



David Conte, *composition*

Faculty Artist Series

Monday, March 7, 2022, 7:30 PM
Sol Joseph Recital Hall

Partita for Violin and Cello (2020) [WORLD PREMIERE] David Conte

- I. Prelude (b. 1955)
- II. Fandango
- III. Elegia
- IV. Balletta

Kay Stern, *violin*
Emil Miland, *cello*

Cal's Aria [WORLD PREMIERE]
from *East of Eden* (2021)

Libretto by David Yezzi
(b. 1966)

Christian Pursell, *bass-baritone*
Kevin Korth, *piano*

Sonata for French Horn and Piano (2020) [WORLD PREMIERE]

- I. Allegretto
- II. Adagio sostenuto
- III. Allegro giocoso

Kevin Rivard, *French horn*
Kevin Korth, *piano*

- Intermission -

*Cameras, recording equipment, food and drink are not permitted in Conservatory performance halls.
Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic equipment before the performance begins.*

Sexton Songs for Soprano and Piano (2010) texts by Anne Sexton
I. Rowing (1928–1974)
II. Her Kind
III. Ringing the Bells
IV. Riding the Elevator to the Sky
V. Us

Marnie Breckenridge, *soprano*
Kevin Korth, *piano*

Piano Trio No. 2 (2022) [WORLD PREMIERE]

I. Allegro moderato
II. Scherzo - Allegro scherzando
III. Passacaglia - Largo serio
IV. Elegy - Largo espressivo

The Lee Trio
Lisa Lee, *violin*
Angela Lee, *cello*
Melinda Lee Masur, *piano*

Program Notes

Partita for Violin and Cello (2020)

When the pandemic began in the spring of 2020, I made a decision to focus on composing chamber music. I had in mind Stravinsky in Switzerland immediately after the outbreak of the First World War: from 1914 until the end of the decade, he had focused on chamber music in response to greatly reduced opportunities. It was natural that I thought first of two dear friends who have been ardent supporters of my work, violinist Kay Stern and cellist Emil Miland. Kay and Emil recorded my Piano Trio No. 1 for Albany Records in 2015; Kay had played my Elegy for Violin and Piano at my Faculty Artist Series Recital in 2017; and Emil premiered and recorded my Cello Sonata in 2015, and premiered my Cello Concerto in 2018, commissioned by the late Michael Morgan for the Bear Valley Music Festival.

My Partita is a light, straight-forward work, in four short movements. The first movement, Prelude, is characterized by a wistful, lilting melody that is traded back and forth between the two instruments. The second movement is a Fandango, which traditionally is a Spanish dance for a man and woman, accompanied by castanets and tambourine. My take on this genre is tongue-in-cheek, giving the music a slightly odd character; the cello plays an ostinato on open strings set in unusual groupings of twos and threes, accompanying a sly melody in the violin. The two instruments trade material throughout. There are pizzicato passages, and frequent interjections of rests. The third movement is an Elegia, the most sustained music of the Partita. It is an adaptation of the slow movement of my Horn Sonata, though the limited harmonic possibilities of just two solo instruments lend a certain intensity of expression to the music. The final Galletta, traditionally a rustic dance in duple compound meter, states and develops a simple childlike melody and features brief cadenzas and liberal use of open strings for both instruments. The movement ends with a flourish.

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Cal's Aria

from *East of Eden* (2021)

Since 2014 I have been working on developing an opera based on John Steinbeck's autobiographical novel "East of Eden," set in the Salinas Valley at the turn and beginning of the last century, and centered on two brothers, Cal and Aron, a modern "Cain and Abel," and their relationship with their father Adam. In this scene: Out of hurt because his father Adam rejected his gift of money, and out of resentment and jealousy at his brother Aron whom Adam loves more, Cal has taken Aron to see their mother at the brothel that she owns. Aron had believed that their mother had "died and gone to heaven; she was heaven's most beautiful angel." Aron's shock at learning this, and his anger at his father's hypocrisy for not telling him the truth about his mother, causes him to enlist to fight in the war, breaking his father's heart. He is killed in battle, causing Adam to have a stroke. Adam is lying helpless in bed, and Cal and Abra are at his bedside, unable to determine if Adam can understand them or not. Cal sings to Abra about the willow tree where she and Aron used to hide, and where he wants now to hide to avoid his father's accusations, and his own guilt.

