



SAN FRANCISCO  
**PERFORMANCES**

Photo: Camilla Greenwell



**OWEN DALBY** | Violin  
**GENEVA LEWIS** | Violin  
**MASUMI PER ROSTAD** | Viola  
**HANNAH COLLINS** | Cello

Sunday, April 6, 2025 | 3:00pm  
Presidio Theatre

## THE BEISCHER FAMILY SUNDAY STRINGS SERIES

### MENDELSSOHN

#### String Quartet in A Minor, Opus 13

*Adagio; Allegro vivace*

*Adagio non lento*

*Intermezzo: Allegretto con moto—Allegro di molto*

*Presto—Adagio non lento*

### ZEMLINSKY

#### String Quartet No. 1 in A Major, Opus 4

*Allegro con fuoco*

*Allegretto*

*Breit und kräftig*

*Vivace e con fuoco*

**This program is made possible in part by the generous support of The Beischer Family.**

**Owen Dalby**    [owendalby.com](http://owendalby.com)

**Geneva Lewis**    [artsmg.com/artists/geneva-lewis](http://artsmg.com/artists/geneva-lewis)

**Masumi Per Rostad**    [masumirostad.com](http://masumirostad.com)

**Hannah Collins**    [hannahcollinscello.com](http://hannahcollinscello.com)

Steinway Model D, Pro Piano, San Francisco

## ARTIST PROFILES

*San Francisco Performances presents Owen Dalby for the second time; he made his debut on the Sunday String Series in February. Geneva Lewis, Masumi Per Rostad and Hannah Collins make their SF Performances debuts at today's concert.*

Praised as “dazzling” (*The New York Times*), “expert and versatile” (*The New Yorker*), and “a fearless and inquisitive violinist” (*San Francisco Classical Voice*), **Owen Dalby** leads a rich musical life as a soloist, chamber musician, new and early music expert, orchestral concertmaster, and educator. He is Artist-in-Residence at Stanford University and lives in San Francisco.

As a member of the St. Lawrence String Quartet from 2015 until the group's retirement in 2024, Owen toured all of the major chamber series in North America and Europe, and made solo appearances with the LA Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and the NHK Philharmonic (Tokyo). Acclaimed recordings include Haydn *Opus 20* (EASonus), as well as his *String Quartets Opus 76* and Korngold's *Piano Quintet Opus 15* with Stephen Prutsman (Phenotypic Recordings). SLSQ was a particularly beloved ensemble in the world of contemporary string quartets, performing many dozens of concerts each season, inspiring and nurturing communities of chamber music enthusiasts, and influencing generations of young artists.

Prior to joining the SLSQ, Owen lived in New York City where he co-founded Decoda, the affiliate ensemble of Carnegie Hall, and was also the concertmaster of Novus NY, the contemporary music orchestra of Trinity Wall Street. He was also a key member of the Trinity Baroque Orchestra, performing the complete cantatas and passions of JS Bach alongside other great 16th and 17th century repertoire. He made his Lincoln Center debut in 2010 with Lou Harrison's *Concerto for Violin and Percussion Orchestra* at Alice Tully Hall, and that same year gave the world premiere of *Look Around You*, a one-man double concerto by Timo Andres for solo violin and viola, with the Albany Symphony Orchestra.

In 2010 Owen completed a three-year tenure with Ensemble Connect (formerly known as Ensemble ACJW), a fellowship of Carnegie Hall and the Juilliard School that seeks to link a performer's life with advanced training in education and community engagement. In addition to co-directing the chamber music program and maintaining a violin studio at Stanford, Owen has taught music to students in masterclasses in Mexico, Iceland, at the Britten-Pears Young Artist Program in Aldeburgh, UK, the Eastman School of Music, the San Francisco Conservatory, Princeton University, Skidmore College, and the University of South Carolina, among many other places.

Owen is regularly invited to perform chamber music at festivals from Hamburg to Honolulu, and from Iceland to Mumbai. His many chamber music collaborators have included Stephen Prutsman, Inon Barnatan, Anne-Marie McDermott, the Danish String Quartet, Daniel Hope, Christian Tetzlaff, Dawn Upshaw, the Persian kamancheh virtuoso Kayhan Kalhor, and Simon Rattle.

Owen received early training with Anne Crowden at the Crowden School in Berkeley, CA and bachelor's and master's degrees from Yale University where he studied with Syoko Aki. With his wife, violist Meena Bhasin, Owen is co-Artistic and Executive Director of Noe Music, a chamber music series in San Francisco, where they make their home with their children Leila and Knight.

