

IPO Summer @
Socially Distanced
Olympia Fields Country Club
2020

String Quartet in Memory of Danny Ransford

Florence Price
(1887-1953)

String Quartet in G major (1929)
I. Allegro
II. Andante Moderato

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1765-1791)

Eine kleine Nachtmusik (1787)
I. Allegro
II. Romanze: Andante
III. Menuetto: Allegretto
IV. Rondo: Allegro

Musicians

Teacher, conductor, and violinist, **Linda Veleckis Nussbaum** has performed as a soloist, chamber, and orchestral musician throughout the United States and Europe. A dedicated teacher, Linda Veleckis Nussbaum serves as Director of Orchestras at Carl Sandburg High School in Orland Park, Illinois, where she conducts three orchestras serving nearly 200 young musicians. Her private studio in Chicago focuses on developing a strong technical foundation and preparing students for competitions and auditions. Her dedication to the musical life extends beyond the concert stage and teaching studio: Linda has served as Executive Director of several orchestras and is in demand as a consultant for symphonic organizations. Her doctoral dissertation, "Beyond the Podium: the Leadership Traits of Symphony Orchestra Conductors," is often cited as the first study of conductor viewed through the lens of organizational behavior. When not making, teaching, or thinking about music, Linda enjoys travel, yoga, and historical research.

Kamen Vachev studied at the Music Academy of Bulgaria, won First Prize and Special Diploma from the Bulgarian National Competition for Chamber Music, and performed for four seasons with the first violin section of Sofia Philharmonic. After relocating to the USA, he attended

Northwestern University and graduated with a Master in Music Performance. He has performed with the Chicago Sinfonietta, Chicago Chamber Orchestra, Elgin Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Ballet, and the Woodstock Mozart Festival. Currently, Mr. Vachev is the third chair in Northwest Indiana Symphony and Assistant Principal Second Violin with the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra. Mr. Vatchev was appointed Concertmaster of the Whiting Festival Orchestra in 2003 and South Shore Orchestra, Valparaiso, in 2010.

Mr. Vatchev is also a very active teacher. He has taught violin for more than 30 years at Valparaiso University, Hinsdale Center for the Arts, Birch Creek Music Festival. In addition to lessons at his private studio, he currently teaches at Northwest Indiana Suzuki School, Merrillville and Portage High Schools, and First Conservatory of La Grange, IL. Many of his students have won competitions and different awards, and some of his students have graduated or are studying at such prestigious schools as Interlochen Arts Academy and De Paul, Northwestern, Indiana, Boston, Valparaiso, Illinois, and Butler Universities

A native Chicagoan, **Scott Gordon Dowd** has performed with numerous orchestras over the years, including the Lake Forest Symphony, Illinois Philharmonic, Light Opera Works, Chicago Sinfonietta, Northwest Indiana Symphony, Chicago Jazz Philharmonic, Orchestra Nashville, Sarasota Opera, the Florida Orchestra, Ars Viva, Elgin Symphony, Chicago Master Singers, Chicago Philharmonic, Chicago Camerata, South Bend Symphony, and the Orchestra of Las Palmas, Canary Islands, among many others. Scott has performed with a gallery of stars from Tony Bennett, Johnny Mathis, and Shirley Jones to Itzhak Perlman, Marilyn Horne, and Henryk Szeryng. He has also performed with Sid Caesar, Imogene Coca, Steve Lawrence, Edye Gorme, the Smothers Brothers, Smokey Robinson, Todd Rundgren, Warren Haynes, and Trey Anastasio. Scott's theater performances have included American Ballet Theatre, Joffrey Ballet, The Royal Ballet, and San Francisco Ballet, as well as, the Goodman and Steppenwolf theater companies.

Lisa Bressler, IPO's Assistant Principal Cellist, joined the orchestra in 2002 after moving to Chicagoland from New York, where she grew up, received her musical training, taught, and performed with many regional orchestras. Besides the IPO, Lisa is a regular member of the Madison Symphony Orchestra, the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, and the Rockford Symphony Orchestra. She is a private cello instructor in Districts 113, 219, 300, and the cello sectional instructor in District 211. She also maintains her private studio in Elgin, where she lives with her husband, IPO's Bass Clarinetist, Bill Olsen (they met in IPO!), and their two Devon Rex cats, Lady Gaga and Pink.