"Willow" - Cal's Aria

(To Abra)

Willow, willow...

Remember the willow,
its long branches swaying,
its flowers in April,
like life renewed,
like life reborn in springtime.
Remember the willow,
its soft petals falling
like tears to the ground.
Willow, willow...

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You went there with Aron,
inside the branches,
where no one could see you,
your lives close together,
suspended like blossoms
like flowers on the willow.

I want to hide there with you,
pure, sweet, Abra.
I can feel your goodness beside me,
hidden by branches,
where no one can see me,
where my father can't see me,
away from his eyes.

In my mind, I still see them,
His eyes, his eyes...
like God's eyes,
staring, staring.

He's dying, dear Abra.
but his eyes, they still see me,
accusing me,
denouncing me,
His eyes see into my soul.

You killed your brother!
Because you showed him your mother,
Aron died because of me,
Because of me.

My mother!
She told me:
You're just like me!
I see who you are!

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Her blood courses through me,
like sap through a willow,

(ADAM coughs)

Adam is dying,
My father is dying because of me.

(To Adam)

Oh, my father!
My father!
Give me your blessing,
though I don't deserve it.

Father,
release me from pain.

Sonata for French Horn and Piano is cast in three contrasting movements. The first movement, marked *Allegretto*, features a broadly sung, energetic first theme, followed by a more lyrical, cantabile second theme. The work unfolds according to the traditional sonata-allegro design, and ends with a witty recollection of the first theme. The second movement, marked *Adagio*, opens with an expressive and melancholy theme in the piano. The theme is then taken up by the French Horn, and is subtly developed and expanded, reaching several climaxes, before ending with a mournful passage alternating the two instruments over a pulsating pedal. The third movement is marked *Allegro giocoso* and features two rhythmic and cheerful themes, followed by a third more lyrical theme. In the recapitulation all three themes are restated with some modest development, leading to a brisk coda.

The Sonata is a transcription of my **Sonata for Double Bass and Piano**, which was commissioned by Stephen Tramontozzi, my colleague at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and Assistant Principal Bassist

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of the San Francisco Symphony. **Sonata for French Horn and Piano** was transcribed for Kevin Rivard, my colleague at the San Francisco Conservatory and Principal French Horn in the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra.

Sexton Songs for Soprano and Piano (2010)

The five poems chosen here span Anne Sexton's fifteen-year career. The two central poems, "Her Kind" and "Ringing the Bells," are taken from her book *From Bedlam and Part Way Back*. Published in 1960, the poems in this book were inspired by her stay in a mental institution. These poems are framed by two other poems, "Rowing" and "Riding the Elevator to the Sky" from her book *The Awful Rowing Toward God*. This book was published in 1973, one year before she committed suicide at the age of 46. "Us" is from her collection entitled *Love Poems*. Through my study of Sexton's poetry and her life, I gradually formed an image of her as a kind of cabaret performer; a microphone in one hand and a cigarette in the other, delivering her funny (and often devastating) jokes. In my musical settings, I have tried to mirror Sexton's vernacular language and popular images with a style that evokes aspects of jazz and cabaret, and mixes sustained aria-type music with *recitative* passages. Sexton's friend, poet Maxine Kumin, wrote about *Awful Rowing*: "The Sexton who had so defiantly boasted... 'I am God la de dah,' had now given way to a ravaged, obsessed poet fighting to put the jigsaw pieces of the puzzle together into a coherence that would save her — into 'a whole nation of God.' " For me, Anne Sexton's painful journey is ultimately a very brave one. She dredges up her feelings and experiences, challenging us to look at them and our own.

