

12-10-2011

Concert: Chamber Orchestra

Ithaca College Chamber Orchestra

Jeffery Meyer

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Chamber Orchestra

Jeffery Meyer, conductor

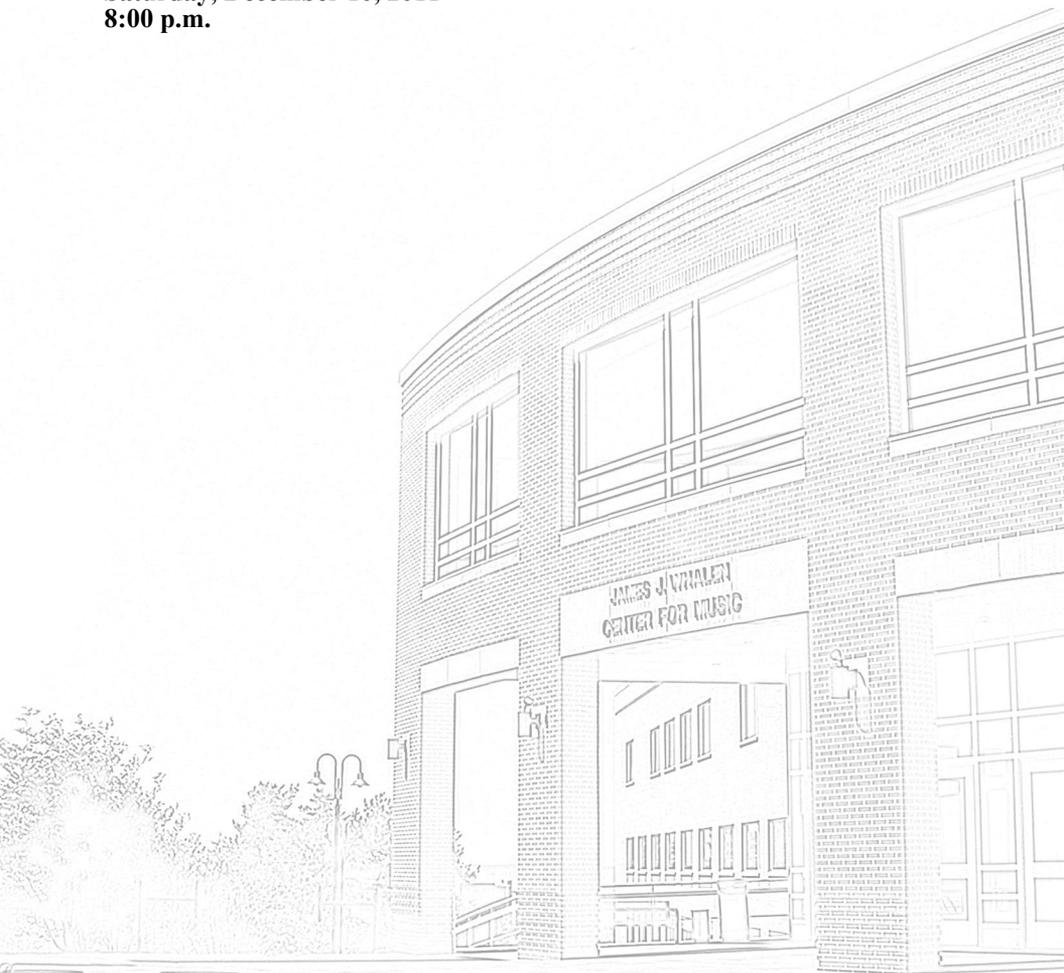
Ursula Oppens, piano

Heidi Hoffman and Elizabeth Simkin, cellos

Ford Hall

Saturday, December 10, 2011

8:00 p.m.



ITHACA COLLEGE

School of Music

Program

Concerto for 2 Cellos in G minor RV 531

- I. Allegro
- II. Largo
- III. Allegro

Antonio Vivaldi
(1678-1741)

Heidi Hoffman and Elizabeth Simkin, cellos

Piano Concerto (2011) *

** North American Premiere*

Ursula Oppens, piano

Laura Kaminsky
(b. 1956)

Intermission

Symphony No. 8 in F Major, Op. 93

- I. Allegro vivace e con brio
- II. Allegretto scherzando
- III. Tempo di Menuetto
- IV. Allegro vivace

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

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Biographies

Heidi Hoffman, cello

Heidi Hoffman, 'cellist, has toured the United States, South America, Europe, and Japan, with such groups as the American Symphony, Jupiter Symphony, and Tchaikovsky Chamber Orchestra. She has also performed with such diverse ensembles as the Tanglewood Music Center Fellowship Orchestra, Northwest Sinfonietta, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Jimmy Paige and Robert Plant, and Heart. Heidi received her DMA and MM degrees from Stony Brook University, where she studied with Timothy Eddy, as well as her BM and Performer's Certificate from the Eastman School of Music, where she studied with Alan Harris. She has served as Lecturer in Chamber Music and cello performance at Wells College and Cornell University. Heidi has been a member of the Syracuse Symphony since 1995 and the Grant Park Symphony Orchestra in Chicago since 1998.

