

The husband-and-wife team concertmaster Katherine McLin and pianist Andrew Campbell leads this violin/piano journey from Leclair's Baroque elegance and Korngold's Shakespeare scenes through the late-Romantic drama of Brahms, and Latin American and Spanish dances from our very own Henry Flurry, Falla and Piazzolla, to the wistful *Ashokan Farewell*.

Jean-Marie Leclair (1697-1764) was among the finest violinists of the French Baroque. He was noted in his time as a composer of virtuoso violin music, in what his German contemporary Johann Joachim Quantz called the “mixed style”—a combination of French and Italian elements. An admiring French contemporary said of him that “Leclair is the first person who, without imitating anything, created beautiful and new things, which he could call his own.” Born in Lyon, Leclair was part of a musical family: three of his brothers were also violinists. He was in Paris by age 26, playing at the *Concerts Spirituels*, an early public concert series. In 1733, he was appointed to the Royal court of Louis XV, but by 1736 he had moved on to the Dutch court of Anne, Princess of Orange. He returned to Paris in 1743, and earned his living as a teacher and composer, producing his only opera in 1746, to a lukewarm reception. Leclair apparently fell on hard times late in his life, and was murdered—likely by his nephew, another violinist—in 1764.

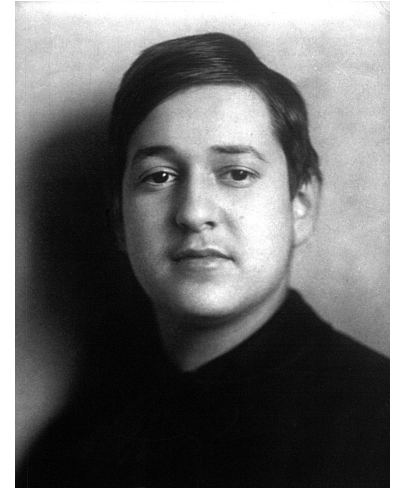


Leclair's *Op. 9*, his fourth book of sonatas for violin and keyboard continuo, was issued in 1743, after his return to Paris. Though these are technically demanding works, they always adhere to the French musical ideal of *le bon goût* (good taste) in avoiding anything “unnatural” or extreme. We hear the two opening movements of *Violin Sonata in D Major, Op. 9, No. 3* here. The opening (*Un poco andante*) makes frequent use of double stops and the second half has some extravagant (though always tasteful!) decorative runs. The *Allegro* is a rollicking rustic dance in 6/8, featuring double stops throughout. It is set in three repeating sections, each of which returns to the opening idea.

Long one of America's leading living composers, **Ellen Taaffe Zwilich (b. 1939)** first attracted wide critical attention in the mid 1970s with chamber works like her *String Quartet 1974*. She has composed in virtually every genre but opera and has written works for many of the world's leading orchestras, music festivals, chamber groups and soloists. Among her many awards and honors is the 1983 Pulitzer Prize in Music. (She was the first woman to receive this prize.) One critic has described her challenging music as “a happy combination of purely technical excellence and a distinct power of communication.” Her *Episodes for Violin and Piano* was written in 2003 for violinist Itzak Perlman. It is set in two movements, opening with a dignified *Arioso*. Here the violin line spins out from a theme played in the opening bars, moving slowly towards a passionate high point, before closing in a whisper. The *Allegro* is much more playful, with the violin and piano competing in a lively game of rhythmic tag throughout the opening section. The violin briefly introduces a more serious, thoughtful idea, before the playful texture returns now with a couple of virtuoso outbursts from the violin.