I. Rowing

A story, a story!
(Let it go. Let it come.)
I was stamped out like a Plymouth fender

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into this world.
First came the crib
with its glacial bars.
Then dolls
and the devotion to their plastic mouths.
Then there was school,
the little straight rows of chairs,
blotting my name over and over,
but undersea all the time,
a stranger whose elbows wouldn't work.
Then there was life
with its cruel houses
and people who seldom touched -
though touch is all -
but I grew,
like a pig in a trench coat I grew,
and then there were many strange apparitions,
the nagging rain, the sun turning into poison
and all of that, saws working through my heart,
but I grew, I grew,
and God was there like an island I had not rowed to,
still ignorant of Him, my arms and my legs worked,
and I grew, I grew,
I wore rubies and bought tomatoes
and now, in my middle age,
about nineteen in the head I'd say,
I am rowing, I am rowing
though the oarlocks stick and are rusty
and the sea links and rolls
like a worried eyeball,
but I am rowing, I am rowing,
though the wind pushes me back
and I know that the island will not be perfect,
it will have the flaws of life,
the absurdities of the dinner table,
but there will be a door,
and I will open it,

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and I will get rid of the rat inside of me,
the gnawing pestilential rat.

God will take it with his two hands
and embrace it.

As the African says:

This is my tale which I have told.

If it be sweet, if it be not sweet,

Take somewhere else,

and let some return to me.

This story ends with me still rowing.

II. Her Kind

I have gone out, a possessed witch,
haunting the black air, braver at night;
dreaming evil, I have done my hitch
over the plain houses, light by light:
lonely thing, twelve-fingered, out of mind.

A woman like that is not a woman, quite.

I have been her kind.

I have found the warm caves in the woods,
filled them with skillets, carvings, shelves,
closets, silks, innumerable good;
fixed the suppers for the worms and the elves:
whining, rearranging the disaligned.

A woman like that is misunderstood.

I have been her kind.

I have ridden in your cart, driver,
waved my nude arms at villages going by,
learning the last bright routes, survivor
where your flames still bite my thigh
and my ribs crack where your wheels wind.

A woman like that is not ashamed to die.

I have been her kind.

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III. Ringing the Bells

And this is the way they ring
the bells in Bedlam
and this is the bell-lady
who comes each Tuesday morning
to give us a music lesson
and because the attendants make you go
and because we mind by instinct,
like bees caught in the wrong hive,
we are the circle of the crazy ladies
who sit in the lounge of the mental house,
and smile at the smiling woman
who passes us each a bell,
who points at my hand
that holds my bell, E flat,
and this is the gray dress next to me
who grumbles as if it were special
to be old, to be old,
and this is the small hunched squirrel girl
on the other side of me
who picks at the hairs over her lip,
who picks at the hairs over her lip all day,
and this is how the bells really sound,
as untroubled and clean
as a workable kitchen,
and this is always my bell responding
to my hand that responds to the lady
who points at me, E flat;
and although we are no better for it,
they tell you to go. And you do.

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IV. Riding the Elevator Into the Sky

As the fireman said:

Don't book a room over the fifth floor
in any hotel in New York.

They have ladders that will reach further
but no one will climb them.

As the New York Times said:

The elevator always seeks out
the floor of the fire
and automatically opens
and won't shut.

These are the warnings
that you must forget
if you're climbing out of yourself.
If you're going to smash into the sky.

Many times I've gone past
the fifth floor, cranking upward,
but only once
have I gone all the way up.

Sixtieth floor:

small plants and swans bending
into their grave.

Floor two hundred:

mountains with the patience of a cat,
silence wearing its sneakers,

Floor five hundred:

Messages and letters centuries old, birds to drink,
a kitchen of clouds,

Floor six thousand:

the stars,
skeletons on fire,
their arms singing.

And a key,

a very large key, that opens something -
some useful door - somewhere -
up there.

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V. Us

I was wrapped in black
fur and white fur and
you undid me and then
you placed me in gold light
and then you crowned me,
while snow fell outside
the door in diagonal darts.
While a ten-inch snow
came down like stars
in small calcium fragments,
we were in our own bodies
(that room that will bury us)
and you were in my body
(that room that will outlive us)
and at first I rubbed your
feet dry with a towel
because I was your slave
and then you called me princess.
Princess!

Oh then

I stood up in my gold skin
and I beat down the psalms
and I beat down the clothes
and you undid the bridle
and you undid the reins
and I undid the buttons,
the bones, the confusions,
the New England postcards,
the January ten o'clock night,
and we rose up like wheat,
acre after acre of gold,
and we harvested,
we harvested.

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Piano Trio No. 2 (2022)

My Piano Trio No. 2, composed between March 2021 and January 2022, was commissioned in 2020 by the Lee Trio: Lisa Lee, *violin*; Angela Lee, *cello*; and Melinda Lee Masur, *piano*, for the 250th Anniversary of Beethoven's birth, and also in honor of Beethoven's Opus 1, a set of three piano trios.

