



*University of Maryland School of Music Presents*

**BARBER, BEACH & BERNSTEIN**  
**University of Maryland Symphony Orchestra**

**Saturday, October 7, 2023 • 8PM**

**DEKELBOUM CONCERT HALL**

**AT THE CLARICE SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**



**SCHOOL OF  
MUSIC**

University of Maryland School of Music  
Presents

# BARBER, BEACH & BERNSTEIN

University of Maryland Symphony Orchestra

**David Neely, conductor**

*Music Director*

**Kumiko Sakamoto, violin**

*Soloist*

*Bal Masqué*, Op. 22 ..... Amy Beach  
(1867-1944)

Violin Concerto, Op. 14..... Samuel Barber  
(1910-1981)

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante
- III. Presto in moto perpetuo

Kumiko Sakamoto, *violin*

2022 UMD Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition Winner

## INTERMISSION

*The Unanswered Question*..... Charles Ives  
(1874-1954)

Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story* ..... Leonard Bernstein  
(1918-1990)

- I. Prologue
- II. "Somewhere"
- III. Scherzo
- IV. Mambo
- V. Cha Cha
- VI. Meeting Scene
- VII. "Cool" Fugue
- VIII. Rumble
- IX. Finale



Born in Dayton, Ohio, conductor **David Neely** has been described by Opera News as "a ninja warrior with a baton" (Opera News). He maintains an active career in symphonic, opera, ballet, and educational settings.

As Music Director and Principal Conductor of Des Moines Metro Opera, a position he has held since 2012, Neely has elevated the company's musical profile and developed one of the nation's finest opera orchestras. He has led critically-acclaimed performances of a broad range of new and traditional repertoire that includes the recent world premiere of Kristin Kuster and

Mark Campbell's *A Thousand Acres*, the in-person premiere of Damien Geter and Lila Palmer's *American Apollo*, regional Emmy award-winning productions of *Manon* and *Billy Budd* for Iowa Public Television, and approximately 30 other works including *Wozzeck*, *Pikovaya Dama*, *Yevkeny Onegin*, *Rusalka*, *Jenůfa*, *Falstaff*, *Elektra*, *Peter Grimes*, *Dead Man Walking*, *Flight*, *Macbeth*, *Don Giovanni*, *Candide*, *La Fanciulla Del West*, *Turandot*, and most recently *Bluebeard's Castle* and *The Love for Three Oranges*. He has led productions with Atlanta Opera, Sarasota Opera, Intermountain Opera, and numerous European opera houses including Bonn and Dortmund. His performances have been praised in Opera News, Opera Today, Opernwelt, the Chicago Tribune, and the Wall Street Journal.

Neely has led concerts with the Memphis Symphony Orchestra, Portland Symphony Orchestra, Dortmund Philharmonic, Bochumer Philharmoniker, Eutin Festival Orchestra, Bregenz Symphony Orchestra, and is a regular conductor with the D.C. area's Apollo Orchestra. He has led ballets with Dortmund Opera and the Indiana University Ballet Theater.

Neely is Director of Orchestras at the University of Maryland School of Music, where recent highlights include Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra, Mahler's Symphony No. 2, Valerie Coleman's *Umoja*, Carlos Simon's *The Block*, Prokofiev's Symphony No. 5, Emilie Mayer's Symphony in F minor, and world premieres of Erich Stem's *Kayak* and Maria Newman's *Our Rights and Nothing Less*. He is a regular guest conductor and guest conducting teacher at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, where he recently conducted Osvaldo Golijov's Flamenco opera *Ainadamar*.

Concerto soloists with whom he has collaborated include Hai-Ye Ni, David Chan, Eric Kutz, Roberto Diaz, Joshua Roman, Bella Hristova, Benjamin Beilman, Delfeayo Marsalis, Ricardo Morales, Ben Lulich, Phillipe Cuper, Nicholas Daniel, and Rainer Honeck. He has appeared as a collaborative pianist with numerous vocalists, including a recent recital with Joyce Castle and Schubert's *Winterreise* with David Adam Moore. He serves as a guest teacher with Washington National Opera's Cafritz Young Artist program, and was the conductor for WNO's American Opera Initiative in 2021. He recently appeared with the American Lyric Theater in New York and with the National Orchestra Institute + Festival.



