

Brandeis University Department of Music
Presents:

Student Chamber Music Concert II

Slosberg Music Center
Brandeis University
7:30pm, April 30, 2026

String Quartet No. 3 in F major, Op. 73

Dmitri Shostakovich
(1906-1975)

- I. Allegretto
- II. Moderato con moto
- III. Allegro non troppo

Grace Newton, violin 1
Laila Eshel, violin 2
Jeffrey Yi, viola
Bryan da Costa, cello

Dolly Suite, Op. 56

Gabriel Faure
(1845-1924)

- I. Berceuse
- II. Mi-a-ou
- III. Le jardin de Dolly
- IV. Kitty-valse
- V. Tendresse
- VI. Le pas espagnol

Jewel Wang and Mirit Wenderfer, piano

Cantilène et Danse

Marc Eyckenne
(b. 1933)

- I. Lent
- II. Tres rythme

Lily Fasciano, alto saxophone
Tony Li, violin
Sophia Guralnik, piano

~Intermission~

Trio in E-flat major, K. 498 "Kegelstatt"

Wolfgang Amadé Mozart

(1756-1791)

- I. Andante
- II. Menuetto
- III. Rondeaux. Allegretto

Gavin Liu, clarinet
Jonathan Beeler, viola
Coby Shusteff, piano

Violin Sonata No. 1 in D minor, Op. 75

Camille Saint-Saëns

(1835-1921)

- I. Allegro agitato -
- II. Adagio
- III. Allegro moderato -
- IV. Allegro molto

Hugh Park, violin
Andrew Gay, piano

**All performers are registered for MUS116b and have been coached by Brandeis music faculty members Mark Berger, Evan Hirsch, and Sophia Szokolay.

Program Notes:

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) was a Soviet composer and pianist. He garnered initial fame after the premiere of his First Symphony in 1926, and became an internationally renowned composer despite significant hardship from Soviet political unrest. His Third String Quartet was composed following World War II in 1946, and was dedicated to the Beethoven Quartet. When the piece was first released, Shostakovich had accompanied the movements with five chilling subtitles, but quickly withdrew these descriptions without explanation. They add an unsettling undertone to an already enigmatic piece.

The first movement, *Allegretto*, is subtitled “calm unawareness of the future cataclysm” and may reference the ignorant or oblivious feeling in the opening melody. The second movement, *Moderato con Moto*, is called “rumblings of unrest and anticipation”, which is indicated by the tension and unsettled emotional landscape of the second movement. The *Allegro non troppo*, subtitled “the forces of war are unleashed”, is overtly violent sounding, and will be the last movement performed this evening. The fourth movement, *Adagio attacca*, is called “homage to the dead”, and the fifth movement, *Moderato*, is “the eternal question: why and to what purpose?”

According to Fyodor Druzhinin, a member of the Beethoven Quartet, the Third String Quartet was profoundly important to Shostakovich: “When we finished playing he sat quite still in silence like a wounded bird, tears streaming down his face. This was the only time that I saw Shostakovich so open and defenseless”. We are glad to be able to perform these movements for you tonight, and we hope that you enjoy.

~Bryan, Grace, Jeffrey and Laïla

Gabriel Fauré was a French composer, organist, pianist, and teacher born in 1845. He was born into a cultured but not musical family, the youngest of six children. His music has been described as the bridge linking the end of Romanticism with the modernism of the second quarter of the 20th century.

The *Dolly Suite* is a collection of pieces for piano duet that Fauré wrote and revised between 1893 and 1896. This collection was used to mark important events in the life of his mistress's daughter, known to her family as "Dolly." Fauré gave each of the six movements a descriptive title:

Berceuse (meaning "lullaby") marks Dolly's first birthday. *Mi-a-ou* was written for her second birthday; the title refers to Dolly's attempts to pronounce the name of her older brother, Raoul. *Le jardin de Dolly* ("Dolly's Garden") was composed as a New Year's Day present. *Kitty-valse* is a musical portrait of the family's pet dog, Kitty. *Tendresse* ("Tenderness") was originally dedicated to Adela Maddison, a music publisher's wife; in this set, it represents a more mature

emotional moment. *Le pas espagnol* ("Spanish Dance") is the energetic final movement, inspired by a bronze equestrian statue that Dolly loved.

