

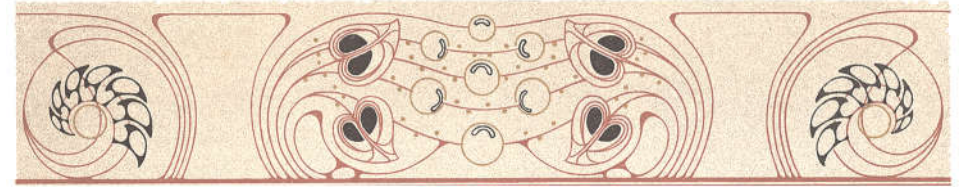
M.U.S.i.C. - Stars in the Classics Presents:

## *In the Mood for Love*



February 2021

Recorded in Cleveland homes



Special Thanks from M.U.S.i.C. for Hosting our February Program Recordings in their Homes

Hosts - Jodi Kanter & Steve Szilagyi, Eileen M Burkhart & Co LLC, and Jay & Lanée Lucarelli

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M.U.S.i.C. wishes to congratulate **Arseniy Gusev** for recently winning **first prize** in the Singapore International Piano Competition.

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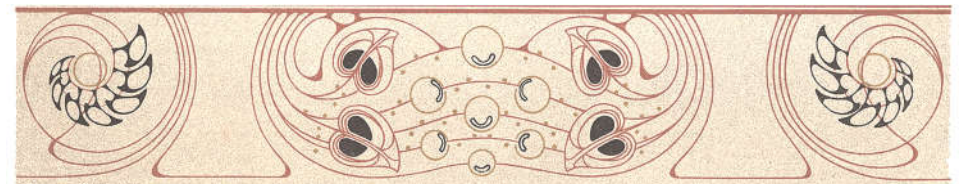
“Neither a lofty degree of intelligence nor imagination nor both together go to the making of genius. Love, love, love, that is the soul of genius.”

-Mozart

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“If music be the food of love, play on,”

- Shakespeare (Twelfth Night)



## ~ Program ~

### **F. CHOPIN (1810–1849): *Barcarolle***

Arseniy Gusev, piano

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### **F. MENDELSSOHN (1809–1847): *Piano Trio No. 1 in D Minor***

II. Andante con moto tranquillo

Regina Laza, violin; Stephen Hawkey, cello; Nikolay Pushkarev, piano

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### **G. DONIZETTI: (1797–1848): “Quanto è bella” from *The Elixir of Love***

Brian Skoog, tenor and John Simmons, piano

~

### **P. SARASATE (1844–1908): *Romanza andaluza***

### **P.I. TCHAIKOVSKY (1840–1893): *Melodie in E-flat***

James Thompson, violin and Arseniy Gusev, piano

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### **F. LISZT (1811–1886): *Liebestraum No. 3***

Grace Roepke, harp

~

### **G. FAURÉ (1845–1924): *Après un rêve • Notre Amour***

Jung Eun Oh, soprano and Grace Roepke, harp

~

### **J. RAFF (1822–1882): *Cavatina***

### **E. GRANADOS (1867–1916): *Spanish Dance No. 5***

### **J. BRAHMS (1833–1897): *Hungarian Dance No. 17***

Regina Laza, violin and Nikolay Pushkarev, piano

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### **F. LEHÁR (1870–1948): “Meine Lippen” from *Giuditta***

