



*The Keneseth Israel Community Music Arts Concert Series
begins its 22nd season with a virtual series of concerts!*

WHO: Pianist Natalie Zhu / Violinist Juliette Kang



WHAT: A Spring Festival of Beautiful Music, the Annual Cheryl Beth Silverman Memorial Concert sponsored by Art and Carol Silverman.

Beethoven: Sonata no 5, "Spring Sonata" for violin and piano

Elgar: La Capricieuse

Lili Boulanger: Nocturne and Cortège

Cesar Franck: Sonata for violin and piano in A

WHEN: Sunday, May 23 at 7:30 PM

WHERE: At your home! This concert will be accessible only by ordering your ticket(s) from Keneseth Israel.

TICKETS: PRICE IS ONLY \$36 FOR THIS CONCERT, \$18 FOR THE NEXT CONCERT ON JUNE 6 (DEPUE BROTHERS BAND) OR A SPECIAL DEAL OF \$50 FOR BOTH FANTASTIC CONCERTS!

Order Online at KenesethIsrael.org/MusicArts

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Name(s): _____

Concert tickets:

May 23 @ \$36 _____

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Pianist Natalie Zhu began her piano studies with Xiao-Cheng Liu at age six in her native China, and made her first public appearance at age nine in Beijing. At eleven she immigrated with her family to Los Angeles, and by fifteen was enrolled in the Curtis Institute, where she received the Rachmaninoff Award and studied with Gary Graffman. She received her master's degree from Yale School of Music as a student of Claude Frank. After stepping in for Garrick Ohlsson in several collaborations with violinist Hilary Hahn in 2000, she continued to perform with Ms. Hahn in tours of the U.S., Europe, and Japan, including a hugely successful Carnegie Hall recital debut. Ms. Zhu has also appeared in concert with violinist Soovin Kim on the San Francisco Performances series. In 2001 she joined the Curtis faculty as staff pianist and in 2003, received an Avery Fisher Career Grant a Musical Fund Society Career Advancement Award, the Andrew Wolf Memorial Chamber Music Award, and a winner of Astral's National Auditions. Her performances have been featured on National Public Radio's *Performance Today*. Ms. Zhu has appeared as a soloist with the Pacific, Haddonfield, and Riverside symphonies; the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra; the Concerto Soloists Chamber Orchestra; the Bergen and China philharmonic orchestras; and the National Repertory Orchestra. Solo recital appearances include the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society; New York's Steinway and Merkin halls; the Philip Lorenz Memorial Keyboard Concerts; the Portland Piano International Summer Festival; Munich's Herkulesaal; and Beijing Concert Hall. An active chamber musician, she is a frequent soloist at the Amelia Island Festival and has appeared at the Marlboro Music, Tanglewood, Skaneateles, Marlboro, Amelia Island, and Great Lakes Festivals; and the **Kingston Chamber Music Festival**, which she has directed for 13 seasons.

Juliette Kang, violin, is from Edmonton, Canada; A child prodigy, Juliette Kang began violin lessons at age four and soon became a student of James Keene, concertmaster of the Edmonton Philharmonic making her concerto debut in Montreal at age seven. In Canada, Ms. Kang won top prizes at the National Music Festival. At age nine, she was accepted at the Curtis Institute and became a student of Jascha Brodsky. By age 11, she won top prize at the 1986 Beijing International Youth Violin Competition in China. In 1989, at age 13, Ms. Kang became the youngest artist to win the Young Concert Artists International Auditions in New York. She appeared as a soloist with the New York String Orchestra at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center in Washington DC, in December 1990, and in June 1991 she performed Bach's Concerto for Two Violins in D Minor with Pinchas Zukerman and the Orchestra of St. Luke's at the 30th Anniversary Young Concert Artists Gala. Kang began her master's at Juilliard in 1991 with renowned violin pedagogue Dorothy DeLay. In her first year at Juilliard, Kang won first prize in the 1992 Yehudi Menuhin International Violin Competition in Paris. In February 1992, she won first prize in the Philadelphia Orchestra Student Competition. Ms. Kang performed her New York recital debut in March 1993 in the YCA Series at the 92nd Street Y. She continued her studies at Juilliard for an additional two years after graduation and performed an average of 20 recitals per year. In 1994, Ms. Kang won the gold medal at the Indianapolis International Violin Competition, as well as prizes for best Bach performance and best performance of Witold Lutoslawski's *Subito*, the commissioned work of the event. Ms. Kang has performed with every major orchestra in Canada; in the U.S.: the San Francisco, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Detroit, and Indianapolis orchestras, the Boston Pops; Hong Kong Philharmonic, Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Singapore Symphony, Czech Philharmonic, and the Orchestre National de France. Since 2005, Ms. Kang has held the position of first associate concertmaster with the Philadelphia Orchestra.

PROGRAM NOTES by Steven Lowe

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Sonata for Violin and Piano in F Major, Op. 24, No. 5, "Spring"

BORN: December 16, 1770, in Bonn

DIED: March 26, 1827, in Vienna

WORK COMPOSED: 1801

A year before his confessional though unsent letter known as the "Heiligenstadt Testament" Beethoven's hearing had not yet deteriorated to the point of despair so powerfully expressed in that letter intended for his brother. Though hints of his worsening affliction had appeared as early as the late 1790s, he was in 1801 enjoying great celebrity as both a virtuoso pianist and a notable composer. He had already completed his audacious First Symphony, which puzzled and even angered contemporary audiences and commentators, but his Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 5, "Spring," ruffled no feathers. In its amiable lyricism the work reflects the composer's abiding love of nature absent anything as tempestuous as, for instance, the storm suggested in the "Pastoral" Symphony that lay but a few years in the future.

