Terrific Trio Opens Our Spring 2018 Season

The cellist Edward Arron will bring two “friends” with him, pianist Jeewon Park and violinist Tessa Lark, for the Saturday, April 14 concert in the auditorium of Ossining High School in Ossining, NY. Their program will include Beethoven’s Piano Trio in D Major, Op. 70, No. 1 (“Ghost”); Ravel’s Sonata for Violin and Cello; and Dvořák’s Piano Trio in F Minor, Op. 65.

Edward Arron, early on called “one of New York’s most exciting young cellists” by The New Yorker, since has garnered worldwide recognition for his elegant musicianship, impassioned performances, and creative programming. A native of Cincinnati, Ohio, he made his New York recital debut in 2000 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Since then, he has appeared in recital, as a soloist with major orchestras, and as a chamber musician throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. In 2013, he completed a ten-year residency as artistic director of the critically acclaimed Metropolitan Museum Artists in Concert, a chamber music series created in 2003 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Museum’s prestigious Concerts and Lectures series. Currently he is artistic director, host, and resident performer of the Musical Masterworks concert series in Old Lyme, CT, among many other projects.

Praised for her “deeply reflective playing” (Indianapolis Star) and “infectious exuberance” (New York Times), Korean-born Jeewon Park is known for her dazzling technique and poetic lyricism. An avid chamber musician, she has performed at prominent festivals around the world, and has been featured in concerts with many prominent string quartets. She often appears in concert with her cellist husband Edward Arron.

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Brooklyn Rider Brings Its Outside-the-Box Concepts to Sleepy Hollow

Hailed as “the future of chamber music” (Strings), the four musicians of Brooklyn Rider, who have attracted legions of fans and drawn rave reviews from classical, world, and rock critics alike, will perform for us on Saturday, April 28, 2018. Their program will include selections from Art of the Fugue by Johann Sebastian Bach; Bella by Barlight by John Lurie; BTT by Colin Jacobsen; and String Quartet in B-flat Major, Opus 130, by Ludwig van Beethoven.

A critic for NPR, which has broadcast several of its concerts, has said, “Brooklyn Rider is one of today’s most technically accomplished string quartet, full stop. Its superb playing is matched only by the thought, commitment and inspiration its members pour into [its various] projects…making the string quartet not a relic of times long gone, but a vessel for the shape of music to come.”

Founded in 2005 and based in Brooklyn, NY, Brooklyn Rider, which is comprised of violinists Johnny Gandelsman and Colin Jacobsen, violist Nicholas Cords, and cellist Michael Nicolas, has become known for playing unusual and contemporary repertoire and for collaborating with musicians from outside the classical music sphere. Past performances have included evenings at the Schwartz Center (Atlanta, GA), the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts (Philadelphia), the Cologne Philharmonie, the American Academy in Rome, the Spoleto Festival USA (Charleston, SC), and Malmö Festival in Sweden. In 2010, the quartet was invited to play at the SXSW Festival in Austin, TX, making the group the only classical ensemble to appear there up to that time. Brooklyn Rider make their Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall debuts in 2011.

Brooklyn Rider’s first album, Passport, released in 2008, was selected by NPR as one of their best classical albums of that year. In 2011, the group was chosen by Philip Glass to record his complete string quartets, an album that also included the world premiere recording of his Bent Suite. In 2015, the quartet celebrated its tenth anniversary with the ground-breaking multi-disciplinary project The Brooklyn Rider Almanac, for which it recorded and toured 15 specially commissioned works, each inspired by a different artistic muse. In 2016 Brooklyn Rider released So Many Things with mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter, featuring music by Kate Bush, John Adams, Caroline Shaw, Bjork, Nico Muhly, Anders Hillborg, Brad Mehldau, Elvis Costello, Sting, and Rufus Wainwright.
Hooked on Bach

That’s what Stanley Goldstein became when, at a friend’s house years ago, he heard almost as background music one of the composer’s Brandenburg Concertos. That friend, he said, “gave me a three-minute tutorial on Bach and classical music.” Then another friend told him about Friends of Music Concerts, a place where he could find excellent classical music close to home.