Elizabeth Simkin, cello

Cellist Elizabeth Simkin joined the IC School of Music faculty in the fall of 1994. She has also served for seven summers on the artist faculty of the Bowdoin International Music festival. Prior to that, she was the teaching assistant and student of Janos Starker at Indiana University, Bloomington. She received her Master of Music degree with the Performer's Certificate from Eastman with Steven Doane and her bachelor's from Oberlin with Richard Kapuscinski, where she won the John Katz prize in cello performance as well as the Oberlin Concerto competition.

As a United States Artistic Ambassador, Elizabeth has performed extensively in International recitals with pianist Karl Paulnack. She has held summer chamber music residencies at Tanglewood and at the Spoleto festival in Italy. She has been a returning guest artist at numerous chamber music festivals including: Olympic, Roycroft, Skaneateles, Chenango, Garth Newel, and Heifetz. As a founding member of Ithaca's New Music Group Ensemble X, she has toured to major concert halls and universities, and worked personally with many of today's leading composers.

These days, she is staying closer to home; recent projects include featured performances on several tracks of a recently released CD, "Beauty Crowds Me" for Hospicare of Ithaca, her first performance of all six Bach Suites last January, and regional performances with the Scheherazade Trio with violinist Susan Waterbury and pianist Jennifer Hayghe. She lives with her husband, Nicholas Boyar and their seven-year old son, Cole.

Laura Kaminsky, composer

Laura Kaminsky is a composer with "an ear for the new and interesting" (The New York Times) whose works are "colorful and harmonically sharp-edged" (The New York Times) and whose "musical language is compounded of hymns, blues, and gestures not unlike those of Shostakovich" (inTune). Social and political themes are common in her work, as is an abiding respect for and connection to the natural world. The visual is made manifest in sound, with color and image often serving as the underlying inspiration.

Kaminsky has received commissions, fellowships, and awards as both a composer and presenter from: the National Endowment for the Arts, Koussevitzky Music Foundation, New York State Council on the Arts, Aaron Copland Fund, Chamber Music America, American Music Center, USArtists International, CEC ArtsLink International Partnerships, Kenan Institute for the Arts, Artist Trust, Seattle Arts Commission, North Carolina Council on the Arts, PONCHO, Jordan Foundation, Jack Straw Productions, Virgil Thomson Foundation, Allen Foundation, King County Arts Commission, Serage Foundation, and Meet the Composer, among others. She has received four ASCAP-Chamber Music America Awards for Adventuresome Programming as well as a citation from the Office of the President of the Borough of Manhattan and is the recipient of the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage 2010 Chopin Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Legacy of the Great Composer. She has been a fellow at artists' communities including the Hermitage Artist Retreat Center, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Centrum Foundation, Dorland Mountain Arts Colony, and the Millay Colony for the Arts.

She is Artistic Director of Symphony Space in New York City. From 2004-2008, she served as dean of the Conservatory of Music at Purchase College/SUNY, where she is currently professor of music and faculty-at-large for the School of the Arts.

A native New Yorker, Kaminsky graduated from LaGuardia High School of Music and Arts, received her bachelor's degree magna cum laude from Oberlin College, and her master's degree from the City College of New York/CUNY, where she was a Tuch Foundation Fellow.

(Ms. Kaminsky's biography taken from the composer's website)

Ursula Oppens, pianist

Pianist Ursula Oppens, one of the very first artists to grasp the importance of programming traditional and contemporary works in equal measure, has won a singular place in the hearts of her public, critics, and colleagues alike. Her sterling musicianship, uncanny understanding of the composer's artistic argument, and lifelong study of the keyboard's resources, have placed her among the elect of performing musicians.

This season Ms. Oppens performs at the Festival Slowind 2011 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, which will honor Elliott Carter. There she performs seminal works of Mr. Carter including *Night Fantasies* for solo piano (which she premiered), *Quintet for Piano and Winds*, and *Triple Duo* with the Slowind Wind Quintet.

She appears at New York City's *Le Poisson Rouge*, in a program of works by Charles Wuorinen and Conlon Nancarrow. It will feature works written for Ms. Oppens such as Nancarrow's *Two Canons* for Ursula and the New York premiere of Wuorinen's *Oros*. The JACK Quartet will join Ms. Oppens on the program for Wuorinen's *String Quintet*.

