

WILLIAM PERRY
The Nightingale in the Park

American composer William Perry has written for stage, film and concert hall. He is perhaps best known for the more than one hundred scores he composed and recorded for great films of the silent era, but his symphonic and chamber works have also been widely performed. In this programmatic piece the violin describes a nightingale flying into a park at twilight and observing a variety of events including children at play, lovers walking hand in hand, a fountain and a carousel. At the end, he flies to the highest branch as night falls.

LEOŠ JANÁČEK
Sonata for Violin and Piano

Leoš Janáček provided a unique voice in 20th century music, and the originality of his speech-inflected opera writing is found in his instrumental works as well. In the Violin Sonata, which he worked on for nearly eight years, he responded to the events of World War I and said "I could just about hear the sounds of steel clashing in my troubled head." Much of this impassioned piece is terse and rugged, but the second movement has a calm lyricism, and the close of the final movement presents a chorale-like theme suggesting liberation from "the Russian armies entering Hungary."

MANUEL DE FALLA
Danse Espagnole from « La Vida Breve »

This dance, which takes place during wedding celebrations in de Falla's opera, *La Vida Breve*, composed in 1905, is one of the most popular pieces of Spanish classical music. It is also a favorite of concert violinists because of the showpiece arrangement by the legendary soloist, Fritz Kreisler, which will be played tonight.

BEDŘICH SMETANA
« From My Homeland » No. 2 in G Minor

Composer of the popular symphonic poem, *The Moldau (Vltava* in Czech), Bedřich Smetana is considered to be the father of Czech national music. Dating from 1880, his two movement suite, *From My Homeland*, exhibits a melodic gift that often reflects folk influences. The andantino G Minor movement invites the listener into a world of quiet lyricism that suddenly and surprisingly turns into vivacious dancing.

RICHARD RODNEY BENNETT
Waltz from « Murder on the Orient Express »

The British composer, Sir Richard Rodney Bennett, has written some of the best-loved film scores of our time, including *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *Enchanted April*, *Far From the Madding Crowd* and *Nicholas and Alexandra*. His Waltz from *Murder on the Orient Express* describes a train slowly getting under way and then gradually reaching full speed. This arrangement for the Albek Duo includes a part for an Acme Thunderer, the whistle used to start trains throughout Europe.

BÉLA BARTÓK
Romanian Folk Dances

The *Romanian Folk Dances* are among Bartók's most popular works. The original version was written for piano, but numerous transcriptions have been made, including one for orchestra by the composer himself. A version by Zoltán Székely for violin and piano is frequently played, but tonight's arrangement for viola and piano by Alan Arnold, edited by the composer's son, Peter Bartók, is rarely heard.

ALESSANDRO LUCCHETTI
Fantasy on Themes from Ruggero Leoncavallo's « Pagliacci » (World Premiere)

The versatile Alessandro Lucchetti is a composer, arranger and pianist whose works have been performed throughout the world. A founder of the musical trend *Neoromantica*, he has extensively researched the fusion of musical genres and culture, including jazz, rock, oriental music and Afro-American themes. He has made numerous arrangements of both classical and popular music, and his *Fantasy on Themes from "Pagliacci"* is one of several such opera-based fantasies he has composed for the Albek Duo.



ALBEK DUO

Ambra Albek, *violin and viola*
Fiona Albek, *piano*

Barnes Hall

Cornell University

Ithaca, New York

Monday, November 14, 2011

7:30 PM



Program

Albek Duo Concert on November 12, 2011

Ambra Albek, violin and viola Fiona Albek, piano

Joaquín Turina from « **El poema de una Sanluqueña** »
1882-1949 La canción del lunar
 Alucinaciones

William Perry **The Nightingale in the Park**
1930-

Leoš Janáček **Sonata for Violin and Piano**
1854-1928 Con moto
 Ballada; Con moto
 Allegretto
 Adagio

Interval (10 minutes)

Three Dance Impressions:

Manuel de Falla **Danse Espagnole from « La Vida Breve »**
1876-1946

Bedřich Smetana « **From My Homeland** » **No. 2 in G Minor**
1824-1864

Richard Rodney **Waltz from « Murder on the Orient Express »**
Bennett
1936-

Béla Bartók **Romanian Folk Dances**
1881-1945 arranged for viola and piano by Alan Arnold;
 edited by Peter Bartók

Alessandro Lucchetti **Fantasy on Themes from Ruggero Leoncavallo's**
1958- « **Pagliacci** » for violin and piano
 (*World Premiere*)

ALBEK DUO

Ambra Albek : *violin and viola*

Fiona Albek : *piano*

Twin sisters Ambra and Fiona Albek from Lugano, Switzerland have been playing music together since their early childhood, and their impressive career has taken them throughout Europe, North and South America and Australia. Their recent CD, *South of the Alps*, has received wide acclaim.

Ambra was taught by Alberto Lysy and graduated with honors under the guidance of Igor Karsko in Lugano, followed by performance studies in Rudolf Koelman's violin class and Wendy Champney's viola class at the Musikhochschule in Zürich. She graduated with a Concert Diploma summa cum laude. Following her main interest in chamber music, Ambra attended other Master courses with Nora Chastain, Friedemann Rieger and the Carmina Quartet in Zurich.

Fiona was taught by Nora Doallo in Lugano graduating with honors; she continued her studies at the Musikhochschule Zürich in Friedemann Rieger's piano chamber music and Lieder performance classes. She graduated with top marks and distinction as a piano chamber musician and accompanist of lyric singers.

As a Duo they attended Prof. Narciso Masi's chamber music classes at the International Piano Academy in Imola, Italy, successfully graduating with Masters' Degrees. Advanced studies included work with such chamber specialists as Emanuel Hurwitz, Gérard Poulet, Ingolf Turban, Arnulf von Arnim, Peter Rybar, Sergio Fiorentino, Paul Badura Skoda, and Robert Cohen.

The Albek Duo regularly performs at music festivals and cultural events where they have premiered a number of pieces specially written for them. This has included a series of *Opera Fantasies* composed by Alessandro Lucchetti and the *Gemini Concerto* by American composer William Perry. Their recording of this work with the RTÉ National Symphony of Ireland, conducted by Paul Phillips, was released by Naxos Records in August of this year.

Ambra and Fiona frequently perform concerts with actors, most recently in presentations of the writings of Hermann Hesse, and next year they have planned a program built around the works of Vladimir Nabokov.



NOTES ON THE MUSIC

JOAQUÍN TURINA

From « El poema de una Sanluqueña »

Joaquín Turina wrote this work in 1923 and dedicated it to the "girls of Sanlúcar," a harbour town frequently visited by the people of Seville and where Turina and his family spent their summer holidays. The work was conceived as a love poem "to the beautiful Andalusian girls living in a sad and never-ending dream." The pieces comprising it are characterized by an alternating lyricism and virtuosity and the cyclical return of a lovely unifying melody.