



CHAMBER MUSIC RALEIGH

Mary J. C. Cresimore presents
Julian Rhee & Shai Wosner

Sights & Sounds on Sundays at North Carolina Museum of Art
February 8, 2026

Julian Rhee (violin)
Shai Wosner (piano)

Violin Sonata in F minor, Op. 6, No. 7, "Au tombeau"

Pietro Locatelli
arr. Eugène Ysaÿe

Performed as a single movement

Violin Sonata No. 3 in D minor, Op. 108

Johannes Brahms

- I. Allegro
- II. Adagio
- III. Un poco presto e con sentimento
- IV. Presto agitato

Intermission – complimentary airline snacks in the lobby

Little Summer Music

Pēteris Vasks

- I. Lullaby
- II. Serenade
- III. Bagatelle

Sonata for Violin and Piano in C minor, Op. 45

Edvard Grieg

- I. Allegro molto ed appassionato
- II. Allegretto espressivo alla romanza
- III. Allegro animato

Appearing Next Weekend
**SIGHTS &
SOUNDS**
on Sundays

**CLEVELAND
CELTIC
ENSEMBLE**

SATURDAY, FEB 14 @ 7:30
SUNDAY, FEB 15 @ 2:00



Violin Sonata in F minor, Op. 6, No. 7, “*Au tombeau*”**Arr. Eugene Ysaÿe****Pietro Locatelli**

1695-1764

Violinist and composer Pietro Locatelli was born and raised in Bergamo, Italy. He spent his early professional years performing in Italy and Germany, but in 1729 settled in Amsterdam, then a center of music publishing, staying there for the rest of his life. He made a comfortable living as a violinist, music editor and publisher, and seller of violin strings. The 12 violin sonatas Op.6 were published in 1737.

Locatelli developed many new techniques for the violin, and continued to perform, but an Englishman who heard him in 1741 wrote "he is so afraid of People Learning from him, that He won't admit a Professed Musician into his Concert".

Eugene Ysaÿe (1858-1931) was considered the “tsar” of violinists in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Like Locatelli, he was a master at developing new playing techniques, using them to “modernized” Baroque compositions, giving them a Late-Romantic flavor.

Violin Sonata No. 3 in D minor, Op. 108**Johannes Brahms**

1833-1897

Brahms composed the D minor Violin Sonata between 1886 and 1888. Well into middle age, his reputation firmly established, he had just premiered the Fourth Symphony in 1885, had become the poster child for the harmonies and forms of the classical tradition. His music was pitted against the “music of the future” of Richard Wagner. While, it seems that everyone who was anyone in the music world took sides, Brahms – considering himself an “elder statesman” of music – let the ideologues fight and polemicize for him.

During the intense composing process, Brahms preferred to abandon his rather bourgeois existence for beautiful, bucolic surroundings. For his summer vacations he usually chose mountain scenery and lakes where he hiked, entertained friends and worked intensively on his music. He spent the summers of 1886 to 1889 near Thun in the canton of Bern, Switzerland. There, he rented a villa overlooking a lake and in the first year composed, among other works, the A Major Violin Sonata, Op. 100, and began the D minor Sonata, Op. 108.

The passionate, often brooding D minor Sonata only occasionally reflects the idyllic environment in which it was composed. Brahms sent the manuscript to his close friend, Clara Schumann, giving rise to perhaps the most personally revealing exchange of letters in their long correspondence and the strongest hint that there may have once been more than a platonic relationship some 35 years earlier. In one letter Brahms writes: “It is really too lovely and delightful to think of my D minor Sonata flowing gently and dreamily beneath your fingers...I laid it on my desk and in my thoughts wandered with you through the maze of organ-points with you still beside me, and I know no greater pleasure than this, to sit at your side or, as now, to walk beside you.”

The restlessness of the opening movement is conveyed through the sustained opening note of the violin over a rapid syncopated accompaniment figure in octaves. Throughout the movement in all of the themes the violin and piano maintain a flow of intertwining rhythms that intensify the restlessness. The beautiful lyrical slow movement is as steadily on the beat as the preceding movement was off it. Its principal melody is an expansion of a motivic fragment from the secondary theme group of the Allegro.

The third movement is a brief intermezzo on a single theme in which the rapidly descending pianissimo arpeggios in the piano create an almost ghostly atmosphere. Brahms used a similar device with the same effect in the Scherzo of the B Major Piano Trio.

The delicacy of the third movement is a psychological setup for the passion of the finale with its pounding introductory repeated chords and the driving theme in the violin. The movement is something of an emotional roller coaster with a staid theme in the piano temporarily abating the storm. But Brahms continually returns to his *Presto agitato*, including the driving syncopated rhythm of the first movement. An even more accelerated coda – again with a calm interruption – concludes the Sonata.

From *Little Summer Music*

I. Lullaby II. Serenade III. Bagatelle

Pēteris Vasks

b.1946

Latvian composer Pēteris Vasks belongs to the loosely-knit group of composers who came to maturity in the subjugated Baltic states of the former Soviet Union during the second half of the last century and rose to prominence after the freeing of their countries. The son of a pastor, Vasks studied the violin and double bass in Lithuania. He then became a member of the Latvian National Opera orchestra and other Riga ensembles, but by the mid-1970s, he resigned to dedicate himself to composing. By the 1980s, he had developed his own musical vocabulary, often incorporating sounds of nature, especially those of the forest and the birds. In this regard, he is heir to Olivier Messiaen, whose music often incorporated avian imagery.