### **K. WEILL (1900–1950): *Je ne t’aime pas***

Jung Eun Oh, soprano and Alexander Kostritsa, piano

~

### **LERNER & LOEWE: “On the Street Where You Live” from *My Fair Lady***

Brian Skoog, tenor and John Simmons, piano

~

### **L. BERNSTEIN (1918–1990) / I. Chouraki, Arranger: Selections from *West Side Story***

Victor Beyens, violin; Brendon Phelps, cello; Alexander Kostritsa, piano

## ~ Artists' Bios ~

One of Northeast Ohio's most versatile violinists, **Victor Beyens** is currently the concertmaster of the Mansfield Symphony as well as assistant concertmaster of the Firelands Symphony and assistant principal second of the Cleveland Pops Orchestra. Victor is an active member and musical/pops arranger for Opus 216, an eclectic group of musicians who perform a variety of repertoire and genres in the Cleveland area. He also performs many house concerts and private events with M.U.S.i.C. (Musical Upcoming Stars in the Classics), with which he also serves as a board member. Victor has recently performed a variety of concerti as a soloist with the Mansfield Symphony, Chagrin Falls studio orchestra, National Repertory Orchestra, and the Cleveland Institute of Music Orchestra. He has also performed in the violin sections of the Phoenix Symphony, The Cleveland Orchestra, Erie Philharmonic, and several others. While finishing school, he served as concertmaster (as well as principal second) of the National Repertory Orchestra and of the Cleveland Institute of Music orchestra. Victor has worked with Cleveland based new music ensemble Ars Futura to perform and record music by contemporary composers. Victor was the director of the Rainbow Strings Suzuki program at Chambers elementary school in East Cleveland, where he oversaw the violin upbringing of over 25 inner city kids.

Victor's ability to create and arrange repertoire of all genres, specifically pop and rock music, has led him to collaborations with members of Led Zeppelin, The Who, The Beach Boys, the Cleveland Cavaliers, as well as Andrea Bocelli, Eric Bergen, Connor Bogart O'Brien, Mark O'Connor, and many other local and national acts. His arrangements of works by Edith Piaf, Mark O'Connor, Queen, Bob Dylan, Stephane Grappelli, Bernstein (*West Side Story*), Irvin Berlin, The Beatles, Elvis Presley, and others, have been performed and enthusiastically received in several states.

Originally from France, Victor first moved to Phoenix to study with Dr. Katy McLin, and then relocated to Cleveland to further his studies at the Cleveland Institute of Music under the tutelage of David Updegraff and William Preucil. He plays on a fine violin from Chicago made by Carl Becker in 1949 and a W.E Hills and Sons English bow made in 1920. For more media and upcoming concert info please visit: [instagram.com/victorbeyens](https://www.instagram.com/victorbeyens)

**Arseniy Gusev**, a young pianist and composer, was born in St. Petersburg in 1998 and has been studying music since the age of five. In 2017 he graduated with honors from the Specialized Music School of the St. Petersburg Rimsky-Korsakov State Conservatory (studied piano with O.A. Kurnavina and composition with E.A. Rushansky); in 2015 he studied at the Boston University Tanglewood Institute as a pianist (Boaz Sharon's studio). In 2017-2018 he studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatory with Professor A.M. Sandler as a pianist and with S.V. Nesterova as a composer. Since 2018 he has been a student at the Cleveland Institute of Music (class of Sergei Babayan, piano, and Keith Fitch, composition).

He actively performs in Russia and abroad, has given solo concerts in Austria, Belgium, Italy, Slovakia, USA and Germany. His compositions are performed in St. Petersburg as well as in other cities in the prestigious venues, such as Mariinsky Theatre and Carnegie Hall. He participated in the master classes of Garrick Ohlsson, Dmitry

Bashkirov, Grigory Gruzman, Jerome Rose, Alexander Mndoyants, Nina Lelchuk, and others.

Arseniy is a laureate of many international and all-Russian competitions, such as the Dorothy McKenzie Artist Award, Three Arts Piano competition, "Another Space" Composition Competition, International Youth Gavrilin Competition, the International Youth Competition "Performer-Composer", and the All-Russian Open Andrei Petrov Composition Competition. Arseniy was recently awarded Second Prize from Piano Cleveland's Virtu(al)oso Global Piano Competition for Artist Relief.

Born into a family of musicians, **Stephen Hawkey** began his musical studies at the age of five on the piano and began cello three years later. Although he studied both instruments extensively through the end of his high school education, he chose to continue his studies in cello for his undergraduate degree at Bob Jones University in Greenville, SC. While earning his bachelor's degree, Stephen served as principal cello in the school orchestra and, as the winner of the university's concerto competition his sophomore year, he performed Bloch's Schelomo with the orchestra. Outside of school, he also was a member of the cello section of the Greenville Symphony Orchestra. In 2018, Stephen chose to continue his studies at the Cleveland Institute of Music, earning a master's degree which he will complete in the spring of 2020. As a student of Dr. Melissa Kraut at CIM, Stephen was an award winner of the school's concerto competition and will perform Shostakovich's Cello Concerto No. 1 with the school orchestra in the spring. He also was accepted into CIM's Advanced Piano Trio Program and the Intensive Duo Program under the primary tutelage of Katherine Brown, Siyan Li, Anita Pontremoli, and Sharon Robinson.