Program Notes

String Quartet in G Major (1929)

Florence Price
(1887-1953)

Florence Beatrice Price (nee Smith) was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, on April 9, 1887, to James H. Smith and Florence Gulliver Smith. Price first received piano lessons from her mother. Price was a precocious child. She graduated as Valedictorian of her class by the age of 16, and she had already published some of her musical compositions in high school. Price graduated with a dual degree in organ and piano teaching from the New England Conservatory in 1907. Upon graduation, she returned to Little Rock to teach at the Cotton Plant-Arkadelphia Academy and later at Shorter College in Little Rock. She moved to Atlanta, Georgia, in 1910, where she was head of the Music Department at Clark University. In 1912, Price returned to Little Rock and married attorney Thomas Jewell Price, who worked with Scipio Jones, a well-known Arkansas attorney who has successfully defended the appeals of twelve African American men sentenced to death after the Elaine Massacre of 1919.

While in Little Rock, Florence Price established a music studio, taught piano lessons and composed mostly piano works, many for teaching purposes. As radical tensions grew worse in Arkansas, including a horrible lynching in the Prices' neighborhood in Little Rock, the family moved in Chicago in 1927. There Florence Price experienced growing professional opportunities for further education, performance, and publication and was active as a teacher, pianist, and organist. One of her important memberships was in the Chicago Club of Women Organists. However, she was not accepted by the Arkansas branch of the Music Teachers National Association because of her race. Unhappily, her marriage did not survive.

In 1932, Price won first prize in the Rodman Wanamaker Foundation composition competition for her Symphony in E Minor, her first of four symphonies. The work premiered with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra on June 15, 1933, under the direction of Frederick Stock. She was the first African American woman to be recognized as a symphonic composer, and the first to have a composition played by a major symphonic orchestra. Incidentally, the first male Afro-American composer to have the same recognition was Little Rock's William Grant Still (1931, Rochester Philharmonic).

Later in life, despite health problems, Price continued to compose prolifically, having composed over 300 compositions in her lifetime. Her compositional output encompassed every genre except opera. Her musical style, especially in her instrumental works, displays mastery of the language of European classical music, with an homage to her Southern heritage. Her pieces are inspired by spirituals, blues, and perhaps most notably rhythms associated with the Juba dance. Price died in Chicago on June 3, 1953, while planning a trip to Europe. In 1964, a Chicago elementary school took her name as its own recognition of her legacy as both a Chicago musician and an important African-American composer.

Copyright 2017 Er-Gene Kahng

***Eine kleine Nachtmusik* (1787)**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
1756 - 1791

Eine kleine Nachtmusik, perhaps the best-known and best-loved of all Mozart's works, remains one of the most mysterious. It comes from a year—1787—when little is known about Mozart's life, and no one is sure why Mozart suddenly wrote so gentle and charming a piece of music. The external events from that year are few: in May his father died in Salzburg, and Mozart himself was occupied for most of the remainder of the year with composing *Don Giovanni*; during that year he may have met and given lessons to a sixteen-year-old visiting from Bonn named Ludwig van Beethoven, but the evidence is uncertain. All that we really know is that Mozart broke off work on the second act of *Don Giovanni* to write this serenade; the manuscript is dated August 10. Usually, this sort of serenade was intended for a social occasion, but there is no record of such an event, and Mozart had written no string serenades since his days in Salzburg. Two centuries later, the origins of *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* remain mysterious.

The title *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* is Mozart's own. *Nachtmusik* translates literally as “night-music,” but the accepted meaning of that term was serenade, which had come to mean a melodic instrumental piece, and Mozart would have understood the title as “A Little Serenade.” He originally scored it for string quintet (quartet plus doublebass), but it can be performed with equal success by a string quartet or string orchestra. In its original form, *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* had five movements, but the second movement—a minuet—was torn out of the manuscript by unknown hands and has disappeared.

Music that charms so completely requires little description or comment. The opening *Allegro* is a miniature sonata-form movement built on the graceful and jaunty opening theme and a more fluid second idea announced by the first violins. The development section is quite brief, and Mozart quickly recapitulates his ideas and brings the movement to a close on its opening theme. Throughout, this movement sparkles and dances with ease rare even in Mozart's music.

Mozart marked the second movement *Romanze*, a general term used to indicate expressive and quiet music. In fact, this movement—marked *Andante*—is a stately rondo with two contrasting episodes. The third movement is the expected minuet-and-trio, with a sturdy minuet and a flowing trio section colored by chromatic writing. The finale is another rondo, though this is an *Allegro*—its buoyant main idea leaps upward and sails along energetically. Once again, Mozart's chromatic writing brings darker and more expressive moments in the midst of all the high spirits.

Program Notes by Eric Bromberger, La Jolla Music Society