

**CHAMBER STARS.**

April 26, 2026 3 pm

**BEETHOVEN: Quintet in E-flat Major, Op. 16**

Debra Barford, Diane Doll, Martha Mitchell Cavender,  
David Barford, David Leehey

**HAYDN: String Quartet in E-flat major, Op. 71 No. 3 - I. Vivace**

**BRAHMS: String Quartet No. 3 in B-flat major,  
Op. 67 - III. Agitato**

**BARTOK: String Quartet No. 2, Sz. 67 -  
II. Allegro molto capriccioso**

Tikaani Quartet ~ Sebastian Manning, Neena Agrawal,  
Katarina Kenney, Romeo Vashishth

**RAVEL: Piano Trio in A Minor**

Michelle Wynton, William Cernota, David Leehey

Doors open for ticket sales and check in at 2:30 pm.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

611 Randolph Street, Oak Park

Tickets are \$20 each

Students through college admitted free of charge.



**CONCERTMASTER GWEN BRITS** began violin lessons at age six in Lexington, Kentucky. After moving to Oregon, she performed with the Salem Youth Symphony, Oregon Pro Arte Youth Chamber Orchestra, Oregon All-State Orchestra, and the All-Northwest Orchestra. During her undergraduate years, she was a member of the Utah State University Symphony Orchestra and studied privately with William Fedkenheuer, now a member of the Miró Quartet. In Iowa, Gwen was an active performer with the Clark University Orchestra and the Dubuque Symphony Orchestra. She was also a member of the Provo-based contemporary folk band Molly in the Mineshaft and Dubuque's Bluegrass Alumatics. Gwen holds a master's degree in ESL instruction and has taught at UIC and Triton College; she is currently a student advisor at the Northwestern University International Students & Scholars Office. She lives in Forest Park with her husband and dog.



Jay Friedman, Music Director



**Trombone Treat**

April 19, 2026 4:00 P.M.

Concordia Chapel of Our Lord

Concerto for Trombone

Timothy Higgins  
(1982-)

- I. Daybreak
- II. Nighttime (Misterioso)
- III. Finale (Presto)

Timothy Higgins, soloist

Jay Friedman, conductor

Intermission

Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 54

Robert Schumann  
(1810-1856)

- III. Allegro vivace

Dylan Zhang, soloist  
Winner of 2026 Concerto Competition

*Symphonic Dances from West Side Story*

Leonard Bernstein  
(1918-1990)

Prologue (Allegro moderato) – Somewhere (Adagio) -- Scherzo (Vivace e leggero) -- Mambo (Meno presto) -- Cha-cha (Andantino con grazia) -- Meeting Scene (Meno mosso) -- Cool Fugue (Allegretto) -- Rumble (Molto allegro) -- Finale (Adagio)

Maurice Boyer, conductor

*The Symphony of Oak Park & River Forest is supported in part by grants from the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, Illinois Arts Council, Oak Park Area Arts Council, in partnership with the Village of Oak Park, and Cook County Arts.*

*Today's concert is being performed in memory of Bernie Metzger*

**Concerto for Trombone** was composed by **Timothy Higgins** in January 2020, on commission from the San Francisco Symphony, and received its World Premiere in a series of concerts with that orchestra under the direction of Michael Tilson Thomas in November 2021. The following notes are from the program of those concerts, reprinted here for the Midwest Premiere with the permission of the composer and soloist.

**THE BACKSTORY.** San Francisco Symphony audiences are well acquainted with Timothy Higgins' music making since he has served as the Orchestra's Principal Trombone since 2008. In this concert, however, we encounter him not only in his role as trombonist but also in a different capacity—that of composer.

His path toward composing began through his work as an arranger of other people's scores. "When I got to San Francisco in 2008," Higgins said, "I started to wonder what it would be like to write my own music rather than arrange other people's, so I started experimenting." He had an advantage that most composition students can only dream of. "I sit in the orchestra every week, so I get to watch what all these composers did with a score. I'm in a laboratory where I can see what works well—or doesn't. I started to identify what was a challenge in writing a piece of music, and why." By 2014 he began to sign off on his own compositions. His catalogue now numbers nearly two dozen pieces.