Award-winning Canadian artist **Kumiko Sakamoto** (she/her/hers) has thrilled audiences across North America, Europe, and China, including performances at Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, Massey Hall, and Teatro la Fenice in Venice. A celebrated violinist, vocalist, and dancer, Kumiko uses her wide range of artistic talents to impact audiences of all ages through the power of music, story-telling, and human connection.

Kumiko received her early training in her hometown of Medicine Hat, Alberta. She was fortunate to have the opportunity to explore her love of the violin, dance, and musical theatre in an environment that nurtured multidisciplinary practice and collaboration. Kumiko has won top prizes at the Alberta Provincial Music Festival, the Canadian National Music Festival, Morningside Music Bridge, and the Fischhoff International Chamber Music Competition. Her debut album, featuring the first recordings of the works of composer Gino Gorini, was released under the Tactus (Naxos) label in 2015.

Kumiko pursued further studies in San Francisco, where she received Bachelor's and Master's degrees in violin and chamber music at the San Francisco Conservatory with minors in vocal performance, while studying dance at Alonzo King's Lines Ballet. She served as a member of the Grammy-winning San Francisco Symphony Chorus and appeared as both a violinist and dancer with the Joe Goode Performance Group in the 2017 premiere of "Nobody Lives Here Now". Kumiko is currently pursuing her doctoral degree at the University of Maryland.

A passionate collaborator, Kumiko has performed alongside members of the Emerson, Kronos, London Haydn, St. Lawrence, Brentano, and Borromeo Quartets, as well as Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Caroline Shaw, Eighth Blackbird, Leila Josefowicz, Lawrence Power, and the Joe Goode Performance Group.

Kumiko founded the Thalea String Quartet in 2014. Committed to the belief that chamber music can be a model for positive change and human connection, the ensemble strives to break the mould of the traditional Classical music ensemble. Over the past nine years, Kumiko has spearheaded several multidisciplinary projects and collaborations that combine elements of theatre, dance, and music. Most recently, Kumiko choreographed, directed, and starred in *Creepy Carrots*, the Thalea String Quartet's staged adaptation of the award-winning children's book by Aaron Reynolds. Current projects include a newly commissioned work for the Thalea String Quartet by composer Akshaya Avril Tucker which features Kumiko as both violinist and coloratura soprano. The Thalea String Quartet served as the fellowship quartet in residence at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and the Young Professional String Quartet at the University of Texas at Austin's Butler School of Music, where they were mentored by the acclaimed Miró Quartet. They were named Associated Artists at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel for the 2018/19 season, where they were mentored by the Artemis Quartet. Most recently they held the Doctoral Fellowship String Quartet position at the University of Maryland.

In addition to her activities with the Thalea String Quartet, Kumiko is a member of *Colour of Anyhow*, a multi-instrumental duo founded with her husband Christopher Whitley in 2020. Inspired by their shared love of Canadian folk music, pop, and Western classical music, *Colour of Anyhow* draws on a wide array of musical influences to celebrate the songs, stories, and experiences that bring us together. The duo's original arrangements feature violin, voice, guitar, and electronic elements, creating musical and stylistic through lines that connect centuries of musical traditions.

Kumiko is a devoted educator and mentor, bringing her rich artistic training to all of her teaching endeavours. She has developed many innovative educational programs, including a strings program for young people with autism, a music program for students in underserved communities in San Francisco, workshops in non-verbal communication, and virtual offerings that have reached thousands of students across North America. Kumiko was recently awarded the Ann Divine Educator Award from the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Association for her work in music education. Kumiko has coached chamber music at the University of Maryland and, along with her colleagues of the Thalea String Quartet, helped launch the inaugural Fischhoff Chamber Music Summer Intensive in 2023.

