

August Concerts in Cherry Valley 2023

Glimmerglass Festival Orchestra
Musicians, in Concert for the
Thirteenth Season



Sunday, August 6, 7:00PM
Cherry Valley Artworks presents

The Fenimore String Quartet

WELCOME TO THE STAR THEATER

Tonight's program is a fine example of the superb programming Artworks has been bringing to The Star Theater. We are committed to nourishing the talent in our own community as well as reaching out to the greater artistic community in a wide range of disciplines. Our concert series has covered the range of musical genres from classical to jazz, from rock to country, world music and more. In addition we have presented ground breaking mixed media performances, dance, plays, films, and art shows. The theater has also become a resource for the community, co-hosting programs with The Glimmerglass Festival, Cooperstown Summer Music Festival, Glimmerglass Film Days, The Cherry Valley Museum and more.

Restoring and maintaining the theater and the rest of this historic building is a huge and daunting undertaking being carried out by a handful of dedicated volunteers. We invite you to join us in preserving one of the oldest, historically significant buildings in Cherry Valley for future generations. You can help by attending events, becoming a member of Artworks or making a donation towards further work on the building. Contributions of any amount are welcome. You can make a donation online at our website: cvarworks.org.

Join us:

Saturday, August 12, 7:00PM

The 2023 Cherry Valley Variety Show

A night of musical theater, jazz, and improvisational comedy produced by Cristina Van Valkenburg and David "Big Dave" Matthey. Stay tuned for cast announcements about their special guests from the TV and film industry and local musical favorites.

Sunday, August 13, 7:00PM

Ensembles Large and Small: Musicians Choice

Expect anything on stage from a tuba solo to a small orchestra! The members of the Glimmerglass Festival Orchestra show off their wide range of talents.

Cherry Valley Artworks presents

The Fenimore String Quartet and Friends

Sunday, August 6, 2023, 7:00 PM

The Star Theater, Cherry Valley, NY

Ruotao Mao, Robyn Quinnett, violins

Amy Tompkins, viola, Ruth Berry, cello

with guest artists

Sasha Margolis, Debrah Devine, violins

Angelika Teng, viola, Jon Pascolini, double-bass

String Quartet No. 6

in f minor, Op. posth. 80

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

I. Allegro vivace assai

II. Allegro assai

III. Adagio

IV. Finale: Allegro molto

String Octet in B-flat Major, op. posthumous

Max Bruch (1838–1920)

I. Allegro moderato

II. Adagio

III. Allegro molto

ABOUT THE MUSICIANS

Violinist **Ruotao Mao** is an active soloist and chamber musician while holding numerous concertmaster posts. His playing was described by *The Classical New Jersey* as “virtuoso display of world-class magnitude” and “The level of playing has reached far beyond mere technical competence.”

A native of Beijing, China, Mr. Mao graduated from the New England Conservatory of Music with a “distinction in performance” award. He earned his Masters Degree in Music and Artist Diploma from Rutgers University where he studied under violinist Arnold Sternhardt of the Guarneri String Quartet. He also studied with Dorothy Delay, Paul Kantor and Masuko Ushioda. As a chamber musician, he is one of the founding members of the former Beijing Piano Quartet, winner of “Artists International Chamber Music Series” with appearances in Weill Hall of Carnegie Hall and Alice Tully Hall of Lincoln Center and also the highly acclaimed Amabile String Quartet, the quartet-in-residence at Rutgers University (2000–2002). As a concerto soloist, he appeared with orchestras such as the Jupiter Symphony, NEC Symphony Corelliard Chamber Orchestra, the Brunswick Symphony Orchestra, Riverside Symphonia, Edison Symphony, the Philadelphia Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra, Bay-Atlantic Symphony, Arcadian Symphony Orchestra and Two Rivers Chamber Orchestra among many others. In 2004, Mr. Mao premiered a violin concerto by Ernie Stires in Stern Auditorium of Carnegie Hall. He had performance tours in Korea, China and Colombia, South America. He performed on WNYC, WETS and WDVR-FM broadcasts and is a recording artist for the CRI and Beijing Broadcast Labels.

Mr Mao serves as the concertmaster of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic, Bay-Atlantic Symphony, Riverside Symphonia and the Glimmerglass Opera Orchestra, Mr. Mao has taught violin and chamber music at The Lawrenceville School, The College of New Jersey and Princeton University.

Born on the island of Montserrat in the Caribbean, **Robyn Quinnett** began playing violin at eight years old. She has won several competitions including the National Mariam Hayes and Ruth Kern Competitions.