In January 2020, then-Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony extended a commission for him to write a trombone concerto. "I was gobsmacked," said Higgins. "I couldn't not do this." The piece was scheduled to be premiered that October, so the pressure was on. He set to work instantly and produced the entire twenty-five-minute concerto in about three weeks. This was not the only thing going on in his life just then. The commission was offered about a month before he and his wife would welcome the birth of their first child, a son named Fynn. "I knew that my time would shift big time, so I wanted to get as much done as I could before he showed up." Once he started, the inspiration flowed even more quickly than he could have hoped.

**THE MUSIC.** "It was exciting to write a trombone concerto," he said, "but also to be able to write for the San Francisco Symphony and know the players." The piece makes broad use of the orchestra's virtuosic resources, providing highlighted passages and solo turns for many instruments apart from the soloist. "Why wouldn't you take advantage of all this incredible talent on the stage? I would have hated for the piece to be just a trombone with some accompaniment the whole time. I would much rather that the audience could focus on hearing the soloist play or on hearing the orchestra play. I want people to notice both." The trombone writing was nonetheless of paramount importance, to be sure. "I want people in the audience to hear how versatile the trombone is," he said. "Whether it's something rhythmic or angular or broad and lyrical, I want them to hear how varied our expressive palette is. I think that really effective solo writing for trombone is able to use both sides of the coin, both angular playing and lyrical playing, and meld them together into something compelling. This piece incorporates a lot of technical challenges, but it's all done with a lyrical line."

The concerto's gestation became intertwined with Fynn's arrival. "I started off thinking that I wanted to start with a flash. I didn't want to slowly walk into the concerto, but rather to begin with high energy. Then, I wanted to find contrast to that—the second theme. I started thinking about what it would be like to have a baby, and I went down this path of playfulness, uncertainty, anticipation. That just showed up on the page and I went with it." Listeners will have no trouble hearing the playfulness in the "Daybreak" movement, where the trombone hops about through a wide range. One also hears the uncertainty Higgins cited, although that may be worked into the piece through more subtle means. This opening movement superimposes two tonic keys, one based on C, the other on D, conveying a sense of uneasiness compared to a standard, strongly rooted key. "From there I went to a nocturnal scene—the second movement. I thought I was probably going to be walking around in some

## A WARM THANK YOU TO OUR DONOR\$!

### Corporate, Foundation, & Government Funders

Charitable Adult Rides  
Cook County Arts Emerging Artists Chicago  
The Gaylord & Dorothy Donnelley Foundation  
Illinois Arts Council Music and Potlucks  
Oak Park Area Arts Council  
Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation  
The Saints W4Sight

### Grand Benefactors

Edith Aldworth Bequest  
David & Debbie Barford in honor of their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary  
A. R. Barton Bequest  
Roy Benedek  
Diane Doll in memory of Ken, Kenny, & Pearl Doll  
Cheryl Flinn & Wayne Christenson  
Gail & Jay Friedman  
Gaspero & Gaspero, Attorneys at Law  
Beth Hoover  
David & Roslyn Leehey  
JoAnn Green Rehkopf Memorial Fund for Young Musicians  
Richard Rizzo

### Sforzando \$1000 - \$2499

Anonymous  
Nancy Barth  
Paul Beckwith  
Carole Benson & Richard Weinberg  
Susan & Nick Bridge, in honor of Jay Friedman  
Michael Delaney, in memory of Geralyn Delaney  
Dan & Janie Harrison  
Barb Hunt

Carol Janosy  
Kristina Lee  
Judy Meredith  
Teresa Powell  
Richard Rizzo, in memory of Victor Recca  
Anthony & Chatka Ruggiero, in memory of Lora Aborn  
Julie Tumma  
Chris & Julie Wood  
**Crescendo \$500 - \$999**

