

# PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

a life more beautiful

PREVIEW  
NOTES

Randall Goosby, *violin*

Zhu Wang, *piano*

Wednesday, December 14 – 7:30 PM

Perelman Theater, Kimmel Center

## PROGRAM INCLUDES

### *Deux Morceaux*

Lili Boulanger

*Born:* August 21, 1893, Paris, France

*Died:* March 15, 1918, Mézy-sur-Seine, France

*Composed:* 1911-14

*Duration:* 5 minutes

Lili Boulanger was the sister of the famous teacher Nadia Boulanger who taught Aaron Copland, Elliott Carter and Philip Glass amongst others. She was a composer for the last 10 years of her tragically short life - she died at 25 - and her music stands in the main line of French music exemplified by Faure, somewhat tinged with the influence of Debussy's Impressionism. It is generally beautiful, delicately colored, and touching. *Deux Morceaux pour Violin et Piano* exemplify these qualities.

### *Violin Sonata No. 2*

Maurice Ravel

*Born:* March 7, 1875, Ciboure, France

*Died:* December 28, 1937, Paris, France

*Composed:* 1923-27

*Duration:* 17 minutes

In March 1928 Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) wrote an article titled 'Take Jazz Seriously!' in which he claimed that "Abroad we take jazz seriously. It is influencing our work. The Blues in my sonata, par example, is stylized jazz, more French than American in character perhaps, but nevertheless influenced strongly by your so-called 'popular music.'" Ever sensitive to both the physical and acoustic qualities of the instruments for which he wrote, Ravel recognized that a fundamental mismatch exists between violin and piano: one is capable of sustaining tones through continual control of a string's vibration, while the other is a percussion instrument that sets the string into motion with one sharp blow. In the Violin Sonata he exploited the two instruments' differences more than their similarities, generally avoiding a smooth blend between the two.

### *Suite for Violin and Piano*

William Grant Still

*Born:* May 11, 1895, Woodville, MS

*Died:* December 3, 1978, Los Angeles, CA

*Composed:* 1943

*Duration:* 13 minutes

In 1943, William Grant Still wrote his Suite for Violin and Piano, which took as its inspiration three sculptures: Richmond Barthé's *African Dancer*, Sargent Johnson's *Mother and Child*, and Augusta Savage's *Gamin*. Each of these works was created in the 1930s and each artist was associated with the Harlem Renaissance. Throughout the Suite, William Grant Still is bringing elements of popular music, blues figures and syncopated rhythms, to the salon.

### *Violin Sonata in A Major, Op. 47, Kreutzer*

Ludwig van Beethoven

*Born:* December 1770, Bonn, Germany

*Died:* March 26, 1827, Vienna, Austria

*Composed:* 1802-04

*Duration:* 40 minutes

In March 1803, Beethoven's patron introduced him to the twenty-four-year-old violin virtuoso George Polgreen Bridgetower. Fresh from wildly successful concerts in Dresden, the violinist was visiting Vienna, having lived in London since his West Indian father had showed him off there as a child prodigy. After including the young violin virtuoso in a quartet reading, Beethoven arranged to give a public concert with Bridgetower and immediately set to work on a violin sonata for the occasion. Because time was short, Beethoven drew on sketches for two movements begun earlier that year, and added a finale that he had originally written in 1802. Bridgetower had to read the middle variation movement from Beethoven's messy manuscript at the concert, while the composer played from sketches. Beethoven highly recommended Bridgetower as "a capable virtuoso who has a complete command of his instrument."