~Jewel and Mirit

Marc Eychenne, born in 1933 in Algiers (and still with us at 92), is an accomplished composer, and was first, just as accomplished a violinist. In fact, in 1954, he won the Grand Prix in the city of Algiers for his violin. As he grew older, he played violin in groups such as the French and Algerian orchestra, and eventually in chamber music through the French Broadcasting Service. As a composer, he's best known for this very piece. It's a work for saxophone, violin, and piano, *Cantilène et Danse*, written originally as a dedication to saxophonist Marcel Perrin, a professor at the Algiers Conservatory.

Like the name suggests, the first movement is all about song and melody, written as if to be sung by each instrument. Though it is largely built upon the relatively unconventional octatonic scale, the first movement is wholly lyrical in the sense that it's slow, dramatic, and connected. Since this piece was composed for alto saxophone, violin, and piano originally, it holds a unique place in the chamber music canon and fully takes advantage of the strange instrumentation with sweeping textures and collaborative melodies.

The second movement is, indeed, a sort of twisted dance. With exaggerated dynamics and constant changes, being organized in bars of 3, 4, 5, 7, or 9 at any given time, we'd imagine it quite difficult to dance successfully. That being said, there's a driving pulse throughout the whole movement that does evoke a sort of dance based on the strong downbeats and accented pitches. It's full of energy, and we hope it inspires you all to dance in your seats however you see fit!

~Lily, Sophia and Tony

Wolfgang Amadé Mozart (1756-1791) was an Austrian-born composer who was one of the most naturally talented musicians and composers in the history of Western classical music. He was a child prodigy who began composing at the age of 5, and he toured with his father throughout his childhood, performing for aristocrats all across Europe on the piano, harpsichord, violin, and organ. During his life he went from being employed as a court musician to being a freelance musician. He worked as a conductor and teacher and composed more than 800 pieces. He passed away at the age of 35.

“Andante” means “Moderately slow” in Italian. This is a 6-minute movement in 6/8 time and it utilizes a compelling interweaving melodic communication between the instruments. This movement has no repeats, which contrasts it from the vast majority of Mozart's chamber compositions. One of this movement's most defining characteristics is a rapid 64th-note turn; it is part of the opening melody and played countless times by all three instruments. This movement has

a tranquil, melancholy feeling to it, but considering the fact that this piece was written in the Classical period rather than the Baroque period, it does not stay within the confines of having only one emotion assigned to each movement; therefore, this first movement is also uplifting and hopeful at times.

The second movement is a Menuetto, which is a traditional dance-like movement written in 3/4 time. It follows a Ternary (A-B-A) form, meaning it features an opening section, a contrasting middle section, and a return to the start. The primary Menuetto section is characterized by a robust and rhythmic theme that uses bold melodic leaps to create a sense of energy. This is followed by a central Trio in G-minor; the shift to a minor key, combined with restless triplet figures and chromaticism, creates a somber atmosphere. Similar to the first movement, this section emphasizes an egalitarian dialogue, where all three instruments are treated as equals. Mozart takes advantage of the unique tonal blend of the clarinet and viola—often having them play in close intervals or octaves—to create a mellow texture that is very distinctive. Meanwhile, the piano serves as a rhythmic anchor while still acting as a melodic partner, ensuring the "interweaving communication" between the performers remains perfectly balanced.

Mozart labels the final *Allegretto* movement with the French word “Rondeaux”, which describes a round poetic form punctuated by a refrain. Similarly, this final movement centers around the repetition of a gentle and playful rising melody. For the first two minutes Mozart fills the space between these “refrains” with brilliant 16th note runs on the piano. In the next section he crafts a beautiful episode of contrasting characters in which the music shifts mood every few seconds, at times stern, then cheerful, then a sweet melancholy. The middle of the movement brims with melodic ingenuity. Mozart’s passages of flowing triplets yield to a mischievous chromatic theme. The clarinet and piano have an uneasy dialogue, which smoothly transitions into the original refrain. But the feeling of security is quickly dispelled as the piano launches into another 16th note sprint, this time accentuated by the other two instruments. Mozart brings the piece to a close with cheery and energetic counterpoint.