Anonymous  
Richard & Priscilla Benson  
Meggan Flinn  
Lillian Hohmann  
Judy Meredith, in memory of 'Saint' Kathleen Perry  
Bernie Metzger  
James Mowers  
Sil Pesavento  
Linda Nyholt-Sabuda  
Sue Sentowski  
Judith Siaba  
Laurel & Robert Tempas

### Fortissimo \$250 - \$499

Rebecca & Kevin Anderson  
Maurice Boyer  
Jeanne Busch  
Rupa Datta & Ravi Nemana  
Carolyn Deuel, in honor of Diane Doll  
Kent Dymak  
Mrs. Eleanor Flinn  
Lawrence & Jennifer Gates  
Irene Hansen  
Bruce Jacobs  
Mary Rose Lambke  
Joe Langley & Brad Bartels  
David & Roslyn Leehey in honor of Carole Benson  
Lenore & Dan Mass  
Jim & Melinda Robinson  
Emmie Strassberg, in honor of her parents, Dave & Debbie Barford  
Barbara Volin, in honor of Beth & Gary Wainer

### Forte \$100 - \$249

Sujata Banerjee, in memory of Debdas Banerjee  
Connie & Eric Brandfonbrener  
Susan Cartland-Bode  
Joyce Callahan  
Vera Capp  
Emile & Jeannie Charest  
Nina Chen  
Guy Corl  
Ann Courter & Norman Hirsch  
KL Robertson Daly  
Cheryl Flinn and Wayne Christenson, in memory of Diane Doll's aunt & Jan Widmaier's father  
Steve Flinn  
Glenn & Donna Gabanski  
Helene & Stephen Gabelnick  
Jessica Gerberi  
Bill & Leah Gleason  
Irene Hansen  
Philip & Patricia Heil  
Beth Hoover, in memory of Julie Tumma's father  
Marian & Stan Kaderbek  
Mr. & Mrs. Laurens A. Lohmann  
Lory Maltby  
Sue McCowen & Randy Rapp, in honor of Beth Hoover  
Laura Milewski  
Mel Noel  
Lisa Rathje & Rob Taylor  
Richard J. Rizzo, in memory of Victor Recca  
Howard & Darlene Sandifer  
Ingrid Schimnoski  
Carla & Edward Sloan  
Rosalie Swanson  
Kristen Tan  
Cynthia Weinand  
Ben Wong  
**Mezzo \$50 - \$99**  
Sharon Allen  
Joyce Callahan  
Marynoel Chavez  
Christina Caldwell  
Kathleen Carney

Christine Dalton  
Glenna Eorgoff, in memory of Diane Doll's Aunt Vera  
Paul Haberstock  
Linda Hillman, in memory of Harry Harbaugh, past band and orchestra director of Pacific High School, San Bernardino, CA  
Carolyn A. Kalina  
Paul McCaffray  
Patrick Murphy  
Oak Park Alumni of SAI  
Hertha Ozsula  
James Pickard  
Jeff Schroeder  
Eleanor Sharpe  
Amy Schropshire  
Elizabeth Smolinski  
Tech Developers  
Mary Tiffin  
Mary Tom  
Mary Tominard  
Steve & Susan Went  
Joyce Westphal  
Camille Wilson White  
**Community Partners**  
Able Printing  
Butterfly Productions  
Byline Bank  
Chicago Tribune  
City Voices  
Concordia University  
Adam Doe, State Farm  
Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation  
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
Illinois Arts Council  
The Lou Malnati Organization  
Oak Leaves  
Oak Park Area Arts Council  
Oak Park Bank  
Oak Park-River Forest Chamber of Commerce  
Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation  
Olde World Limousine  
Park District of Oak Park  
Pioneer Press  
Pro Musica Youth Chorus  
Thrivent  
Wednesday Journal

## April 19, 2026 Personnel

++ *Concertmaster*  
+ *Assistant Section*  
*Leader*  
\* *Principal*  
~ *Section Organizer*  
^ *String Intern*  
Number after name  
indicates how many  
years in S/OP&RF