Experienced composers know that the medium of piano trio is the most difficult of the various combinations of piano and strings, all of which have inspired some of the greatest composers' greatest works. I composed my first Piano Trio in 2011, commissioned by the Shanghai Conservatory, and I was delighted to have another opportunity to meet this challenge. Cellist Angela Lee and I have collaborated on a number of projects, including a recording of my "Aria and Fugue" for cello and organ, with organist Jonathan Dimmock.

As the composition of each of the four movements was underway, I became conscious very quickly that each movement was an homage to an admired composer. The first movement is cast in a traditional sonata-allegro form, featuring a nervous, rhythmically varied first theme, contrasted with a very lyrical second theme. It was especially the character of this second theme that made me aware of the muse of Erich Korngold as a source of inspiration. I have long admired his unabashedly romantic musical language, which is subtly informed by some 20th century idioms. The second movement, which was the last composed, is a lively scherzo, and from my composition of the first bars, I was completely aware of the influence of Stephen Sondheim, who had just died, and who I consider to be the most important American composer of the last third of the 20th century. My scherzo follows quite closely the formal design of the traditional scherzo, with the trio section featuring some extended canonic treatment of the themes. One of my favorite pieces of 20th century music is Frank Martin's "Petite Symphonie Concertante." I was a student in Paris in 1976 when an important memorial concert of his music was given. My teacher Nadia Boulanger gave me tickets to attend, and I have been a devoted student of his music ever since. Like Martin's piece, my third movement, marked "Largo serio," is based on a 12-tone row which becomes the basis for a melody treated as a Passacaglia theme.

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The work unfolds based completely on this theme, and rises to several climaxes before the final more serene music, built on a pedal tone. The fourth movement is an Elegy which very consciously evokes the stately and expressive character that one finds in a number of Beethoven's slow movements. At eight minutes, this is the longest movement, and it is based on a series of variations on the opening theme, treated as a Chaconne. The work ends with serene confidence on a sonority that places the work firmly within a certain American 20th century musical tradition, thus unifying the vision of the great master Beethoven, the original impulse behind this commission, with our own time.

- Program notes by the composer

Artist Profiles

David Conte, *composer*

David Conte is the composer of over 150 works published by E. C. Schirmer Music Company, including seven operas, works for chorus, solo voice, orchestra, band, and chamber music. He has received commissions from Chanticleer, the San Francisco, Oakland, Stockton, and Dayton Symphonies, the Atlantic Classical Orchestra; and from the American Guild of Organists. In 2007 he received the Raymond Brock commission from the American Choral Directors Association, one of the nation's highest honors in choral music. His work is represented on many commercial CD recordings, including in 2015 *Chamber Music of David Conte*, on the Albany label; in 2016 *Choral Music of Conrad Susa and David Conte*, on the Delos label; and in 2018 *Everyone Sang: Vocal Music of David Conte* on the Arsis label. His opera *The Gift of the Magi* has received over 30 productions in the U.S., Canada, Europe, and Russia. He co-wrote the film score for the acclaimed documentary *Ballets Russes*, shown at the Sundance and Toronto Film Festivals in 2005, and composed the music for the PBS documentary, *Orozco: Man of Fire*, shown on the American Masters Series in the fall of 2007. In 1982, Conte lived and worked with Aaron Copland while preparing a study of the composer's sketches, having received a Fulbright Fellowship for study with Copland's teacher Nadia Boulanger in Paris, where he was one of her last students. He earned his Bachelor's degree from Bowling Green State University and his Master's and Doctoral degrees from Cornell University, where he studied with Karel Husa. He is Professor of Composition and Chair of the Composition Department at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he has taught since 1985. In 2010 he was appointed to the composition faculty of the European American Musical Alliance in Paris. In 2014 he was named Composer in Residence for Cappella SF, a professional chamber choir in San Francisco. In 2016 his song cycle *American Death Ballads* won First Prize in the NATS Composition Competition, and was premiered by tenor Brian Thorsett and pianist Warren Jones at the NATS Conference in Chicago.

