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Karen Johnson and Friends

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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September 26, 2002 at 7:30 pm

Modlin Center for the Arts

Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music

Karen Johnson and Friends

Karen Johnson, *violin*

Molly Sharp, *viola*

Mark Russell Smith, *cello*

Joanne Kong, *harpsichord and piano*

Presented in conjunction with the Department of Music

Tonight's concert is being recorded by MobilMaster for possible future broadcast on National Public Radio.

*Modlin Center residency activities for 2002-2003
are underwritten by a grant from the Robins Foundation.*

Tonight's Program

Sonata XII in C Major, RV 754

Antonio Vivaldi
(1669-1741)

1:00 - *Preludio: Largo*
 4:21 - *Allemanda: Allegro*
 6:20 - *Sarabanda: Largo*
 10:45 - *Corrente: Allegro*

Karen Johnson, *violin*
 Mark Russell Smith, *cello*
 Joanne Kong, *harpisichord*

Sonata for Violin and Piano

John Corigliano
(b. 1938)

Allegro
Andantino
Lento
Allegro

Karen Johnson, *violin*
 Joanne Kong, *piano*

—Intermission—

Sonata for Cello and Piano in g minor, Op. 19

Sergei Rachmaninoff
(1873-1943)

Andante

Mark Russell Smith, *cello*
 Joanne Kong, *piano*

Piano Quartet No. 1 in g minor, Op. 25

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

Allegro
 - *Intermezzo: Allegro, ma non troppo*
 2:10 - *Andante con moto*
 7:19 - *Rondo alla Zingarese: Presto*

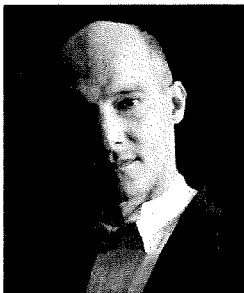
Karen Johnson, *violin*
 Molly Sharp, *viola*
 Mark Russell Smith, *cello*
 Joanne Kong, *piano*

About the Artists

Karen Johnson, *violin*

Karen Johnson was appointed concertmaster of the Richmond Symphony in September 2001. She has performed with the Baltimore Symphony, National Symphony and the Washington Ballet Orchestra. Last fall, she accompanied the Baltimore Symphony as an orchestra member on their European Tour. She has performed as concertmaster for the Juilliard Orchestra and the Jerusalem International Symphony Orchestra. Prior to moving to D.C., she played with the Prometheus Chamber Orchestra in New York. From 1997-2000, she performed as first violinist of the Vauz String Quartet, appearing regularly at Alice Tully Hall.

Ms. Johnson has appeared as soloist with orchestras in New York, California, Washington, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. She made her New York City solo debut in November 1997 with the Juilliard Symphony in Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center as winner of the Juilliard Sibelius Violin Concerto Competition. This past spring, Ms. Johnson earned a master's degree at the University of Maryland where she studied with Cleveland Orchestra Concertmaster and former Cleveland Quartet member William Preucil. She received a Bachelor of Music from the Juilliard School in New York City where she studied with Joel Smirnoff, first violist of the Juilliard String Quartet. During Juilliard's May 2000 Commencement ceremony, Ms. Johnson was awarded the Peter Mennin Prize for outstanding achievement and leadership in music in the undergraduate program.



Mark Russell Smith, *cello*

Whether conducting contemporary masterpieces or bringing fresh insights to the symphonies of Mozart, Beethoven or Brahms, Mark Russell Smith demonstrates consummate musicianship and enthusiastic commitment to the art of music-making—qualities that have endeared him to audiences and musicians alike. Appointed music director of the Richmond Symphony Orchestra in 1999, he has been praised for his innovative and approachable programming, and has won critical acclaim for the orchestra's renewed vigor, depth of sound and expression. Coupled with his commitment for excellence is his passion for education and for reaching diverse audiences and enriching the lives of every Richmonder through great music.

As a guest conductor, Smith enjoys a burgeoning national reputation that

has already brought him engagements and re-engagements with prestigious American orchestras including the Minnesota Orchestra, the St. Louis Symphony, the Houston Symphony and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. Other recent appearances include the Hartford Symphony, Orquesta Sinfonica de Xalapa, the Phoenix Symphony, the Colorado Symphony, the Curtis Opera Theatre, the Jacksonville Symphony, the Berkshire Choral Festival, the Eastern Music Festival, the Tulsa Philharmonic, Orchestra London (Ontario) and the European Center for Opera and Vocal Art in Ghent, Belgium.