### First Violins

Gwen Brits 5 ++  
Eliot Abarbanel 8  
Eric Brandfonbrener 12  
Caitlin Hillyard 5  
Abraham Marcial Manzola 2  
Lisa Minnish 9  
Aileen Murphy 4  
Ingrid Schimnoski 8+  
Marylou Witz 19  
Michelle Wynton 13  
Peiran Zhao 1  
**Second Violins**  
Carol Janossy 48 \*  
Rupa Datta 1  
Cheryl Flinn 33  
Isabela Flores 5  
Lisa Gaspero 4  
Yi-Chen Huang 15  
Judy Meredith 28  
Melissa Proulx 3  
Emilysue Reichardt 2  
Lorena Morales Rodriguez 3  
Elizabeth Tan 2  
Julie Tumma 25  
Wailin Wong 9

### Violas

Uli Widmaier 9 \*  
Keith Jones 7 +  
Adrienne Kitchen 1  
Heather Lough 10  
Janet Widmaier 9  
**Cellos**  
Alex Groesch 8 \*  
Viktoria Baldacci 2  
Karen Baldwin 28  
Andrea Charest 6  
Christian Hernandez 9  
Lenore Mass 31  
Peter Mertka 1

### Double Basses

Kristina Lee 24 \*  
Thea Grendahl Christou 15  
Ceazar DePaoli 5  
James Janossy 19  
David Malatesta 13  
Jolie Quick 11  
Macy Wilson 2

### Harp

Raquel Coleman 1

### Keyboard

David Leehey 21

### Stage Manager

Jon Zimmer 1



Donald Gimbel  
Terry Gimbel  
Corey Kirkpatrick  
Marilyn Novak  
Ruth Reko  
Margaret Wanat

### Flutes

Laurel Tempas 12  
Marcia Hustad 9  
Julie Siarny 24, *Piccolo*

### Oboes

Debbie Barford 47 \*  
Elliot Lichtenberg 1+  
Linda Johnson 54  
Beth Hoover 48, *English Horn*

### Clarinets

Diane Doll 52 \*  
Jim Robinson 13  
Kumiko Nowlan 10, *E♭*  
Cristian Zavala 1, *Bass*

### Alto Saxophone

Dan Moffett 2

### Bassoons

Martha Mitchell Cavender 7 \*  
Lisa Rathje 14  
Xavier Woodley, *Contra*

### French Horns

David C. Barford 46 \*  
Melinda Z. Robinson 25  
Michael Papierniak 35  
Emily Torrey 3  
Shivani Maisuria 3

### Trumpets

Dale Kerner 46 \*  
Edward Kerner 10  
Augustine Melecio 7

### Trombones

Chris Wood 23 \*  
Patrick Zielinski 40  
Lance Malina 42, *Bass*

### Tuba

Cheldon White 1

### Percussion

Tim Nichin 2\*  
Michael Daniel 56  
Matt Hart 13  
Jeff Evans 1

sort of middle-of-the-night can't-get-my-kid-to-sleep fog. I had written a little lullaby that I sang to Fynn before he was even born, and still do today, and that was the basis for 'Nighttime,' the second movement." The idea is sometimes conveyed in specific detail. At one point, for example, the string instruments enter in rapid sequence from high to low in the orchestra's range, each section picking up the same descending motif. "I was trying to build up fog," Higgins explains—not standard-issue San Francisco fog, but more "the fogginess I might feel at night with my baby crying, which would soon become a very familiar experience." "And from there, I thought I needed to end with a bold ending. The rondo is a traditional form for the finales of many concertos, so I used that and wrote a big ending. The last movement is high energy and I wanted to use the full range of the instrument. Violin players can get up and down their instrument so easily, and I am jealous of that. So I decided that in this finale I wanted to jump all around my instrument, too. I wanted it to look and sound athletic."