~Coby, Gavin and Jonathan

Camille Saint-Saens’ First Violin Sonata was written in October 1885 and is a masterfully written concert piece. Known for its technical virtuosity, Saint-Saens referred to the piece as the “Hippogriff Sonata” and often included the piece in his own concerts. The sonata consists of four movements divided into two sections, throughout which the piano and violin share the spotlight in presenting beautiful themes that evolve through a spectrum of emotions.

Allegretto Agitato: Combined with an opening key of D minor and frequent changes between 6/8 and 9/8 time signatures, the sonata begins with a sense of foreboding.

Adagio: The piece enters this movement through seamless transition in violin, now with

slower, more relaxed, and brighter harmonies. Here the violin takes the main voice with an accompaniment from the piano that creates a sense of liberty between both players.

Allegretto Moderato: The second section of the piece begins with a scherzo, with both violin and piano sharing themes with irregular five-bar staccato phrases that return the listeners to a sense of uncertainty but with a much lighter atmosphere. This eventually reaches a stark contrast with the piano leading into a more indulgent legato portion of the movement preparing for the finale.

Allegro Molto: With a polar opposite feel from how the piece began, the fourth and final movement begins in D major in common time, starting with light and fast scales from the violin. The piece ends with a rich euphoric feeling, carried away by extremely fast and virtuosic sections from both the piano and violin.

~Andrew and Hugh

Performer biographies:

Jonathan Beeler started playing violin when he was ten years old, but his musical journey truly started at age twelve when he found a new instructor, Rohan Gregory. Jonathan and Rohan worked on Suzuki books 2, 3, and 4, and then Rohan introduced him to a summer music program called ChamberFest in Worcester, in which he played in his first ensemble. After doing this program for two consecutive years, he decided to take a leap of faith and join the Tufts Youth Philharmonic Orchestra. He spent his junior and senior year of high school with this orchestra, and his enjoyment and success led him to also join the Clark University Symphony Orchestra and the Boston Scottish Fiddle Orchestra. Having been involved with the Worcester Chamber Music Society already, he signed up to work as a youth mentor in their musical education program for underserved youth, Neighborhood Strings. He has continued mentoring there for the past three years. The summer after his Freshman year of college, he played violin at Music at Port Milford, an advanced multi-week summer program in Canada involving chamber, orchestral, and choral music. After joining Brandeis University's Class of 2027, he excitedly got involved in the music department and joined the Brandeis-Wellesley Orchestra, chamber ensembles, and started taking private violin lessons with Clara Lyon, viola lessons with Mark Berger, and fiddle lessons with Sheila Falls. He is now pursuing a B.A. in music, with a concentration in violin performance. For the first time, in 2026, he was a participant in Hanneke Cassel's Pure Dead Brilliant Fiddle Weekend. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time in nature and playing in live Celtic music sessions around Boston.

Bryan da Costa is a sophomore Biology major at Brandeis University. He has been playing the cello for the past 12 years and studied under Allison Eldridge at the New England Conservatory Preparatory School for four years.

Laila Eshel is a freshman from upstate New York studying chemistry and music. She has been playing violin for 14 years, and is a member of the BWO orchestra at Brandeis. Currently, Laila is taking private violin lessons from Sophia Szoloskay. She has experience playing chamber music in summer festivals such as Kinhaven Music School or Point Counterpoint chamber music camp, as well as Empire State Youth Orchestra's chamber music program and ensembles at her home studio. Laila has enjoyed playing in a quartet this semester, and is excited to present this piece by Shostakovich.

Lily Fasciano is a sophomore, majoring in music composition & theory, in addition to studying CAST (creative arts through social transformation) and hispanic studies. Though her primary instrument is alto saxophone, she's played many instruments throughout her life including (but not limited to) piano, bass clarinet, drumset, voice, mandolin, and tin whistle. While it's been a beast to put together, she feels very lucky to have worked on it with the very hardworking Sophia and Tony, and hopes you enjoy the piece!

Andrew Gay is a pianist and cellist in the class of 2027 from Stoneham, Massachusetts, studying Chemical Biology and Piano Performance at Brandeis. Before college, Andrew spent his time outside of school attending chamber groups and orchestras in local areas. Andrew is a Leonard Bernstein Fellow who is currently studying under Evan Hirsch and is excited to expand his repertoire. Outside of music and STEM, Andrew spends his time skiing and playing tennis.