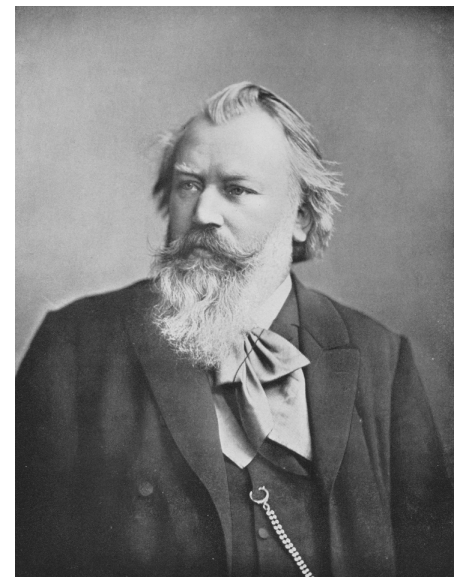


Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897-1957), born in Bohemia but raised in Vienna, began composing as a child. His father, an influential music critic, was able to give him access to the greatest musicians in Vienna. Young Korngold was clearly a prodigy, and at age nine, Gustav Mahler hailed him as a genius. Through the 1920s, he maintained a career as both a conductor and as a composer, and his 1920 opera *Die tote Stadt* (*The Dead City*) was particularly successful. By the 1930s, life for a Jewish artist in Austria was becoming increasingly hazardous, and in 1934 he accepted an offer to come to Hollywood to work on a film score. He spent the rest of his life there, and would write nearly two dozen film scores, mostly for the Warner Brothers studio. Korngold's bold, thoroughly Romantic style made him a natural for swashbuckling Errol Flynn adventures like *Captain Blood* (1935), *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938), and *The Sea Hawk* (1940). He returned increasingly to concert music after the war—he had in fact vowed never to write anything but film music until Hitler was defeated.



In 1919, Korngold completed a set of incidental pieces for Shakespeare's comedy *Much Ado About Nothing*. When the production, at Vienna's Schönbrunn Palace, ended in 1920, Korngold lost no time in extracting an orchestral suite from the score, and—with advice from violinist Wolfgang Kolisch—a four-movement suite for violin and piano. It opens with *The Maiden in the Bridal Chamber*, written to accompany a scene in which Hero awaits her wedding to Claudio with just a bit of apprehension, but obvious passion, all coming through clearly in the violin line. *Dogberry and Verges: March of the Watch* is a tongue-in-cheek piece depicting the two drunken night watchmen, marching pompously, but stumbling every few steps. *The Scene in the Garden* represents the growing love between the play's other couple, Beatrice and Benedick, whose snarky banter underlies a burgeoning romance. Here the lush violin line portrays Beatrice's growing softness. The final movement, *Masquerade-Hornpipe* accompanies an earlier party scene, that sets up many of the conflicts that are finally resolved at the conclusion, including the "merry war" of Beatrice and Benedick.

By the time he completed his third and final violin sonata in 1888, **Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)** was an acknowledged master at the pinnacle of his powers: all his orchestral pieces, and most of his chamber music, were behind him. The piece was finished, after two years of work, during a summer holiday at Lake Thun in Switzerland. The *Violin Sonata No. 3 in D minor, Op. 108* is certainly the most imposing of his three sonatas for violin and piano and is among his finest chamber works. The premiere was on December 21, 1888 in Budapest, with Jenő Hubay, violin and Brahms on piano. The work was published in 1889 with a dedication to his friend, conductor and pianist Hans von Bülow.



The sonata begins with an amazing statement by the violin: you could, in fact, argue that all the important ideas he works with in the next eight minutes of the opening movement (*Allegro*) are encapsulated in the first four bars! The movement as a whole is set in sonata form, with two related main themes: a lovely idea from the violin above a restless, piano background, and a second theme introduced by the piano alone. One remarkable feature of the development section is the unwavering A held by the piano. (To indulge in just a bit of music theory here, it would not be at all unusual for a development section of a piece in D minor to end with a prominent A Major harmony in preparation for returning to the main key. But here Brahms maintains this "pedal point" for almost 50 measures!) After we are safely back in D minor, he springs another surprise—a short bit of conventional "development section"-style writing in the middle of his recapitulation. At the coda, Brahms again has the piano

sit on a pedal point, this time a D. The *Adagio* is led by the violin throughout, playing a limpid, expressive theme. This occurs three times in the course of the movement, with contrasting moods between each statement. The piano leads the third movement (*Un poco presto e con sentimento*), playing an offbeat main idea with violin accents. After the idea is restated by the violin, it alternates with more rhapsodic music. The large finale (*Presto agitato*) is again in sonata form, with two main ideas: an almost frantic dance, and a much more lyrical and relaxed idea introduced by the piano. The stormy development section is concerned almost entirely with the first theme. This theme also dominates the very end of the piece, maintaining a turbulent mood until the final chords.