Owen performs on the “Fetzer” Stradivarius made in Cremona in 1694.

American/New Zealand violinist **Geneva Lewis** has forged a reputation as a musician of consummate artistry whose performances speak from and to the heart and who has been lauded for the “remarkable mastery of her instrument” (CVNC) and hailed as “clearly one to watch” (*Musical America*).

Named a BBC New Generation Artist (2022–24), Geneva is also the recipient of a 2022 Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award and a 2021 Avery Fisher Career Grant. She was also Grand Prize winner of the 2020 Concert Artists Guild Competition, winner of the Kronberg Academy's Prince of Hesse Prize (2021), *Musical America's* New Artist of the Month (June 2021), a Performance Today Young Artist in Residence, and a YCAT Concordia Artist.

In 2023, Geneva made her BBC Proms debut with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and Jaime Martin. The 2024–25 season includes debuts with the Orquestra Filarmonica de Minas Gerais, Indianapolis Symphony, Des Moines Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, The Florida Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, and Vancouver Symphony.

Geneva made her solo debut at age 11 with the Pasadena POPS and has since gone on to perform with orchestras including Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, North Carolina Symphony, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, BBC New Orchestra of Wales, BBC Symphony, Kansas City Symphony, Austin Symphony, and San Diego Symphony under conductors such as Gemma New, Hugh Wolff, Nicholas McGegan, Grant Llewellyn, Giordano Bellincampi, and Dirk Meyer.

Deeply passionate about chamber music, Geneva has had the pleasure of collaborating with prominent musicians such as Jonathan Biss, Glenn Dicterow, Miriam Fried, Kim Kashkashian, Gidon Kremer, Marcy Rosen, Sir András Schiff, and Mitsuko Uchida. She has performed in venues and festivals such as London's Wigmore Hall, the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Marlboro Music Festival, Kronberg Festival, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Ravinia, and Chamberfest Cleveland.

An advocate of community engagement and music education, Geneva was selected for New England Conservatory's Community Performances and Partnerships Program's Ensemble Fellowship, through which her string quartet created interactive educational programs for audiences throughout Boston. The quartet was also chosen for the Virginia Arts Festival Residency, during which they performed and presented master classes in elementary, middle, and high schools.

Geneva received her Artist Diploma from New England Conservatory as the recipient of the Charlotte F. Rabb Presidential Scholarship, studying with Miriam Fried. She also studied with Professor Mihaela Martin in the Professional Studies Program at the Kronberg Academy. Prior to that, she studied with Aimée Kreston at the Colburn School of Performing Arts.

Geneva currently performs on a composite violin by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini, c. 1776 generously on loan from a Charitable Trust.

Praised for his “burnished sound” (*The New York Times*) and described as an “electrifying, poetic, and sensitive musician,” the Grammy Award-winning, Japanese-Norwegian violist **Masumi Per Rostad** hails from the gritty East Village of 1980s New York. He was raised in an artist loft converted from a garage with a 1957 Chevy Belair as the remnant centerpiece in their living room. Masumi began his studies at the nearby Third Street Music School Settlement at age three and has gone on to become one of the most



in demand soloists, chamber musicians, teachers. In addition to maintaining an active performance schedule, he serves on the faculty of the prestigious Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY.

Masumi regularly tours internationally and has performed at many of the most prominent festivals, including Marlboro, Spoleto USA, Music@Menlo, Caramoor, Music in the Vineyards, Bowdoin, and the Aspen Music Festival. His guest violist collaborations include programs with the St Lawrence, Ying, Pavel Haas, Miró, Verona, and Emerson String Quartets, as well as with the Horszowski Trio. He toured and recorded extensively as a former member of the International Sejong Soloists. He can be heard on the Cedille Records, Naxos, Hyperion, Musical Observations, Bridge, and Tzadik record labels.

As a member of the Pacifica Quartet for almost two decades (2001–17), Masumi regularly performed in the world's greatest halls including Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Tokyo's Suntory Hall, Sydney's City Hall, New York's Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, London's Wigmore Hall, Vienna's Konzerthaus and Musikverein, Munich's Herkuleshaal, Paris' Louvre and Cité de la Musique, and Berlin's Konzerthaus among many others. He was full professor of viola and chamber music as quartet-in-residence at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music. In 2006, the ensemble was awarded the coveted Cleveland Quartet Award, Avery Fisher Career Grant, and they were also named *Musical America's* 2009 Ensemble of the Year.

Masumi is an ardent advocate for the arts, and often sought after as a contributing writer to such publications as the *Huffington Post*, *Strings*, and *Gramophone* magazines as well as *The Guardian*.