Kumiko is committed to fostering creativity, health, and well-being amongst musicians of all ages. She is dedicated to sharing the power of music with people of all backgrounds and sees music as an essential tool for encouraging compassion, connection, and curiosity in her community and beyond.

Kumiko performs on an 1820 Joannes Franciscus Pressenda violin generously on loan from the Canada Council for the Arts Musical Instrument Bank.

Kumiko would like to thank the warm and supportive UMD community, the UMSO for their inspired collaboration, maestro David Neely for his dedicated artistry, professor David Salness for his encouraging and insightful mentorship, her family and friends for their constant love and encouragement, her husband Chris for his unwavering support and care, and her parents for their everlasting commitment to her dreams.

**Bal Masqué**

AMY BEACH

Born Sep. 5, 1867, Henniker | Died Dec 27, 1944, New York

New Hampshire-born Amy Marcy Cheney was a child prodigy of music, able to improvise and compose music with multiple parts by age four. At age six, she began piano lessons with her mother, and just one year later, she gave her first public concert. Soon after, the Cheney family moved to Boston and she began more formal piano study with Johann Ernst Perabo and Carl Baermann. Her parents' decision to have her study in the United States went against the general preference for European conservatories, then considered the preeminent musical institutions. It is possible that Cheney's parents were satisfied with Perabo and Baermann's German origins, just as it is also possible that her parents were influenced by contemporaneous gender expectations and roles, under which women were generally not considered eligible for serious education or public performance. Despite this, Cheney made her professional debut in 1883 and debuted as a soloist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1885. During this time, she also took what would be her only formal composition lessons.

Later in 1885, Cheney married Henry Harris Aubrey Beach (1843–1910), a doctor twenty-four years her senior who taught at Harvard University and who had followed her budding career. From this point forward, she was known as “Mrs. H.H.A. Beach,” using this title to sign her compositions. In obedience to her husband, Beach changed her focus from performance to composition; public performance was viewed as too public a position for a middle/upper class woman at this time. Her husband's desire to adhere to cultural gender expectations meant that during her marriage, Beach rarely performed publicly, donated any profit to charity (so as to avoid the potentially immodest behavior of earning income for being on stage), and did not take any formal composition lessons. Instead, Beach read and translated theory texts and followed an intense score study regimen to increase her skill set. Interestingly, Beach quickly reestablished her professional career as a pianist after her husband and mother died, respectively, in 1910 and 1911, traveling to Europe to perform and promote her compositions, the large majority of which are for piano.

Bal Masqué is a single-movement orchestral work, arranged from the original piano version (op. 22) written in 1893 and published in 1894. With a marking of *Tempo di Valse* and a triple meter, the music evokes a waltz for a ball, alluding to the title. After a grandiose tutti introduction, the lower register provides rhythmic support for the singing melody in the upper strings and winds. This melody is an arrangement of Beach's song “Wouldn't That be Queer,” op. 26, no. 4 (also published 1894), the text of which describes how unusual it would be if the flowers sang and birds grew from the ground, or if cats and dogs spoke. After a series of trills is passed down the orchestra, the next section of the waltz begins, the tune introduced by the cellos. This second melody is the same as Beach's “Pierrot and Pierrette” movement from her *Children's Carnival*, op. 25 for piano, also published the same year as *Bal Masqué*. The first melody returns to close the piece, with the percussion, high winds, and lilting grace notes evoking the humorous text of the original song.

**Violin Concerto, op. 14**

SAMUEL BARBER

Born Mar. 9, 1910, West Chester | Died Jan 23, 1981, New York

Composer and baritone Samuel Barber grew up in West Chester, Pennsylvania, about thirty miles west of Philadelphia. His musical interests were cultivated by his aunt and uncle, contralto Louise Homer and composer Sidney Homer, and he began studying piano, voice, and composition at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia at just fourteen years old. While still a student, Barber began to gain recognition as a composer, winning multiple awards. Barber's famed *Adagio for Strings*, which premiered in 1938 by the NBC Symphony Orchestra under Arturo Toscanini, earned him permanent international stature.

