you're a madman genius riffing on a hymn or a ragtime—then, hopefully, maybe, you as the audience can understand the whole thing too, the way the hymns are constantly being changed, made funnier or more solemn, shifted into various personalities and styles—all setting up a final epiphany. The pacing to these climaxes is crucial. When Ives finally lets the hymn loose, it has to feel like a discovery.

One of the most complex and difficult passages in the four Violin Sonatas happens in the second movement of the 1st Sonata. The movement begins with a sentimental tune from Civil War days, "The Old Oaken Bucket" ("how dear to my heart are the scenes of the childhood"). All is well at the beginning. The violin starts with the tune, and gradually there are gorgeous modulations: the melody begins to drift, even nostalgia is becoming a memory.

But then, the trouble starts! The pianist is in a duple rhythm, while the violin remains in the waltz time of "the Old Oaken Bucket." The piano's rhythm becomes loudly and clearly a march, while the violin

keeps quietly obsessing over the waltz in all kinds of elaborate, chromatic ways. The pianist is marked much louder than the violin and may appear to be something of a jerk. Against all odds, this weird passage keeps going and going: the violin's almost inaudible frenzy, begging to be heard, and the marching pianist rising heedlessly. At last, the two instruments meet for a fanfare: but the window of clarity is brief, a second Civil War tune appears, clotted with sour notes, half-remembered, blurred as if through tears. It's stunning, how much emotional connotation Ives packs into this passage: the boys marching to war and the family at home lamenting their loss; the blur and submersion of memory; tender nostalgia juxtaposed against violent separation. Each technical element of the music is matched to its expressive end, but the passage is still almost impossible to pull off.

Again, why did Ives use so many hymns?

In the last movement of the 1st Sonata (the last thing on this program), much of the music is about the hymn "Work for the Night is Coming":

Work, for the night is coming,
Work thro' the morning hours...
Work, for the night is coming,
When man's work is done.

which Ives transforms into a rambling and endlessly regenerating march, as if the whole town was stomping about singing, encouraging each other to be productive Protestants. Towards the end of the movement, the march becomes even more chaotic (an important sign in Ives that things are about to explain themselves) and then resolves into an incredible climax in F major. The violin belts out the hymn (work work work!) while the pianist plays bells clanging, surrounding the hymn with color and dissonance. Yes, at last, it all makes sense, a glorious end to a glorious day, and as the smoke clears, something emerges which we haven't heard before: the pianist plays a soft gospel cadence, something achingly familiar to us from the American popular tradition. It's a cliché, almost. But somehow after all the welter of music, after all the veering marches and cross accents and different kinds of music colliding, it seems to contain and calm everything. The chaos of Ives' world laid the stage for this one quiet cadence to speak, and to feel new. Or in other words, Ives wrote whole impossible works, so that we could hear one thing well.

—Jeremy Denk

Biographies

Jeremy Denk, piano

Jeremy Denk is one of America's foremost pianists. Winner of a MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship, and the Avery Fisher Prize, Denk was recently elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Denk returns frequently to Carnegie Hall and has recently performed with the Chicago Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, and Cleveland Orchestra, as well as on tour with Academy St. Martin in the Fields, and at the Royal Albert Hall this Summer performing Bartok 2 in his return to the BBC Proms.

In 2017–18, Denk reunites with Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony to perform Bartok 2. He will also return to Carnegie Hall, both to perform Beethoven 5 with Orchestra St. Luke's, and alongside Joshua Bell, one of his long-time musical partners. Returning in subscription to the Seattle Symphony, Denk will also embark on a tour with the orchestra performing Beethoven 5, and he continues as Artistic Partner of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra with multiple performances throughout the season, including the premiere of a new piano concerto written for him by Hannah Lash. He also appears in recital throughout the US, including performances in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, Houston, Seattle, Los



***“An Artist You Want to Hear
No Matter What He Performs.”***

—THE NEW YORK TIMES

Angeles, Baltimore and Princeton. His collaborations in 17-18 include a US tour of the complete Ives Violin Sonatas with Stefan Jackiw in a special project in which Denk will present the sonatas with a vocal ensemble performing hymns embedded in the compositions. A recording of the Sonatas with Stefan Jackiw is forthcoming from Nonesuch Records.

Abroad, Jeremy Denk will be presented by the Barbican in multiple performances as artist-in-residence at Milton Hall. He will also return to play-direct the Britten Sinfonia in London, and on tour in the UK. In Asia, Denk will make his debut in recital in Hong Kong, Seoul, and Singapore. Future projects include re-uniting with Academy St. Martin in the Fields for a tour of the US, and a trio tour with Joshua Bell and Steven Isserlis.

In 2016–17, Denk toured extensively in recital including performances at the Wigmore Hall and Lincoln Center's White Light Festival in a special program that included a journey through seven centuries of Western music. He also returned to the National Symphony led by Sir Mark Elder, and performed with the St. Louis, Vancouver, and Milwaukee Symphonies, and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, among others. Denk also recently made his debut at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the Philharmonie in Cologne, and Klavier-Festival Ruhr. Denk's upcoming releases from Nonesuch Records include *The*

Classical Style, with music by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. He also joins his long-time musical partners, Joshua Bell and Steven Isserlis in a recording of Brahms' Trio in B-major. His previous disc of the Goldberg Variations reached number one on Billboard's Classical Chart.

In 2014 Denk served as Music Director of the Ojai Music Festival, for which, besides performing and curating, he wrote the libretto for a comic opera. The opera was later presented by Carnegie Hall, Cal Performances, and the Aspen Festival.

