

PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

a life more beautiful

PREVIEW
NOTES

Susanna Phillips, soprano;
Anthony McGill, clarinet; Myra Huang, piano
Wednesday, January 24 – 7:30 PM
Perelman Theater, Kimmel Center

PROGRAM

The Shepherd on the Rock, D. 965

Franz Schubert

Born: January 31, 1797, Vienna, Austria

Died: November 19, 1828, Vienna, Austria

Composed: 1828

Duration: 13 minutes

Schubert wrote *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* (“The Shepherd on the Rock”) in 1828 for Pauline Anna Milder-Hauptmann, one of the leading soprano singers at the time. The piece explores a range of emotion for the singer, per Milder’s request. It begins with a solemn lament from a shepherd towards his lover, growing darker as the shepherd is consumed by his feelings, until the coming of spring revives his spirits. *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* has also become a staple of clarinet repertoire, featuring the instrument through various poetic interludes between verses and call-and-response phrases from the singer that evoke an echo effect. The piece was eventually performed by Milder Hauptmann; however Schubert had already been dead for two years at the time of its premiere. It is considered the last of his more than 600 songs.

Chavah’s Daughters Speak

James Lee, III

Born: 1975, St. Joseph, Missouri

Composed: 2021

Duration: 13 minutes

James Lee III, one of the most prominent American composers of his generation, is often inspired by religious themes, which he frequently references through the Hebrew Scriptures. Of this work, he says: “*Chavah’s Daughters Speak* is a cycle of five songs I composed using the text of Lou Ella Hickman. *Chavah* is the Hebrew name for Eve, the mother of humanity according to the book of

Genesis. In this work, I wanted to use texts and thoughts that might have been spoken by women from the Bible who were not given an opportunity to have their expressions recorded in the sacred scriptures.”

Sonata in A Minor, D. 821, Arpeggione

Franz Schubert

Composed: 1824

Duration: 25 minutes

Schubert composed the *Arpeggione Sonata* in late 1824 and it remains today the only significant composition for the instrument. The arpeggione, invented in 1823 by a Viennese guitar maker, was a six-stringed instrument with frets but bowed like a cello. The instrument experienced a brief period of popularity after its invention, and it is likely Schubert wrote the sonata in response to a commission. However, by the time the sonata was posthumously published in 1871, all interest in the instrument had died out. Today, the work is mostly commonly performed on cello or viola, but transcriptions for other instruments, such as the double bass, flute, guitar, and clarinet (as we’ll hear tonight) also exist.

Romance

William Grant Still

Born: May 11, 1895, Woodville, MS

Died: December 3, 1978, Los Angeles, CA

Composed: 1954

Duration: 6 minutes

Originally written for alto saxophone, William Grant Still’s lush *Romance* was later arranged for clarinet and piano. The title suggests the mood of the piece; it is essentially a love song without words.