



# Highland Park Strings

34th Season ~ 2012-2013  
Francesco Milioto, Conductor



Photo: Lisa Mazzucco



Photo: Lisa Mazzucco

*Double Your Pleasure!*

**Free Community Concerts**

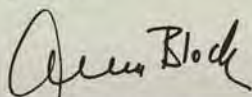
# Double Your Pleasure!

## **Our 34th Season Four Community Concerts "Sundays at 3 pm"**

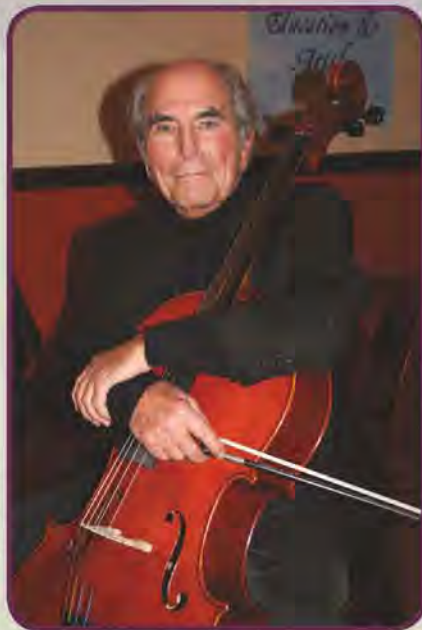
Following our final concert last May, the noted critic Dorothy Andries wrote: "It was a lovely afternoon, all the more so because there's no one else around here doing what the Highland Park Strings is determined to do—present orchestral concerts open to the public, free of charge." As pleasing as that comment was, I appreciate even more the letters I receive from our loyal audience members. For example, Wini Engerman wrote: "The Benefit concert was pure joy. Rarely have I had such unmitigated pleasure at a concert." These reminders that "our little miracle in Highland Park" is bringing pleasure to so many is the inspiration for us to continue despite increasing costs and an uncertain economy.

Devising programs for each season is a daunting task. This year, we have created something special. Four sets of siblings, all of whom are extraordinary artists, will be our soloists. Nikki Chooi, whose debut with the Strings last year in the Tchaikovsky Concerto was a sensation, will return with his brother Timothy to present the Bach Double Concerto and fiddle showpieces by Sarasate and Saint-Saens. Our December Concert will feature the young cellist Johannes Gray together with his sister Erica, violinist and violist. They will play the rarely heard Double Concerto by Reicha as well as bravura pieces for solo cello and viola by Tchaikovsky and Wieniawski. Starring in our Benefit Concert in February will be the Aznavoorian sisters, Marta and Ani, performing both the piano and cello concertos by Schumann. Closing the season in May, we will be treated to the Brahms Double Concerto featuring the Barston sisters, Elisa on violin and Amy on cello. The Strings will fill out the programs with Concerti Grossi by Handel and Manfredini and Symphonies by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms. Who could ask for anything more?

We look forward to your continued support. On behalf of the Strings, I am deeply grateful.

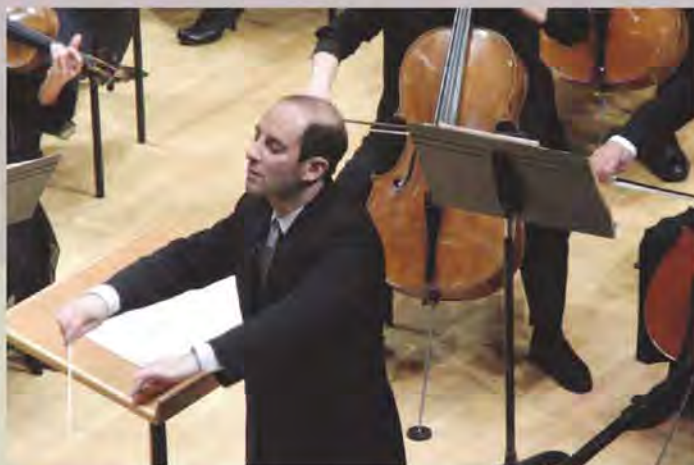


Lawrence Block  
Founder and General Manager



*"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



## Francesco Milioto, Conductor



Since coming to Chicago just over a decade ago Francesco Milioto has become an integral member of the city's musical scene, balancing a career as both a conductor and pianist. In addition to his position as Principal Conductor of the Highland Park Strings he is Co-founder/Conductor of the New Millennium Orchestra, Music Director of the Skokie Valley Symphony Orchestra, and Artistic Director/Conductor of Access Contemporary Music. Mr. Milioto is also an assistant conductor/rehearsal pianist/prompter for the Ravinia Festival, where he works closely with Maestro James Conlon. Outside of Chicago, Mr. Milioto has just finished his sixth production with Opera on the James in Virginia, followed by his return to LA Opera as first assistant conductor for the company's production of *La Boheme*.

