Sheku and Isata Kanneh-Mason
cello and piano
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2020
BEETHOVEN: CELLO SONATA NO. 4 IN C MAJOR, OP. 102, NO. 1

Beethoven’s five cello sonatas are a cornerstone of the repertory. He wrote them throughout his life: two in his early period (Op. 5), one in his middle period (Op. 69), and two more in his late period (Op. 102). He was a key player in the development of the cello sonata—the first composer to write duo sonatas for cello and piano, where, for the most part, the instruments strive to be equal partners. The cello has the first word in the Fourth Sonata, Op. 102, No. 1, which Beethoven wrote in the summer of 1815. Here, the give and take between piano and cello is infinitely subtler than in the three earlier sonatas. In both movements, a slow introduction precedes a sonata-form Allegro and the theme of the quicker movements gives the listener the impression of evolving out of the introductory material. The musical argument between the two instruments is more concentrated than before. The unity of the whole is reinforced as the music of the opening measures is re-visited immediately before the final Allegro. Beethoven recognized that the structure of this sonata—generally viewed as the first work of his final period—was somewhat experimental and he described the work in the manuscript score as a ‘free sonata.’ Like the earlier Op. 27 piano sonatas quasi una fantasia, Beethoven shifts the weight of the sonata from the traditional opening movement to the finale.

—© Keith Horner

SAINT-SAËNS: THE SWAN (FROM THE CARNIVAL OF THE ANIMALS)

Camille Saint-Saëns had no intention of offering The Carnival of the Animals to the public when he composed the piece early in 1886; he simply thought to provide an entertainment for his friends at Carnival time. Following the first private performance, Saint-Saëns’ old friend and supporter, Franz Liszt, requested that the suite be given again. Thinking the work to be too frivolous to be considered as serious music, Saint-Saëns then specifically prohibited further performances, allowing only one piece of the fourteen-section composition to be performed during his lifetime—The Swan. On February 26, 1922, a little more than two months after the composer’s death, the public premiere took place, and The Carnival of the Animals quickly became one of Saint-Saëns’ most popular works.

Recognized as a whimsical introduction to classical music, The Carnival of the Animals consists of 14 movements, with each movement using different parts of the orchestra to embody the sounds of an animal, from roosters to elephants to kangaroos. The original score called for only eleven instruments: two pianos, a flute, a clarinet, a glass harmonica
xylophone, string quartet, and double bass. Today, the strings are usually beefed up to orchestral proportions and some performances include recitation of verses written for the work by one of several poets or humorists.

“The Swan” is to this day one of the most famous pieces played by cellists around the world. Its beautiful, graceful, and somewhat melancholy melody is written perfectly for cello solo and piano accompaniment.

—cpyb.org

SHEKU KANNEH-MASON, CELLO

The winner of the 2016 BBC Young Musician competition, Sheku Kanneh-Mason is already in great demand from major orchestras and concert halls worldwide. He became a household name worldwide in May 2018 after performing at the Wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex at Windsor Castle. His performance was greeted with universal excitement after being watched by nearly two billion people globally. In June 2018, Sheku received the Male Artist of the Year and the Critics’ Choice awards at the re-launched Classic BRIT Awards, and in July 2018 became the first artist to receive the new BRIT Certified Breakthrough Award, having sold more than 30,000 copies of his debut album in the UK and surpassing 100,000 album sales worldwide. In January 2020, Sheku released his second album, Elgar, featuring the Cello Concerto, which he recorded at Abbey Road Studios with Sir Simon Rattle and the London Symphony Orchestra. On its release, it reached No. 8 in the UK Official Album Chart, making Sheku the youngest classical instrumentalist and the first cellist in history to reach the UK Top 10.

Sheku has made debuts with orchestras such as the Seattle Symphony, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Netherlands Chamber Orchestra at the Concertgebouw, the Atlanta Symphony, Japan Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, London Philharmonic, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, and Baltimore Symphony orchestras. Forthcoming highlights include performances with the City of Birmingham Symphony, Toronto Symphony, BBC Scottish Symphony, and Stockholm Philharmonic orchestras.


