



## SAMF2022 at CATHEDRAL BASILICA

38 Cathedral Place, St. Augustine, FL 32084

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**Saturday, June 25, 2022, 7:30 pm**

### DANSES & SPELLS

**PIOTR SZEWCZYK | Rebirth of Hope for String Orchestra**

**ERNEST BLOCH | Concerto Grosso for String Orchestra and Piano**

- I. Prelude: Allegro energico
- II. Dirge: Andante moderato
- III. Pastorale & Rustic Dances
- IV. Fugue

**CLAUDE DEBUSSY | Danses sacrée et profane for Harp and String Orchestra**

- I. Danse sacrée: Très modéré
- II. Danse profane: Modéré

– INTERMISSION –

**CAROLINE SHAW | Entr'acte for String Orchestra**

**FRANZ LISZT | Malédiction for Piano and String Orchestra (1833)**

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**SAMD CHAMBER ORCHESTRA**

VIOLIN I: Nigel Armstrong, Gabriela Peña, Piotr Szewczk, Inghan Han, Scott Jackson

VIOLIN II: Aurica Duca, Clinton Dewing, Ann Hertler, Tania Aniela Moldovan

VIOLA: Jorge Peña, Mario Rivera, Lauren Hodges Burns

CELLO: Jin Kim, Betsy Federman, Brian Magnus

BASS: Paul Strasshofer

HARP: Justine Dawn Tiu

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## PROGRAM NOTES

### SZEWczyk | Rebirth of Hope for String Orchestra (2004)

I wrote this piece during my first year of playing in New World Symphony in Miami Beach. In this piece I combine elements of baroque music with modern minimalism, extended tonal harmonies and changing meters.

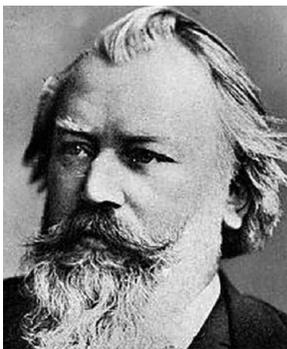
### BLOCH | Concerto Grosso No. 1 for String Orchestra & Piano (1925)



Swiss composer **Ernest Bloch** (1880-1959) received his formal musical education in Europe before immigrating to the United States in 1916 where he took up a string of prestigious teaching jobs at leading musical institutions. Despite his busy academic life, Bloch managed to produce a vast body of influential works, many of which explore his Jewish faith and adopted homeland. Bloch was active during a period that many would consider a crossroads of musical history. The old Romantic and Classical idioms were gradually being abandoned by composers in favor of the hard-edged, academic modernism pioneered by Stravinsky and Schoenberg.

Bloch himself could be considered a transitional composer – though his music is firmly rooted in traditional forms, he did not shy away from the use of modern techniques and sounds. Concerto Grosso No. 1 is a perfect example of this stylistic dichotomy, fusing the traditional Concerto Grosso form (which pits groups of soloists against the larger ensemble), with modern harmonies and angular, contemporary rhythms.

### DEBUSSY | Danse sacrée et danse profane for Harp & Strings (1904)



From an incredibly young age, **Claude Debussy** (1862-1918) established himself as a non-conformist. He entered the elite Paris Conservatoire at age 10 on the merits of his dazzling pianistic abilities, but quickly outgrew the institution's rigid, conservative program. Rather than follow the traditional forms and techniques pushed by his professors, he chose to forge his own idiosyncratic musical path, absorbing influence from anywhere he heard potential – from the operas of Wagner to Javanese Gamelan – whilst dispensing with all he saw as superfluous. Today he is considered the quintessential French composer and in the eyes of many, the catalyst for the wave of modernity that would follow him.

Danse sacrée et danse profane for Harp & Strings, was composed in 1904 on commission from the Pleyel harp company who were promoting a new style of chromatic harp. Though the new harp was not a success and quickly fell out of favor and production, Debussy's work has become a core piece of the harp repertoire. It is set in two contrasting movements: the first a sacred dance evoking Ancient Greece in its rustic parallel harmonies, the second a lithe waltz that shifts in and out of focus and makes use of a palette of shimmering harp effects.

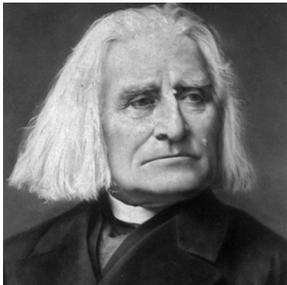
**CAROLINE SHAW** | Entr'acte for String Orchestra (2011)



In 2013 the American composer **Caroline Shaw** (b.1982) won the Pulitzer Prize for music for her a cappella vocal work *Partita for 8 Voices*, making her the youngest ever recipient of this prestigious accolade. *Entr'acte* was composed at roughly the same time as *Partita* and shares with its prizewinning counterpart a pre-occupation with music of the past.

*Entr'acte*, composed in 2013, was originally envisioned for string quartet, but is tonight heard in its string orchestra adaptation. Where *Partita* takes its broad starting point from ancient Baroque dance forms, *Entr'acte* finds its impetus in a single moment of a string quartet by the classical era composer Joseph Haydn. In particular it focuses on a solitary harmonic fragment the composer herself describes as '...a kind of absurd, subtle, Technicolor transition'. Over its roughly 10 minute span, *Entr'acte* takes Haydn's harmonic quirk and sends it on a kaleidoscopic journey, making use of novel and inventive string effects and many unusual, glassy colors on the way.

**LISZT** | *Malédiction* for Piano & String Orchestra (c.1833)



**Franz Liszt** (1811-1886) was one of the most prominent and complete musicians of his era. He was equally accomplished as a virtuoso pianist, composer, conductor, organist, pedagogue, and orchestrator, as well as a great promoter of the work of his contemporaries. His legacy today endures in the many contributions he made to pianistic technique and the countless innovations he foreshadowed in his vast compositional catalog.

It is not known whether Liszt ever heard or performed his work *Malédiction* for Piano & String Orchestra in public. The manuscript was discovered long after the composer's death in 1915, and there is no mention of the work in his correspondence or in any public record. Despite this, the work is a prime example of Liszt's phenomenal musicianship; over the course of a single extended movement, Liszt demonstrates virtuosity not only as a pianist but as a composer as well. The solo piano - which opens the work with a dramatic cadenza - takes the soloist to extremes of expression and technique, even in its sweetest passages. The orchestral writing makes similar use of extremes, both in its strikingly inventive use of dissonant harmony and abrupt dramatic shifts from darkness to light.

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# THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS

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Dr. Daniel and Mrs. Teresa Rodriguez-Yip



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