*"...it was Milioto, a terrifically talented...conductor, who was the spark plug of this performance. He presided...with Bernsteinesque bravura..."*

– John von Rhein, Chicago Tribune

This past summer marked Mr. Milioto's 9th season with the Ravinia Festival where he worked intensely on Mozart's *Idomeneo* and *The Magic Flute*. Mr. Milioto is looking forward to leading exciting orchestral seasons with both the Highland Park Strings and Skokie Valley Symphony Orchestra, in addition to several key projects with the New Millennium Orchestra and Access Contemporary Music. For more information on Maestro Milioto please visit [www.francescomilioto.com](http://www.francescomilioto.com).

*"The Highland Park Strings just wrapped up its 33rd season of free Sunday afternoon concerts, and a 34th will commence October 21. That's reason enough to cheer this volunteer ensemble."*

– Dorothy Andries, Pioneer Press



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

# October 21

## The Fabulous Fiddlers

3 pm ~ Free Admission ~ Highland Park High School ~ 433 Vine Avenue  
Sponsored by First Bank of Highland Park



Nikki Chooi

"A model of taste and tonal refinement."

– Boston Globe

"...the *Allegro vivacissimo* arrived with the young man flying confidently through the dazzling passages. The conclusion was...stunning-ensemble and soloist meshing to secure a brilliant finale"

– Dorothy Andries,  
Pioneer Press



Timothy Chooi

"Le Miracle"

– La Presse of Montreal

### HANDEL

Concerto Grosso Op. 6, No. 5 in G major

### BACH

Concerto for Two Violins in D minor, (BWV 1043)

Nikki Chooi and Timothy Chooi, violins

### HAYDN

Symphony No. 49 in F Minor ("La Passione")

### SARSATE

Ziegeunerweisen, Op. 20

Nikki Chooi, violin

### SAINT-SAENS

Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 28

Timothy Chooi, violin

Recently named Laureate of the prestigious 2012 Queen Elizabeth Violin Competition, Nikki Chooi returns for his second appearance with the Strings, having performed the Tchaikovsky Concerto last season to great acclaim. Chooi obtained his Bachelors of Music at the Curtis Institute and at graduation was awarded the Milka Violin Artist Prize. He is currently pursuing graduate studies at the Juilliard School with Ida Kavafian and Donald Weilerstein. He has been a Fellow at the Steans Institute at Ravinia as recipient of the Gene Witz Memorial Scholarship. The past summer he attended his second season at the Marlboro Music Festival.

Timothy Chooi is currently enrolled at the Curtis Institute studying with Ida Kavafian. At the age of 16, Timothy captured the 2010 Grand Prix of the Montreal Symphony Orchestra Competition bringing him numerous concert engagements. In 2010 Timothy won the "Special Violin Prize" at the 2010 Yehudi Menuhin Violin Competition in Oslo. The Canadian born brothers will perform the Bach "*Double*" Concerto and each will play a showpiece for fiddle, *Ziegeunerweisen* by Sarasate and the *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* by Saint-Saens. The Strings will begin the concert with the *Concerto Grosso, Op. 6, No 5* by Handel and will also perform one of Haydn's masterful symphonies, *No. 49, "La Passione"*

# December 16

## *Two Shades of Gray*

3 pm ~ Free Admission ~ Elm Place School ~ 2031 Sheridan Road

*Sponsored by Rotary Club of Highland Park/Highwood*

### **HANDEL**

Overture to Judas Maccabaeus

### **MANFREDINI**

Concerto Grosso in C Major, Op. 3, No. 12 ("Christmas")

### **JOSEF REICHA**

Double Concerto for Violin and Cello in D Major, Op. 3

*Erika Gray, Violin, Johannes Gray, Cello*

### **MOZART**

Symphony No. 25 in G Minor, K. 183

### **WIENIAWSKI**

Scherzo-Tarantelle, Op. 16

*Erika Gray, Viola*

### **TCHAIKOVSKY**

Pezzo Capriccioso, Op. 62

*Johannes Gray, Cello*



Erika Gray and Johannes Gray

The brilliant fifteen year old cellist, Johannes Gray, returns for his second appearance with the Strings. Joined by his violinist and violist sister Erika, age sixteen, they will perform the rarely heard *Double Concerto* by Josef Reicha, a contemporary of Mozart. Both Erika and Johannes are scholarship members of the Music Institute of Chicago's prestigious pre-collegiate Academy Program, where Johannes studies with Hans Jorgen Jensen and Gilda Barston and Erika studies with MIC artist faculty member Desiree Ruhstrat. Each is also a member of both of the award winning Quartets—Ventoso and Stracciatella. The latter recently won the Gold Medal at the 2012 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition.

Erika is a junior at New Trier High School where she is concertmaster of the Chamber and Symphony Orchestras. A multiple prize winner, Erika has performed in venues such as Symphony Hall, Sydney Opera House, Bennett-Gordon Hall. Johannes, starting cello at age two, debuted with the Chicago Symphony at age fourteen, soloing four times as First Place Winner of the CSO Youth auditions. He has been featured on NPR's From the Top radio program and will participate in the International Young Tchaikovsky Competition this September. In addition to the Double Concerto, Erika will perform (on Viola) the *Scherzo-Tarantelle* by Wieniawski and Johannes will display his astounding technique in Tchaikovsky's showpiece, *Pezzo Capriccioso*. The Strings will add seasonal pieces by Handel and Manfredini as well as the beloved Symphony No. 25 by Mozart.