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Kay Stern, *violin*

Kay Stern is the Concertmaster of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, a position she has held since 1994. Stern is a Professor of Violin at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and an artist and faculty member of Festival Napa Valley, the Blackburn Academy and Classical Tahoe. Stern has served on the faculty of the Cleveland Institute of Music and the Music Academy of the West. She has served as assistant to Dorothy DeLay at the Aspen Music Festival and assistant to the Juilliard Quartet at the Juilliard School. As founding member and first violinist of the Lark String Quartet, she has performed and given master classes throughout the United States, Europe and Asia. Kay attended the Juilliard School as a student of Dorothy DeLay. While at Juilliard, she received full scholarships for her Bachelor, Master's, and Doctoral degree programs. Her concerto and chamber music recordings can be heard on Phillips, Nonesuch, Innova, MusicMasters, Koch International, Gramavision, Arsis and Albany Records.

Emil Miland, *cello*

Cellist Emil Miland is an internationally-renowned soloist and chamber musician. He made his solo debut with the San Francisco Symphony at 16, the same year he was selected to perform in the Rostropovich Master Classes at U. C. Berkeley. He has been a member of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra since 1988 and was honored when Frederica von Stade asked him to accompany her in Carnegie Hall at her farewell recital. Many composers have written new works for him including Ernst Bacon, David Carlson, David Conte, Shinji Eshima, Candace Forest, Lou Harrison, Jake Heggie, and Andrew Imbrie. About Miland, David Conte states, "As a performer, Mr. Miland has frequently appeared with many of the world's finest singers, and his playing for me has always embodied many features of vocal technique, including a special kind of portamento and various speeds of vibrati." He recorded Conte's Sonata for Violoncello and Piano with pianist Miles Graber on Albany Records' "Chamber Music of David Conte." In 2018 he collaborated with Maestro Michael Morgan at the Bear Valley Music Festival to perform the premiere of Conte's Cello

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Concerto, a memory made even more cherished by Morgan's untimely passing. Recent projects include recording "Intonations" by Heggie for the "Violins of Hope," released on the Pentatone label and playing solo cello on the soundtrack for the film of Gordon Getty's opera, *Goodbye Mr. Chips*. He is also involved with an upcoming documentary celebrating the life and artistry of his close and long-time friend, mezzo-soprano Lorraine Hunt-Lieberson. San Francisco Classical Voice says of Miland: "Among the San Francisco Bay Area's legions of great musicians, nobody works harder than the cellist Emil Mila ... former child prodigy, current virtuoso, 30 year veteran of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, founding principal cello of the New Century Chamber Orchestra, soloist, teacher, mentor, and humanitarian icon." Fanfare Magazine stated, "From the first notes of the Sonata for Cello and Piano, Conte proves himself a master of the singing line ... Cellist Emil Miland does a superb job of extracting every ounce of passion from this most passionate work, and is ably supported by pianist Miles Graber."

Christian Pursell, *bass-baritone*

Christian Pursell is an American bass-baritone. He is known for his interpretation of Escamillo in Bizet's *Carmen*; Opera News remarks, "[Pursell] handled the notoriously wide-ranging music with seeming ease, showing a brilliant upper register and solid low notes." In May 2022, he performs Escamillo in *Carmen* at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, followed by his role debut as Olin Blitch in Floyd's *Susannah* with Wolf Trap Opera in August 2022. Pursell debuts at Philadelphia Opera in September 2022 as Elmira in Rossini's *Otello*. Mr. Pursell returns to the Bay Area in April 2022 to perform a recital mini-tour titled *April in Paris* with his collaborator, pianist Ronny Michael Greenberg. Mr. Pursell began his 2021/22 season with his role debut as Escamillo in *Carmen* at Cincinnati Opera in July 2021, followed by appearances as Escamillo with Houston Grand Opera and Hawaii Opera Theatre. Pursell performed in Handel's *Messiah* with San Francisco Symphony, and joined Arizona Musicfest in February 2022 for Beethoven's Symphony No. 9. A native of Santa Cruz, California, Mr. Pursell is a graduate of the San Francisco Conservatory of

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Music, and received his Master of Music degree from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. A 2017 Merola Opera Program participant, he was a resident at San Francisco Opera as an Adler Fellow in 2018 and 2019.