Sophia Guralnik is a sophomore majoring in biochemistry and minoring in music performance. She has been studying classical piano as a soloist since she was six years old and this is her fourth semester playing in a chamber group. She has enjoyed expanding her musical education through the chamber music program and looks forward to performing!

Tony Li is a violinist and composer born in Beijing, China, and currently studying at Brandeis University. He has studied composition with David Rakowski, Mark Berger, Erin Gee, and Neal Hampton. He has studied playing the violin with Julia Glenn and Clara Lyon, chamber music with Joshua Gordon, Mark Berger, and Sophia Szokolay.

Gavin Liu, Class of 2029, is a first-year student currently exploring his academic interests at Brandeis. Originally from both Southborough, MA, and Beijing, China, Gavin began playing the clarinet at age thirteen. Throughout middle and high school, he was an active member of the New England Conservatory Youth Philharmonic and the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras. When he isn't honing his craft in the practice room, Gavin is likely cheering on the Celtics, hunting for rare finds to add to his growing vinyl collection, or on a quest for the perfect bowl of noodles/ramen.

Grace Newton is a senior majoring in computer science and linguistics and minoring in music. She's played in chamber and orchestra ensembles throughout her time at Brandeis, and is a former gold medalist for the Massachusetts State Solo and Ensemble Festival and concertmaster for the Rhode

Island Philharmonic Youth and Franklin Repertory Orchestras. She's loved having the chance to work through Shostakovich with the quartet this semester, and hopes everyone enjoys the show tonight.

Hugh Park is a Senior at Brandeis University, where he's majoring in Biology with a minor in Music. Hugh is from Boston and has been playing the violin since the age of five. He studied at the New England Conservatory under maestro Malcolm Lowe, concertmaster of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Hugh eventually performed with BYSO of the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras (BYSO) for six years, including international tours with the Youth Symphony Orchestra in Germany. Hugh is a Leonard Bernstein Fellow at Brandeis.

Coby Shusteff is a freshman studying biology and music at Brandeis. He has been playing piano in the classical style for fourteen years. His shifting repertoire has included works spanning from the baroque era to the impressionist style. Coby takes a particular interest in Bach's Well Tempered Clavier and always has a prelude and fugue ready to play. Coby's other interests include hiking and listening to the great symphonic works.

Jewel Wang is a first year at Brandeis University interested in studying Neuroscience with a minor in Music. Piano has always been one of her hobbies, and she began taking lessons starting elementary school, though she took a 4-year break in the middle. She has had the opportunity to perform concertos with Antelope Valley Chamber Orchestra. Even though she now finds herself having very little time to practice, Jewel still attempts to squeeze in an hour to run to Slosberg. When she's not at Shapiro Science, she enjoys watching documentaries, listening to music, and zoning out.

Mirit Wenderfer is a first-year Leonard Bernstein Scholar studying Health, Science, Society, and Policy (HSSP), and Music, and also hopes to minor in Legal Studies. Mirit studied piano with Richard Marshall at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music Prep Program, and with Rodolfo Morales at Houston's High School for the Performing and Visual Arts. Upon moving to Vancouver, BC, Mirit continued her piano studies with Ian Parker through the Vancouver Academy of Music's Young Artist Collegiate Program. Mirit is thrilled to be performing in tonight's chamber concert and is grateful to her teachers Evan Hirsch and Mark Berger, and to her chamber partner Jewel Wang.

Jeffrey Yi is a current junior studying Business and Psychology, and has been playing viola since early middle school. In high school, Jeffrey had been a member of the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras (BYSO), the Boston Music Institute, the Tri-M Music Honor Society, and attended the MMEA All-State music festival. After pausing once he got to college, Jeffrey joined the Brandeis-Wellesley Orchestra last fall and resumed chamber sessions under the guidance of Professor Mark Berger, whom he had coincidentally first met during his time in BYSO over quarantine. On campus, Jeffrey is also part of the Brandeis Asian American Student Association

(BAASA), the Squash and Badminton clubs, and works as a research assistant at the CoPE Lab under Dr. Hannah Snyder.