**Robert Schumann** married Clara Wieck, the daughter of his piano teacher and herself one of the great pianists of Europe, on September 12, 1840. Before his marriage, Schumann had concentrated exclusively on composing songs and solo piano works, but Clara encouraged her husband to try his hand at larger-scale forms such as symphonies, oratorios, and concertos. The result was that Schumann entered one of the most creative periods of his life. For the next five years, he produced one large-scale masterwork after another, including the *Spring Symphony*; the Overture, Scherzo, and Finale; the oratorio *Paradise and the Peri*; three String Quartets, and the E-flat Piano Quartet and Quintet. He also continued to compose songs, producing the song cycles *Liederkreis* and *Dichterliebe*. Interestingly, his composition of solo piano music essentially stopped. The major exception was the **Piano Concerto in A minor**, which began life as a Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra in one movement, completed in 1841. In 1845, Schumann added a slow movement and finale to a revised version of the Fantasy to complete a three-movement concerto. It was premiered in Dresden on December 4, 1845, with Clara as the soloist.

The opening theme of the brilliant finale is a major-key reworking of the first movement's main theme, nicely contrasted with the more playful character of the syncopated second theme. Schumann approaches form with great freedom in this movement. A long coda, impulsive and irresistible, ends the concerto, one of the most popular in the repertory.

A child of the Jazz Age, composer and conductor **Leonard Bernstein** made his famous debut, conducting the New York Philharmonic on very short notice without the benefit of a rehearsal, in a nationally broadcast concert in November 1943. Over the next decade he wrote two symphonies ("Jeremiah" and "The Age of Anxiety"), the ballet *Fancy Free*, the Broadway musicals *On the Town* and *Wonderful Town*, the operas *Candide* and *Trouble in Tahiti*, and music for the movie *On the Waterfront*, starring Marlon Brando. However, it was the musical **West Side Story**, written between 1955-1957, which would ensure his fame as a composer. In 1960, Bernstein revisited his score for *West Side Story* and extracted nine sections to assemble into the **Symphonic Dances**. This work premiered at a "Valentine for Leonard Bernstein" gala concert by the New York Philharmonic (a fundraiser for the orchestra's pension fund) under Lukas Foss' direction on February 13, 1961.

The stylistic diversity within the *Symphonic Dances* is partially created by the juxtaposition of classical techniques such as fugue with dance rhythms such as mambo and jazz syncopations. However, the essence of the entire score is the opening melodic figure of "Maria" (C-F sharp-G), with its characteristic tritone interval. The suite ends, like the musical itself, on edge, with an evocative chord containing the same interval.

The crucial role of dance in *West Side Story* added to the challenge of adapting the music for the concert platform. The orchestration calls for vibrant instrumental combinations and a huge percussion section (not to mention finger-snapping and shouts of “Mambo!” from orchestra members) to enhance the kinetic quality of the rhythms. The printed score includes the following descriptions:

Prologue (Allegro moderato)—The growing rivalry between two teenage street gangs, the Jets and 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 [Tony and Maria] 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.

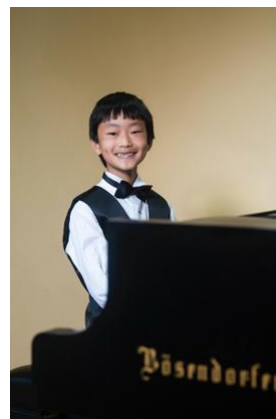
Rumble (Molto allegro)—Climactic gang battle during which the two gang leaders are killed.

Finale (Adagio)—Love music developing into a procession, which recalls, in tragic reality, the vision of “Somewhere.”