Barber's European travels as well as his teachers at Curtis helped to solidify Barber's interest

in and connection with a more traditional, Romantic style of classical music, exemplified by *Adagio for Strings* and the *Violin Concerto*. While he occasionally did explore dissonance and limited serialism, his lyrical melodies and solidly tonal music often place him in stark contrast with his contemporaries, whose compositions were pushing beyond tonality, exploring new timbres, and creating extended techniques. Within this context, Barber's compositions sounded just as unique as the more experimental modernist compositions.

The *Violin Concerto*, op. 14, was commissioned in 1939 by Samuel Fels for his adopted son and violinist Iso Briselli, who graduated from Curtis with Barber. After presenting Briselli with the first two movements of the “concertino,” the violinist complained that it was not virtuosic enough, and so Barber added the rapid third movement...which Briselli declared impossible! Briselli would never perform the work, and it was instead given its public premiere by Albert Spalding on February 7, 1941, with the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Eugene Ormandy. For the premiere, Barber provided the following program notes:

The work is lyrical and rather intimate in character..The first movement—allegro molto moderato—begins with a lyrical first subject announced at once by the solo violin, without any orchestral introduction. The movement as a whole has perhaps more the character of a sonata than a concerto form. The second movement—*andante sostenuto*—is introduced by an extended oboe solo. The violin enters with a contrasting and rhapsodic theme, after which it repeats the oboe melody of the beginning. The last movement, a perpetual motion, exploits the more brilliant and virtuosic character of the violin.

The solo violin is featured immediately in the sonata form first movement, the lack of an orchestral introduction perhaps contributing to Barber's description of the movement as more a sonata than part of a concerto. A second, more folk-like lilting theme is introduced in the clarinet and, unusual for a concerto first movement, there is no soloist cadenza. Throughout the movement, Barber explores modes and new key relationships but roots the movement in tonality. Lush and lyrical, the second movement recalls Barber's experience as a singer. The movement explores the rich lower register of the violin, and the long lines demonstrate Barber's more conservative compositional style. Marked *Presto*, in *moto perpetuo*, the show-stopping third movement allows the soloist's technique to take center stage, bringing the work to a brilliant close.

### ***The Unanswered Question***

CHARLES IVES

Born Oct. 20, 1874, Danbury | Died May 19, 1954, New York

Charles Ives grew up in Connecticut and his oeuvre is famously inspired by the musical and literary history of New England. His strong association with the area has also allowed him and his music, which frequently borrows snippets of melodies from common hymns, popular tunes, American marches, etc., to be held up as a quintessential symbol of the United States. Ives's eclectic influences are possible because of the variety of musical experiences he had. His father was a band leader in Danbury and Ives played drums in his father's ensemble. Ives also studied harmony and composition with his father and took piano and organ lessons. He began a professional career as an organist at just age fourteen, working as a church organist until 1902. Ives's career and skill as an organist influenced his compositions: we can trace his interest in improvisation, contrasting timbres, use of drones or pedal points, multi-line textures, and interest in spatial effect to the organ.

Ives continued working as an organist—which also required him to compose music for services—while completing his degree at Yale University, where he also took organ and composition lessons with Horatio Parker. Even so, Ives moved to New York after graduation in 1898 and entered the world of business, becoming an insurance salesman. While at first he continued to compose, overwork and stress caused him to almost cease writing music in 1905, beginning again after his marriage to Harmony Twichell in June 1908. The *Unanswered Question*, most likely inspired by a line in Ralph Waldo Emerson's 1847 poem

The Sphinx, was first written in 1908, and then revised 1930–1935. Ives stopped writing new music in 1927 and retired from insurance at the start of 1930. From then on—as his public career as a composer began—Ives focused on revising previous works, often preparing them for public performance or publication.

