

GREAT FALLS SYMPHONY 2019-2020 CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES

the Cascade Quartet presents
Phil Aaberg
IN CONCERT

Megan Karls, VIOLIN · Luis Angel Salazar, VIOLIN · Alyssa Roggow, VIOLA · Thad Suits, CELLO

with guest artist **Philip Aaberg, piano**

7:00pm Friday, November 1 | 2:00pm Sunday, November 3
First Congregational Church UCC | First Congregational Church UCC

PROGRAM

CHARLES IVES 1874-1954 Scherzo: "Holding Your Own"

W. A. MOZART 1756-1791 Quartet in G Major, K. 387

Allegro vivace assai

Menuetto

Andante cantabile

Molto allegro

INTERMISSION

SILVESTRE REVUELTAS 1899-1940 *Música de Feria (Music of the Fair)*

PHILIP AABERG b. 1949 Piano Quintet #1 (2007)

CASCADE QUARTET & Philip Aaberg, PIANO

I. Goes By Itself. Goes By Itself and Carries

II. RIP: 3 Charlies

This concert is generously sponsored by **Drs John & Susan Avery**

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PROGRAM NOTES

CHARLES IVES

Scherzo: "Holding Your Own"

Charles Ives was one of a handful of celebrated composers who wrote music in his spare time. His day job, at which he was extremely successful, was running an insurance company. He is even credited with establishing many of the actuarial principles that are its foundation today. The first truly great American composer, Ives wrote sophisticated music that often included quotations from unsophisticated sources: hymns, barn dances and, as heard here in the form of a familiar tune that comes out of nowhere (spoiler alert!), popular ditties.

Ives adored complexity, especially in the form of dissonant harmonies and competing musical meters. Both are features of this brief musical joke, whose subtitle, "Holding Your Own", refers to the need for each performer to suppress a natural instinct to want to play with the others.

W. A. MOZART

Quartet in G Major, K. 387

The Mozart quartet on this program is the first of a set he wrote dedicated to Joseph Haydn, the undisputed father of the string quartet form. Although it has become known as the "Spring" quartet, owing to its youthful energy, it was actually completed on the last day of December 1782, during the composer's years in Vienna.

In an approach that Beethoven would later take to extremes, the piece opens by alternating loud and soft melodic snatches. The movement then unfolds with a cheerful charm that is only briefly interrupted by a dramatic conversation between the upper voices in the development section.

The rapid contrast of loud and soft from the first movement becomes a striking feature of the Menuetto, where the alternation, note-by-note, of forte and piano, gives the rhythm an odd, unsettled character. This Menuetto, together with its contrasting trio section in a brooding minor key, is more substantial than most of Mozart's minuets, again anticipating Beethoven in this regard.

The third movement is mostly a richly-harmonized aria for the first violin, with the cello at times providing a sweeping moving line underneath. Then comes the brilliant fugal finale whose broad opening four-note motif belies the rollicking activity that is to follow.

SILVESTRE REVUELTAS

Música de Feria (Music of the Fair)

"As a small boy (and maybe as an adult) I always preferred banging on a washtub or dreaming up tales to doing something useful." This is how Revueltas, near the end of his life, described his artistic values. With his childlike love of "noise", his distrust of musical academia, and his iconoclastic, nationalistic approach to composing, Revueltas is the Charles Ives of Mexico. But unlike Ives, who died a rich man at 80, Revueltas died young and poor, his body broken by hard living and alcoholism.

Música de Feria depicts a Mexican fair, with all its chaotic fun and its sentimental, nostalgic interludes. There are even occasional hints of a mariachi band playing somewhere in the midst of the hubbub -- an unusual challenge for any string quartet.