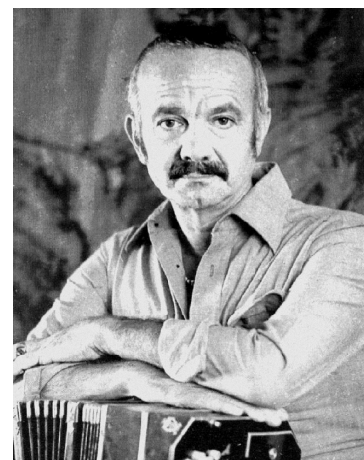
Henry Flurry, Arizona Philharmonic's artistic director, has written for ensembles in Prescott and across the country, including the Louisiana Philharmonic, Flagstaff Symphony, Arizona Philharmonic, and other regional orchestras. His *Machiche* comes from *Ragtime Dances for Marimba and Orchestra*, a set based on ragtime-influenced ballroom dances of the 1910s. Katherine McLin was concertmaster for the work's premiere, and in this movement her violin served as the marimba's dance partner. She later asked Flurry to arrange *Machiche* for violin and piano. The machiche began as a Brazilian dance, became popular in Paris, and eventually evolved into the samba.



Spanish composer **Manuel de Falla (1876-1946)** completed his short two-act opera *La vida breve (The Short Life)* in Madrid in 1905. The opera won a prize from the Spanish Royal Academy of Fine Arts, but he continued to revise it after moving to Paris in 1907. It was finally staged in Nice, in 1913. *La vida breve*, set in Andalusia, tells the rather sordid story of a young Roma girl, Salud, who falls in love with a wealthy young man named Paco. Paco fails to mention that he is already engaged and will be married soon. When Salud shows up at the wedding, she drops dead in grief. Though the opera itself is seldom produced today, some of its orchestral sections have taken on life of their own as popular concert music, including the *Danza* from Act II. In 1926, violinist **Fritz Kreisler (1875-1962)** published the arrangement here under the title *Dance Espagnole*, apparently without Falla's permission. (Kreisler was undoubtedly one of the great violinists of his generation and certainly a competent composer in his own right, but he was also notorious for producing forgeries attributed to great violinists of the past and for poaching on other composers' music!) The *Dance Espagnole*, a popular encore showpiece, begins with a seductive main theme, that alternates with contrasting, and increasingly flashy ideas.



The Tango—Argentina's national dance—had its origins in the seamy bordellos and taverns of Buenos Aires. With roots in Cuban and African music, and Argentina's homegrown *milonga*, it emerged in the early 20th century as a passionate couple's dance—seduction set to dramatic and syncopated music. Argentinian composer **Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992)** was born into this tradition and would eventually transform it into music for the concert stage. His family moved to New York City when he was very young, and Piazzolla spent his childhood in the Bronx. While still a child in New York, he learned the *bandoneón*—a large button accordion that is the lead instrument of the *Tango orchestra tipica*. While he just 13 years old, the Tango superstar Carlos Gardel invited Piazzolla to join him on tour. His father did not allow this, but when the family moved back to Argentina just a few years later, Piazzolla quickly gained a reputation playing in the best *orquestras* in the country, eventually forming his own group in 1946. At the same time, he was beginning to study with the composer Alberto Ginastera and writing his first classical compositions. Eventually, Piazzolla decided to pursue classical composition



exclusively, and moved to Paris to study with the famed teacher Nadia Boulanger. Boulanger was apparently unimpressed with his modernist classical works but was enthusiastic when he finally played one of his Tangos. He credits her with inspiration to combine the two, and over the next four decades, he forged a distinctive style that came to be known as *Nuevo Tango*. His music nearly always began with the seductive rhythm of the dance, but incorporated elements of Jazz, Rock, and modernist art music.

Piazzolla's *Histoire du Tango (History of the Tango)* was composed in 1986 for flute and guitar, written for the Belgian flutist Marc Grawels. The version for violin and piano heard here was published by Dmitriy Varelas in 2005. After initial movements surveying Tango's roots in turn-of-the-century brothels (*Bordel 1900*) and its evolution into a more respectable form for both listening and dancing (*Café 1930*), the third movement, played here, is *Nightclub 1960*. By this time the Tango had evolved into several distinct styles, and incorporated influences from Brazilian Samba and American Jazz, all of these threads woven together here.