Passionate about breaking down barriers that prevent people from enjoying Classical music, Masumi was the founder of DoCha, a chamber music festival in Champaign, Illinois that produced innovative events with a focus on engaging new audiences through fun and inventive programming. DoCha-hosted events featured unique collaborations between members of the University and multi-genre presentations from Classical chamber music to contemporary dance, the spoken word, and much more. All programs were free of charge and took place at a beautiful former community Opera House. Other activities of DoCha, included "in-reach" performances for elementary school students as well as master classes, competitions and performance opportunities for local music students.

Masumi has served on the faculties of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University, The University of Chicago, Longy School of Music, and Northwestern University. He has given master classes at The Colburn School, Cleveland Institute of Music, The Aspen Music Festival, Bowdoin International Music Festival, Interlochen and San Francisco Conservatory among many others.

He received his Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from The Juilliard School. There, he studied with legendary violist and pedagogue Karen Tuttle from the age of 17 and was made her teaching assistant just three years later at the age of 20. At Juilliard, he was awarded the "Lillian Fuchs Award" for the most outstanding graduating violist. He also won the Juilliard School Concerto Competition and performed the world premiere of Michael White's *Viola Concerto* in Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall, with conductor James DePreist. That same year he gave the New York premiere of Paul Schoenfield's *Viola Concerto* with the Juilliard Symphony to critical acclaim. In 2008 he was awarded the "Rising Star Award"

by the Third Street Music School Settlement for his musical achievements

Masumi lives in Rochester, NY with his wife Sonia—a concert pianist—and their daughter, Ling. He is professor of viola and chamber music at the Eastman School of Music. He is a D'Addario Artist and has used their strings since 1999. Celebrating a 400 year birthday in 2019, his Amati viola was crafted in Cremona, Italy in 1619.

Cellist **Hannah Collins** is a dynamic performer who uses diverse forms of musical expression and artistic collaboration to build community. Winner of the Presser Music Award and De Linkprij's for contemporary interpretation, she takes an active role in expanding the repertoire for the cello by commissioning new works and co-creating interdisciplinary projects—most recently working with visual artist Antonia Contro and violinist Clara Lyon on *Correspondence*, a multimedia installation exhibited at the Carrie Secrist Gallery in Chicago. *Resonance Lines*, her solo debut album on the Sono Luminus label, is an "adventurous, impressive collection of contemporary solo cello music," negotiated "with panache" (*The Strad*), pairing music by Benjamin Britten and Kaija Saariaho with commissioned works by Caroline Shaw and Thomas Kotcheff.

Over the past decade, New Morse Code, her "remarkably inventive and resourceful duo" (*Gramophone*) with percussionist Michael Compitello, has developed projects responding to our society's most pressing issues, including *The Emigrants*, a documentary chamber work by George Lam, and *dwb (driving while black)*, a chamber opera by Roberta Gumbel and Susan Kander. They were named the winners of the 2020 Ariel Avant Impact Performance Prize which will support the development of new works addressing sustainability and scientific innovation.

Solo and chamber music performances have taken Hannah to festivals such as Orford Centre d'arts, Kneisel Hall, Aldeburgh Festival, and Musique de Chambre à Giverny. She is a member of A Far Cry and Decoda, and has recently performed with The Knights, Grossman Ensemble, Bach Aria Soloists, and NOVUS NY. Praised for her "incisive, vibrant continuo" playing (*S. Florida Classical Review*), Hannah also appears regularly as a Baroque cellist with the Sebastians, Quodlibet Ensemble, and Trinity Baroque Orchestra.

Hannah earned a B.S. in biomedical engineering from Yale and holds degrees in music from the Yale School of Music, the Royal Conservatory of The Hague, and City University of New York. She is an alumna of Ensemble Connect, a fellowship program of Carnegie Hall, The Juilliard School, and Weill Music Institute, and is currently Associate Professor of Cello at the University of Kansas.

## PROGRAM NOTES

### String Quartet in A Minor, Opus 13

**FELIX MENDELSSOHN**

(1809–1847)

Mendelssohn turned 18 early in 1827, a year that was important for many reasons. Already the composer of two masterpieces—the *Octet* (1825) and the *Overture to A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1826)—Mendelssohn spent the summer on a walking tour of the Harz Mountains in central Germany and in the fall entered the University of Berlin, where he attended Hegel's lectures. One other event from 1827 had a profound effect on the young composer: Beethoven died on March 26.