In 2017, Sheku made his BBC Proms debut at the Royal Albert Hall as soloist with the Chineke! Orchestra, an ensemble with which he enjoys a special relationship, having taken part in their debut concert at the Royal Festival Hall in 2015. He returned to the Proms twice more as part of the 40th anniversary of BBC Young Musician in 2018, and to perform the Elgar Concerto with the City of Birmingham Symphony and Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla in 2019. Sheku is passionate about the importance of making classical music accessible to all and is an ambassador for music education charities Music Masters and Future Talent. During the Covid-19 lockdown in spring 2020, Sheku and his siblings performed in twice-weekly livestreams from their family home in Nottingham to audiences of hundreds of thousands around the globe.

In February 2018, Sheku performed ‘Evening of Roses’ at the BAFTAs Awards show at the Royal Albert Hall. He was joined on stage by four of his six siblings, all of whom perform classical music to an exceptional standard. This was the first time any artist has been invited to perform during the ceremony two years running and followed his memorable performance of Leonard Cohen’s ‘Hallelujah’ at the 2017 BAFTAs, the subsequent recording going viral on YouTube.

In July 2019, Sheku was awarded the prestigious 2019 PPL Classical Award at the O2 Silver Clef ceremony in support of independent music therapy charity, Nordoff Robbins. In 2017, he was awarded the South Bank Sky Arts Breakthrough Award, given by the judges to the most promising young Artist across all genres, following recent winners Billie Piper and Stormzy. He has performed alongside Hollywood A-listers in ‘The Children’s Monologues’ directed by Danny Boyle at Carnegie Hall New York and has played at No. 10 Downing Street in front of an illustrious guest list for Black History Month.
Sheku is currently a full-time ABRSM Scholarship student at the Royal Academy of Music, studying with Hannah Roberts. He began learning the cello at the age of six with Sarah Huson-Whyte and then studied with Ben Davies at the Junior Department of the Royal Academy of Music where he held the ABRSM Junior Scholarship. He has received masterclass tuition from Guy Johnston, Robert Max, Alexander Baillie, Steven Doane, Rafael Wallfisch, Jo Cole, Melissa Phelps, and Julian Lloyd Webber and, in July 2017, participated in the Verbier Festival Academy in masterclasses with Frans Helmerson and Miklos Perenyi. A keen chamber musician, Sheku performs with his sister, Isata and brother, Braimah, as a member of the Kanneh-Mason Trio.

Sheku was appointed a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) in the 2020 New Year’s Honours List. He plays an Antonius and Hieronymus Amati cello c.1610, kindly on loan from a private collection.

ISATA KANNEH-MASON, PIANO

Isata Kanneh-Mason’s debut album, Romance, drew popular and critical acclaim, entering the UK classical charts at No. 1 when it was released in July 2019 and leading Gramophone magazine to extol the recording as “one of the most charming and engaging debuts” and Classic FM to praise Isata as “a player of considerable talent.” Isata recorded the all-Clara Schumann disc for Decca Classics as an homage to the composer and pianist in the year of what would have been her 200th birthday, selecting works from across her compositional output including solo piano pieces, a sonata, chamber music with violinist Elena Urioste, transcriptions of two of her husband Robert’s songs, and the piano concerto, which she recorded with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and conductor Holly Mathieson.

Since her studies with Joanna MacGregor and Carole Presland at London’s Royal Academy of Music, Isata Kanneh-Mason has embarked on a successful and increasingly busy concert career as a solo artist, with concerto appearances, solo recitals and chamber concerts throughout the UK and abroad. She also continues to perform with her siblings, including regular duo recitals with her brother, the cellist, Sheku Kanneh-Mason. Recent highlights include appearances at the Edinburgh Festival, Wigmore Hall, London, Théâtre des Champs Elysées, Paris, Teatro della Pergola, Florence, and an extensive ten-city North American tour, including their debut recital at New York’s Carnegie Hall and a return to the Vancouver Recital Society.

