

Musical Program

David Dean Mendoza (b. 1979)

Reverie for Viola and Piano (2021)

Erwin Schulhoff (1894-1942)

Concertino for Flute, Viola, and Double Bass, WV 75

Andante

Rondino

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Oboe Sonata, Op. 166

Andantino

Allegretto

Molto Allegro

Giovanni Bottesini (1821-1889)

Fantasia on Bellini's "La Sonnambula" for Bass and Piano

INTERMISSION

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Selections from Cello Suite No. 3, BWV 1009 (Transcribed for Double Bass)

Charles Loeffler (1861-1935)

L'Etang (The Pond), Rhapsody for Oboe, Viola, and Piano

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Serenade for Flute, Violin, and Viola in D Major, Op. 25
(Arranged for Flute, Oboe, and Viola)

Entrata, Allegro

Allegro molto

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Sonata No. 1 in e minor for Cello and Piano, Op. 38
(Transcribed for Double Bass)

Allegro non troppo

Sérgio Azevedo (b. 1968)

Concertino da Câmara Quartet (New Mexico Premiere)

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Featured Artist of the Season

Dianna Shomaker is a Placitas treasure, a past board member and president of the Placitas Artists Series, and, above all, a consummate artist with incredible talent. We are pleased that Dianna is our *Featured Artist* for the 37th season.

RAFFLE DRAWING AFTER INTERMISSION

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Presents

Kimberly Fredenburgh

Altura Ensemble

Music for Strings, Winds, and Piano

Sunday, December 17, 2023



Kim Fredenburgh, Viola and Host

Toby Vigneau, Double Bass

Judith Gordon, Piano

Kevin Vigneau, Oboe

Anastasia Samsel, Flute

Concert generously sponsored by

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Placitas Artists Series projects are made possible in part by New Mexico Arts, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Notes on Today's Concert

David Dean Mendoza is a composer who is comfortable writing various styles of contemporary music. His works often juxtapose the traditional with the contemporary, the ancient with the avant-garde, and the accessible with the abstract. Compositions can include elements such as silences, improvisation, and non-Western sounds to produce works that have been described as ethereal and evocative. The *Reverie for Viola and Piano* is both introspective and hopeful in character. This single-movement work spins long melodies while artfully and seamlessly entwining the distinct timbres of the viola and piano.

Erwin Schulhoff was an Austro-Czech composer and pianist. According to critic Jonathan Blumhofer, he was equally at home in the idiom of the late Romantics, the post-World War I avant-garde, popular music of the day (especially jazz), and folk music." We will hear the third and fourth movements of Schulhoff's *Concertino for Flute, Viola, and Double Bass*. Blumhofer says, "The flowing third movement is based on a Carpathian folk song. Its non-stop counterpoint remains impressively lyrical throughout and includes some devilishly high writing for both viola and bass." He adds that "the short, brilliant *Rondino-finale* [includes an] imitation of a Moravian flute-seller's call tucked into the middle."

Camille Saint-Saëns was a French composer, organist, conductor, and pianist. The *Oboe Sonata*, along with sonatas for clarinet and bassoon, was composed in 1921, the year the composer died. In a letter to a friend, Saint-Saëns said, "At the moment I am concentrating my last reserves on giving rarely considered instruments the chance to be heard." About the "iconic *Oboe Sonata*," Kim Fredenburgh says, "This work is steeped in late Romantic splendor, each movement increasing in tempo leading to a virtuosic finish."

Italian composer **Giovanni Bottesini** is sometimes referred to as "the Paganini of the double bass." Not only was he a noted virtuoso on that instrument, he composed extensively for it. He also composed numerous orchestral works and the music for a dozen operas. This *Fantasia on "La Sonnambula"* ("The Sleepwalker") is one of five fantasias for double bass and piano based on operas of Vincenzo Bellini.

