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Program Page

**40th ANNUAL
ROCKPORT CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL**

Friday, August 13 :: 5 & 8 PM

ZLATOMIR FUNG, *cello*

DINA VAINSHTEIN, *piano*

**RIMEMBRANZE DEL TROVATORE DI VERDI, OP. 20 (1865)
Alfredo Piatti (1822-1901)**

Andante mosso/Adagio - Allegretto - Allegretto - Andante maestoso

**FANTAISIE ON THEMES FROM ROSSINI'S WILLIAM TELL, OP. 8 (1830)
Georges Hainl (1807-73)**

Andante - Andante poco Allegretto theme and variation - Adagio - Allegro

LENSKY'S ARIA FROM EUGENE ONEGIN (1878)

Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky (1840-93), arr. Mikhail Bukinik

**FANTAISIE ET VARIATIONS ON DONIZETTI'S LA FILLE DU REGIMENT,
OP. 16 (1856) Francois Servais (1807-66)**

Allegro / Lento - Tema (marziale) and 4 variations - Romance (Andantino) -
Finale (Allegro ma non troppo)

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Notes

RIMEMBRANZE DEL TROVATORE DI VERDI, OP. 20

Alfredo Piatti (b. Bergamo, Italy, January 8, 1822; d. Crocetto di Mozzo, July 18, 1901)

Composed 1865; 16 minutes



Life started well for the young Alfredo Piatti when he succeeded his great-uncle in his hometown orchestra of Bergamo at the age of 8. After five years of study at the Milan Conservatory, Piatti premièred his own cello concerto in Milan at 15. After a concert at La Scala the following year, he set out on his first European concert tour. Initially, he had great success, notably in Vienna, but then fell ill in Pesth (Budapest) and had to sell his cello to take care of himself. On the way back home, he met Liszt, gave a concert with him on a borrowed cello in Munich, followed by more concerts in Paris. Liszt presented him with a fine Amati cello, ever encouraging to gifted young musicians.

London soon became a base for Piatti, who continued to tour throughout Europe, teach both privately and at the Royal Academy of Music, play as principal cello with the Italian Opera, and perform string quartets with other celebrated string players in the first Joachim Quartet. He also published 18th century Italian cello music in editions that respected 18th century practice. His *12 Caprices, Op. 25* (1875) are still used by teachers of the instrument. Margaret Campbell in her informative book *The Great Cellists* (Gollancz, London 1988) sums up Piatti as “one of the last of the old romantic school of cello players combining brilliant technique and good taste.” Piatti played in the traditional manner without the anchoring endpin, avoided sentimentality in his playing, and had an agile pair of hands. He was also a connoisseur of fine instruments – including the 1720 Stadivari, known as the ‘Piatti, Red Cello,’ which he sought out for years, played on for a quarter century, and which still bears his name.

Pupils from across the world gathered for Piatti’s 70th birthday concert in Milan. Verdi joined in the celebrations. The program for the concert does not appear to have survived. But it would be nice to picture four of Piatti’s most distinguished pupils – Germans Hugo Becker, Robert Hausmann and Leo Stern, perhaps with the English cellist William Whitehouse – each taking his place in one of the four sections of Piatti’s *Rimembranze* of Verdi’s opera *Il trovatore*. It is a tasteful but still virtuoso tribute from one Italian musician to another, brilliant but not flashy.

FANTASIE ON THEMES FROM ROSSINI’S WILLIAM TELL, OP. 8

Georges Hainl (b. Issoire, Puy-de-Dôme, France, November 16, 1807; d Paris, June 2, 1873)

Composed 1830; 7 minutes

Having won the *premier prix* for cello at the Paris Conservatoire in 1830, François Georges Hainl started his professional career with various orchestras in the French capital. He then toured as a solo cellist. But it was only when he started conducting in Lyons in 1841 that Hainl’s name began to be noticed. Two decades later, he had risen to become conductor at both the Paris Opéra and the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire. Although Hainl beat Berlioz in the process, the two men remained friends, with Hainl directing part of Berlioz’s *L’enfance du Christ* and other shorter pieces in his first full season. Berlioz, for his part, put behind him years of hostility from the Conservatoire and made over all his personal collection of scores and parts to the organization and ‘my friend’ Georges Hainl. “It could not possibly be in better hands,” Berlioz wrote in his *Memoirs*.





Piatti, sketched for the Illustrated London News

The cello was at the heart of Hainl's activities as a composer, with several fantasies, 'souvenirs' and other short works in a relatively small catalog. The *Fantaisie on themes from Rossini's William Tell* is amongst the earliest of these, likely first scored for cello and piano, but later provided with orchestral accompaniment. Although evidence is scant and few cellists perform the work today, the *Fantaisie* may well have been among the best known of Hainl's works for the instrument. A rolled-up copy of the score appears to lurk in Hainl's top hat in the caricature of him by Achille Lemot (now to be found in the French *Bibliothèque nationale*).

LENSKY'S ARIA FROM EUGENE ONEGIN

Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky (b. Kamsko-Votkinsk, Russia, April 25/May 7, 1840; d. St. Petersburg, October 25/November 6, 1893)

arr. Mikhail Bukinik (b. Dubno, then Poland, now Ukraine, in 1872; d. United States in 1947)

Composed 1878. Arrangement date unknown / 7 minutes

Tchaikovsky turned to *Eugene Onegin*, Alexander Pushkin's much-loved novel in verse, knowing that his music could provide a narrative line through the 'lyric scenes' he instinctively knew he could compose. These 'lyric scenes' became Tchaikovsky's best-loved opera and Lensky's aria *Kuda, kuda vi udalilis* (Where, where have you gone, golden days of my youth?) one of its most memorable scenes. In the aria, Lensky is waiting at dawn for his opponent, Onegin, whom he has challenged to a duel, after seeing Onegin flirt with his sweetheart Olga. In the aria, as he waits for the fatal duel, Lensky sadly contemplates what lies ahead, now caring little whether he lives to see another day.