Mendelssohn never met Beethoven—he had grown up in northern German cities, far from Vienna, where Beethoven lived the final 35 years of his life. But the young composer regarded Beethoven as a god. In the fall of 1827, only months after Beethoven's death, Mendelssohn wrote his *String Quartet in A Minor*. This quartet seems obsessed by the Beethoven quartets, both in theme-shape and musical gesture, and countless listeners have wondered about the significance of these many references.

The *Quartet in A Minor* opens with a slow introduction. This *Adagio*, which evokes memories of Beethoven's *Quartet in A Minor, Opus 132*, also quotes one of Mendelssohn's own early love-songs, "Ist es wahr?" and that song's principal three-note phrase figures importantly in the first movement. The music leaps ahead at the *Allegro vivace*, and Mendelssohn's instructions to the players indicate the spirit of this music: *agitato* and *con fuoco*. The second movement also begins with a slow introduction, an *Adagio* that has reminded some of the *Cavatina* movement of Beethoven's *String Quartet in B-flat Major, Opus 130*. The main body of the movement is fugal, based on a subject that appears to be derived from Beethoven's *String Quartet in F Minor, Opus 95*.

The charming *Intermezzo* is the one "non-Beethoven" movement in the quartet. In ABA form, it opens with a lovely violin melody over pizzicato accompaniment from the other voices; the center section (*Allegro di molto*) is one of Mendelssohn's fleet scherzos, and he combines the movement's principal themes as he brings it to a graceful close. The sonata-form finale opens with a stormy recitative for first violin that was clearly inspired by the recitative that prefaces the finale of Beethoven's *String Quartet in E-flat Major, Opus 127*. Not only does Mendelssohn evoke the memory of several Beethoven quartets in this finale, but at the very end he brings back quotations from this quartet's earlier movements: the fugue subject from the second movement is heard briefly, and the quartet ends with the heartfelt music that opened the first movement.

What are we to make of the many references to Beethoven's late quartets in this quartet by the teenaged Mendelssohn? Are they slavish imitation? The effort of a young man to take on the manner of an older master? An act of homage? There may be no satisfactory answers to these questions, but Mendelssohn's *Quartet in A Minor*—the work of an extremely talented young man still finding his way as a composer—is accomplished music in its own right: graceful, skillfully made, and finally very pleasing.

## String Quartet No. 1 in A Major, Opus 4

ALEXANDER ZEMLINSKY  
(1871–1942)

Alexander Zemlinsky's career spanned several musical worlds: born and trained in the Vienna of Bruckner and Brahms, he died—almost forgotten—in a suburb of New York City during World War II. Over the last several decades, however, he has gradually been recognized as a talented composer and conductor who followed

his own course through the complex thicket of music in the twentieth century. Zemlinsky had Viennese training, studying piano and composition at the Vienna Conservatory from 1887 until 1892. He became close friends with the young Arnold Schoenberg, who claimed that all his systematic musical education had come from Zemlinsky; Schoenberg later married Zemlinsky's sister, and the two young men established a society to promote and perform new music in Vienna. Zemlinsky soon attracted the attention of Mahler, who conducted the premiere of his opera *Es war einmal* in Vienna in 1900 and scheduled the premiere of another opera. In the new century, Zemlinsky made his career largely as a conductor, conducting from 1911 until 1927 in Prague (where he gave the first performance of Schoenberg's *Erwartung*) and from 1927 until 1930 at the Kroll Opera in Berlin. When the Nazis came to power in 1933, he returned to Vienna and at the Anschluss in 1938 fled to America, where he died at age 70.

Zemlinsky most wanted to write for the stage: he composed eight operas, as well as ballet and incidental music. He wrote very little orchestral music, some chamber music (including four string quartets), and a number of songs. As a composer, Zemlinsky gradually moved away from the late-romantic style he had learned at the Conservatory, but he never embraced the atonal idiom of his friend Schoenberg. His music is often original in conception (his *Second String Quartet* is in one movement that lasts for 40 minutes) and reflects an intelligent sensibility trying to find a personal voice in the midst of vast musical changes. His music for voice remains probably his most enduring achievement, particularly his *Lyric Symphony* of 1923, modeled on Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*.

Zemlinsky composed his *String Quartet No. 1* in 1895, when he was 24. This music was admired by Johannes Brahms, who made the generous gesture of convincing Simrock, his own publisher, to publish this work by an unknown young man (though a musical conservative himself, Brahms was a keen supporter of new talent and at this same time also sponsored performances of chamber music by another young composer, Ernst von Dohnányi). It is not surprising that Brahms should have admired Zemlinsky's *First String Quartet*, for—in terms of form and sound—it shows the influence of the older composer.