Robyn earned her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from The Juilliard School studying with Naoko Tanaka and the late Stephen Clapp. In 2019, Robyn completed her DMA from Stony Brook University studying with Hagai Shaham. She has attended the Tanglewood Music Center, Aspen Music Festival, Colorado College Music Festival, and Festival Internacional de Inverno de Campos do Jordão in Brazil. She has performed with ensembles such as the Glimmerglass Festival Orchestra, American Symphony Orchestra, Knoxville Symphony, Hudson Valley Philharmonic, Princeton Symphony, Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic,

New Haven Symphony, American Ballet Theatre Orchestra, Opera Philadelphia, and toured internationally as Principal Second of the Sphinx Virtuosi.

Robyn is dedicated to community engagement and pedagogy. She is a teaching artist and board member of Living Arts Collaborative, an organization of performing artists who aim to bring an accessible and interactive approach to the musical arts in schools. She founded The Montserrat Music Festival, a summer festival, bringing music education and live chamber music to her home island of Montserrat. She has also served as a Violin Faculty at the Sphinx Performance Academy in residence at the Curtis Institute of Music, Roosevelt University, and Cleveland Institute of Music. In the fall of 2023, Robyn will begin her position as full time Violin Faculty at Smith College.

Praised by the *Washington Post* for his “incisive, vibrato-rich tone,” **Sasha Margolis** has performed classical and improvised music all over the world, including the Netherlands, Italy, South Korea, Japan, and Spain. As co-leader of the eclectic ensemble Big Galut(e), he has won the Simcha Prize at the 2017 International Jewish Music Festival in Amsterdam and been heard on *Performance Today*, PRI's *The World*, and WNYC's *New Sounds*. As a chamber musician, he has collaborated with pianists Sanford Margolis and Jeremy Denk, members of the Pittsburgh, Detroit, Dallas and National Symphonies, Theodore Arm, and members of the Corigliano, Pro Arte, and Arianna Quartets. At Spoleto Festival USA, he was concertmaster for U.S. premieres of little-known operas by Janacek, Henze, Bellini and Donizetti, also playing and acting in Mauricio Kagel's *La Trahison Oral*. This summer, he is serving as associate concertmaster at the Glimmerglass Festival. Other career highlights include appearing as a strolling violinist on ABC's *Lost*, and playing for NBA star Grant Hill's wedding. His klezmer-themed novel, *The Tsimbalist*, was published in 2016.

Violinist **Debrah Devine** is an active musician in Upstate New York. Debrah attended SUNY Fredonia and CUNY Brooklyn College where she studied violin performance with Cornelius Dufallo and Liang Chai respectively. She is member of the Binghamton Philharmonic, Principal Second Violin for the Catskill Symphony, Principal Second Violin for the Femimore Chamber Orchestra, Assistant Concertmaster at the Orchestra of the Southern Finger Lakes and is a member of the Erehwon Ensemble. During July Debrah is an artist-in-residence serving as Principal Second Violin at the MostArts Festival. She also performs with several chamber ensembles including the Castalia String Quartet based in Oneonta, New York.

A dedicated pedagogue, Debrah teaches violin and viola to people from all walks of life in Cooperstown NY and in Oneonta. She also conducts the Preparatory Orchestra of the Little Delaware Youth Ensemble based in Oneonta.

Amy Tompkins, viola, received her Master's Degree in Arts Administration from Indiana University, Master's of Music in Viola Performance from the University of Colorado at Boulder (where she studied with Erika Eckert, Geraldine Walther, and the Takács Quartet), and Bachelor's of Music from Boise State University (student of Dr. Linda Kline). Regionally, she has performed with Albany Pro Musica, Binghamton Philharmonic, Catskill Symphony, Glens Falls Symphony Orchestra, Saratoga Voices, and Tri-Cities Opera. Tompkins is a founding member of the Castalia Quartet and Principal Viola for the newly-formed Fenimore Chamber Orchestra in Cooperstown, NY. She regularly performs with the Upper Catskill String Quartet and is delighted to be making her second appearance with the Fenimore String Quartet. Previous engagements in her home state of Idaho include the Boise Philharmonic, Boise Baroque Orchestra, Opera Idaho, McCall SummerFest, and Sun Valley Opera. She currently serves as the Associate Director of Development for the Glimmerglass Festival.