In preparation for the premiere of *The Unanswered Question* (revised version) in May 1946, Ives wrote his own program note that describes the piece, excerpted here:

The strings play ppp throughout with no change in tempo. They are to represent “The Silences of the Druids—who Know, See, and Hear Nothing.” The trumpet intones “The Perennial Question of Existence,” and states it in the same tone of voice each time. But the hunt for “The Invisible Answer,” undertaken by the flutes and other human beings, becomes gradually more active, faster and louder through an *animando* to a *con fuco*. This part need not be played in the exact time position indicated. It is played in somewhat of an *improptu* way; if there be no conductor, one of the flute players may direct their playing. “The Fighting Answerers,” as the time goes on, and after a “secret conference,” seem to realize the futility, and began to mock “The Question” —the strife is over for the moment. After they disappear, “The Question” is asked for the last time, and “The Silences” are heard beyond in “Undisturbed Solitude.”

This description sets up the three main groups of instruments in the piece: strings, trumpet, and flutes. The strings indeed remain static and quietly muted the entire piece, creating a tonal atmosphere underneath the more chromatic and dissonant winds. The trumpet’s recurring statements of “The Question” are answered each time (except for the end) by the flutes, which are marked with a separate tempo than the other instruments, posing a challenge for the performers. The notated rhythms for the flutes get faster and faster, while the tempo and volume also increase. Ives employs his quintessential “wedge” technique in the flutes, with the individual lines in contrary motion to each other. His interest in spatial effects and timbre is also seen in the full 1946 program note, which gives suggestions as to instrument placement, techniques, and possible substitutions. Ives helps to make his modernist compositional style more accessible for listeners by providing a narrative through which we are invited to understand his music.

### **Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story***

LEONARD BERNSTEIN

Born Aug. 25, 1918, Lawrence | Died Oct 14, 1990, New York

Named after his late grandfather, Louis Bernstein (Bernstein legally changed his name to “Leonard,” which his parents called him, at age sixteen) was born in Massachusetts to a family of Jewish immigrants from what is now Ukraine. He began playing music at age ten, when his aunt gave the family an old piano, and began taking lessons at fourteen. Bernstein was also involved with opera and jazz during high school and—to his father’s chagrin—majored in music at Harvard. He then attended the Curtis Institute of Music and, in the summer of 1940, attended the Tanglewood festival where he studied conducting with the famed Serge Koussevitzky. After graduating from Curtis in 1941, he quickly established himself as a leading conductor; he was hired as the assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic which launched his international career. One of the first American conductors of international renown, Bernstein would eventually become the music director of the New York Philharmonic and frequently conducted the Vienna Philharmonic.

One of Bernstein’s most famous scores, *West Side Story* modernized *Romeo and Juliet* into contemporaneous New York City. The star-crossed lovers, Tony and Maria, are from different ethnic backgrounds, allowing the show to explore conversations surrounding immigration, discrimination, and acceptance. Maria is Puerto Rican and sister to Bernardo, leader of the gang the Sharks. Maria and Tony, best friends with and former member of the white gang the Jets, fall in love despite their differences and the antagonism around them. In a fight between the gangs, Bernardo kills Riff, the leader of the Jets, and Tony avenges his friend’s death by killing Bernardo. While Maria grieves for her brother, she still loves

Tony, and they plan to run away. Their plans are thwarted when Chino, Bernardo's friend, shoots and kills Tony in revenge. Ending differently than the original Romeo and Juliet story, Maria is unable to commit suicide and instead her grief heals the feud between the two gangs and the communities they represent.

West Side Story opened in 1957 and was an immediate hit. Bernstein, along with fellow orchestrators Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal, prepared the set of Symphonic Dances in 1960. The Symphonic Dances from West Side Story premiered in 1961 by the New York Philharmonic, conducted by Lukas Foss, who attended Curtis with Bernstein. Published with the score is a brief explanation of the movements, which are performed without break, and how they relate to the original show:

*Prologue* (Allegro moderato)

The growing rivalry between two teenage gangs, the Jets and the Sharks.

*Somewhere* (Adagio)

In a visionary dance sequence, the two gangs are united in friendship.

*Scherzo* (Vivace e leggiero)

In the same dream, they break through the city walls, and suddenly find themselves in a world of space, air, and sun.

*Mambo* (Meno Presto)

Reality again; competitive dance between the gangs.

*Cha-cha* (Andantino con grazia)

The star-crossed lovers see each other for the first time and dance together.

