



Highland Park Strings

33rd Season ~ 2011-2012

Francesco Milioto, Conductor



Applause!

Free Community Concerts

Applause!

Our 33rd Season Four Community Concerts "Sundays at 3 pm"

The Strings have earned **Applause!** for always aspiring to artistic excellence and continuing to offer free community concerts despite budgetary concerns in an uncertain economy. Our ensemble of amateur chamber musicians, now blended with top young professionals, and our roster of soloists representing the best of Chicago talent and beyond, have created an enviable niche in the arts community.

Mostly, however, the **Applause!** belongs to you, our loyal listeners, who have filled our halls to near capacity for the past 32 years and showered us with your deep appreciation by standing ovations, praiseworthy comments and generous contributions to augment the anchor support of the Park District of Highland Park, YEA! Highland Park and The Rotary Club of Highland Park/

Highwood. You are the inspiration and spirit of the cultural community we serve, which has allowed our "little miracle in Highland Park" to flourish. On behalf of all the Strings, I am deeply grateful.



"The Highland Park Strings are unique, created by the determination and vision of cellist Larry Block and receiving base support from the Park District of Highland Park. Their free programs are a gift to the community from Block, his serious community musicians and the park district."

– Dorothy Andries, Pioneer Press

Lawrence Block
Founder, Co-principal Cellist and
General Manager

"Continually reinventing itself is what keeps the Highland Park Strings new, free and exciting each season."

– Larry Block



Francesco Milioto, Conductor



Now in his fifth season as conductor of the Highland Park Strings, Francesco Milioto has established himself as one of this city's most talented and sought-after musicians. The Chicago Tribune has called him "one of the best young conductors working in the Chicago area." In addition to his podium activities, he exercises his prodigious piano skills as a chamber musician, collaborative pianist and vocal coach. Since 2003 Milioto has been engaged as an assistant conductor and regular rehearsal pianist at the Ravinia Festival where this past summer he worked closely with Maestro James Conlon, the CSO and soloists on a production of Puccini's *Tosca*.

This year he will return to the Los Angeles Opera as assistant conductor to Maestro Patrick Summers to work on Puccini's *La Boheme*. Milioto also is music director of the Skokie Valley Symphony, and the New Millennium Orchestra, which will be featured at Symphony Center and the Harris Theater during the upcoming season. As artistic director of Access Contemporary Music, he will lead concerts and a tour of Toronto before returning to Opera on the James in Lynchburg, Va., for a production of Donizetti's *L'Elisir D'Amore*.

"As for the Brahms, ... the ensemble performed it with vigor and style delivering what might be called the "downtown sound" associated with such repertoire."

– Dorothy Andries, Pioneer Press



Stephanie Ettelson presents

"The Art of Listening to Today's Concert"
prior to each program at 2 pm.

October 23

Classic Gems and The Three Fiddles

3 pm • Free Admission
Highland Park High School • 433 Vine Avenue

BACH

Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 (BWV 1051)
Doyle Armbrust, Dominic Johnson, violas

HAYDN

Symphony No. 59 in A Major ("Fire")

MOZART

Sinfonia Concertante for Violin, Viola and Orchestra, K. 364
Aurélien Pederzoli, violin
Doyle Armbrust, viola

Strings concertmaster **Aurélien Pederzoli** returns for his second appearance as violin soloist joined by New Millennium Orchestra viola colleagues **Doyle Armbrust** and **Dominic Johnson**.

"The Three Fiddles" each lead diverse, freelance careers embracing the classics, contemporary music, rock and rap.



Dominic Johnson



Aurélien Pederzoli



Doyle Armbrust

Pederzoli and Armbrust are members of the newly-formed Spektral Quartet. Among the great violin-violin duos of the literature is Mozart's glorious Sinfonia Concertante, which is as romantic as it is representative of the 18th Century. Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 6, the last of the famous set composed in the style of the concerto grosso, features the mellow voice of two violas in duet as "concertante" soloists contrasted with Bach's exuberant tutti. Haydn's early Symphony No. 59 ("Fire") probably earned its nickname from the extremely energetic first movement with its unusual "Presto" marking. Haydn's unending originality in each of his more than 100 symphonies is legend.

Pederzoli plays a 1717 Carlo Bergonzi violin on generous loan from Francis Akos, Highland Park Strings conductor emeritus and former assistant concertmaster of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

"Violinists Aurélien Pederzoli and J. Austin Wulliman, violist Doyle Armbrust and cellist Russell Rolan are offering a winning combination of superb playing and fresh approach to repertoire choice and concert staging (Spektral Quartet)."

– Chicago Classical Review

December 11

Tchaikovsky Times Three

**Sponsored by Rotary Club of
Highland Park/Highwood**
3 pm • Free Admission
Elm Place School • 2031 Sheridan Road

TCHAIKOVSKY

Andante Cantabile
(from String Quartet No. 1 in D Major)

TCHAIKOVSKY

"Souvenir de Florence," Op. 70
(String Sextet in D Minor)

TCHAIKOVSKY

Concerto for Violin and Orchestra
in D Major, Op. 35
Nikki Chooi, violin



Nikki Chooi

Award-winning Canadian violinist Nikki Chooi makes his Strings debut in one of the most difficult concertos in the repertoire and a favorite of concertgoers, especially the beautiful Canzonetta. A student of Ida Kavafian and Joseph Silverstein at the Curtis Institute of Music and recipient of the 2010 Gene Witz Memorial Scholarship at the Ravinia Steans Music Institute, Chooi is a seasoned orchestral soloist and chamber music performer. Tchaikovsky's chamber music is as colorful and Russian in spirit as his symphonic works. Two of these works, the melancholic Andante Cantabile from his First String Quartet based on a folk tune, and "Souvenir de Florence," his celebrated string sextet, are arranged for the larger format of the string orchestra.