--Notes by Thad Suits

PHILIP AABERG

Piano Quintet #1 (2007)

—Notes by Philip Aaberg

While working on some live recordings from the defunct Ozark Club, an African-American-owned jazz club in Great Falls, I began to think of this Quintet in relation to my thoughts and readings on Montana history and culture. Pages of quotes line the wall of my composition studio for inspiration. One in particular helped give form to this composition. Writer and instructor Bill Kittredge, who edited the literary anthology *The Last Best Place* wrote: "In the American West, we are struggling to revise our dominant mythology, a story called the Western, hoping to see through to the so-called Real West. In essence we are trying to find a new story to inhabit." In the Quintet, this "new story" is not an impression of a culture or landscape frozen in time, but includes the influences of African-American music, Native American language, machine rhythms, and West Coast contemporary music, as represented by composers Paul Dresner and John Adams, with whom I worked when I lived in Oakland.

The title of the first movement, "Goes By Itself. Goes By Itself and Carries", was taken from an interview with Minerva Allen, a major figure on this continent for her work in preserving Native American languages. The "RIP" in the second movement stands for Russell, Ives, and Parker, the "3 Charlies". Although Charlie Russell is the only "Montanan" of the three, I let my imagination

conjure up a West where the creative spirits of those men spread like wildfire on the prairie wind. I played the music of Charles Ives when I was a teenager at the MSU-Bozeman Chamber Music Festival. He was the epitome of the maverick composer, and his advice to “write what you know”, rather than copy the Europeans, blazed a trail for almost all American composers who followed him. Charlie Parker, of course, was a brilliant jazz innovator, and his voice made incursions into Montana by way of the Ozark Club. Charlie Russell’s paintings are embedded in my consciousness through my grandfather’s collection of “Montana” history magazines.

In the Quintet I’ve used devices from jazz and from my study of Ives’ music. I also used the poetry of A.R. Ammons as a model of improvisatory composition, something that the late jazz composer and keyboardist, Joe Zawinul, called “crystal structure.” These trends, of course, are united by the hopeful idea of an all-inclusive history extending into the future.

“They teach you there’s a boundary line to music. But, man, there’s no boundary line to art.”

-Charlie Parker

“Again, if a man finds that the cadences of an Apache war-dance come nearest to his soul—providing he has taken pains to know enough other cadences, for eclecticism is part of his duty, sorting potatoes means a better crop next year—let him assimilate whatever he finds highest of the Indian ideal...his music will be true to itself and incidentally American...”

-Charles Ives.

“Any man that can make a living doing what he likes is lucky, and I’m that. Any time I cash in now, I win.”

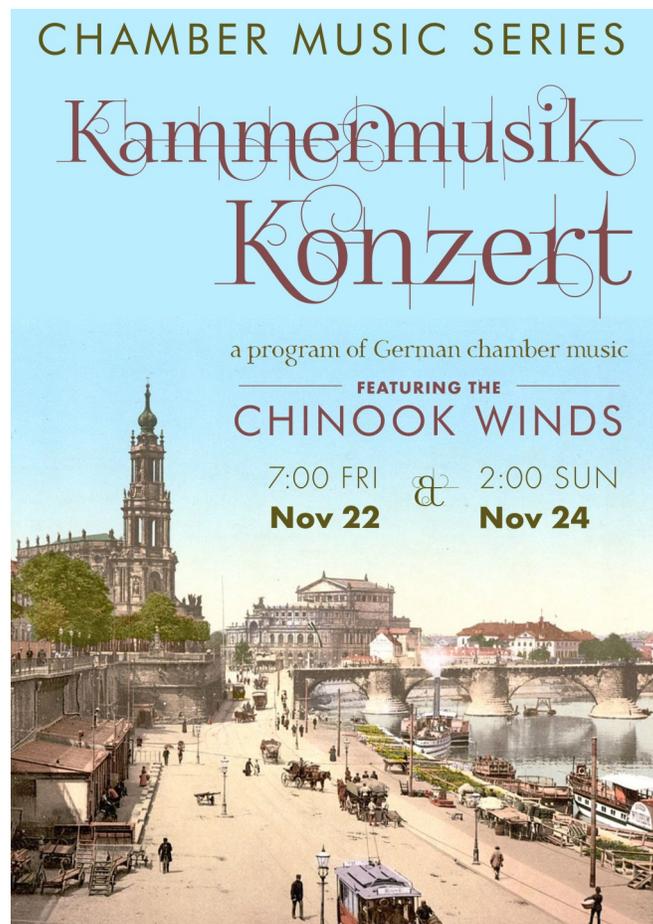
-Charlie Russell

“Goes by itself (Assiniboine phrase for car)
Goes by itself and carries (Assiniboine phrase for truck)
...Why the sun, or why the chinook wind blows,
Where they came from, little things
Like That”