The arrangement of this scene for cello and piano is by Ukrainian cellist, composer and music educator Mikhail Bukinik, born just seven years before the opera's first performance in 1879. Bukinik studied at the Moscow Conservatory, appeared many times as a soloist, taught at the prominent Gnessin School and eventually emigrated to the USA after the Russian Revolution.

FANTAISIE ET VARIATIONS ON DONIZETTI'S LA FILLE DU REGIMENT, OP. 16

Francois Servais (b. Halle (Hal), nr Brussels, Belgium, June 6, 1807; d. Halle, November 26, 1866)

Composed 1856. 14 minutes

"A talent of the first rank, a Paganini of the cello, who astonishes, moves and enthralls through his boldness, his surges of sensitivity and his impetuous pace: I am speaking of the great cellist Servais."

The words are those published by Berlioz in the *Journal des Débats* after a concert in Paris by the Belgian virtuoso François Servais in 1847. When he wrote his complimentary words, Berlioz omitted to mention that Servais now has his own website <https://www.servais-vzw.org/en/>, where his music is "alive and kicking" under the auspices of the Servais Society.



Triple Threat: Georges Hainl in his prime (likely c 1865) as conductor, cellist and composer



Tchaikovsky with his wife Antonina Miliukova in 1877. The couple were together for just six weeks.



Adrien François Servais, the most important of 19th century Italian cellists

Rockport Music

Servais regularly performed throughout Europe – in concert with Liszt in The Hague in 1834, playing the *Archduke* trio with Mendelssohn and Ferdinand David in Leipzig, performing in the very first concert of the Vienna Philharmonic, and traveling widely in eight grand tours throughout many European countries. At a time when string technique was fast evolving, Servais led the charge in pursuit of technical virtuosity. He also invented the end pin, used to anchor the instrument to the floor, and permit accurate playing in ever-higher thumb positions on the A-string. As the existing repertoire for the cello was limited, he composed about 100 works for the instrument, 70 of which have been published and reprinted. They include four concertos, many recital pieces, duos and some 20 *fantaisies* in versions with solo piano, quartet, quintet or chamber orchestra. The *Fantaisie et variations on Donizetti's La Fille du Regiment, Op 16* is one of the better known of these and some of its technical innovations have been spotted and documented in music by the next generation of Romantic composers. These include David Popper, Victor Herbert and even Dvořák in his Cello Concerto.



A lengthy introduction, both lyrical and recitative-like, previews the main theme, the regimental song of Donizetti's comic opera: *Chacun le sait, chacun le dit* (Everyone knows it, everyone says it). This arrives, marked *marziale*, and is followed by a sequence of variations. Different technical challenges are explored in each variation, from the long shifts and wide leaps of the first, to the fast-running scales and *ponticello* (close to the bridge) bowing in the second. Ghostly harmonics are the main feature of the third and octaves, the fourth. A *Romance: Il faut partir mes bons compagnons d'armes* (I must leave you, my fellow arms fighters) follows, functioning much like a slow movement ahead of the Finale. This is based on the cheerful love duet *De cet aveu si tendre* (From this so tender confession). Its dazzling octaves, across-the-strings arpeggios and increasing tempo help make the fantasy a showpiece *par excellence*.

— Program notes © 2021 Keith Horner.

Comments welcomed: khnotes@sympatico.ca

About the Artists



Zlatomir Fung

cello

Praised for his virtuosity, maturity and profound musicality, 21-year-old American cellist Zlatomir Fung is quickly building an international reputation as one of the outstanding young string soloists of his generation, and is poised to become one of the preeminent cellists of our time. **He was awarded 1st prize at the 2019 Tchaikovsky International Cello Competition**, and is a former 1st prize winner at the Johansen, Stulberg, Irving Klein, Schoenfeld and Enescu International Music Competitions. In the 2020/21 season, Fung was invited to make debuts with the London Philharmonic, The Hallé, Frankfurt Opera, Turku Philharmonic, and the

Hangzhou Philharmonic among others. He was also scheduled to appear throughout North America, both with orchestra and in recital. Recent highlights include performances at Carnegie Hall. Fung's future appearances include performances in The Embassy Series in Washington, D.C., as well as in Malibu, Toronto and Baltimore, and with the Seattle, Utah, Santa Fe and Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestras. Of Bulgarian and Chinese heritage, he began playing cello at age three and earned fellowships at Ravinia's Steans Music Institute, Heifetz International Music Institute, MusicAlp and the Aspen Music Festival and School. Fung has been featured on NPR's 'Performance Today' and has appeared on 'From the Top' six times. He is the recipient of the Kovner Fellowship and currently studies at The Juilliard School under the tutelage of Richard Aaron and Timothy Eddy.



Dina Vainshtein

piano

Boston-based pianist Dina Vainshtein is known for her sensitive and virtuosic collaborations with some of the most promising musicians of recent years. Dina, a longtime Faculty Pianist for the Heifetz Institute and studied with Boris Berlin at the prestigious Gnessin Academy in Moscow where she received the Special Prize for the Best Collaborative Pianist at the 1998 Tchaikovsky International Competition. She came to the United States in 2000 to attend the Cleveland Institute of Music. Vainshtein’s talents led to numerous performing opportunities—from Tully Hall and Weill Recital Hall to the Caramoor Festival and the Ravinia Festival—as well as tours of Japan, China, Europe and Russia. For nearly a decade, she has been affiliated with the New England Conservatory and the Walnut Hill School in Natick, Massachusetts.

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