Vasks is fiercely nationalistic, with a desire to express his national heritage, especially his language, through music. In 1990, shortly after the freeing of his country from Russian domination, he said: “To express myself in Latvian – my native language – through my music. That's the only way I can say what I have to say... a small nation that has suffered so much, that has often been betrayed and sold out. And still – a nation which obstinately refuses to step back from its rights... That's how I imagine my music.”

Vasks composed *Little Summer Music* in 1985. Since the composer couldn't stand the hustle and bustle of Riga during summer, he usually spent his summers with his family at the dormitory of some boarding school in Latvia which usually was empty during summertime.

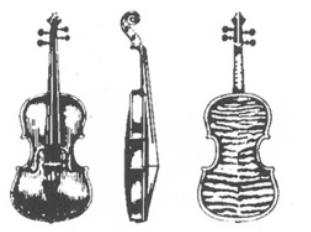
The folk-like melodies of the six movements of *Little Summer Music* reflects the composer's admiration of nature as opposed to the harsh conditions of the city that, at the time, still had to withstand the growing problems of Soviet occupation. A 2016 transcription for flute and piano has become very popular.

Sonata for Violin and Piano in C minor, Op. 45

Edvard Grieg
1843-1907

Completed in the winter 1886-87, this is Edvard Grieg's last Sonata, a form for which he had little affinity. Shortly before its composition he expressed his misgivings with the comment that he “will fight his way through the (large) forms, cost what it may.” In a letter to his cousin, the author Bjørnson, Grieg commented that in this work he has moved away from his national “language” to a wider, more cosmopolitan one.

There is a curious homage in this sonata to two of Grieg's contemporaries, who premiered violin sonatas the year before: Echoes of César Franck in the first movement and of Johannes Brahms in the third. Grieg was acquainted with both and admired them greatly. The second movement is the most lyrical, calling Grieg's own songs and piano miniatures to mind. In the last movement the echoes of Brahms alternate with a rustic, foot-tapping folk dance rhythm.



We Applaud Chamber Music Raleigh

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Winner of the 2024 Avery Fisher Career Grant, Korean-American violinist **Julian Rhee** is acclaimed for his refinement, beauty of sound, and “the kind of poise and showmanship that thrills audiences” (*The Strad*). Praised for his soulful lyricism, magnetic presence, and passion for collaboration, Rhee brings expressive depth, technical mastery, and interpretive insight to both standard and contemporary repertoire.

Rhee has appeared with major orchestras across North America, Europe, and Asia, including the Calgary Philharmonic, Belgian National Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, Antwerp Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, and San Diego Symphony. He has collaborated with conductors such as Alexander Shelley, Nicolas McGegan, Valentina Peleggi, Antony Hermus, and Leonard Slatkin. Recent and upcoming highlights include debuts with the European Orchestra Academy, Richmond Symphony, Pacific Symphony, and Gürzenich Orchestra, with return engagements to the Eugene Symphony and ProMusica Chamber Orchestra.

Following prize-winning performances at the 2024 Queen Elisabeth International Violin Competition and a Silver Medal at the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis, Rhee has emerged as a soloist of remarkable artistry and maturity. He is also First Prize Winner of the Elmar Oliveira International Competition and Astral Artists’ National Auditions, and a recipient of honors including the Aspen Festival’s Dorothy DeLay Fellowship and awards from the Kronberg Academy. A U.S. Presidential Scholar, he serves as a Young Strings of America Ambassador sponsored by SHAR Music.

An active chamber musician, Rhee is a member of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center’s Bowers Program and performs regularly at Alice Tully Hall and on tour. He has appeared at festivals including Marlboro, Ravinia Steans Institute, Music@Menlo, and Rockport Music, and this season makes debuts at the Kingston Chamber Music Festival and as Artist in Residence at the Durango Music Festival.

Rhee earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees at the New England Conservatory and currently studies with Christian Tetzlaff at the Kronberg Academy. He performs on the 1699 “Lady Tennant” Antonio Stradivari violin, on extended loan through the generosity of the Mary B. Galvin Foundation and the Stradivari Society.

Pianist Shai Wosner is internationally recognized for his exceptional artistry, musical integrity, and imaginative insight. Acclaimed for performances ranging from Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert to Ligeti and today’s leading composers, he is praised for his “keen musical mind and deep musical soul” (*NPR’s All Things Considered*).

Recent highlights include recitals and chamber music performances in Japan, a return to the Utah Symphony, and performances of piano concertos by Mason Bates and Vijay Iyer, the latter written for Wosner and ECCO (East Coast Chamber Orchestra). His ongoing collaboration with Iyer also includes *Plinth*, part of Wosner’s multi-composer commissioning project *Variations on a Theme of FDR*.

Additional recent appearances include performances with the JACK Quartet at the Frick Collection, tours with Pinchas Zukerman and Joshua Bell, and chamber music with the Zukerman Trio.

Wosner’s arrangements have earned wide recognition, including chamber versions of Beethoven symphonies premiered and toured internationally by Emanuel Ax, Leonidas Kavakos, and Yo-Yo Ma, and released on GRAMMY-nominated recordings for Sony Classical. He has appeared with major orchestras throughout North America and Europe and has released numerous acclaimed recordings on Onyx Classics. Born in Israel, Wosner studied with Emanuel Ax at The Juilliard School, where he now serves on the piano faculty. His honors include the Martin E. Segal Award, an Avery Fisher Career Grant, and a Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award.