-Minerva Allen

Everyone is welcome... And will be there!”
-Billboard for the African-American-owned Ozark Club
in Great Falls, MT, 1956

UP NEXT ON THE CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES



CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES

Kammermusik Konzert

a program of German chamber music

FEATURING THE
CHINOOK WINDS

7:00 FRI & 2:00 SUN
Nov 22 Nov 24

The poster features a detailed illustration of a European city street scene, likely Prague, with a large cathedral on the left, a river with boats in the middle, and a bridge in the background. The scene is filled with people, horse-drawn carriages, and street lamps, creating a historical atmosphere.

FRIDAY, November 22, 7:00 P.M.
Masonic Lodge, 821 Central Ave
SUNDAY, November 24, 2:00 P.M.
First Congregational Church UCC, 2900 9th Ave S

PHILIP AABERG PIANO



Philip Aaberg, of Helena, Montana, is known worldwide for his compositions that evoke the spaciousness and beauty of the Western landscape. "With this music of Eastern Montana, I've tried to capture things that are important to me such as the quality of the sound. On the prairie, sound carries a long way. The sense of vision is important, too," explains Philip, whose innovative compositions have been influenced by everything from barbed wire and trains to twilight. "On a clear day, you can see the Rockies a hundred miles away. I try to communicate that sense of distance and loneliness."

While in high school, Philip traveled 500 miles by train to study with master teacher Margaret Saunders Ott of Spokane. A past recipient of the Montana Governor's Award for the Arts, Philip graduated from Harvard, where he received a four-year Leonard Bernstein Music Scholarship. After post-graduate studies, he embarked on a career that included recording studio work and tours with musical giants such as Peter Gabriel, Elvin Bishop, and the Doobie Brothers.

Besides playing piano with the Boston Pops and participating in the Marlboro Chamber Music Festival, Philip has appeared on many of the world's great concert stages from Seville and Stockholm to London and Rome. He's also given innovative community concerts featuring the music of Bach, Beethoven and Liszt and performed chamber music with ensembles throughout the country.

Philip has released twelve solo albums, one of which, *Live From Montana*, received a 2002 Grammy nomination. He is also an Emmy nominee

for "All-American Jazz" and for his score for "Class C: The Only Game in Town". Recipient of a Montana Governor's Award for the Arts, 2011 Artist's Innovation Award, an honorary doctorate in music from Montana State University in 2013, and 2015 Montana Governor's Humanities Award.

"Phil is the genuine article... a native Montanan with a profound feeling for the wide-open plains and high-country magic that nurtured his childhood and he's devoted his musical life to exploring that land and its people," writes Keyboard Magazine. "He's an innovator in a stylistic neighborhood bordered by Aaron Copland, Charles Ives, Bruce Hornsby, and Keith Jarrett. It's a uniquely American sound, at times poignant, brash, pensive, and, bursting with enthusiasm."

GREAT FALLS SYMPHONY CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES

PHIL AABERG

WITH THE
CASCADE QUARTET

7:00 FRIDAY

November 1

First Congregational UCC
2900 9th Ave S

2:00 SUNDAY

November 3

First Congregational UCC
2900 9th Ave S

TICKET INFORMATION

SINGLE TICKETS \$15 Adults | \$5 Students
SEASON PASS \$75 Adults | \$25 Students
BRING-A-FRIEND AND FAMILY PASSES
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