During the past several summers, Stephen has attended numerous music festivals, including the National Repertory Orchestra in 2016 and 2018, and the Pacific Region International Summer Music Academy in 2017, where he was a finalist in the concerto competition and performed the first movement from Shostakovich's Cello Concerto No. 1 with the festival orchestra. He has also played in numerous master class settings for renowned musicians, including Christopher Adkins, Colin Carr, Michael Haber, Kim Kashkashian, David Kim, Daniel and Todd Phillips, and Philip Setzer.

Most recently, Stephen won the section cello position in the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, with whom he will begin performing in May after he finishes his master's degree at CIM. Over the past two years, Stephen has been a contract musician with the Akron, Ann Arbor, Canton, Firelands, and Mansfield Symphony Orchestras.

Born in Moscow, **Alexander Kostritsa** started playing the piano at the age of six. He toured Japan two years later, and performed in Fukuoka City Hall. Since then, he has performed in Russia, Germany, Italy, France, Spain, South Korea and the USA. He placed in several young artists competitions, including the 2nd prize (1st was not awarded) in Moscow's Glinka Competition (1998). In 2006, he was accepted as a student at the famous Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow, studying with well-known pianist-composer, Mikhail Petukhov. Alexander has appeared as a soloist with Vidin Philharmonic, Russian State Youth Orchestra, "The Seasons", and many other orchestras. He won first prizes in the Rovere d'Oro competition (Italy, 2007) and at the Slavonic Music Festival (Ukraine, 2007). Alexander recently earned his DMA from the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he studied with Antonio Pompa-Baldi.

**Regina Laza Pérez-Blanco** was born in Algeciras, Spain, in 1994. Her music studies flourished when she began studying with Christopher Blezien at age nine in 2003. Ten years later, she graduated with distinction with a chamber music concentration at the Royal Conservatory of Music of Madrid. Her solo debut in Madrid was at the National Auditorium with Shostakovich's first violin concerto.

She has won many prizes, such as First Prize in the International Competition of Music of the Vladimir Spivakov Foundation, in Moscow; Grand Prix in the International Festival and Competition: Roza Vetrov in Jonzac, France; First Prize for the Best Interpretation of strings at the VI Musical Competition of young talents in Granada, Spain; First Prize in the First National Competition of "music in the memory of Marcos Pedro Moreno" in Cabra, Córdoba, Spain; First Prize in the Cuidado do Fundão Championship in Portugal; First Prize in the "strings" category and Grand Prize overall in the International Tournament of Music in Turin, Italy.

She has been Concertmaster of the Youth National Orchestra of Spain since 2014. She has also been a member of the European Union Youth Orchestra, Youth Orchestra of Andalusia and Concert Master of the Cadiz one, with which she debuted in 2008 as Soloist with Mendelssohn Concerto. She was also Concertmaster of the "Joaquin Turina" Chamber Orchestra and a member of the Spanish Chamber Orchestra and member of the Royal Conservatory of Music of Madrid Symphonic Orchestra.

She has performed as soloist in the International Rosa Vetroy Festival in France, in the National Auditorium of Spain, the International Festival of Young talents at the National School of Music, The Lubomir Pipkov Competition in Sophia, Bulgaria, the International Festival of Music of the Vladimir Spivakov Foundation of Moscow, in the Mink's High School of Music Auditorium with its Chamber Orchestra in Belarus, in the Kremlin, in the Central School of Music in Moscow, in Marrakesh, in the Yugoria International Festival in Siberia, in the Eurochestries Festival in Moscow. in the House of Congress and Courts in Cádiz, Spain, in "Trujillo's Festival" with the bicentennial orchestra, in the second Roza Vetroy International Festival in Spain, in the International Music Festival of the Vladimir Spivakov Foundation of Moscow, in the Palacio Real of Carlos V at the Alhambra in Granada, among others.