**Timothy Higgins** officially began his role as principal trombone of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the start of the 2025–26 season. Higgins won the final audition for principal trombone in April 2025 and is the second CSO musician to be appointed by Zell Music Director Designate Klaus Mäkelä. He appeared as guest principal trombone with Mäkelä and the CSO for memorable performances of Mahler’s Third Symphony in April and with Jaap van Zweden for spring performances of Mahler’s Sixth and Seventh symphonies in Chicago, on the Orchestra’s 2025 European Tour and the final two weeks at the 2025 Ravinia Festival as guest principal trombone. Prior to his appointment to the CSO, Higgins served as principal trombone of the San Francisco Symphony, appointed by Michael Tilson Thomas in 2008. He was previously the acting second trombonist with the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C. In addition to an active orchestra career, Higgins is a highly regarded composer and arranger. He was the sole arranger of the National Brass Ensemble’s *Gabrieli* recording. In November 2021, Higgins composed and performed as soloist in the premiere of his Concerto for Trombone with Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony. Additional arrangements and compositions by Higgins have been programmed by the San Francisco Symphony, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra, Detroit Symphony, Kansas City Symphony, Steamboat Springs Strings Festival and numerous university brass ensembles. His compositions have been commissioned by the San Francisco Symphony, Detroit Symphony, American Brass Quintet, international tuba soloist Sergio Carolino and Music City Brass Ensemble. Higgins was the composer-in-residence at Music Academy of the West in 2018,

debuting a piece for chamber ensemble and voice featuring renowned American soprano Deborah Voigt. His arrangements and original compositions are available through his publishing company, 415Music, established in 2014. He released a solo CD, *Stage Left*, which features his own compositions in 2013. Recent albums include two self-produced recordings from 2020 in his Underground series. A respected educator, Higgins has served on the faculty at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Northwestern University’s Bienen School of Music and the Pokorny Low Brass Seminar at Northern Illinois University. He has also been part of the brass faculty at the Aspen Music Festival and Pacific Music Festival. Higgins has led masterclasses in Australia, China, Canada, Japan and North America, including classes at the Royal Conservatory in Toronto, New World Symphony, Vanderbilt University, Manhattan School of Music and the Juilliard School. Originally from Houston, Texas, Higgins came to the Chicago area to attend Northwestern University, where he received a bachelor’s degree in music performance and studied with CSO Trombone Michael Mulcahy. His other principal teachers were Michael Warny (Houston Grand Opera) and Royce Landon (Des Moines, Iowa). In 2005, Higgins won the Robert Marsteller Solo trombone competition, as well as the International Trombone Association (ITA) Trombone Quartet competition with his group CT3. While attending the Tanglewood Music Center, Higgins was awarded the Grace B. Upton Award for Outstanding Fellow. Timothy Higgins is a Bach Artist and an Ultimate Brass Artist.



**Dylan Zhang**, age 12, is a student in the 6th Grade at Roosevelt Middle School in River Forest, IL. He loves playing piano and studies with Sueanne Metz. In the 2025 Chicago International Music Competition, he received the Jury Discretionary Prize as a Grand Prize and received the First Place in his age group. He was the Overall Winner of the Open Junior Division of the O’Malley Foundation National Concerto Competition (2025). He was the 2025 Winner of Kishwaukee Symphony Orchestra (KSO) Young Artists Concerto Competition and performed with KSO. He was the recipient of the 2025 NSMTA Betty Benton Summer Music Scholarship and performed with orchestra at the Perugia Music Festival in Italy. He was First Place winner of the Illinois State Music Teachers Association (ISMTA) Competition (2023-Elementary Division and 2024-Junior Division), the Carmel Arts International Online Competition (2023), and the Music Festival in Honor of Confucius (2024). He won First Prize in the Franz Liszt Center International Piano Competition (2024), First Place and the Most Promising Young Pianist Award at the Chopin with a View International Festival and Competition (2023) and was a Gold Medalist in the Grand Metropolitan International Music Competition (2023). He was a prize winner of the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) Piano Competition-Illinois State Level (2025), the Elevato Stanza Junior Piano Competition (2025), the Walgreens National Concerto Competition (2023), the DePaul National Concerto Competition for Young Performers (2024), the Carmel Klavier International Competition (2023 and 2024), the Aloha International Piano Competition (2023), the Elevato Piano Competition (2023), the Odin International Music Online Competition (2022), the London International Music Competition (2022), and the WPTA Spain International Piano Competition (2022). He was a winner of the American Fine Arts Festival Competition (2022) and performed at Carnegie Hall.

For biographies of conductors **Jay Friedman** and **Maurice Boyer**, please see your program book.