Chooi plays on a 1729 Guaneri del Gesu on generous loan from the Canada Council of the Arts Instrument Bank.



Fearless romance from the Highland Park Strings

"As with the concert Sunday, a near capacity crowd consistently attends these high level performances of the classical string repertoire and beyond. All we can do is join their applause and say, 'Thank you very much.'"

– Dorothy Andries, Pioneer Press

February 12 Annual Benefit

Distant Borders, Close Connections

Sponsored by YEA! Highland Park
3 pm • \$40 General Admission
Bennett-Gordon Hall at Ravinia
For tickets, call 847.831.3622.

VILLA-LOBOS

Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5 for Soprano and 8 Cellos
Michelle Areyzaga, soprano

HERBERT

Concerto No. 2 for Cello and Orchestra in E Minor, Op. 30
Amit Peled, cello

DVORAK

Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, Op. 95 ("New World")

The Strings' annual benefit in the intimate and acoustically superb Bennett-Gordon Hall at Ravinia always brings stellar artists to center stage. Soprano **Michelle Areyzaga**, an alumna of the Ravinia Steans Music Institute is well known in Chicago and abroad for her vocal versatility. In the music of Brazilian composer Villa-Lobos, which marries folk music with the style of J.S. Bach, Areyzaga's artistry has a remarkable vehicle. Israeli cellist and recording artist **Amit Peled**, in his third appearance with the Strings, will perform Victor Herbert's Cello Concerto No. 2, considered the composer's classical masterpiece, although the Irish-born composer-cellist is best known for his operettas and works for the musical theater. It is this concerto that is said to have been the inspiration for Dvorak's Cello Concerto. Close connections continue with Dvorak's Symphony from the "New World," in which the romantic composer juxtaposes indigenous American folk music with the spirit of his native Bohemia.



Amit Peled

"The flair of the young Rostropovich"
– American Record Guide



Michelle Areyzaga

"a gleaming voice and tone suffused with light"

– Chicago Sun-Times

"Of the vocal soloists, the most impressive singing came from the ever-dependable soprano Michelle Areyzaga in a radiant and fluent "Laudamus te" as well as in her Christe eleison" duet."

– John von Rhein, Chicago Tribune

Bonus for Major Contributors

Show how important Strings concerts are to you and our community by considering a donation of a \$100 or more to our benefit concert. You will be eligible for a minimum of 2 tickets, preferred seating and free tickets to a Donor Appreciation Chamber Music Concert at 3 pm on April 1 at the Highland Park Community House. This special program will feature the Spektral Quartet and members of the Strings.

May 20

Now and Then

Stephen Burns, Guest Conductor

Sponsored by **Dr. Armando Susmano**

3 pm • Free Admission

Highland Park High School • 433 Vine Avenue

SUSMANO

Serenade for Flute, Strings and Percussion

Constance Volk, flute

HAYDN

Trumpet Concerto in E-Flat Major

Stephen Burns, trumpet

SCHUBERT

Symphony No. 5 in B-Flat Major, D. 485

MOZART

Concerto No. 21 for Piano and Orchestra
in C Major, K. 467

Lori Kaufman, Piano



Lori Kaufman



Stephen Burns

Stephen Burns, Chicago's multi-talented conductor, trumpet virtuoso, composer and professor, returns to lead the Strings in a classic program with a "now" twist. He also will perform Haydn's brilliant Trumpet Concerto in E-Flat Major and collaborate from the podium with award-winning pianist **Lori Kaufman** in Mozart's C Major Piano Concerto No. 21. Kaufman, who is a major presence on the Chicago musical scene and performed Chopin with the Strings last year, has plans to perform across Southeast Asia during the 2011-2012 season. Deerfield resident **Armando Susmano**



Armando Susmano



Constance Volk

marks his composing debut with the Strings with his orchestral Serenade featuring **Constance Volk**, principal flute of the New Millennium Orchestra. The three-movement "expression of love" highlights folklore rhythms of Susmano's native Argentina enhanced by the special sound effects of the marimba, large triangle and woodblock. Schubert's enchanting Fifth Symphony known as "The Symphony without Trumpets and Drums," pays homage to Mozart in the warm Andante.

"Lori Kaufman's performance was a virtuoso exercise in control of touch and dynamics."

– The Boston Globe

"Burns uses his instrument with the lightness and flexibility of a singer in operatic arias. The tone is smooth and buttery, the ornamentation tasteful, the phrasing refined."

– The New York Times



Park District of Highland Park

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Visit www.hpstrings.org

Watch Cable Channel 19

Free admission sponsored by the Park District of Highland Park