Kevin Korth, *piano*

As an in-demand recitalist and coach, pianist Kevin Korth has collaborated with such legendary artists as Frederica von Stade, Isabel Leonard, Sasha Cooke, Jake Heggie, Nadine Sierra, Anthony Roth Costanzo, Lise Lindstrom, Joel Krosnick, and Deborah Voigt. Praised by Gramophone for playing that is “superb”, and “full of color and character,” his debut album, *Out of the Shadows*, a recording of American art song with soprano Lisa Delan and cellist Matt Haimovitz on the Pentatone Classics label, was warmly received. Reflecting his being in demand as an interpreter of contemporary work, the album features premieres by Jack Perla, Gordon Getty, and David Garner, in addition to previously unrecorded works by Norman Dello Joio and John Kander. His latest recordings include an album of Robinson Jeffers settings by composer Christopher Anderson-Bazzoli with mezzo-soprano Buffy Baggott for the Delos label, and an album of songs by composer David Conte for the Arsis label. Recent recital engagements include recitals with mezzo-sopranos Catherine Cook and Susanne Mentzer, baritone Matthew Worth, and soprano Rhoslyn Jones. Mr. Korth currently holds a position on the vocal coaching faculty at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

Kevin Rivard, *French horn*

Known for his “delicious quality of tone” Kevin Rivard is the Co-Principal Horn of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, and Principal Horn of the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra. As a soloist and chamber musician, he has performed with the New Century Chamber Orchestra, Music@Menlo, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the Chamber Music Society

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of Lincoln Center, and the LA Chamber Orchestra. Winner of numerous solo competitions, he was awarded Grand Prize at the 2008 Concours International d'Interpretation Musicale in Paris, the 2007 International Horn Competition of America, the 2003 Farkas Solo Horn competition, and in 2001 was a Presidential Scholar in the Arts. Mr. Rivard has served as guest Principal Horn with both the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Philadelphia Orchestra, and was a featured soloist with the Houston Symphony. Previous positions include the Colorado Symphony and Florida Orchestra. A Juilliard graduate, Mr. Rivard spends his summers performing and teaching with the Aspen Music Festival and Music@Menlo. As one of the horn professors at San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Mr. Rivard loves teaching and inspiring the next generation of horn players. Every year he volunteers at local schools performing for youth, hoping to give as many children as possible the opportunity to enjoy live music.

Marnie Breckenridge, *soprano*

Soprano Marnie Breckenridge has established herself as a go-to soprano for countless critically acclaimed new vocal works by living composers. She is praised for her, “bell-like ring over an enormous range and personality spilling from every note” (The Globe and Mail), “lovely soprano” voice (The New York Times), and “lyrical poignancy and dramatic power” (The Chicago Tribune). She recently received the 2020 DORA award for “Outstanding Performance by an Individual in an Opera” for *JACQUELINE*, a role she helped create with composer Luna Pearl Woolf and librettist Royce Vavrek about the life of Jacqueline Du Pré written for her and cellist Matt Haimovitz (Tapestry Opera, Toronto). She has performed with San Francisco Opera, San Francisco Symphony, English National Opera, Kobe Festival, Los Angeles Opera, Metropolitan Opera Council, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Arizona Opera, Indianapolis Opera, Mobile Opera, Montclair Peak Performances, Prototype Festival, Ft. Worth Opera, São Paulo Opera, Left Coast Ensemble, Opera Parallèle, Washington Chorus, Berkeley Symphony, Ravinia Festival, Philharmonia Baroque and countless other US Regional companies. She is the 2013

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recipient of the SFCM Fanfare Award for “Alumni of the Year” and featured soloist on Delos/Dimitri Hvorostovsky, New World Records/Victor Herbert, American Modern Ensemble/Robert Paterson, David Conte, Richard Aldag, and her own album *Happy Golden Days* streaming on all on-line platforms. www.MarnieBreckenridge.com

The Lee Trio

Since its critically acclaimed Wigmore Hall debut in 2002, The Lee Trio’s “gripping immediacy and freshness” and “rich palette of tone colours” [The Strad] continue to move audiences and critics around the globe. The Trio’s honors include top prizes at the Kuhmo International Chamber Music Competition in Finland, the G. Zinetti International Chamber Music Competition in Italy, and Gotthard-Schierse-Stiftung grant for international artists in Germany.