Ever since then, Stanley, a CPA and private-equity investor, has been a subscriber and generous donor to Friends of Music. “It’s a great deal for the money and in an absolute sense: high-quality programming and wonderful artists. I’m happy to get season tickets because I know I’ll enjoy most of the works. I never pick a certain concert; I’ll take the whole bunch because I’m happy with the results most of the time.”

He likes the concerts so well that he always buys four season tickets so that he can invite business acquaintances and friends and make an evening of it – dinner and a concert. Over the years, he’s developed a list of favorite composers: Bach (of course), Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky. “Some modern guys – 12-tone music – are not to my taste,” he concedes. But that hasn’t stopped him from listening and trying to appreciate them.

If you’ve been a regular at FOM performances, you’ve probably seen Stanley: tall, slim, silver-haired, bespectacled, always mixing with friends before the concert and during intermissions. Why does he support Friends of Music? “It’s important for my selfish interests – and for the Westchester community,” he says. “It’s like synagogue: even if you don’t go every week, you want to make sure it’s always there.” However, he’s quick to point out that he does attend most concerts. So he’ll be at concerts this spring, and at those performed by the stellar roster slated for FOM’s 65th season.

Terrific Trio Opens Our Spring 2018 Season

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Kentucky-born Tessa Lark has been praised for her astounding range of sounds, technical agility, captivating interpretations, and multi-genre programming. As a chamber musician, she has toured with musicians from Ravinia’s Stearn Music Institute, and this year will do two tours with Musicians from Marlboro. She has been a participant in Caramoor’s Rising Stars program. She also plays jazz violin.
What Awakened Musical Interests in a Physicist?

Ray Kaplan, professor of physics and long-time member of Friends of Music’s Board, retired in January from that volunteer position in which he had been chair of the important Program Committee. Recently he shared how he came to love classical music. – Ed.

What did I know about great classical music? In 1948 I was a 20-year-old kid from the Bronx, studying physics at City College. I loved physics and math, but also had a mild interest in music, so I decided to squeeze in a class on the symphony.

My instructor had a connection with someone at NBC; it was the golden age of radio. Well-known voices of the airwaves – including Bing Crosby, Al Jolson, Jack Benny, Bob Hope, and George Burns and Gracie Allen – were starting to give way to the amazing performances of the NBC Symphony Orchestra, led by Arturo Toscanini. And my teacher’s contact there managed to get passes for the class to attend rehearsals every Friday afternoon at the NBC studio at Carnegie Hall. I had no idea what I’d signed up for.

I’ll never forget the first time I watched from the balcony as the maestro walked down the aisle in the orchestra area below and up on the stage. Toscanini must have been 80 or 81 by then, a small and slightly unsteady figure. But when he mounted the podium, he seemed a foot taller. And of course, he was in complete control of the orchestra and whatever symphony they were practicing.

Over the next two hours, it was all Toscanini’s show. The orchestra did whatever he told them to. His word was law. Sometimes a few musicians seemed to resent his uncompromising authority. But they also were in awe of him.

Although I didn’t take a music class the following semester, I talked my way into attending those rehearsals again. They were just as spectacular – perhaps even more so as my knowledge of music broadened. Since then I’ve been to a lot of great performances in many different venues. As a sometime cellist myself, I particularly enjoyed seeing Pablo Casals and, later, Mstislav Rostropovich. But nothing compares to my year with Arturo Toscanini.

Remembering Robert Mann

The founder and first violinist of the Juilliard String Quartet died early this year at the age of 97. A musician distinguished for his astonishing technique, Mann spent 51 years with the Juilliard String Quartet, long outlasting his fellow founders, second violinist Robert Koff, violist Raphael Hillyer, and cellist Arthur Winograd. He played his last performance with the Juilliard in 1997, but continued to play with other groups. The JSQ has always been known for its strong performances. Mann once told a skeptical critic, “We didn’t want to have smooth chamber music.”

Friends of Music board member David Kraft notes that the JSQ (and Mann) performed at Friends’ very first concert on March 27, 1954 in a program of Mozart, Debussy and Beethoven.