Isata has also performed in the Portland Piano Series in Oregon, the Barbican Centre’s Sound Unbound festival, The Color of Music Festival in South Carolina, at the Edinburgh, Cheltenham, and Bath festivals, the Snape Proms, the Musikfestspiele Saar, and in venues from Antigua and the Cayman Islands, to Perth. During the UK’s Covid-19 lockdown in spring 2020, she and her siblings performed in twice-weekly livestreams from their family home in Nottingham to audiences of thousands around the globe. Isata’s rendition of the first movement of Beethoven’s third piano concerto accompanied by a chamber ensemble comprised of her brothers and sisters garnered over one million views. Future live performances include at the Kissinger KlavierOlymp, BBC Radio 3’s Wigmore lunchtime concert series, the Salzburg Mozarteum, Klavier Festival Ruhr, the Kimmel Center Philadelphia, and with the Sarasota, Gothenburg Symphony, Hallé, Johannesburg Philharmonic, KwaZulu Natal Philharmonic, and Paris Mozart orchestras. From the 20/21 season, Isata will become Young Artist in Residence with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

Isata reached her category final in the 2014 BBC Young Musician competition, winning the Walter Todds Bursary for the most promising musician. She has since performed several times on television and radio, including on BBC Radio 3 In Tune, the South Bank Sky Arts Awards, The Andrew Marr Show, the Radio 3 RPS Awards, BBC2 Proms Extra, Radio 4 Front Row and Woman’s Hour, Al Jazeera TV, BBC World Service, Channel 4, The One Show, ITV Born To Shine, BBC2 Classroom Heroes, and a feature for CBS Sunday Morning. Isata made her debut as a television presenter for the coverage of the 2019 BBC Proms.

She completed her undergraduate degree at the Academy as an Elton John scholar, and performed with Sir Elton in 2013 in Los Angeles. Isata is also grateful for support from the Nottingham Soroptimist Trust, Mr and Mrs John Bryden, Frank White, and Awards for Young Musicians.

Exclusive Management for Sheku and Isata Kanneh-Mason: Enticott Music Management
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

FALL VIRTUAL ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE
October-December 2020

The Philharmonic Society is excited to announce its inaugural lineup of virtual Artists-in-Residence for Fall 2020: violinist Hilary Hahn, and cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason with pianist Isata Kanneh-Mason. Spanning October to December, Artists-in-Residence will curate, organize, and produce a series of three intimate, virtual performances.

HILARY HAHN PERFORMS MOZART
Saturday, November 14, 7pm PST

MOZART: Violin Concerto No.5 in A major, K.219 “Turkish”

HILARY HAHN PERFORMS AUERBACH, ABELS AND GINASTERA
Saturday, December 12, 7pm PST

AUERBACH: Lonely Violinist (Ballet for a Lonely Violinist), Op.70
MICHAEL ABELS: New Work (World Premiere)
GINASTERA: Violin Concerto, Op. 30:
 I. Cadenza

TICKETS $20 PER CONCERT

SHEKU KANNEH-MASON, CELLO & ISATA KANNEH-MASON, PIANO PERFORM BARBER
Sunday, November 22, 3pm PST

BARBER: Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 6

SHEKU KANNEH-MASON, CELLO & ISATA KANNEH-MASON, PIANO PERFORM RACHMANINOFF
Sunday, December 20, 3pm PST

RACHMANINOFF: Sonata for Piano and Cello, Op. 19

TICKETS $20 PER CONCERT
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On-demand streaming available for 1 week after each concert premiere

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UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER

STEPHEN HOUGH, PIANO
Friday, December 11, 2020, 7pm PST
Virtual Concert
BACH/BUSONI: Chaconne from Partita No. 2 in D minor, BWV 1004
SCHUMANN: Fantasie in C major, Op. 17
LISZT: Funérailles
LISZT: Mephisto Waltz No. 1, S. 514