No one who watched Ken Burns's epic 1990 documentary *The Civil War* will forget *Ashokan Farewell*—the melancholy fiddle tune that serves to bind hundreds of images and hours of interviews regarding one most heartbreaking periods of America's history. Like most people who watched, I assumed that the tune was contemporary to the 1860s, like the jaunty band music, fiddle music, and popular songs in the film's soundtrack. But *Ashokan Farewell* was written in 1982 by the fiddler and songwriter **Jay Ungar (b.1946)**, who tells the story as follows:

Ashokan Farewell was named for Ashokan, a camp in the Catskill Mountains not far from Woodstock, New York. It's the place where Molly Mason and I have run the Ashokan Fiddle & Dance Camps for adults and families since 1980... I composed *Ashokan Farewell* in 1982 shortly after our Fiddle & Dance Camps had come to an end for the season. I was feeling a great sense of loss and longing for the music, the dancing and the community of people that had developed at Ashokan that summer. The transition from living at a secluded woodland camp with a small group of people who needed little excuse to celebrate the joy of living, back to life as usual, with traffic, newscasts, telephones and impersonal relationships, had been difficult. By the time the tune took form, I was in tears. I kept it to myself for months, unable to fully understand the emotions that welled up whenever I played it. I had no idea that this simple tune could effect others in the same way. *Ashokan Farewell* was written in the style of a Scottish lament. I sometimes introduce it as, "a Scottish lament written by a Jewish guy from the Bronx."



Burns heard Ungar's recording of the tune in 1984, as he was beginning work on *The Civil War*, and made it the main title theme of each of the film's nine episodes, later asking Ungar to record much of the additional fiddle music heard in the score. *Ashokan Farewell* became a kind of *idée fixe*, however: reappearing at the most emotional moments in the film. (Ungar later figured that it is present for nearly an hour of the documentary's 11-hour running time!)

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Biographies

The McLin/Campbell Duo

Since their debut in 1990, the McLin/Campbell Duo has captivated audiences across the United States, Europe, and Mexico with dynamic, genre-spanning performances. Their repertoire ranges from timeless masterworks from the past three centuries with bold contemporary pieces, including world premieres and imaginative new arrangements. Known for their vibrant stage presence and artistic synergy, the duo brings music to life in ways that resonate and create connections with today's audiences—engaging, entertaining, and inspiring with every performance.

Violinist **Katherine McLin** is Concertmaster of the Arizona Philharmonic and maintains an active career as a concerto soloist, recitalist, chamber musician, and orchestral leader. Since debuting with the Oregon Symphony at age 15, she has made well over 100 solo appearances with orchestras nationwide and released more than 20 recordings on the Summit, Centaur, and Opus One labels. She also serves as concertmaster of the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra (Columbus, Ohio) and has collaborated with artists including Gil Shaham, Bela Fleck, Rhiannon Giddens, and Leslie Odom Jr., including ProMusica's May 2024 residency with Jon Batiste that premiered his first piano concerto. McLin is Professor of Violin at Arizona State University and holds the Evelyn Smith Professorship in Music; she has been invited twice by the American String Teachers Association to present national conference master classes. She earned a doctorate in violin performance from the University of Michigan, with additional degrees from Indiana University and the Oberlin Conservatory, and performs on a 1709 Gobetti violin on loan from ProMusica.



Pianist **Andrew Campbell** is a versatile collaborator whose work spans chamber music, opera, and orchestral performance. He has appeared internationally across Europe, South Africa, and Asia, and throughout the United States. Campbell has directed summer music programs in Germany, Luxembourg, and North Carolina, and serves as Faculty Artist at Rocky Ridge Music in Colorado. His recordings include Cantando with bassoonist Albie Micklich, and recent highlights include serving as principal pianist for the Oregon Bach Festival Orchestra in summer 2024. As a vocal coach, he has worked on the music staffs of Washington National Opera and San Diego Opera, collaborating with conductors Andre Previn and Heinz Fricke and working with composer Carlisle Floyd. Campbell studied with Martin Katz at the University of Michigan and is Professor of Music and Director of Collaborative Piano at Arizona State University.

