

# camera lucida

chamber music concerts at UC San Diego  
in partnership with the San Diego Symphony  
sponsored by the Sam B Ersan Chamber Music Fund

Monday, October 3 2011

tonight's concert will be broadcast saturday, october 8th at 7 pm on  
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program design and layout by Aaron Helgeson

Dear Musical Friends!

With joy we welcome you back to the fourth season of Camera Lucida. And for the third year in a row, we open with a work of Franz Schubert, whose music, in its grace, intimacy, poignancy and vulnerability, perfectly captures the special beauty of chamber music. Tonight's Rondo, an unabashed piece of salon music that would have adorned the evening gatherings of Schubert's friends in Biedermeier Vienna, works through the traditionally repetitive "round" or "returning" form of the older rondeau with typically Schubertian expansiveness: seemingly not wanting to end, striving for the timeless, longing for the endless. And it was composed when Schubert was only 19 years of age, probably the same age as many in our audience tonight.

Chamber music is in fact a dated phenomenon -- properly, it extends from the late Eighteenth Century to early in the Twentieth, when fundamental changes in society uprooted the ground in which it had flourished. So the view is historical, but the experience is in the present, thanks to the miracle of performance. The music, as sound unfolding in our presence, is being created here in this room, tonight.

We revel in juxtaposing relative rarities such as the Schubert Rondo with acknowledged masterpieces such as Mozart's K. 478. And somewhere in between lies an exceptional work such as Chausson's Concerto. Claimed by many as one of the greatest works of chamber music, Chausson nonetheless labors under the reputation of a minor composer.

Who knows what would have become of Chausson's music had he lived past his 44th year. His freakish death, from crashing into a brick wall while speeding on a velocipede (the first pedal-driven bicycle, invented by Chausson's compatriot and contemporary Pierre Michaux) removed from French music history a figure who fits centrally in the sequence of Fauré, d'Indy, Debussy, Satie and Ravel. The ripeness and depth of this work of a composer in his mid-30's makes one wonder where his music would have taken him in the 20th century.

It's a privilege to work on and share these remarkable creations, and for this privilege we thank Sam Ersan, whose generosity and enthusiasm make our project possible. We also thank you, for joining in this experience as the silent but essential partners who complete the loop: as listeners.

Charles Curtis  
Artistic Director

**Rondo in A Major, D. 438** (1816)

Franz Schubert  
(1797-1828)

**Piano Quartet in G minor, K. 478** (1785)

Wolfgang Amadeus  
Mozart  
(1756-1791)

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante
- III. Rondo (Allegro)

- intermission -

**Concerto for Violin, Piano & String Quartet in D Major, Op. 21** (1891)

Ernest Chausson  
(1855-1899)

- I. Decide
- II. Sicilienne
- III. Grave
- IV. Finale

Jeff Thayer, Jasmine Lin, Pei-Chun Tsai, violins  
Che-Yen Chen, viola  
Charles Curtis, cello  
Reiko Uchida, piano

## Franz Schubert

Diary Entry "Vienna, 14th June 1816"

*This diary entry, expressing Schubert's glowing enthusiasm for Mozart's music, is one of only a handful that survives, though this is more an indication of the lack of regularity with which Schubert wrote such entries than anything else. It was written in response to a performance on the 13th of June 1816 of Mozart's String Quintet in G Minor K. 516, a cousin to the Piano Quartet heard on tonight's concert in both key and character. Curious, perhaps, due to Schubert's upbeat and exalted tone.*

A light, bright, fine day this will remain throughout my whole life. As from afar the magic notes of Mozart's music still gently haunt me. How unbelievably vigorously, and yet again how gently, was it impressed deep, deep into the heart by Schlesinger's masterly playing. Thus does our soul retain these fair impressions, which no time, no circumstances can efface, and they lighten our existence. They show us in the darkness of this life a bright, clear, lovely distance, for which we hope with confidence. O Mozart, immortal Mozart, how many, oh how endlessly many such comforting perceptions of a brighter and better life hast thou brought to our souls! — This quintet is, so to speak, one of the greatest of his lesser works. — I too had to show myself on this occasion. I played variations by Beethoven, sang Goethe's 'Restless Love' and Schiller's 'Amalia,' I cannot deny Goethe's musical poet's genius contributed much to the success...

## Friedrich Justin Bertuch

"Concerning the Latest Favourite Music at Grand Concerts"

from the Journal des Luxus und der Moden (1788)

*In this concert review of the Piano Quartet in G Minor K. 478, Bertuch comments on the important differences (and sometimes pitfalls) of chamber music to more public forms of performance. In contrast to operatic or orchestral performances, chamber music of the time was often performed by amateurs in the privacy of one's own home (thus the term "musica di camera"). This contrast is felt most in Bertuch's preference for "skilled musicians" in a "quiet room" for an audience of "two or three," an ambiance that we hope to invoke in tonight's performance.*

... Mozart has now gone to Vienna as Imperial Kappellmeister. Any philosophical lover of music will regard him as a remarkable man. He was an extremely precocious genius, composing and playing from his ninth year onwards (indeed, even earlier) like a true virtuoso, to every one's astonishment. But what is very rare is that he was not only a