Angelika Teng is an active violist on both east and west coasts and currently resides in Bay Area, California. For her career as a musician, she has been performing with Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, Riverside Symphonia, Symphony in C, and numerous orchestras throughout the States. She has given many recitals and participated in chamber music concerts at Rutgers University. She has also performed at Kneisel Hall Chamber Music Festival in Maine. In the meanwhile, as a passionate performer and educator, Ms. Teng has coached and worked with California Youth Symphony and California Orchestra Academy. Ms. Teng received her degree of Bachelor of Arts from Tainan National University of the Arts (TNNUA) in Taiwan. Later she moved to New York and received the degree of Master of Music from Mannes School of Music, where she also received scholarships for the entire school calendar years. She was a candidate for Doctor of Musical Arts at Rutgers University with Fellowships. In her early years, she has attended Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Wien (University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna) in Vienna, Austria, where she studied with Thomas Kakuska (1940–2005) of Alban Berg Quartett. Her other primary teachers were Nai-Yueh Chang of TNNUA, Ira Weller (1955-2022) of Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, and Choong-Jin Chang of The Philadelphia Orchestra.

Ruth Berry is cellist and founding member of several chamber ensembles, including the Castalia Quartet of the Catskills, the Fenimore String Quartet, the Magellan String Quartet, and Ensemble Sonaris. She gives recitals of popular classics with Ensembles Intermezzo, and is the Artistic Director of a unique musician collective, In Praise of Music (www.inpraiseofmusic.org).

Since 1986, Ruth performs during the summers with the Glimmerglass Festival Orchestra and, when not in the orchestra pit, lives in her historic and award-winning Kitt Shipman Memorial Chapel in Springfield Center, NY. During the “off summer” months, Ruth travels regularly to perform for arts organizations throughout the North and SouthEastern USA including work as principal cellist of the Fenimore Chamber Orchestra and the Colgate Orchestra. Ruth worked for many years as principal cello of the Augusta Opera and Symphony and artist in residence with the Magellan String Quartet at Georgia Southern University. Ruth went to college at Boston University (where she studied cello with Leslie Parnas and received the Edwin E. Stein Award for Excellence in the Arts). Her graduate degree and studies at Cornell University were in musicology, analytical techniques and performance practice. Ruth is currently working on an Advanced Certificate in Labor Studies from the Cornell School of Industrial Labor Relations.

Jon Pascolini currently performs with the Glimmerglass Opera Orchestra, the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra, where he is Assistant Principal Bass, and the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra, where he is Principal Bass. He lives in Dayton, OH, where he is Adjunct Professor of Double Bass at the University of Dayton and maintains an active teaching studio in addition to his performing schedule.

PROGRAM NOTES

There are some interesting facts about this combination of pieces and composers in tonight’s program:

Mendelssohn’s String Quartet in f minor was written in 1847 and Bruch’s String Octet in B-flat Major for 4 violins, 2 violas, cello and double-bass was written in 1920. Both works are the final major works of their composers. However, the quartet was published in 1848, a year after Mendelssohn’s death, and the octet was not published until 1996. It is believed that Mendelssohn wrote this quartet as an homage to his sister, Fanny Mendelssohn, who died earlier that year. Coincidentally, Bruch’s wife, Clara, died the year before he

composed the octet. The choice of somber E-flat minor for the second movement seems to reflect his emotions toward his recent loss.

One often finds Mendelssohn and Bruch paired in a compact disc featuring their violin concertos. And if a string octet is featured in a program, most of the time it would be the famous Mendelssohn Octet. Tonight, we will feature the same two composers but with a Mendelssohn Quartet and the Bruch Octet.

Mendelssohn's string quartet in f minor is filled with high intensified passion and fire which is rarely found in his earlier works. The first movement is characterized by tremolo-like sixteenth notes throughout the movement. The second movement is a scherzo in form, but it, too, is highly dramatic with rhythmical complexities (the outer sections) and clashing of contrasting characters (the middle section). The third movement is a beautiful, heart-felt Adagio followed by a stormy and almost angry final movement characterized by syncopated rhythm in the main theme.

Bruch's Octet is in three movements, much like Mozart's Divertimentos but on a larger scale. The first movement opens with a gorgeously lyrical viola solo, and that lyrical character carries through the whole movement even during highly dramatic sections. The second movement is in a darker key, E-flat minor. It opens with a march-like motif which becomes the accompaniment figure under a first violin melody. The middle section is marked "Andante con molto di moto" (leisure speed with a lot of motion) and has been called "the highlight of the work" by some critics. The final movement combines characters of playful, noble (2nd theme on the cello) and triumphant. The playfulness gives one a balanced sense of scherzo which is "missing" in the work. Overall, it's a top level masterpiece which was relatively unknown and seldom performed before its first publication just 27 years ago.

(Program Notes by Ruotao Mao)

Artwork front cover: Mary Lou Ganio



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C H E R R Y V A L L E Y
ARTWORKS