# February 17 Annual Benefit

## Schumann Squared

**Sponsored by YEA! Highland Park**

**3 pm ~ \$40 General Admission ~ Bennett-Gordon Hall at Ravinia**  
**For tickets, call 847.831.3622.**



Photo: Lisa Mazzucco

Ani Aznavoorian

*"A cellist who shows great sensitivity and great virtuosity at all moments."*

— Los Angeles Times



Photo: Lisa Mazzucco

Marta Aznavoorian

*"A pianist of exceptionally finished technique and purity of musical impulse."*

— Boston Globe

### **BEETHOVEN**

Symphony No. 1 in C Major, Op. 21

### **SCHUMANN**

Concerto for Cello in A minor, Op. 129

Ani Aznavoorian, cello

### **SCHUMANN**

Concerto for Piano in A minor, Op. 54

Marta Aznavoorian, piano

The Strings' annual benefit concert in the intimate and acoustically perfect Bennett-Gordon Hall at Ravinia is the highlight of the season. Appearing as soloists are the Aznavoorian sisters. Chicago natives, both Marta and Ani have performed as soloists with the Chicago Symphony. Marta holds both a faculty position and an ensemble-in-residence post with the celebrated Lincoln Trio at the Music Institute of Chicago. She received her Bachelor of Music degree and the coveted Performers Certificate from Indiana University where she studied with Menahem Pressler, and she received her Masters of Music degree from New England Conservatory. In strong demand as a chamber musician, Marta has collaborated with many artists such as the Pacifica Quartet, and concertizes frequently with her sister. Ani has appeared with some of the world's most recognized orchestras including the Boston Pops, the Tokyo and Helsinki Philharmonics and the Juilliard Orchestra. She received both her Bachelor and Master of Music Degrees from Juilliard where she studied with the famed Aldo Parisot. This season marks her fifth year as principal cellist of CamarataPacifica. In addition, she has been a member of the music faculty at the University of Illinois in Champaign/Urbana. Marta and Ani will play Schumann's only concerti for their respective instruments—a delight for the ears and eyes. The program begins with Beethoven's *Symphony No. 1*.

## **Bonus for Major Contributors**

Show how important Strings concerts are to you and our community by considering a donation of \$100 or more. You will be eligible for a minimum of two tickets, preferred seating, listing in the Program Book and free tickets to a Donor Appreciation Chamber Music concert at 3pm on April 7 at the Highland Park Community House.

# May 19

## Brahms Doubled

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

### BRAHMS

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73

### BRAHMS

Double Concerto for Violin and Cello, Op. 102  
Elisa Barston, Violin, Amy Barston, Cello

As daughters of Gilda Barston, the highly regarded cello teacher at the Music Institute of Chicago, Elisa and Amy are well known in the Chicago area. At age seventeen, Amy appeared with the Chicago Symphony on live television, was the Grand Prize winner in the Society of American Musicians' Competition and won First Place and the Audience Prize in the Fischhoff International Chamber Music Competition. Beginning at age three, Amy studied with Nell Novak at the Music Institute of Chicago and later with Joel Krosnick at Juilliard where she earned her Masters Degree. Amy lives in New York where she is a teacher at the New York School for Strings and at Juilliard. Elisa's principal teachers include Almita and Roland Vamos at the Music Institute as well as Robert Lipsett at USC and Josef Gingold at Indiana University where earned a Master of Music Degree, the prestigious Performer's Certificate and the Jascha Heifetz Scholarship. Elisa served as Associate Concertmaster of the Saint Louis Symphony for nine seasons and was a first violin in the Cleveland Orchestra. She is currently Principal Second Violin of the Seattle Symphony and both Amy and Elisa are members of the acclaimed Corigliano Quartet. They will perform one of the masterpieces of the literature for two instruments, the Brahms Double. The Strings will add the second of Brahms four symphonies to the program.



Elisa and Amy Barston

*"Glowing sound and technical aplomb"* (Elisa Barston)

– The Strad Magazine

*"Passionate and elegant"* (Amy Barston)

– New York Times



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*"What a gem you have here. I LOVE your orchestra."*

– Dr. Robert G. Hasty, Guest Conductor

*"A well prepared and entirely satisfying performance of Schubert's Symphony No. 5."*

– Dorothy Andries, Pioneer Press



**Park District of Highland Park**

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**34th Season ~ 2012-2013**

**Francesco Milioto, Conductor**

**October 23**

*The Fabulous Fiddlers*  
Highland Park High School

**February 17 (Benefit)**

*Schumann Squared*  
Bennett-Gordon Hall at Ravinia

**December 16**

*Two Shades of Gray*  
Elm Place School

**May 19**

*Brahms Doubled*  
Highland Park High School

Call 847.831.3622

Visit [www.hpstrings.org](http://www.hpstrings.org)

Watch Cable Channel 19

*Free admission sponsored by the Park District of Highland Park*