Thanks to being a Fulbright recipient grantee, she earned her master's degree and is now working on her Artist's Diploma with Mr. Ilya Kaler at CIM.

**Jung Eun Oh**, soprano, has appeared as a recital soloist at the Kennedy Center, and has performed concert works such as Mahler's Fourth Symphony, Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Robert Beaser's *The Heavenly Feast*. Operatic roles include the Sandman and the Dew Fairy in Humperdink's *Hansel and Gretel*, Pamina in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Mademoiselle Silverpeal in *Der Schauspieldirector* and the title roles of Igor Stravinsky's *Le Rossignol* and Mozart's *La finta giardiniera*. *The Plain Dealer* has praised her "silvery-timbre, crystal-clear sense of pitch, and vocal agility" and has described her singing as "expressive enchantment" with "exceptional accuracy and taste." Ms. Oh has been a guest artist in Music, Modern and Moving, presented by ideastream and PBS and collaborates frequently with members of The Cleveland Orchestra in chamber music performances. Ms. Oh holds a doctoral degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music, as well as an Artist Diploma and a Master's degree in vocal performance. In 2010, she received honorable mention in the Heida Hermanns International Competition, and in 2006, she won first place in the

Leopoldskron vocal competition in Salzburg, Austria and subsequently performed in Schloss Leopoldskron and Schloss Mirabell. In Cleveland, she has been the recipient of the Irvin Bushman Prize, the Boris Goldovsky Prize in Opera, the Pauline Thesmacher Award, the 2006-2007 Scholarship of The Music and Drama Club of Cleveland, and the Helen Curtis Webster Award, among others. Her voice can be heard in collaboration with Richard King (Principal Horn, The Cleveland Orchestra) and Orli Shaham in the album *Chamber Music for Horn*, distributed by Albany Records. Ms. Oh served as a member of the voice faculty at the Cleveland Institute of Music from 2008 to 2012.

In addition to her music degrees, Ms. Oh holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics from Harvard University. During her stay at Harvard, Ms. Oh premiered two original compositions and also appeared in Harvard University productions of *The Magic Flute* and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. Before embarking on the musical adventure as described above, Ms. Oh worked as an analyst in the field of asset management. After dedicating nine wonderful years solely to the field of performing arts, she has returned to the financial world and works for an investment firm as Director of Research. Ms. Oh continues to sing to promote the arts and hopes to use a combination of all of her skills in helping to sustain arts organizations in the future.

**Brendon Phelps** is forging a path as an engaging cellist and collaborator, characterized by his sense of individuality, depth of expression, and expansive palette of color. His playing has been described by *The Strad* as "...rich but clear sound and beautiful shaping and leading."

As a collaborator, recent notable highlights include performing the Mendelssohn Octet with the Shanghai Quartet at the Tilles Center, as well as his Carnegie Hall debut, premiering string quartet commission from composer Anthony Vine. International concerts have included North and South America as well as Europe in venues such as Casa de la Musica in Quito, Ecuador and the International Mendelssohn Festival in Hamburg, Germany. Other recitals have included Princetown University, Boston Conservatory, Lunenburg Academy of Music Performance in Nova Scotia, Marilyn Horne Museum, and the Boston Early Music Festival.

Phelps coached chamber music as part of a one-year residency at Shenandoah Conservatory. He also taught and performed at the Interlochen Academy as a chamber music teaching fellow. He maintains a fully online cello studio with students throughout the US and Canada. Phelps has received his Bachelors and Masters in music from the University of Akron and the Cleveland Institute of Music, respectively. He also received an Early Music Performance Certificate from Case Western University and an Artists Diploma and string quartet fellowship from the Shanghai Quartet at Montclair State University. His primary teachers were Melissa Kraut and Nick Tzavaras.

**Nikolay Pushkarev** was born in 1997 in Kiev, Ukraine, to a family of musicians. He started his piano education at the age of seven, and in 2015, graduated from the Kiev General Specialized Boarding School of Music. Since 2016, Nikolay has been studying with Prof. Sergei Babayan at the Cleveland Institute of Music.

