



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

**Henry Haas, Violin**  
**Edward Newman, Piano**

**Elisabeth Adkins, Violin**  
**Emily Torkelson, Cello**

April 11, 2024

7:00 PM

PepsiCo Recital Hall

**Program**

Five Pieces for Two Violins and Piano

*Prelude*

*Gavotte*

*Elegy*

*Waltz*

*Polka*

Dmitri Shostakovich  
(1906 – 1975)

Elisabeth Adkins, Violin

Sonata in A Minor, Op. 34

*Allegro Moderato*

*Scherzo - Molto Vivace*

*Largo con Dolore*

*Allegro con Fuoco*

Amy Beach  
(1867 – 1944)

~ *Pause* ~

Piano Trio No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 49

*Molto Allegro Agitato*

Felix Mendelssohn  
(1809 – 1847)

Emily Torkelson, Cello

Romance sans Paroles et Rondo Élégant, Op. 9

Henry Wieniawski  
(1835 – 1880)

Henry Haas is a student of Dr. Elisabeth Adkins.  
The use of recording equipment or taking photographs is prohibited.  
Please silence all electronic devices including watches, pagers, and phones.

## Program Notes

### *Five Pieces for Two Violins and Piano* – Dimitri Shostakovich (1906 – 1975)

Dimitri Shostakovich was one of the most prolific composers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He produced his works at a remarkable pace, especially considering that Soviet authorities frequently forbade his music from being performed.

To pay his bills, Shostakovich composed for the Soviet Union's vast film industry, creating music for 36 films over 50 years. To further supplement this income, Shostakovich asked his friend Levon Atovmyan (1901 – 1973) to arrange music from these films for performances in the home. These pieces are a product of this partnership.

The *Five Pieces* were arranged and produced circa 1970, at the end of Atovmyan's life, and are made up of short vignettes, including a prelude, an elegy, and three lively dances. While four of the five pieces have clear ties to Shostakovich's compositions, the waltz is not sourced, and may be an original composition of Atovmyan's.

Shostakovich's works are most often associated with a dark intensity, portraying the struggles and hardships he faced and the dissatisfaction he held with a Russia under Stalin. His film music, by contrast, is much more "classical," full of a joyful lightness that is easy for the ear to follow. The *Five Pieces* are an example of such compositions, especially in the bouncing Gavotte and the comedic Polka that ends the work.

I am incredibly grateful to perform this alongside my professor, Dr. Elisabeth Adkins, who has been so crucial to my development as a musician over my tenure at TCU. Thank you, professor.

### *Sonata in A Minor, Op. 34* – Amy Beach (1867 – 1944)

Amy Beach was one of the most important composers to the then burgeoning school of American composition. Despite her unquestionable contributions to the genre, she has only recently begun to receive her rightfully earned recognition. She was born to a prominent family in New England and a child prodigy who reportedly memorized forty songs at the age of one. She premiered as a piano soloist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at only 17 years old.

A year later, she married Henry Harris Aubrey Beach (1843 – 1910), who would almost immediately insist that she stop performing in public. Following her marriage, her husband demanded she focus instead on composition, which, despite her inexperience and lack of formal training in the art, resulted in a sequence of successful works over the next several decades.

Her only violin sonata was one such work, composed in 1896 and performed the following year with a now 30-year-old Beach premiering it on the piano herself, a rare case of her performing onstage before her husband's death. The sonata is rich and

dramatic, with clear nods to the kind of dense, moving lines that were so integral to the melodic writing of the romantic period.

Delicate, quiet passages are violently slammed into phrases of great strength and passion, creating a vivid and exciting landscape that often travels into the top registers of the violin. The first movement begins quite subdued, with the piano establishing the melody before the violin soars above it in the second theme. The second movement is the lightest of the four, a dancing scherzo surrounding a slow central theme that then accelerates back into the opening material.