The organization last hosted Mann on February 25, 2006, playing Mozart’s String Quintet, K. 515, as a guest violist with the Mendelssohn String Quartet, whose performers included Mann’s son Nicholas.

David himself first saw Mann and the JSQ when he was in graduate school, circa 1957, and the group came to Penn State for several days of performances that featured Bartok quartets. David saved that program and got Mann to sign it when he last appeared at a Friends of Music concert.
Charlie Albright, hailed by The Washington Post as “among the most gifted musicians of his generation” and praised by The New York Times for “jaw-dropping technique and virtuosity meshed with a distinctive musicality,” will return to our Sleepy Hollow High School stage on Saturday, May 12, at 8:00 pm. His program will include two Impromptus by Franz Schubert, from the composer’s Opus 90; Concert Arabesques on themes from Johann Strauss’s “On the Beautiful Blue Danube,” by Adolf Andrei Schulz-Evler; Variations, Op. 41, by Nikolai Kasputin; and the Opus 25 Études by Frédéric Chopin.

Mr. Albright was the first winner of Friends of Music Concerts’ Performance Award following his stellar appearance at the 2009 Young Concert Artists International Auditions. Since then his career has blossomed indeed. He has appeared as a frequently returning guest artist with such orchestras as the BBC Concert Orchestra; the Alabama, Baltimore, California, Edmonton (Canada), Fort Smith, Lansing, Mobile, Omaha, Phoenix, Seattle, San Francisco, Victoria (Canada), and West Michigan Symphonies, and other major groups. He has performed world wide, including at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; the Salle Cortot (Paris, France); the Arsht Center for the Performing Arts (Miami); The Kumho Art Hall (Seoul); the NCPA (Beijing); and Alice Tully Hall (New York). He regularly works with artists from all genres, including vocalist/conductor Bobby McFerrin, violinist Joshua Bell, and cellist Yo-Yo Ma. He played as part of the honorary degree ceremony at Harvard for Senator Ted Kennedy; a 10th anniversary remembrance of 9/11/01; the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison; and the Aspen Institute’s Citizen Artistry conference in New York. He also has been with the Silk Road Project.

Mr. Albright has garnered many additional awards, including the 2013 Arthur W. Foote Prize from the Harvard Musical Association, and a prestigious 2014 Avery Fisher Career Grant from the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. In addition to performing, he is sought after as a speaker, master class instructor, teacher, and competition judge.

Outstanding Piano Performance Will Close 64th Season

Heads Up About April 14!

The April 14th concert will be held in the auditorium of Ossining High School, located on Route 9 (aka South Highland Avenue) in Ossining, NY. In order to reach the auditorium entrance, which is located at the back of the school, proceed to the traffic light at Waller Avenue/Emwilton Place and turn east onto Emwilton, up the hill. At the first intersection, turn left onto Woldon Road; the entrance road, on the left before reaching the next intersection, leads to a drof off for handicapped, handicapped parking, and other parking. Main parking is available in that Woldon Road lot, and also may be available along Woldon Road itself. There is parking also in two small lots off Emwilton, but paths from them to the school’s south entrance are uneven and poorly lit.

Access our website, www.friendsofmusicconcerts.org, for a site map.
What Makes a Great Audience?

“Is there any way we could take your audience on tour with us?” asked a member of a quartet that had just performed for Friends of Music. He was complimenting us on the way his group’s performance had been received. His opinion has been echoed by many others who have appeared on our roster. Our audiences have made inclusion in our season a sought-after concert date.

What makes such a great audience? It’s more than attentiveness and good concert manners, although those qualities are very important. It’s not even superior knowledge of the music, although some of our patrons certainly have that.

We think it’s the way our audiences seem to personify deep appreciation. Appreciation of the beauty of the music, in all its variety. Appreciation of the excitement that radiates from the performers before them. Appreciation of the work that has gone into the perfection of their playing. Appreciation of the long history of classical music that is at that moment emanating from our stage.

Although we cannot promise to send you on tour, we hope to welcome you at our concerts this spring, and to those in the coming season.