

PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

a life more beautiful

PREVIEW
NOTES

Anthony McGill, *clarinet*

Gloria Chien, *piano*

Sunday, October 11 – 3:00 PM

PROGRAM (Selection of Program Notes)

***Peace* [Arr.]**

Jessie Montgomery

***Born:* 1981, New York, NY**

***Composed:* 2020**

***Duration:* 5 minutes**

Of this work Jessie Montgomery says: "I was going to call this 'Melancholy' instead of 'Peace', but I didn't want to be a downer for the people. I'm struggling during quarantine to define what actually brings me joy. And I'm at a stage of making peace with sadness as it comes and goes like any other emotion. I'm learning to observe sadness for the first time not as a negative emotion, but as a necessary dynamic to the human experience."

Viola Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 120, No. 2

Johannes Brahms

***Born:* May 7, 1833, Hamburg, Germany**

***Died:* April 3, 1897, Vienna, Austria**

***Composed:* 1894**

***Duration:* 25 minutes**

After finishing the Violin Sonata No. 3 in D Minor, Op. 108 in 1888, Johannes Brahms returned to the duo sonata just once more; in 1894, in quick succession, he composed a pair of sonatas for clarinet (or viola) and piano that were published together the following year as Op. 120. The two Op. 120 sonatas, the first of which is in F Minor, the second of which is in E-flat Major, are as like to one another as peas in a pod: rich-textured, songful, and not at all filled with the kind of hair-raising drama that has made the D Minor Violin Sonata so famous. The No. 2 in E-flat Major, Op. 120 has three movements: Allegro amabile, Allegro appassionato-sostenuto, and Andante con moto-Allegro-Più tranquillo. The wealth of long-limbed, lyrical melody in the opening and closing movements led Brahms to abandon the idea of a slow movement in favor of a scherzo-type middle movement in E-flat Minor; the central trio section, a B Major Sostenuto ("ma

dolce e ben cantando"), serves nicely to fill the gap left by that missing slow movement. The finale is a theme and variations in which the clarinet and piano join together to spin yard after yard of silken, overlapping, arpeggiated spiderwebs.

Trio in E-flat Major, K. 498, *Kegelstatt*

Carl Maria von Weber

***Born:* November 18, 1786, Eutin, Germany**

***Died:* June 5, 1826, London, United Kingdom**

***Composed:* 1815-1816**

***Duration:* 22 minutes**

The 28-year-old Carl Maria von Weber began composing this piece in July 1815, working first on the Rondo finale, then turning to the Andante con moto middle panel. He completed the first movement last, in November 1816, around his thirtieth birthday. This reverse process of composition seemed to hamper neither the work's structural fabric nor its final, rather imposing musical worth. While the piano gets second billing in this work, its role is nearly equal to that of the clarinet. Weber himself was a virtuoso pianist and this composition was one of several he wrote for clarinetist Heinrich Baermann, equally gifted in his instrumental realm. The first movement begins vigorously, with many utterly enchanting exchanges between clarinet and piano. A serene and lovely theme is then introduced on clarinet, with the piano initially serving in an accompaniment role, but then later prodding the music into playfulness. A recapitulation and coda close out this sonata-allegro movement in deft style. The second movement begins with a mournful theme on clarinet. The piano follows with an extended solo section, after which the two instruments reunite and eventually deliver a lovely, if gloomy, close. The finale dispels the darkness from the previous movement with the clarinet's joyful main theme.