The six suites for unaccompanied cello are considered to be some of **Johann Sebastian Bach's** greatest works. They are among the most frequently performed solo compositions ever written for cello. It should be no surprise that double bassists have also found them to be worthy of transcription and performance. This third suite, like the others, has six movements, stylized dances of the Baroque era. We will hear selections from the suite.

German-born composer and violinist **Charles Loeffler** immigrated to the U.S. in 1882 and served for many years as assistant concertmaster of the Boston Symphony. *L'Etang (The Pond)* is one of two rhapsodies he wrote for oboe, viola, and piano inspired by poems of French poet Maurice Rollinat. This poem presents an eerie scene that includes a girl beside a pond, an overcast sky, a threatening storm, goblins and consumptive toads, and a moon that resembles a death's head. Kim Fredenburgh says,

Notes (continued)

"The viola and oboe offer a dark and sinister timbre perfectly suited to this underworld."

We will emerge from the ominous world of Loeffler into brighter music by **Ludwig van Beethoven**. Fredenburgh says, "The sun will come back out with some crisp and energetic movements from the Beethoven flute serenade trio; this version exchanges the violin for an oboe." Richard Wigmore, in notes to a Hyperion release, says that in the opening fanfare of the march-like *Entrata* movement, "the flute seems to be masquerading as a horn; the strings quickly join in the fun, and the whole movement is full of delicate, quickfire give-and-take between the three instruments."

The *Cello Sonata No. 1* of **Johannes Brahms** is his first surviving duo-sonata and one of only two sonatas he wrote for cello. It has been described as an homage to J. S. Bach, with the principal theme of the *Allegro non troppo* movement being an allusion to *The Art of the Fugue*. Steven Isserlis, on a Hyperion release, remarks that this movement, principally in the key of e minor, ends with a "glorious sunset coda in E Major."

Sérgio Azevedo is a leading and prolific Portuguese composer, pianist, professor, and music presenter. He wrote *Concertino da Câmara* for the Opus Ensemble and their unique instrumentation. This joyful work reflects the influence of Prokofiev. His concerto for oboe, viola, and orchestra will be premiered by Kim Fredenburgh and Kevin Vigneau in September 2024.

Notes compiled by Kim Fredenburgh and Jay Rodman

About The Altura Ensemble

The **Altura Ensemble** is a group of talented friends and family members of violist, **Kim Fredenburgh**, who has performed for PAS many times. Among the ensemble are husband, **Kevin Vigneau**, on oboe; **Toby Vigneau**, on double bass; **Judith Gordon**, on piano; and **Anastasia Samsel**, on flute, completing this group. Kevin Vigneau has also formed the ensemble **tRio Grande**, along with Kim and Toby. That trio has commissioned and performed new works for this unusual combination. Toby Vigneau won the Santa Fe Symphony's inaugural concerto competition. He recently won the international audition for the associate principal bass position with the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal, and will join them for the 2024/25 season. Gordon explores diverse repertory with a wide range of solo artists and ensembles. This performance marks Samsel's New Mexico debut.

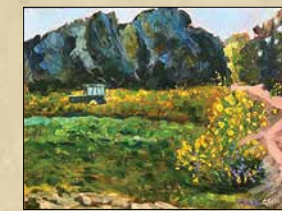
Rehearsals take place at Fredenburgh's Altura Park residence, hence the ensemble name. The group always consists of string players, generally joined by winds or piano. They greatly enjoy making music together and connect with the audience by sharing insights about the music. The ensemble offers exciting variety in programming with unique instrumental combinations and a number of musical styles. Performances are marked by high energy levels and contagious enthusiasm.



Raffle: *Joy of Summer* by Dianna Shomaker, valued at \$2,000, will be given away to the raffle winner. Raffle tickets available on our website, at the library, and at the concert.

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Our December Visual Artists



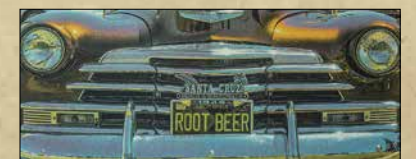
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