From about the age of 10, Nikolay participated in various concerts in Ukraine and abroad, from regular school concerts in the National Philharmonic of Ukraine to expressive appearances on European stages. He has been awarded at such competitions as the "Horowitz-Debut" (Kiev, Ukraine), the International Piano Competition "Chopin's

Golden Ring" (Ljubljana, Slovenia), the International Chamber Ensemble Competition in Saint-Petersburg, Russia, the Karamanov International Piano Competition in Simferopol, and the Tbilisi International Piano Competition in Tbilisi, Georgia.

**Grace Roepke** has earned distinction as a successful solo performer and competitor in the United States and abroad. She has received numerous honors, such as Grand Prize and First Prize at the Friends of the Minnesota Orchestra Young Artist Competition, making her the first and only harpist to do so in the competition's 60-year history; First Prize in the Cleveland Institute of Music Concerto Competition; and Grand Finalist in the 2021 Dutch Harp Festival World Harp Competition, representing the United States as the only finalist currently residing in North America.

Equally at home as an orchestral musician, Ms. Roepke has served as guest principal harp with the Illinois Symphony Orchestra and the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra. She has spent summers as a fellowship recipient at the Texas Music Festival and Round Top Festival Institute, a full-tuition scholarship recipient at the Eastern Music Festival, and an Emerson Scholar at the Interlochen Summer Arts Camp. Her extensive orchestral experience has allowed her to work with notable conductors including Hans Graf, Joann Falletta, and Jahja Ling. As a chamber musician, Ms. Roepke enjoys collaborating in traditional and contemporary ensembles, including the BlueWater Chamber Orchestra as guest principal harpist and the Cleveland Institute of Music New Music Ensemble.

In addition to her performance career, Ms. Roepke is an avid music educator and autism advocate. Her passion for autism advocacy has led to autism-inspired commissions by Yoav Sadeh and is working to develop sensory friendly music concerts that are free and open to the public. Ms. Roepke maintains a private studio and is a Suzuki certified teacher, having trained in the Suzuki method herself as a young student.

Currently pursuing her master's degree at the Cleveland Institute of Music, Ms. Roepke studies with world-renowned solo artist Yolanda Kondonassis. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Harp Performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music in 2019 with academic honors; upon graduation, she received the Alice Chalifoux Prize in Harp and the Cleveland Institute of Music Merit Award. Ms. Roepke is a native of Chanhassen, Minnesota, where she studied with Phala Tracy and Kathy Kienzle.

**John Simmons**, pianist, Coach, CIM Opera Theater, has appeared in numerous recitals in Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Italy and the U.S. His studies include a piano performance diploma from the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Vienna, Austria, where he was a student of Paul Badura-Skoda.

He was a pianist/coach for the Opera House in Graz, Austria for two seasons and a teaching assistant at the Hochschule in Graz. After returning to the U.S., he received a Master's degree from the Peabody Conservatory in Piano Performance as a student of Yoheved Kaplinsky.

Mr. Simmons has coached, taught and performed at AIMS in Graz, the Spoleto Festival USA, Lincoln Center Festival, Centro Studi Italiani, The Amalfi Coast Music Festival and the Shaker Mountain Festival. He was an associate coach at the Juilliard Opera Center for three years and was on the coach staff faculty at the CW Post campus of Long Island University for six years. Mr. Simmons has performed frequently at Weill Recital Hall, Merkin Hall and the Austrian Cultural Forum in New York. He completed

three concert tours of Europe featuring works of Pavel Haas and Viktor Ullmann, and also gave the New York premieres of Viktor Ullman's Cornet and Ernst Krenek's What Price Confidence.

Mr. Simmons has performed with such artists/ensembles as Jonas Kaufmann, Christopher Maltman, John Aler, the London Symphony Chorus, the Westminster Choir, the Joffrey Ballet of Chicago and the Spoleto Festival Orchestra. He was assistant conductor for the Lincoln Center Festival and University of Michigan, Ann Arbor productions of *The Silver River* by Bright Sheng in summer 2002 and January 2007. He was also music director and pianist for NY Opera Project's production of Samuel Barber's *Vanessa* in spring 2004. While in New York, Mr. Simmons played in the voice studios of many well-known teachers, including Doris Yarick Cross and Anna Moffo. He was a guest professor of collaborative piano for the 2004-2005 school year at Rutgers University. Mr. Simmons was appointed to the CIM faculty in 2005.