The quartet is in the four-movement form of the classical string quartet. Its dramatic first movement, marked *Allegro con fuoco*, depends on some key relationships that Brahms might have found unusual, while the second movement is in ABA form; the unusual thing about this movement is that the outer sections are slow, while the center section whips along on a *Presto* marking. The somber third movement is the only one of the four with a German marking: *Breit und kräftig* ("broad and powerful"). This movement too is in ternary form, and once again it is the dramatic, almost explosive, center section that commands interest. Zemlinsky rounds the quartet off with a lively finale, which shares with the first movement the marking *con fuoco*: "with fire."

—Program notes by Eric Bromberger

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All performances at Herbst Theatre unless otherwise indicated

## September 2024

Sat 28 7:30pm Hot Club of San Francisco  
(*Presidio Theatre*)

## October 2024

Fri 4 7:30pm *Gala Performance:*  
Jake Heggie, piano  
Nicholas Phan, tenor

Sat 12 7:30pm Karim Sulayman, tenor  
Sean Shibe, guitar  
(*Presidio Theatre*)

Sat 26 10:00am Alexander String Quartet with  
Robert Greenberg

Sat 26 7:30pm Esmé Quartet

Sat 2 10:00am Alexander String Quartet with  
Robert Greenberg

Thu 7 7:30pm Jerusalem Quartet  
(*Caroline H. Hume Concert Hall*)

Wed 13 7:30pm Natasha Paremski, piano

Thu 14 7:30pm Caroline Shaw, viola/vocals  
Gabriel Kahane, piano/vocals

Tue 19 7:30pm Anthony Roth Costanzo,  
countertenor  
Bryan Wagorn, piano

## December 2024

Tue 3 7:30pm Anthony McGill, clarinet  
Pacifica Quartet

## January 2025

Sat 11 10:00am Alexander String Quartet with  
Robert Greenberg

Sat 25 10:00am Alexander String Quartet with  
Robert Greenberg

Sat 25 8:00pm MILOŠ, guitar\*

Wed 29 7:30pm *PIVOT Festival:*  
Gabriel Kahane, curator · conductor  
Carla Kihlstedt, violin/vocals  
Del Sol Quartet

Thu 30 7:30pm *PIVOT Festival:*  
Gabriel Kahane, curator · host  
Haley Heynderickx, guitar/vocals  
The Westerlies

Fri 31 7:30pm *PIVOT Festival:*  
Gabriel Kahane, curator · host  
Sandbox Percussion

## February 2025

Tue 4 7:30pm Sir Stephen Hough, piano

Sat 8 10:00am Alexander String Quartet with  
Robert Greenberg

Sat 8 7:30pm Marc-André Hamelin, piano

Sat 15 7:30pm Steven Isserlis, cello  
Connie Shih, piano

Sun 16 3:00pm Alexi Kenney, violin  
Owen Dalby, violin & viola  
Christopher Costanza, cello  
Amy Yang, piano (*Presidio Theatre*)

Sat 22 7:30pm Amjad Ali Khan, sarod  
Sharon Isbin, guitar  
Amaan & Ayaan Ali Bangash, sarod\*

Wed 26 7:30pm Fleur Barron, mezzo-soprano  
Kunal Lahiry, piano

Thu 27 7:30pm Dreamers' Circus  
(*Presidio Theatre*)

## March 2025

Sat 8 7:30pm Calidore String Quartet

Tue 11 7:30pm Midori, violin  
Özgür Aydin, piano

Fri 14 7:30pm Pavel Haas Quartet

Thu 20 7:30pm Jan Lisiecki, piano

Fri 21 7:30pm Tetzlaff Quartet

Tue 25 7:30pm Louis Lortie, piano

Fri 28 7:30pm Johan Dalene, violin  
Sahun Sam Hong, piano

Sat 29 7:30pm Thomas Dunford, lute\*  
(*St. Mark's Lutheran Church*)

## April 2025

Tue 1 7:30pm Joyce Yang, piano

Thu 3 7:30pm Randall Goosby, violin  
Zhu Wang, piano

Sun 6 3:00pm Owen Dalby, violin  
Geneva Lewis, violin  
Masumi Per Rostad, viola  
Hannah Collins, cello  
(*Presidio Theatre*)

Wed 16 7:30pm Isidore String Quartet

## May 2024

Sat 3 7:30pm Manuel Barrueco, guitar\*

Sun 4 3:00pm Christopher Costanza, cello  
(*Presidio Theatre*)

\* Presented in association with OMNI Foundation for the  
Performing Arts

**Programs, Artists, Dates and Times Subject to Change**