A champion of the music of our time, Smith recently collaborated with Yo-Yo Ma and members of the Chamber Music Society of Minnesota in *Hun Qiao* (Bridge of Souls), a concert of remembrance and reconciliation featuring world premieres by Korean, Japanese, Chinese and American composers. A firm believer in the use of technical innovation to reach worldwide audiences, he debuted with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, conducting the final round of the first Piano E-Competition, where he led six concerto performances that were streamed live over the Internet. His commitment to living composers continues in the 2002-03 season as he returns to lead the Minnesota Orchestra in its Composers Institute, featuring music by some of America's most talented young composers.

Smith grew up in a musical family in Phoenix, Ariz., where he began the serious study of conducting while still in his teens. He is a graduate in cello performance of the Juilliard School, where he studied with Claus Adam, and of the Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied conducting with Max Rudolf and Otto-Werner Mueller. While at Curtis, Smith was first prizewinner in the National Repertory Orchestra Conductors Competition, and upon graduation, was named assistant conductor of the Opera Company of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Singers.

From 1989 to 1994, Smith served as associate conductor of the Phoenix Symphony Orchestra. From 1992 through 1999, he served as music director of the Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra. His dynamic personality, creative programming and focus on outreach helped revitalize the Springfield (Mass.) Symphony, where he served as music director from 1995 through 2000.

When not conducting in Richmond or around the country, Smith lives in Minneapolis with his wife, Minnesota Orchestra horn player Ellen Dinwiddie Smith, and their two sons, Alexander and Noah.

Molly Sharp, *viola*

Molly Sharp is the principal violist for the Richmond Symphony. Prior to moving to Richmond, Ms. Sharp received a bachelor's degree from Vanderbilt University/Blair School of Music and was a member of the Nashville Symphony. She received her master's degree in 1992 from the Cleveland Institute of Music



where she studied with Heidi Castleman. Chamber music studies have included summers at the Taos School of Music and the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival-Yale Summer School of Music. Ms. Sharp is the violist for the Oberon String Quartet which is in residence at St. Catherine's School in Richmond.

Joanne Kong, *harpichord and piano*

Recognized as an artist of exceptional versatility, keyboardist Joanne Kong has received critical praise for her "great finesse and flexibility (*The Washington Post*)," "utmost keyboard sensitivity and variety of tone (*Richmond Times-Dispatch*)," "remarkable technical ability (*The Oregonian*)," and "superb artistry (*San Antonio Express-News*)."



From Bach specialist to chamber musician, she has performed to critical acclaim at numerous venues including the Los Angeles and Oregon Bach Festivals, Abbey Bach Festival, Texas Bach Collegium, Houston Harpsichord Recital Series, Memphis Chamber Music Society, Stotsenberg Concert Series, San Antonio Festival, Los Angeles Monday Evening Concert Series, Virginia Waterfront International Festival of the Arts, the Royal Netherlands Embassy, Columbia University, Harvard University and orchestral performances under William McGlaughlin, Myung-Whun Chung, Alberto Bolet, Samuel Baron and George Manahan. A gifted collaborator, she has performed with some of the world's finest musicians including the Shanghai String Quartet and Eugenia Zukerman, and has been master class pianist for James Buswell, Timothy Eddy, Robert Bloom, David Shifrin, Harvey Pittel, Gwendolyn Koldofsky, Arleen Augér, Phyllis Bryn-Julson, Roberta Alexander, Roberta Peters and Gian Carlo Menotti.

Ms. Kong is the recipient of national and international honors including performance fellowships from the American Academy of the Arts in Europe and the Bach Aria Festival, designation as a Laureate in the 1983 National Beethoven Foundation Fellowship Auditions, three Ruth Lorraine Close Fellowships and the Irl Allison Grand Prize in the 1985 International Piano Recording Competition. In addition to concertizing, her performances have been broadcast over numerous radio stations including National Public Radio, WQXR in New York and WFMT in Chicago. Available for educational and community outreach programs, she is in frequent demand as a piano, harpsichord, vocal and chamber coach, and has been recognized for her exceptional work with gifted young musicians. Dr. Kong is currently the director of accompaniment and coordinator of the Chamber Ensembles program at the University of Richmond.



