

Harmonia Chamber Players III

Saturday, January 24, 2026 • 2:00 p.m.

First Free Methodist Church



ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904)

Serenade for Wind Instruments in D minor, Op. 44

Moderato, quasi Marcia

Tempo di Menuetto — Trio

Andante con moto

Finale: *Allegro molto*

Hsing-Hui Hsu, conductor

— intermission —

SHEILA BRISTOW (*1969)

Quatre mouvements pour éventails — WORLD PREMIERE

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN (1732–1809)

Symphony No. 52 in C minor, Hob. I:52

Allegro assai con brio

Andante

Menuetto e trio — *Allegretto*

Finale: *Presto*

William White, conductor

Please silence cell phones and other electronics, and refrain from the use of cameras and recording devices during the performance.

Refreshments will be available in the Fine Center during intermission.

Harmonia Orchestra and Chorus

William White, music director • George Shangrow, founder

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Antonín Dvořák

Serenade for Wind Instruments in D Minor, Op. 44

Dvořák modeled both of his serenades—the Op. 22 for strings and this Op. 44—after the Classical-era serenades and *divertimenti* of Mozart and Haydn, works for chamber ensembles or small orchestras consisting of dance movements yet sometimes with aspirations toward a symphonic scale. In particular, the instrumentation of Dvořák's Op. 44 recalls the *harmonie* ensemble so prevalent in the previous century: pairs of oboes, clarinets, horns and bassoons, often with an *ad libitum* part for string bass or contrabassoon—Dvořák uses both, along with an extra horn and a single cello. As with his string serenade, Dvořák worked quickly, sketching and orchestrating the opening movement in a single day (January 4, 1878) and completing the other three within two weeks. The premiere did not take place until November 17 of that year, in Prague. During the interim, Dvořák wrote his Slavonic Dances, whose publication in late November would create a sensation across Europe, turning a rather obscure Czech composer into a household name. Although Dvořák originally planned to write three serenades, he ended up using sketches for a third such composition in his Czech Suite, composed the following year.

The Op. 44 serenade opens with its shortest movement, a march. While Dvořák labels the next movement a minuet (in F major) with a trio (in B♭), the forms in question are actually two triple-meter Bohemian folk dances: the *sousedská* (in moderate tempo) and *furiant* (very fast, with syncopated cross-rhythms). The key moves to A major for the slow movement that follows, returning to D minor for the finale. Cast in a modified rondo form, this last movement charges ahead until relaxing for a *meno mosso* section that builds forcefully in anticipation of a recapitulation—but it is the march theme from the first movement that reappears before the opening theme of the rondo returns, now in D major.

Sheila Bristow

Quatre mouvements pour éventails

Sheila Bristow's newest work, for string orchestra, consists of four brief sketches inspired by Paul Claudel's *Cent Phrases pour éventails*. "The *cent phrases* of the title actually

number 172," writes Barry Laine, "and they are short poems written in French with accompanying Japanese characters" during the 1920s, when Claudel was the French ambassador to Japan. Modeling his verse on haiku, Claudel "also made the graphic qualities of each poem—its appearance on the printed page—an integral part of the poetic experience."

Franz Joseph Haydn

Symphony No. 52 in C minor

Haydn composed the majority of his 100-plus symphonies while in the employ of the wealthy Esterházy family. "My prince was satisfied with all my works," he recalled, "I was applauded and as leader of an orchestra I could experiment, observe, eliminate, dare." When Prince Nikolaus would spend months at a time at his Eszterháza estate (modeled after Versailles), the composer "was cut off from the world. No one around me could have doubts about me or torment me, and I was forced to become original."

Dating from 1770 or 1771, the Symphony No. 52 has been called by Haydn scholar H.C. Robbins Landon, "the grandfather of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, also created with mathematical precision and in extreme conciseness," and, according to YouTube sensation Dave Hurwitz, stands as "one of the very greatest—if not the greatest—of the *Sturm und Drang* symphonies" that Haydn composed around this time. (This "storm and stress" label is a misnomer, applied by a French musicologist who was unaware that Haydn's minor-key symphonies of this era predated the same-named literary movement by several years.)

"The opening movement," notes Daniel Jaffé, "is one of the most dramatic and disconcerting that Haydn ever composed: just try predicting the phrase lengths or where the each cadence is going to fall!" An E♭-major second subject is, unusually, heard twice, the second time at great length.

The *Andante*, in $\frac{3}{8}$ time and C major, presents itself as a gentle dance with muted violins, but offers humorous and disconcerting surprises along the way. The minuet returns to C minor and features unexpected accents on beat three of its $\frac{3}{4}$ meter; oboes lead the way in the gentler C-major trio section. In the *Presto* finale, Haydn makes highly effective use of built-in pauses and energetic counterpoint.

Violin

Leah Anderson*
Susan Beals
Stephen Hegg
Jason Hershey
Manchung Ho
Maria Hunt
Fritz Klein
Pam Kummert
Gregor Nitsche
Stephen Provine**
Theo Schaad
Janet Showalter*
Kenna Smith-Shangrow

Viola

Colleen Chlastawa*
Grant Hanner
Katherine McWilliams
Håkan Olsson
Stephanie Read

Cello

Liam Frye-Mason
Katie Sauter Messick
Annie Roberts
Valerie Ross
Matthew Wyant*

Bass

Gus Blazek
Ericka Kendall
Steven Messick*

Oboe

Yuh-Pey Lin*
Margaret Siple

Clarinet

Steven Noffsinger
Chris Peterson*

Bassoon

Julian Banbury
Jeff Eldridge*

Contrabassoon

Michel Jolivet

French Horn

Barney Blough
Laurie Heidt*
Robin Stangland

** concertmaster

* principal