JEREMY DENK, PIANO
Saturday, November 21, 2020, 7pm PST
Virtual Concert
SCHUMANN: Kinderszenen, Op. 15
CHOPIN: Mazurka in A-flat major, Op. 50, No. 2
ADÉS: Mazurka No. 1
CHOPIN: Mazurka in A minor, Op. 7, No. 2
ADÉS: Mazurka No. 2
CHOPIN: Mazurka in B-flat minor, Op. 24, No. 4
ADÉS: Mazurka No. 3
CHOPIN: Mazurka in C-sharp minor, Op. 63, No. 3
RZEWSKI: “Winnsboro Cotton Mill Blues”
CHOPIN: Polonaise-Fantaisie in A-flat major, Op. 61
BEETHOVEN: Piano Sonata No. 32, Op. 111

DECEMBER

TETZLAFF QUARTET
Saturday, January 16, 2021, 7pm PST
Virtual Concert
BEETHOVEN: String Quartet No. 13 in B-flat major, Op. 130
BEETHOVEN: Große Fuge, Op. 133
BEETHOVEN: String Quartet No. 15 in A minor, Op. 132

LEIF OVE ANDSNES, PIANO
Thursday, January 21, 2021, 8pm PST
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall
SCHUMANN: Three Romances, Op. 28
JANÁČEK: On an Overgrown Path, Volume 1
BARTÓK: Three Burlesques, Sz. 47
SCHUMANN: Carnaval, Op. 9

TRIUMPH OVER ADVERSITY FESTIVAL
Anthony McGill, clarinet
Demarre McGill, flute
Additional artists TBA
December 8-13, 2020 PST
Virtual Concerts – Free

Anthony and Demarre McGill curate programs of works spotlighting musicians and composers from marginalized communities, with pieces by Gabriela Lena Frank, Tania León, Valerie Coleman, and David Baker, and including works specifically commissioned for the McGill brothers.

JANUARY

ORPHEUS CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Branford Marsalis, saxophone
Saturday, January 9, 2021, 7pm PST
Virtual Concert
ROSSINI: Overture to The Barber of Seville
RODRIGO: Suite from Soleriana
DEBUSSY: Rhapsody for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra
IBERT: Concertino da Camera
TURINA: La Oración del Torero (The Bullfighter’s Prayer), Op. 34
BRYAN: Carmen, Jazz suite on themes by Bizet
(Orpheus Commission)
UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH

SMETANA TRIO
Tuesday, March 2, 2021, 8pm PST
Samueli Theater

RACHMANINOFF: Trio élégiaque No. 1 in G minor
MARTINŮ: Piano Trio No. 3 in C major, H. 332
SMETANA: Piano Trio in G minor, Op 15

GEORGE LI, PIANO
Thursday, March 4, 2021, 8pm PST
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

BEETHOVEN: Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2, “Moonlight Sonata”
BEETHOVEN: Variations and Fugue for Piano in E-flat major, Op. 35
CHOPIN: Nocturnes, Op. 27
CHOPIN: Mazurkas, Op. 59
CHOPIN: Scherzo No. 1 in B minor, Op. 20
CHOPIN: Scherzo No. 4 in E major, Op. 54

2021 Laguna Beach Music Festival
COUNTERPOINT
Festival Artistic Director: Conrad Tao, piano
Caleb Teicher, dancer
Friday, March 26, 2021, 8pm PDT
Locations in Laguna Beach

Duo program with music by Bach, Gershwin, etc.

