

PROGRAM

**Joseph Bologna, Chevalier de St. Georges, arr. Nagy:** *Quartet for flute and strings*  
(after *Sonata for flute and harp in Eb*)

- I. *Andante*
- II. *Menuetto*
- III. *Rondeau*

**Sydney Guillaume:** *A Journey to Freedom (World Premiere)*

**Karl Bochsa:** *Oboe Quartet no. 2. in d minor*

- I. *Allegro non troppo con espressione*
- II. *Rondo moderato*

**Luigi Boccherini:** *Quintet for flute, oboe, violin, viola, and cello in C major, G443*

- I. *Allegro non troppo*
- II. *Allegretto*
- III. *Tempo di Minuetto*

**Performers**

Emi Ferguson, flute  
Debra Nagy oboe  
Shelby Yamin, violin  
Allison Monroe, viola  
Rebecca Reed, cello

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NOTES ON THE PROGRAM:

Winds of Change takes its inspiration from the philosophies that sparked the French and Haitian revolutions at the end of the 18th century. In France, years of exploitation, inflation, and usurious taxes on poor farmers and working people fueled desperation that turned violent - eventually resulting in the establishment of new systems based on equal opportunity, freedom of speech, and representative government. Inspired by the French Revolution's *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, enslaved Africans in the

French colony of Saint-Domingue mounted their own successful revolution just two years later in 1791, which abolished slavery and established the sovereign state that would later be known as Haiti. The effects of Haiti's revolutionary fight for freedom were felt across the globe as Haiti emerged as the first Black republic in the world, and the second nation in the western hemisphere (after the United States) to win its independence from a European colonial power.

The Age of Revolutions may be past, but ongoing fights for racial justice in the U.S. and around the world, continued challenges to freedom of movement and expression, and recent political unrest in Haiti all make clear that the journey to freedom is ongoing, something that we all must continue to work towards.

While the music on this program - most of it from the revolutionary period of the 1790s - works within traditional forms to meet societal expectations, it also challenges them in subtle and sometimes not-so-subtle ways. For instance, Joseph de Bologne's playful, tune-filled sonata belies the racism that he faced forging a path as a Black performer and composer in late 18th C France. The mixed-race son of a Black enslaved woman known as *Nanon* and a white plantation owner in Guadeloupe, Bologne became a member of France's abolitionist group *Les Amis des Noirs* and traveled to Haiti in the mid-1790s. We've reimagined Bologne's sonata for harp and flute as a quartet for flute and strings. Too often, our visions of the past have excluded composers and performers of color; by arranging Bologne's sonata, we hope to bring a new work by a historical Black composer into the chamber music repertoire.

I'm also extremely pleased to present the world premiere performance and recording of Sydney Guillaume's *A Journey to Freedom*. Reflecting on well over 200 years of struggle for freedom from oppression, Sydney's piece represents a journey to freedom that's at once personal and universal. Initial neoclassical tendencies are transformed and reclaimed by traditional yanvalou rhythms from Sydney's native Haiti, reflecting a journey that is at times pleading, soaring, questioning, and ultimately left unresolved.

More than a decade of continued violence and political instability followed the storming of the Bastille that launched the French Revolution in July 1789. The heightened emotions and uncertainty of post-Revolutionary Paris echo throughout Karl Bochsa's oboe quartet in d minor. Though full of lovely tunes, one always has the sense that something dangerous or foreboding lurks beneath the surface of this piece. As you'll hear, Bochsa's rare choice of minor mode brings intensity and pathos to the churning opening theme, while persistent use of pedal tones and chromaticism build tension that only gets released during brief diversions to the major mode.

The experience of listening to (or playing!) Boccherini's music is one of pleasure that is heightened through repetition rather than development; it's about enjoying moments of harmonic friction; it's about finding new ways to be expressive within an intimate, almost-whispered palette of soft dynamics. As the 19th century musicologist François-Joseph Fétis once observed, "Boccherini's works are so remarkable in every respect that one is tempted to believe that he knew no other music than his own."

In this way, the works of Luigi Boccherini represent a sort of musical alternative universe. His obsession with colors and textures (rather than melody and form) reflect not only his unique priorities but also tacitly reject the aesthetic values or "progress" of his contemporaries such as Haydn and Mozart.

Given Boccherini's preoccupation with texture and colors, his music is evocative, playful and witty. His idiosyncratic style is clearly identifiable even when unattributed – which is the case for the Quintet in C major that you're about to hear. The first movement delights in contrasts and soars with bits of birdsong while the amazingly meditative last movement explores a kaleidoscope of pastel colors. With dynamics rarely rising above piano, Boccherini redefines virtuosity across twelve successive variations that are built on the simplest of structures: a simple C major scale going up and down.

Deceptively simple but utterly sublime, the 19th century violinist Jean-Baptiste Cartier commented, "If God wanted to *speak* to men through music, he would do it with the works of Haydn, but if He himself wished to *listen* to music, He would choose Boccherini."

- Debra Nagy

"It is only by your avarice and our ignorance that anyone is still held in slavery up to this day, and we can neither see nor find the right that you pretend to have over us...We are your equals then, by natural right, and if nature pleases itself to diversify colors within the human race, it is not a crime to be born Black nor an advantage to be white."

- **Toussaint L'Ouverture, Letter to the General Assembly July 1792**

"Do you want the state to be solid? Then make the wealth-spread as small as you can; don't allow rich men or beggars. It is always between them that public liberty is put on sale"

- **Jean-Jacques Rousseau, On the Social Contract (1762)**

"It seems to me that one man alone could govern the world, if all hearts were disposed to tolerance and equity."

- **Louis-Sébastien Mercier, L'An deux mille quatre cent quarante (2440), published in 1771.**