Ms. Oppens appears at Spivey Hall in Morrow, GA with a program that features Elliott Carter's *Two Thoughts about the Piano* and works written for her such as John Corigliano's *Winging It*, and Frederick Rzewski's *The People United Will Never Be Defeated*. She also travels to the Mills College Center for Contemporary Music for a program of mixed works by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Scriabin and Schumann, and premieres a new concerto by Laura Kaminsky at Ithaca College and with the St. Petersburg Chamber Philharmonic.

In 2008, she celebrated the 100th birthday of her friend and colleague, Elliott Carter, with critically acclaimed performances of his complete works for solo piano at the Boston Conservatory of Music, Symphony Space, the Ravinia Festival, Merkin Hall, the Tanglewood Festival and elsewhere. Her recording of these works, *Oppens Plays Carter*, received a 2009 Grammy nomination for best solo classical album and was named on "Best of 2008" lists in *The New York Times*, the *New Yorker* magazine and the *Chicago Tribune*.

Other recent highlights include the *Mozart Dances* with the Mark Morris Dance Group at Ravinia, at Toronto's *Luminato Festival*, in New Zealand, and at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. She performed Elliott Carter's *Dialogues* and the premiere of Harold Meltzer's *Privacy* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic for their renowned *Green Umbrella Series*, and later performed and recorded *Privacy* with the Boston Modern Orchestra led by Gil Rose and performed Carter's *Dialogues* with the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra led by Ingo Metzmacher.

Driven by an enduring commitment to integrating new music into regular concert life, Ms. Oppens has commissioned and premiered many compositions, including works by Anthony Braxton, Elliott Carter, Anthony Davis, John Harbison, Julius Hemphill, Tania Leon, György Ligeti, Witold Lutoslawski, Conlon Nancarrow, Tobias Picker, Frederic Rzewski, Alvin Singleton, Joan Tower, Lois V Vierk, Christian Wolff, Amnon Wolman, and Charles Wuorinen.

A co-founder of *Speculum Musicae*, Ms. Oppens has an extensive recording catalogue and has received three Grammy nominations: for Oppens plays Carter; for her Vanguard recording of Frederic Rzewski's *The People United Will Never Be Defeated*; and for *American Piano Music of Our Time*, a classic

compilation of piano works by 20th century American composers for the Music & Arts label. Her most recent release is *Winging It: Music of John Corigliano* on Cedille Records, which has already received great critical acclaim.

Ursula Oppens studied piano with her mother, the late Edith Oppens, as well as with Leonard Shure and Guido Agosti. She received her master's degree at The Juilliard School, where she studied with Felix Galimir and Rosina Lhévinne. After 14 years as the John Evans Distinguished Professor of Music at Northwestern University, Ms. Oppens is now a Distinguished Professor on the faculty of the Conservatory of Music at Brooklyn College and the CUNY Graduate Center.

Jeffery Meyer, conductor

Born in Chicago, Jeffery Meyer began his musical studies as a pianist, and shortly thereafter continued on to study composition and conducting. He is the founder and Artistic Director of the St. Petersburg Chamber Philharmonic in St. Petersburg, Russia, as well as the Director of Orchestras at the Ithaca College School of Music. He has appeared with orchestras in the United States and abroad, including ensembles such as the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Syracuse Symphony Orchestra, Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, Cayuga Chamber Orchestra and the Orchestra Sinfonico "Haydn" di Bolzano e Trento. In recent concert seasons, he has been seen conducting, performing as piano soloist and chamber musician, as well as conducting from the keyboard in the United States, Canada, Russia, Italy, Spain, Germany and throughout Eastern and Southeastern Asia.

Called "one of the most interesting and creatively productive conductors working in St. Petersburg" by Sergei Slonimsky, he is an active participant in the music of our time, has collaborated with dozens of composers, and commissioned and premiered numerous new works. In 2007, he made his Glinka Hall conducting debut in the final concert of the 43rd St. Petersburg "Musical Spring" International Festival, featuring works by three of St. Petersburg's most prominent composers, and in 2009, he conducted the opening concert of the 14th International Musical Olympus Festival at the Hermitage Theatre and was recently invited back to perform in the 2011 festival. He has also been featured numerous times as both a conductor and pianist as part of the "Sound Ways" International New Music Festival in St. Petersburg, Russia. Most recently, he led the St. Petersburg Chamber Philharmonic in its United States debut with three performances at Symphony Space's 2010 "Wall-to-Wall, Behind the Wall" Festival in New York City which the New York Times called "impressive", "powerful", "splendid", and "blazing."