The Sonata's nickname seems to have been bestowed by others who found the opening Allegro suggestive of spring, no doubt deriving from the vernal loveliness of its primary theme, announced by the violin and echoed by the piano. Throughout this engaging movement, the two instrumentalists trade off complementary statements of that theme as if mimicking each other in a playful conversation during a tranquil walk in the woods.

It is the piano that initiates the following Adagio molto espressivo with an aria-like theme answered in kind by the violin. If the Allegro seems like a carefree amble, this movement conveys serene stillness, as if the strollers stopped to sit and enjoy the scenery.

More of a conversational nature is found in the Scherzo: Allegro molto, witty and animated. The two instruments follow each other in almost canonic fashion, each figuratively on the heels of the other, thereby creating delightful syncopations that further enhance contrast with the preceding Adagio. Note that in the mid-movement Trio the instruments play together before separating for a repeat of the "A" section's energy and syncopation.

The closing Rondo: Allegro ma non troppo also revels in a happy mixture of syncopation, triplets and bountiful lively trills. Good humor is the byword, finding the composer in an especially buoyant state of mind. The Rondo theme itself sounds like an appreciative nod to Mozart.

Lili Boulanger, (1893-1918) As a Parisian-born child prodigy, Lili Boulanger's talent was apparent at the age of two, when Gabriel Fauré, a friend of the family discovered she had perfect pitch. Her parents, both of whom were musicians, encouraged their daughter's musical education. Her mother, Raissa Myshetskaya (Mischetzky), was a Russian princess who married her Paris Conservatoire teacher, Ernest Boulanger (1815–1900), who won the Prix de Rome in 1835. Her father was 77 years old when she was born and she became very attached to him. Her grandfather Frédéric Boulanger had been a noted cellist and her grandmother Juliette a singer.

Lili accompanied her ten-year-old sister **Nadia** to classes at the Paris Conservatoire before she was five, shortly thereafter sitting in on classes on music theory and studying organ with Louis Vierne. She also sang and played piano, violin, cello and harp. Her teachers included Marcel Tournier and Alphonse Hasselmans for harp, Mme Hélienè Chaumont for piano and Fernand Luquin for violin.

Career and death

In 1912, Boulanger competed in the **Prix de Rome** but during her performance she collapsed from illness. She returned in 1913 at the age of 19 to win the composition prize for her cantata *Faust et Hélène*, becoming the first woman to win the prize. The text was written by Eugene Adenis based on Goethe's Faust. The cantata had many performances during her lifetime. Because of the prize, she gained a contract with the publisher Ricordi. Lili Boulanger was greatly affected by the 1900 death of her father; many of her works touch on themes of grief and loss. Her work was noted for its colorful harmony and instrumentation and skillful text setting. Aspects of Fauré and Claude Debussy can be heard in her compositions, and Arthur Honegger was influenced by her innovative work.

She suffered from chronic illness, beginning with a case of bronchial pneumonia at age two that weakened her immune system, leading to the "intestinal tuberculosis" that ended her life at the age of 24. Although she loved to travel and completed several works in Italy after winning the Prix de Rome, her failing health forced her to return home, where she and her sister organised efforts to support French soldiers during World War I. Her last years were also a productive time musically as she labored to complete her many works. Her death left unfinished the opera *La princesse Madeleine* on which she had spent most of her last years.

The reader may ask: do two tiny works on this program merit this much space?? The answer: There is no doubt that Lili's very short life impacted and resonated tremendously with that of her sister, Nadia! Nadia Boulanger had given up entering the Prix de Rome after four unsuccessful attempts and focused her attention on her role as

assistant in Henri Dallery's organ class at the Conservatoire, where Lili studied harmony, counterpoint and composition with Paul Vidal and Georges Caussade under the Conservatoire's Director Gabriel Fauré—the last of whom was greatly impressed by her talents and frequently brought songs for her to read. According to Virgil Thomson, one of the thousands of organ, composition, and piano students and teachers taught by Nadia or students of Nadia, she was a 'One Woman Graduate School so powerful and so permeating that legend credits every U.S. town with two things—a five and dime and a Boulanger pupil, and for American musicians in general, she was our Alma Mater.'

"Nadia Boulanger," according to Aaron Copland, another of her famous students, "knew everything there was to know about music; she knew the oldest and the latest music, pre Bach and post Stravinsky, and knew it cold. All technical know how was at her fingertips. More important to the budding composer was her way of surrounding him with an air of confidence." She taught harmony, counterpoint, analysis, composition and other musical disciplines to hundreds of young Americans who flocked to her old fashioned apartment in Paris, attended her summer classes at Fontainebleau, or, during World War II, studied with her in one of the several colleges and conservatories at which she taught in her wartime sojourn in the U.S.

Nadia Boulanger died in 1979 at the age of 92, teaching until several days before her death. *(Editor note: my own Boulanger legacy can trace at least four teachers either taught by Boulanger or one of her pupils, and KI's own organist Andrew Senn has a very substantial Boulanger legacy). E. Bildersee with gratitude to Allen Hughes, who wrote Nadia Boulanger's obituary in the October 23, 1979 New York Times.*