Notes on the Program

Notes written by Homer Rudolf

John Corigliano. Sonata for Violin and Piano (1963)

John Corigliano had the benefit of growing up in a musical environment—his father was concertmaster of the New York Philharmonic for 23 years and his mother was a pianist. He, himself, was a pianist and composer from an early age. Numerous of his compositions have received recognition. Most recently, his Symphony No. 2 was the winner of the 2001 Pulitzer Prize in Music. In 2000 he won an “Oscar” for his film score for *The Red Violin*, which also received awards in Canada and Germany. The Sonata for Violin and Piano (1963) won the chamber music prize at the 1964 Spoleto Festival. Corigliano writes the following about the sonata:

“This Sonata is an optimistic, ultra-rhythmic, tonal-and-then-some duo for two masterful players. I built the themes and harmonics of its four movements—*Allegro*, *Andantino*, *Lento* and *Allegro*—all from a second and its inversion, a seventh. The movements center, respectively, on C, D, G minor and D—but I freely included non-tonal and polytonal sections when needed. I think its eclecticism, its rhythmic energy and its bright character give the Sonata a very American quality, though that wasn’t the goal of writing it.

“I didn’t so much develop the lively theme in the opening *Allegro* as herald it with a brief opening fanfare and then embed it in a detailed backdrop, like a stone in a mosaic. Then, from those backdrop details, I built the first theme of the next movement, a gentle *Andantino* in a modified sonata form. Three themes seem to intertwine in this movement, which peaks and peaks again before quieting—but a closer look should reveal that both the second and third themes are but variations of the first. The third movement caps a tense, emotional violin soliloquy with hushed echoes of the sonata’s signal interval (the second) and the fourth movement, a rondo with a difference, takes a vivid polytriadic theme and augmented variation on it, and accompanimental fugues from previous movements, and spins them all into a breathless and exuberant polymetric finale.”

Antonio Vivaldi. Sonata for violin and continuo, RV 754, C major

Giovanni Baptista Vivaldi, originally a baker, became a professional violinist and was active at St. Mark’s cathedral in Venice for about 45 years. Of his six known children, only Antonio became a musician. Known as “The Red Priest” because of his red hair, Antonio was ordained as a priest in 1703. That same year he was appointed “maestro di violino” at the Pio Ospedale della Pieta—an institution that cared for orphaned, abandoned and indigent girls. During the years he held this position, many of his compositions were performed by the young musicians at the Ospedale.

In 1718 Vivaldi moved to Mantua for three years. It may have been during these years that a set of 12 violin sonatas was copied, for the title page of this

manuscript collection identifies him as the chapel master of the governor of Mantua. However, Vivaldi continued to use this title long after he left Mantua, so the copying date is uncertain. The collection was discovered in 1973 at the Henry Watson Music Library in Manchester, England, and was probably part of the music collection of Charles Jennens, the librettist for Handel's *Messiah*. The Sonata RV 754 in C major is the last sonata in this set.

Six of the sonatas, including RV 754, are unique to this source. The others are known in various forms in other compositions, for Vivaldi was a prolific self-borrower in his instrumental music. All are in the "Sonata da Camera" tradition, opening with a *Prelude*, which is followed by several movements in binary form, most with dance titles. The movements of this sonata are titled: *Preludio-Allemanda-Sarabande-Corrente*. All movements are in C major, except the *Sarabande*, which is in C minor. The title page does not specify the use of a bass stringed instrument in performance [a cello or *violone*], but they could certainly be performed that way.

Sergei Rachmaninoff. Sonata for cello and piano, op. 19, G minor.

Until the age of seven or eight, Sergei Rachmaninoff lived with his family on the last estate they owned. There he studied piano with the professional musician, Ann Ornatskaya, who was engaged from St. Petersburg. By 1881 that estate, too, was lost, due to his father's profligate life-style, and the family moved to a small, crowded flat in St. Petersburg. His parents separated shortly after he was awarded a scholarship to attend the St. Petersburg Conservatory, and the children were raised by their mother. Because of the academic difficulties Sergei was having, she decided to send him to Moscow as a pupil of Nikolay Zverev. He lived at the Zverev apartment, along with several other students, where they were closely supervised by Nikolay's sister. In 1888, about the time he became interested in composition, he began work at the Moscow Conservatory. In 1892 he received the "Great Gold Medal" from the Conservatory for his opera *Aleko*.

Composed late in the year 1901, the Sonata for cello and piano, op. 19, was dedicated to his friend, the cellist Anatoly Brandukov, and they performed the piece together on December 2nd. The writing for the cello consistently exploits the lyrical qualities of the instrument. In contrast, the piano has a much more expansive part. In the first movement, which is in the traditional sonata form, the exposition is generally not repeated, due to the length of the work. After the slow introduction, the piano enters with a rhythmic motive prominent throughout the movement. The second movement is a rondo in C minor, while the third is in song form (ABA) in the key of Eb major. The final movement is again in sonata form, but does not call for a repeated exposition. The coda was apparently added to the movement after the concert of December 2, 1901, for the date November 20 appears in the score just before the coda, and December 12 appears at the end.