2021 Laguna Beach Music Festival
ITS BRILLIANCE ALMOST FRIGHTENED ME
Festival Artistic Director: Conrad Tao, piano
Saturday, March 27, 2021, 8pm PDT
Locations in Laguna Beach

Laurence CRANE: Prelude No. 1
BERG: “Traumgekrönt” from Seven Early Songs
SCHUBERT: “Gretchen am spinnrade” (Gretchen at the Spinning Wheel)
Eric WUBBELS: gretchen am spinnrade
Ruth Crawford SEEGER: String Quartet
BEETHOVEN: String Quartet No. 16, Op. 135

FEBRUARY

JOSHUA BELL, VIOLIN
Wednesday, February 10, 2021, 8pm PST
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

Grammy Award-winning violinist Joshua Bell returns to Orange County in a recital that will enchant audiences with his breathtaking virtuosity and captivating stage presence. Program to be announced.

ASTOR PIAZZOLLA AT 100 WITH PHILIPPE QUINT AND MEMBERS OF THE JOFFREY BALLET
Philippe Quint, violin
Members of the Joffrey Ballet*
Additional artists to be announced
Tuesday, February 23, 2021, 8pm PST
Irvine Barclay Theatre

Co-presented by Irvine Barclay Theatre
Concert sponsored by Steven M. Sorenson MD
Additional support provided by the Ibex Foundation
*Appearance courtesy of the Joffrey Ballet, Ashley Wheater, Artistic Director

Multi-Grammy-nominated violinist Philippe Quint and members of the world-class, Chicago-based Joffrey Ballet celebrate the centennial of tango legend Astor Piazzolla in a performance of music and dance.

VADYM KHOLODENKO, PIANO AND BROOKLYN RIDER
Sunday, January 24, 2021, 3pm PST
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

The 2013 Cliburn Piano Competition Gold medalist Vadym Kholodenko teams up with string Brooklyn Rider, which has been hailed as “the future of chamber music” (Strings) and continues to draw rave reviews from classical, world, and rock critics alike, in a chamber performance highlighting the performers’ commanding technique and creative interpretations. Program to be announced.
UPCOMING EVENTS

2021 Laguna Beach Music Festival
CHANGE THIS THREAD ON WHICH WE MOVE
Festival Artistic Director: Conrad Tao, piano
Sunday, March 28, 2021, 3pm PDT
Locations in Laguna Beach

Caroline SHAW: Entr’acte (Westerlies arrangement)
DEBUSSY: Violin Sonata in G minor
GESUALDO: selected Madrigals
Other works to be announced.

APRIL

ALISA WEILERSTEIN, CELLO
AND INON BARNATAN, PIANO
Thursday, April 8, 2021, 8pm PDT
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

Select Beethoven Cello Sonatas

BRENTANO QUARTET
Friday, April 9, 2021, 8pm PDT
Venue TBD

HAYDN: String Quartet No. 6 in D major, Op. 17
BARTÓK: String Quartet No. 5, Sz. 102
BRAHMS: String Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Op. 51

JERUSALEM QUARTET WITH
PINCHAS ZUKERMAN, VIOLIN AND
AMANDA FORSYTH, CELLO
Wednesday, April 21, 2021, 8pm PDT
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

BRUCKNER: Adagio from String Quintet in F major, WAB 112
DVOŘÁK: Sextet for Strings in A major, Op. 48
BRAHMS: Sextet for Strings No. 1 in B-flat major, Op. 18

JEAN-YVES THIBAUDET, PIANO
Saturday, April 24, 2021, 8pm PDT
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

DEBUSSY: Préludes Books 1 and 2

MAY

DANISH STRING QUARTET
Sunday, May 16, 2021, 3pm PDT
Samueli Theater

Grammy-nominated Danish String Quartet makes its second appearance in the 2020-21 season with a performance showcasing its players’ masterful technique and heartfelt expressivity. Program to be announced.