As a pianist, Meyer has been in residence at the Banff Centre for the Arts, and in residence at the Aspen Festival as part of the Furious Band. He performs

frequently with percussionist Paul Vaillancourt as part of the piano-percussion duo Strike, which, in January 2010, released an album of world-premiere recordings of works written for the duo on Luminescence Records, Chicago. The duo has recently appeared in the Beijing Modern Festival and at the Tianjin Conservatory in China. He has been broadcast on CBC, has recorded and performed with the Philadelphia Virtuosi (Naxos), and has been heard as a soloist at the Aspen Festival. During the 2001-2002 academic year he lived and studied in Berlin and Leipzig as the recipient of a DAAD grant in music, during which time he wrote incidental music to David Mamet's *Duck Variations*, which was performed throughout Berlin by the theater group Heimspieltheater. He has been distinguished in several international competitions (2008 Cadaqu's Orchestra Conducting Competition, 2003 Vakhtang Jordania International Conducting Competition, 2003 Beethoven Sonata International Piano Competition, Memphis, Tennessee) and was a prizewinner in the 2008 X. International Conducting Competition "Antonio Pedrotti" and the 2011 American Prize in Conducting.

Meyer is an active adjudicator, guest clinician, and masterclass teacher. He has adjudicated competitions throughout the United States, including Alaska, as well as at the Hong Kong Schools Music Festival. He has given masterclasses throughout the United States as well as Canada and Asia, and recently led conducting masterclasses at the Central Conservatory in Beijing, China. He has served on the faculties of the Icicle Creek Music Center, Dorian Keyboard Festival, Opusfest Chamber Music Festival (Philippines), Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp, Marrowstone Music Festival, and the LSM Academy and Festival. In the summer of 2011, he returned to China as the guest conductor of the 2011 Beijing International Composition Workshop at the Central Conservatory in Beijing, China.

Meyer holds degrees in piano as well as composition and completed his Doctorate of Musical Arts in Piano Performance with Gilbert Kalish at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

Chamber Orchestra Personnel

Violin I

Emily Frederick, concertmaster
Alyssa Jutting
Misako Sakurai
Samatha Spena
Margaret Dagon
Claire Wilcox
Nils Schwerzmann

Violin II

Madeline Wething, principal
Bryn Digney
Shawn Riley
Amy Shumann
Sarah Hoag
Jason Calhoun

Viola

Maxwell Aleman, principal
Stephen Gorgone
Kate Inie-Richards
Carly Rockenhauser
Kelly Ralston

Cello

Peter Volpert, principal
Thilman Benham
Madeline Docimo
Sophie Chang
Andy Chadwick

Bass

Kyle Kresge, principal
Andrew Ryan
Samuel Shuhan
Kevin Gobetz

Flute

Sandra O'Hare, co-principal
Corinne Shirk, co-principal

Oboe

Alana Rosen, principal
Elizabeth Schmitt

Clarinet

Emily Dobmeier, principal
Alyssa Barna

Bassoon

Thomas Connors, principal
Ross Triner

Horn

Emma Stuaadacher, principal
Colins Speirs, principal

Trumpet

Nathaniel Sodeur, principal
Keli Price

Trombone

Kai Johnson, principal

Percussion

Julia Ross, principal, timpani
Jessica Linden

Notes

Concerto for Two Cellos

Vivaldi wrote over 350 concertos for solo instruments, and over 40 for two instruments. Of them, the concerto for 2 cellos in G minor (written between 1713 and 1717) is particularly charming. In a very short span of time, and in very compact forms, Vivaldi creates numerous musical characters and ample opportunities for showcasing many virtuosic elements in the solo parts. The clear textures and carefully balanced ensemble allow both solo voices to show through, even though they often play in their lower registers. At times, each soloist has their own say; at other times, they accompany each other, and still other times they are supported by the orchestra.

Perhaps the most colorful contribution Vivaldi made to the repertoire of the time was to champion a new style of cello playing, derived from violin playing, which demanded from the soloist a command of many varied articulations and bow strokes. These nuanced differences allowed a greater range of musical color and emotional affect, evident most clearly in the sublime central Largo. The movement is set like a double lament, and requires the cellos to spin a line in duet like opera singers.

In the outer movements, one will hear ample use of echo technique, where the solo cellos play the same music in canon. There are also more abstract "echoes" of Vivaldi's own Four Seasons, violin concertos he would compose years later. And of course there are, amid the motoric rush of tones and the often rhetorical musical treatments, shining moments of striking originality, like the resounding tutti line in the opening Allegro which ascends chromatically in parallel thirds, or jarring immediate shift from 16th notes to triplets the soloists execute in the finale.