*Meeting Scene* (Meno mosso)

Music accompanies their first spoken words.

*Cool Fugue* (Allegretto)

An elaborate dance sequence in which the Jets practice controlling their hostility.

*Rumble* (Molto allegro)

Climactic gang battle during which the two gang leaders are killed.

*Finale* (Adagio)

Love music developing into a procession, which recalls, in tragic reality, the vision of "Somewhere."

The music of West Side Story pulls influences from a variety of influences, demonstrating the transculturation that results from immigration. Bernstein uses the Cuban mambo and cha-cha, the Puerto Rican seis, and the Mexican huapango as dances in the score, and the drums, maracas, and cowbells also evoke the general sound of Latin America. At the same time, Bernstein also is inspired by jazz and uses operatic compositional techniques, creating a sound world that is truly indicative of 1950s New York City.

*Program notes by Elizabeth Massey, Ph.D.*



The School of Music would like to thank the Board of Visitors for supporting the Annual Concerto Competition Prize Awards, as well as for their counsel and volunteer leadership.

The School of Music would also like to express its deep appreciation for the generosity of all scholarship benefactors and patrons.

With this support, the school is able to recruit the best musicians to Maryland from every part of the state, the nation, and the world.





David Neely, *Music Director*  
 Mark Wakefield, *Manager of Orchestral Activities*

**VIOLIN**

Yuan-Ju Liu, *Concertmaster*  
 Anna Kelleher,  
*Principal Second*  
 Zoe Kushubar,  
*Principal Second*  
 Emily Chen  
 Anton Doan  
 Jing Fan  
 Alexandra Fitzgerald  
 Darragh Fitzgerald  
 José Antonio Guzman  
 Anthony Holc  
 Max Jacobs  
 Lina Kang  
 Kiran Kaur  
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 Nina Staniszewska  
 Camden Stohl  
 Eleanor Sturm  
 Ruth Swope  
 Anna Weiksner  
 Alan Whitman  
 Jessica Zhu

**VIOLA**

Seth Goodman,  
*Principal*  
 Emily Bussa  
 Yu-Hsuan Chen  
 Fabio Dantas de Araujo Costa  
 Nathan Hoffman  
 Anna Lee  
 Xach Lee-Llacer  
 Micah McCready  
 Rohan Prabhakar  
 John Ross  
 Brian Shoop  
 Madeline Stohl

**CELLO**

David Agia, *Principal*  
 Jenna Bachmann  
 Sarah Bennett  
 Henry Bushnell  
 Gavriel Eagle  
 Rory Gallo  
 Ethan Gullo  
 Noah Hamermesh  
 Nailah Harris  
 Wesley Hornpetrie  
 Eva Houlton  
 John Keane  
 Sean Kim  
 Simone Pierpaoli  
 Quinn Taylor

**DOUBLE BASS**

Joshua Rhodes, *Principal*  
 Britney Hansford  
 Teddy Hersey  
 Benjamin Knight  
 Asa Dawson

**FLUTE**

Andrew Hui  
 Ksenia Mezheny  
 Erica Spear  
 Brianne Steif

**OBOE**

Jonathan Alonzo  
 Yelazat Azhbagambetov  
 Lauren Riley

**ENGLISH HORN**

Lauren Riley

**CLARINET**

Jackson Lasher  
 Nick Lopez  
 Sophie Ross  
 Matthew Vice

**BASSOON**

Makayla Bowen-Longino  
 Meghan Freer

**CONTRABASSOON**

Jonathan Zepp

**ALTO SAXOPHONE**

Elizabeth Linton

**HORN**

Gavin Gibson  
 Liam McConlogue  
 Owen Miller  
 Drew Mincey  
 Matt Tremba

**TRUMPET**

Theresa Bickler  
 Tatiana Giesler  
 Jacob Weglarz

**TROMBONE**

Liam Glendening  
 Colton Wilson

**BASS TROMBONE**

Gilberto Cruz

**TUBA**

Grace Tifford

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 Trent Bowman  
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