SERGIO ASSAD, CLARICE ASSAD,
AND THIRD COAST PERCUSSION
Sergio Assad, guitar
Clarice Assad, piano/voice
Third Coast Percussion
Friday, May 28, 2021, 8pm PDT
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

In an exploration of global music traditions, legendary guitarist Sergio Assad, along with Clarice Assad’s spellbinding vocals and the rhythms of Grammy-winning Third Coast Percussion, will take audiences on a vast musical journey grounded in familiar stories.
JUNE

AUGUSTIN HADELICH, VIOLIN
AND ORION WEISS, PIANO
Monday, June 14, 2021, 8pm PDT
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

BEETHOVEN: Violin Sonata No. 4 in A minor, Op. 23
DEBUSSY: Sonata in G minor, L. 140
COLL: Hyperlude No. 5 for Solo Violin
YSAŸE: Sonata No. 6 in E major for Solo Violin
BRAHMS: Sonata No. 2 in A major, Op. 100
DEBUSSY: L’isle joyeuse, L. 106
ADAMS: Road Movies

RENÉE FLEMING, SOPRANO
Thursday, June 17, 2021, 8pm PDT
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

In a rescheduled performance from the previous season, four-time Grammy winner and legendary soprano Renée Fleming appears in a program of beloved songs and arias.

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All artists, dates, times, venues, programs, and prices are subject to change.
The Philharmonic Society of Orange County gratefully acknowledges the following donors for their generous support of the Fund for Music during the past twelve months. These contributions make up the difference between the income generated from ticket sales and the actual cost of bringing the world’s finest orchestras, soloists and chamber ensembles to Orange County and inspiring 100,000 K-12 students each year with quality music programs. Gifts range from $60 to more than $100,000, and each member of the Philharmonic Society plays a valuable role in furthering the mission of this organization.

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The Philharmonic Society’s campaign is the first of its kind in the organization’s history. It will grow the Society’s endowment—providing greater opportunities for the presentation of the world’s leading orchestras and other musical performances while expanding our educational and community outreach—and also establish a current needs fund for organizational sustainability and flexibility. We are proud to recognize those who are helping secure the Society’s future with a gift to the Philharmonic Forward Campaign. We are grateful for their support, which will help fuel the Society’s growth and provide a legacy of incomparable music and superb music education programs in perpetuity.

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Estate gifts allow our long-time subscribers and donors to leave an enduring legacy that helps ensure the long-term financial strength of the Philharmonic Society of Orange County. Please consider including us in your will, as either a percentage of your estate or a fixed amount. Doing so will support our commitment of presenting world-class programming and music education that enriches the cultural life of Orange County for generations to come. For more information, please contact 949.553.2422, ext. 233, or email Support@PhilharmonicSociety.org.
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ABOUT US

Founded in 1954 as Orange County’s first music organization, the Philharmonic Society of Orange County presents national and international performances of the highest quality and provides dynamic and innovative music education programs for individuals of all ages to enhance the lives of Orange County audiences through music.

For more than 65 years the Philharmonic Society has evolved and grown with the county’s changing landscape, presenting artists and orchestras who set the standard for artistic achievement from Itzhak Perlman, Gustavo Dudamel, Yo-Yo Ma, and Renée Fleming to the Berlin Philharmonic, Vienna Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and many others. In addition, the Philharmonic Society celebrates multi-disciplinary performances under its Eclectic Orange brand and embraces music from a wide range of countries with its World Music performances. Its celebrated family concerts introduce children to classical music with creative and inspiring performances, instilling music appreciation for future generations.

The Philharmonic Society’s nationally recognized Youth Music Education Programs, offered free of charge, engage more than 100,000 students annually through curriculum-based music education programs that aim to inspire, expand imaginations, and encourage learning at all levels. These programs are made possible by the Committees of the Philharmonic Society comprised of 700 volunteer members who provide more than 90,000 hours of in-kind service each year.

As a key youth program, the exceptional Orange County Youth Symphony and String Ensemble provide top-tier training to the area’s most talented young musicians through multi-level ensemble instruction, leadership training, touring opportunities, challenging professional repertoire, and performances in world-class venues. The Philharmonic Society also promotes life-long learning by connecting with colleges and universities to conduct masterclasses and workshops and providing pre-concert lectures to introduce audiences to program selections.

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