Denk is known for his original and insightful writing on music, which Alex Ross praises for its "arresting sensitivity and wit." The pianist's writing has appeared in the *New Yorker*, the *New Republic*, *The Guardian*, and on the front page of the *New York Times Book Review*. One of his *New Yorker* contributions, "Every Good Boy Does Fine," forms the basis of a book for future publication by Random House in the US, and Macmillan in the UK. Recounting his experiences of touring, performing, and practicing, his blog, *Think Denk*, was recently selected for inclusion in the Library of Congress web archives.

In 2012, Denk made his Nonesuch debut with a pairing of masterpieces old and new: Beethoven's final Piano Sonata, Op. 111, and Ligeti's *Études*. The album was named one of the best of 2012 by the *New Yorker*, NPR, and the *Washington Post*, and Denk's

account of the Beethoven sonata was selected by BBC Radio 3's *Building a Library* as the best available version recorded on modern piano. Denk has a long-standing attachment to the music of American visionary Charles Ives, and his recording of Ives's two piano sonatas featured in many "best of the year" lists.

Jeremy Denk graduated from Oberlin College, Indiana University, and the Juilliard School. He lives in New York City, and his web site and blog are at jeremydenk.net.

Stefan Jackiw, violin

Violinist Stefan Jackiw is recognized as one of his generation's most significant artists, captivating audiences with playing that combines poetry and purity with an impeccable technique. Hailed for playing of "uncommon musical substance" that is "striking for its intelligence and sensitivity" (*Boston Globe*), Jackiw has appeared as soloist with the Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, Philadelphia, and San Francisco symphony orchestras, among others.

Following his performance with the Cleveland Orchestra this summer, Stefan Jackiw reunites with Juraj Valcuha, for performances with the Detroit Symphony and Luxembourg Philharmonic. He also makes his debut with the National Symphony in Washington, DC, performing



Bruch's Violin Concerto with Marek Janowski. In recital, he will appear on tour throughout the US, including Baltimore, Houston, Philadelphia, and the Boston Celebrity Series. His recitals include performances of all the Ives violin sonatas with acclaimed pianist Jeremy Denk, with whom he has also recorded the Sonatas for Nonesuch Records. Abroad, Stefan appears on tour performing the Tchaikovsky Concerto with l'Orchestre National d'Île-de-

France in Europe and Asia, including his debut at the Philharmonie de Paris; he also returns to the Bournemouth Symphony playing Korngold with Andrew Litton, and Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, performing Tchaikovsky with Residentie Orkest.

Last season, Stefan returned to the Netherlands radio Symphony, playing Mozart's Concerto No. 5 with Ludovic Morlot at the Concertgebouw. He also returned to

the Cleveland Orchestra, Kansas City Symphony, and Oregon Symphony, and played with the Grand Rapids Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, and Vancouver Symphony under Jun Markl. Highlights in Europe included his performances of Mendelssohn with the Munich Chamber Orchestra; appearances with the Philharmonia and RAI Turin Orchestra and Juraj Valčúha; and performances with the Helsinki Philharmonic and Bern Symphony,

Orquesta Sinfonia de Galicia, and on tour with the Royal Flemish Philharmonic and Philippe Herreweghe. Recitals included his performance of the complete Brahms violin sonatas at the Aspen Festival, which he has recorded for Sony. He also recorded the Beethoven Triple with Inon Barnatan, Alisa Weilerstein, Alan Gilbert and Academy St. Martin in the Fields.

Highlights of recent seasons include a performance of Prokofiev's Second Violin Concerto at Carnegie Hall with Mikhail Pletnev, and a multi-city tour with the Russian National Orchestra; performances with the St. Louis Symphony under Nicholas McGegan, and with the Rotterdam Philharmonic under Yannick Nézet-Séguin, and performances with the Indianapolis Symphony under Krzysztof Urbanski, and the Pittsburgh Symphony under Juraj Valcuha. In Asia, Stefan recently appeared for the first time with the

Tokyo Symphony at Suntory Hall under the direction of Krzysztof Urbanski, and returned to the Seoul Philharmonic under Mario Venzago. He also toured Korea, playing chamber music with Gidon Kremer and Kremerata Baltica. In Australia, Stefan toured with the Australian Chamber Orchestra play-directing Mendelssohn. He also gave the world premiere of American composer David Fulmer's Violin Concerto No 2 "Jubilant Arcs," written for him and commissioned by the Heidelberg Festival with the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie under Matthias Pintscher.

Jackiw is also an active recitalist and chamber musician. He has performed in numerous important festivals and concert series, including the Aspen Music Festival, Ravinia Festival, and Caramoor International Music Festival, the Celebrity Series of Boston, New York's Mostly Mozart Festival, the Metropolitan Museum of Art,

the Washington Performing Arts Society and the Louvre Recital Series in Paris. As a chamber musician, Jackiw has collaborated with such artists as Jeremy Denk, Steven Isserlis, Yo-Yo Ma, and Gil Shaham, and forms a trio with Jay Campbell and Conrad Tao. At the opening night of Carnegie Hall's Zankel Hall in New York, Jackiw was the only young artist invited to perform, playing alongside such artists as Emanuel Ax, Renée Fleming, Evgeny Kissin, and James Levine.

Born in 1985 to physicist parents of Korean and German descent, Stefan Jackiw began playing the violin at the age of four. His teachers have included Zinaida Gilels, Michèle Auclair, and Donald Weilerstein. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Harvard University, as well as an Artist Diploma from the New England Conservatory, and is the recipient of a prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant. He lives in New York City.

“As Pure and As Close to Perfection As Music Can Get.”

—THE GLOBE AND MAIL