Kaminsky Piano Concerto

The Piano Concerto is scored for single winds, brass (1 horn, 2 trumpets, 1 trombone), strings, 2 percussion (vibraphone, tamtam, 3 gongs, 3 wood blocks, bass drum, and 4 graduated Drums), and solo piano. Visual images are the source of inspiration, in particular, the light on both the Hudson River, which I see from my studio window, and on the Neva River in St. Petersburg, Russia, where I have been a visiting artist on several occasions over the past few years.

The notions of flow and stasis, and reflection and absorption are addressed musically in one extended movement. Coming out of improvisation, the Concerto commences with a piano cadenza, the material of which serves as the basis for the rest of the work.

The Piano Concerto was jointly commissioned by The Serge Koussevitzky Music Foundation in the Library of Congress, with the approval of the Librarian of Congress, and The Koussevitzky Music Foundation, and The St.

Petersburg Chamber Philharmonic of St. Petersburg, Russia, Jeffery Meyer, Artistic Director. Special thanks to Ursula Oppens. The work received its world premiere performance on November 26, 2011 at the Small Philharmonic Hall in St. Petersburg as part of the 23rd International Sound Ways New Music Festival.

Symphony 8 in F Major, Op. 93

Although Beethoven composed his Seventh and Eighth Symphonies nearly concurrently, and they were premiered together on the same concert in 1812, they are wildly different in style and musical language. The Seventh's muscular textures and propulsive rhythms are contrasted by the Eighth's light-hearted and economical elegance. At the premiere of the two symphonies, when the Czerny asked the composer why the latter was less well received, Beethoven replied "because it is so much better."

The Eighth Symphony, like the 3rd of Brahms, expresses the composer's complete mastery of the symphonic form and the resources of the orchestra not through bombast but graceful and witty craftsmanship. The work harkens back to the era of Haydn, with its chamber-sized orchestra and musical humor; Beethoven even labels the 3rd movement Menuetto, preferring the form over the scherzo he himself helped develop.

The Symphony opens with a spirited statement of the principal theme in triple meter " but by the second phrase, which is sung by solo clarinet over gentle woodwind chords, the listener knows to expect the unexpected with this work. The movement continues through a tutti statement which culminates in a silent grand pause, only to be followed by the second theme in D major, an unorthodox key choice. The second theme is punctuated by frequent slackening of the otherwise motoric tempo and quickly grows back into a full tutti which leads explosively into the development section. Throughout this section, dynamic contrast is key, and the melodic material is often surprisingly carried in the cellos and basses. After a false recapitulation leading to another development (a Beethoven hallmark by this time) we are again surprised when the bombastic tutti peters out to just a few instruments playing chords isolated by silence, culminating in a pianissimo segment of the main tune, a musical wink by Beethoven.

The second movement was famously inspired by Johann Maelzel's metronome. Here the clicking machine which every young student hates is delightfully represented by staccato woodwinds, and witty string melodies try, often with a humorous lack of success, to fit in underneath. The Menuetto is surprisingly muscular, and includes notable melodic solos not only for the trumpets but also the timpani. The central trio section is a beautiful pastorale showcasing the clarinet, horns, and cellos.

If you blink, you might miss the finale, which Beethoven sets at the astonishing tempo of 84 to the bar (meaning practically 3 full measures every 2 seconds); shimmeringly nervous triplet figures lead to a frantic melody punctuated by tutti outbursts of another Beethoven hallmark, the glorified "wrong note". The music dashes between more and more key areas, and along the way finds repose in a more staid second melody and an increasingly complex piling up of fragmented lines before coming to a complete halt with emphatic interruptions by the low strings. The music then tentatively finds its way back, only to explode into the remote key of F# minor " which Beethoven quickly abandons by unapologetically going directly back into F major for a rousing, though comically protracted, finale.

Upcoming Events

December

11 - Ford - 3:00pm - **Winter Choral Concert**. Larry Doeblner and Janet Galván, directors.

11 - Ford - 8:15pm - **Percussion Ensemble**. Conrad Alexander, director.

12 - Ford - 8:15pm - **Jazz Lab**. Greg Evans, director.

13 - Hockett - 7:00pm - **Piano/Instrumental Duos**

15 - Ford - 7:00pm - **Campus Choral Ensemble**

Now in its second century, the Ithaca College School of Music affirms its fundamental belief that music and the arts are essential components of the human experience. The School of Music prepares students to be world-class professionals and the music leaders of tomorrow - ready to transform individuals and communities by advancing the art of music.