The third movement is at first restrained, beginning with a deliberate stillness before erupting into several fits of passion by the climax. After this, the movement slows again, ending on a delicate harmonic that evaporates into silence. The final movement is the most dramatic of the four, marked *Allegro con Fuoco* (with fire). It is briefly interrupted by softer melodies introduced by the piano and a three-voice fugue that appears halfway through the movement, but before long it drives back to a powerful and definite conclusion. The final measure of the piece stands alone as the first and only to be marked *triple forte*.

*Piano Trio No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 49* – Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847)

Jacob Ludwig Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy was born into a wealthy family in Hamburg who had connections with many leading artists and musicians. Like Amy Beach after him, Mendelssohn was a child prodigy, excelling in painting, poetry, and linguistics alongside music.

He began taking piano lessons with his mother when he was six and made his debut on the instrument at nine. By the time the boy was fifteen, he had already composed his first symphony, and it was not long before his fame spread across Europe.

His first piano trio, written in the summer of 1839, was hailed by Robert Schumann (1810 – 1856) as “the master trio of our age,” going so far as to call Mendelssohn the “Mozart of the 19<sup>th</sup> century” (my cellist, who dislikes Mozart, mentioned that this sounded far more like an insult than a compliment). The trio has an abundance of rich and memorable melodies, while also demonstrating the brilliance of Mendelssohn’s piano writing.

The first movement is opened by two gorgeous themes, both introduced by the cello. Throughout the rest of the movement, the violin and cello trade these themes back and forth while the piano alternates between agitating the line with a dense, rumbling harmony, or taking the theme in moments of more subdued brilliance. This culminates in the virtuosic finale wherein the melody is finally permitted to rise to its peak.

I have the pleasure of performing this work alongside my dear colleague Emily Torkelson, who has been a reliable and enduring friend in our continual pursuit of greater musicianship. Thank you Emily!

*Romance Sans Paroles et Rondo Élégant, Op. 9* – Henryk Wieniawski (1835 – 1880)

Henryk Wieniawski was born in Lublin to a musical family, with two of his three brothers pursuing music seriously alongside the young virtuoso. Wieniawski would begin his studies with the violin at age five, instead of following his mother's example and learning the piano. He made astonishing progress on the instrument, and gave his first solo performance at seven, and, despite only accepting French nationals over the age of twelve, Wieniawski was enrolled to the Paris Conservatoire on special decree when he was only eight.

Wieniawski composed *Romance sans Paroles et Rondo Élégant* at the age of seventeen, during a concert tour of Russia with his brother. This tour fully established Wieniawski as a famous virtuoso, and further as an equally gifted composer.

The piece consists of two contrasting miniatures. First is the *Romance sans Paroles*, which utilizes harmonics to establish a light and flowing texture. This opening, unlike the following material, is almost entirely devoid of ornamentation, and instead focuses on the pure tone of the violin.

The *Rondo* greatly contrasts the first few minutes of the work by supplementing the notes on the page with many technical devices, namely trills, left-handed pizzicato, artificial and natural harmonics, chords and double stops, and sudden transitions between the two extremes of the violin's register. All of these allow performers to demonstrate their own range of technical effects, an opportunity of which Wieniawski took full advantage in his own playing.

The finale of the piece culminates in an epic, driving melody that moves to a cadenza before finally arriving to a triumphant final phrase: Four measures of Largo in fortississimo, with closely spaced chords in the violin and pounding tremolo in the piano creating tension that finally resolves with the last note of the piece.

### **Acknowledgements**

Without the dedicated work of my colleagues this recital would not have been possible. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the musicians who made this evening so special. Firstly, I would like to thank my professor and friend once more. Dr. Adkins and Emily both took time out of their busy schedules to put this program together, and I am endlessly grateful for their support over my four years here.

Next, and perhaps most importantly, a very big thank you to my pianist Mr. Edward Newman. Mr. Newman has worked with me since the beginning, and he and Dr. Adkins have helped me in innumerable ways over the course of my time here. Without his guidance (and endless patience), I would never have dreamt to be able to program repertoire like this. Thank you so much for your support, sir.

And finally, to my family and friends who have supported me during my tenure at TCU and well before it, thank you so much. I would not be the man nor the musician I am today without every one of you, and you are each so dear to me. Enjoy!