Johannes Brahms. Piano quartet, op. 25, G minor

Brahms was born in Hamburg, where his father was a musician who made his living primarily as a double bass player. He attempted to teach Johannes to play violin and cello, but eventually gave in to his interest in the piano. At the age of 10 the boy almost went on a tour to America, promoted by his father—but his teacher Otto Cossel intervened and arranged for him to continue study with Eduard Marxsen, who recognized his potential as a composer. At the age of 13 he supported himself for a couple of years by playing in seaport taverns that included prostitutes in their employ. As a result of the unrest created by the revolution of 1848, the Hungarian violinist Eduard Reményi came to Hamburg, and they began to perform together. In 1852, after some time in America and Paris, the violinist returned to Hamburg and the two young musicians embarked on a tour in northern Germany. They separated while visiting Liszt in Weimar, and Brahms's subsequent travels eventually brought him to the home of Robert and Clara Schumann on September 30, 1853. He remained in Düsseldorf for a month, visiting the Schumanns almost every day—playing his music and participating in their family circle. Before he left, unknown to him, Schumann had written the article "Neue Bahnen" [New Paths] in which he heralded the musical genius of Brahms. As a consequence, his compositions soon began to appear in print. The Schumanns visited Brahms in Hamburg in late January 1854. One month later Robert Schumann attempted suicide by jumping off a bridge into the Rhine River, and he was institutionalized in Bonn, where he remained for the rest of his life.

Brahms is undeniably the most important composer of chamber music during the Romantic era. The Piano Quartet, op. 25, completed in 1861, is the first of the two he wrote. It has the traditional four-movement structure, with the first in sonata form without a repeated exposition. An *Intermezzo* (rather than a *minuet* or *scherzo*) and a *Trio* make up the second movement—all in 9/8 time, and concluding with a short coda after the repeat of the *Intermezzo*. The slow movement consists of an overall ABA structure. In addition, the A sections, themselves, also have an ABA structure. The quartet ends with a Gypsy rondo, a tradition that goes back to Haydn's Gypsy rondo of his Piano Trio, Op. 1. Before the final appearance of the A section, Brahms has included a "quasi cadenza" for the piano.

U p c o m i n g E v e n t s

Sweet Honey in the Rock

Sunday, September 29, 2002, 7:30 pm

Carpenter Center for the Performing Arts

Sponsored by the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation

This a cappella ensemble of six African-American women transcends the technologically enhanced music of the day. Sweet Honey's sound has been described as being like that of a rushing wind, the crashing of waves, an eagle's scream as it soars through the air—natural and forceful and transforming. Their sound is so true to itself that it pierces the hearts and minds of anyone who listens. It even touches those who cannot hear but who can feel and see the music as it is communicated through the fluid hands of a Sign Language interpreter.

Special seating is available upon request for hearing-impaired patrons.

Tickets: \$29 adults, \$27 seniors, \$15 children—through TicketMaster at 262-8100.

Tickets: \$22 faculty/staff, UR students FREE—through Modlin Center Box Office.

Yolanda Kondonassis, harp

Eugenia Zukerman, flute

Tuesday, October 1, 2002, 7:30 pm

Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music

The Modlin Center is pleased to welcome back two of today's finest musicians. Yolanda Kondonassis has become recognized as one of America's foremost harpists, performing extensively as a concert soloist and recitalist and enjoying a busy recording schedule. Eugenia Zukerman is renowned worldwide for her elegant sound, lyrical phrasing, brilliant agility and graceful stage presence. A versatile performer, Ms. Zukerman has played for over 25 years with orchestras, in solo and duo recitals and in chamber music ensembles on a regular basis. After performing together for years, this duo brings their unique talents Richmond for a return engagement.

Tickets: \$24 adults, \$22 seniors, \$12 children, \$20 faculty/staff, \$5 UR students

Orpheus Chamber Orchestra with Richard Goode, piano

Monday, October 7, 2002, 7:30 pm

Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music

Sponsored by the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation

Hailed for its vibrant spirit, eloquence and deep commitment, Orpheus has developed a unique approach to leadership and innovation—working without a conductor, rotating principal chairs and allowing the individual players to shape the outcome of each piece of music they perform. Marking its 30th anniversary, Orpheus returns to Richmond in a special collaboration with pianist Richard Goode performing Beethoven's Piano Concerto #4 in G Major.

Tickets: \$26 adults, \$24 seniors, \$13 children, \$22 faculty/staff, UR students FREE