**Brian Skoog** is an American tenor known for his "strong voice" and "fine lyric tenor." In 2020, he will sing the role of The Defendant in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Trial By Jury* with Toledo Opera. Skoog performed with Central City Opera in the summer of 2018, singing the role of Tamino in *The Magic Flute* for the Nina Odescalchi Kelly Family Matinee and the dual role of Larry/Matt in *The Face on the Barroom Floor*. In the fall of 2018, Skoog performed the role of Tebaldo in Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* with The Cleveland Opera, with whom he has performed many leading roles. Recent seasons include performances with Cleveland Opera Theater, Dayton Opera, Nashville Opera, Toledo Opera, and Utah Festival Opera. An active performer of oratorio and concert work, Skoog has recently performed with the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra, the Toledo Symphony Orchestra, and members of the Fort Collins Symphony. He was the tenor soloist for the world premiere of Margaret Brouwer's *Voice of the Lake*; the video recording of this performance is now available on DVD. Skoog completed his graduate studies at the Cleveland Institute of Music and has completed many prestigious artist training programs.

Violinist **James Thompson** is forging a promising career as a versatile chamber musician, soloist, and music educator. He is currently an Artist Diploma candidate at the Cleveland Institute of Music with Jaime Laredo, having studied previously with William Preucil and Paul Kantor.

Mr. Thompson regularly performs for top-tier chamber music festivals around the country, including Music@Menlo, the Perlman Music Program, and the Taos School of Music. He has collaborated in concert with a multitude of artists including David Finckel, Peter Salaff, Roger Tapping, and a variety of musicians from both The Cleveland Orchestra and the Cleveland Institute of Music. An advocate for new music, Mr. Thompson has worked alongside composers Keith Fitch, Stephen Hartke, Libby Larsen, and David Rakowski, among others, on performances of their works.

In 2014, Mr. Thompson was selected to solo with The Cleveland Orchestra at Severance Hall as part of the ensemble's education series. He has appeared as a soloist with numerous local orchestras including the CIM orchestra, the Blue Water Chamber Orchestra, the Cleveland Pops, and the Cleveland Philharmonic. Mr. Thompson was invited to perform in Budapest as part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Bartok World Competition and in Sendai for the 7<sup>th</sup> Sendai International Violin Competition.

Alongside his performance career, James Thompson is forming a strong reputation as a private instructor and chamber music coach. He views his work with young people as an immensely important aspect of his calling as a musician, and is grateful to have the opportunity to share with everyone the joy he has found making music.

#### **About the arranger of *West Side Story*:**

**Ilan Chouraki** (pronounced Shuraki), born in 1963, is a French-Israeli composer and arranger. He has taken his roots in the world of classical composers and more particularly that of Ravel, Prokofiev, and Stravinsky. He allowed himself to step over the elitist atonal music of the following decades, despite spending a year at IRCAM under the direction of Pierre Boulez, where he was able to see Luciano Berio, György Ligeti, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Iannis Xenakis, and many other composers working.

Ilan likes to combine classical aesthetics with the musical culture of his contemporaries.

## ~ About M.U.S.i.C. ~

M.U.S.i.C. (Musical Upcoming Stars in the Classics) is committed to providing intimate performance opportunities for emerging world class musicians in Northeast Ohio, and beyond. M.U.S.i.C. finds venues, arranges concerts, provides programs, publicity, and refreshments, and pays performers. By its activities, M.U.S.i.C. provides enjoyment for audiences, helps launch new musical careers, introduces novel performance venues, and expands the audience for chamber music. M.U.S.i.C. aims to enhance Northeast Ohio's reputation as an international capital of musical excellence.

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**Saturday, March 20, 2021**

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**at the Church of the Western Reserve**

**(limited seating available)**

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