The Lee Trio is committed to expanding the piano trio repertoire and has commissioned and performed new works of living composers including Uljas Pulkkis, Aaron Jay Kernis, Philip Lasser, Jane Antonia Cornish, Laurence Rosenthal, Jerry Bilik, Nathaniel Stookey, Richard Pantcheff, Edmund Finnis, and Sylvie Bodorova. The Trio has recorded Jane Cornish’s *Duende* on the Delos label and D. J. Sparr’s *Lost in the Old South Tower* for the album “Hard Metal Cantūs” on Innova Records. In addition to giving masterclasses, the Trio regularly performs outreach concerts where the arts have little exposure. Humanitarian trips to work with underserved youth have taken the Trio to Ukraine and Romania. The Trio served as the Resident Ensemble at University of Utah and the Gheorghe Dima Music Academy in Romania and as Distinguished Visiting Scholars in the Performing Arts at Gordon College.

As part of Beethoven’s global 250th birthday celebration in 2020, The Lee Trio made its debut at the Beethoven-Haus Bonn. The Trio had the distinguished honor to perform for German Chancellor Angela Merkel during her first official visit to NYC in 2010, and for former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt in 2014 in celebration of the 25th anniversary of the peaceful revolution and reunification of Germany.

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To stay in touch, find The Lee Trio on youtube.com/theleetrio, facebook.com/theleetrio or IG [@theleetrio3](https://instagram.com/theleetrio3).

Lisa Lee, *violin*

A graduate of The Curtis Institute of Music and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, violinist Lisa Lee is a Fulbright Scholar and has garnered top prizes in the Tadeusz Wronski International Violin, the San Francisco Symphony Concerto and Pacific Symphony Orchestra Young Artists competitions, and the Seventeen Magazine/General Motors National Concerto competition. Lisa has toured extensively with the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, and has participated in the Ravinia, Marlboro, IMS Open Chamber, and Lucerne music festivals. Most recently, she received the 2021 San Francisco Classical Voice award for “Best Instrumental Ensemble Performance” with friends and founders of the Valley of the Moon Festival in Sonoma, CA. Lisa is on faculty at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and the Young Chamber Musicians Program and can be found on the Naxos, Koch, And Delos labels.

Angela Lee, *cello*

A graduate of The Juilliard School and Yale School of Music, cellist Angela Lee is a recipient of a Fulbright scholarship to study in London with William Pleeth, a grant from the Foundation for American Musicians in Europe, the Jury Prize in the Naumburg International Cello Competition, and a cello performance fellowship from the American-Scandinavian Foundation. She performs as soloist and chamber musician throughout North America, Europe and Asia and gives masterclasses in the United States and abroad. Using music to foster peace and goodwill, Angela Lee has made numerous humanitarian trips to the Republic of the Philippines and the former Yugoslavia. While on a U.N.-sanctioned tour of six war-torn cities throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina, she performed for American and NATO troops and displaced civilians. In addition to coaching chamber

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music at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Angela serves on the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra Alumni Association Leadership Council and on the Board of Directors of The Resonance Project (<https://music-resonance.org>), which promotes live music in mediation settings and international conflict resolution. She plays on a 1762 cello made by Nicolo Gagliano from Naples, Italy.

Melinda Lee Masur, *piano*

Lauded for her “impeccable technique and artistic interpretation” [The Columbian], pianist Melinda Lee Masur has performed on all three stages of Carnegie Hall, at London’s Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room, the Berliner Philharmonie, at the Ravinia Festival, Festival Les Muséiques Basel and in Boston’s Symphony Hall. As chamber musician, Melinda has performed with such artists as Augustin Hadelich, Fanny Clamagirand, Adrian Brendel and Thomas Quasthoff. Together with her husband, Ken-David Masur, she is Artistic Director of the Chelsea Music Festival, an annual summer music festival in New York City praised by The New York Times as a “gem of a series” and frequently featured amongst its Best Classical picks of the season. A graduate of Harvard University and the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hannover, Germany, Melinda is the Director of Piano Chamber Music and Co-Director of the Young Artist Piano Program at the Boston University Tanglewood Institute. Melinda Lee Masur is a Steinway Artist.