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Documents**  
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Aaron Helgeson

skilled musician at an unusually early age: he matured in the happiest manner and on reaching man's estate continued to show steady development. We know flashes of ephemeral genius from bitter experience! Where is its fruit when the right time comes? Where its solid durability? Not so in Mozart's case! A few words now on an odd phenomenon occasioned by him (or by his fame). Some time ago a single *Quadro* by him (for pianoforte, 1 violin, 1 viola and violoncello) was engraved and published, which is very cunningly set and in performance needs the utmost precision in all the four parts, but even when well played, or so it seems, is able and intended to delight only connoisseurs of music in a *music di camera*. The cry soon made itself heard: "Mozart has written a very special new *Quadro*, and such and such a Princess or Countess possesses and plays it!", and this excited curiosity and led to the rash resolve to produce this original composition at grand and noisy concerts and to make a parade with it *invita Minerva*. Many another piece keeps some countenance even when indifferently performed; but this product of Mozart's can in truth hardly bear listening to when it falls into mediocre amateurish hands and is negligently played. — [...] "Is that all it is?" (thinks the half-instructed hearer of this music) "This is supposed to verge on the extreme of excellence in art, and yet I feel tempted to block my ears frequently as I listen. What sense does that make? How am I to know in the end what I may honestly praise or find fault with in the music?" — In this way is a true love of music spoiled, sound human reason and sound natural impulses misled, and that directness and thoroughness of culture obstructed without which no art can ever rise to and maintain itself on the heights. What a difference when this much-advertised work of art is performed with the highest degree of accuracy by four skilled musicians who have studied it carefully, in a quiet room where the suspension of every note cannot escape the listening ear, and in the presence of only two or three attentive persons! But, of course, in that case no *éclat*, no brilliant, modish success is to be thought of, nor is conventional praise to be obtained! Political ambition can here have no part to play, nothing to gain, nothing to bestow, nothing to give and nothing to take — in contrast to *public* concerts of the modern kind, where such factors exert an almost constant influence.

### **Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji**

"A Note on Ernest Chausson"

from *Mi Contra Fa: The Immoralisings of a Machiavellian Musician* (1947)

*The 1986 republication of the essay below informs us that "Sorabji was born in England in 1892 of a Spanish-Sicilian mother (a singer) and a Parsi father. Largely self-taught in music, he demonstrated a fantastic virtuosity at the keyboard in the 1920's but soon grew to dislike*

*performing and preferred to concentrate instead on composing and writing. He currently resides in a peaceful little village in southern England... So strikingly personal, so penetrating are his views that a reader once remarked that Sorabji's writings make those of George Bernard Shaw seem amateurish by comparison." The following offers an idiosyncratic overview of Chausson's oeuvre with special reference to the Concerto opus 21. His concluding views on Schubert must be excused on the grounds of an apparent extravagance in musical taste which seems to have deafened him to simpler beauties.*

One of the most interesting, attractive and appealing figures in French music of modern times is that of Ernest Chausson, the outstanding personality among the group of distinguished pupils of César Franck which included Vincent d'Indy and Henri Duparc.

Chausson's untimely death at the early age of forty-four as a result of an accident, was a loss to music that one never ceases to deplore, bearing in mind the constant and rapid growth of his work up to the time of his death, in beauty, eloquence of expression, richness and power. The extent of his work is not vast, but it is remarkable for its consistently and increasingly high quality. He worked in every kind of form, songs, opera, chamber music and orchestral, and in all is conspicuous individuality, rare sensitive beauty, and rich musical imagination. Considered as a song-writer alone, his achievement is of primary importance; "La Chanson Perpetuelle," and the exquisitely lovely cycle "Le Poeme de l'Amour et de la Mer," are among the masterpieces of French song. The prevailing mood of Chausson's work is an entrancing melancholy, tender and twilit, a melancholy quite free from whine or maudlin sentiment; rather is it Virgil's *Sunt lachrymae rerum*; it is a melancholy expressed in terms of the utmost sensitive refinement, subtle beauty and aristocratic distinction of manner. There is a line of Milton that might have been written after hearing a typical specimen of Chausson's genius, so perfectly does it apply -- "Most musical, most melancholy"; indeed it is the exquisitely and richly musical nature of Chausson's work that is its most immediately obvious quality. To say of music that it is "musical" almost appears like pushing pleonasm to journalistic extremes. A little consideration, taking into account such contemporary practitioners as Bartok (and Schoenberg at his most monomaniacal) will show the point and appositeness of the adjective, I think. The dry, grinding grittiness of a Bartok stands so far removed from the warm living richness and glow of a Chausson, or a Delius, that one is justified in saying that the purely musical interest in Chausson or Delius is vastly greater than it is in Bartok; this, however, implying no denigration of the integrity or sincerity of Bartok -- the abstract thinker pursuing certain lines of thought in sound as compared with the poet and mystic -- a Whitehead perhaps as over against a St. John of the Cross or a Jallal-ud-dhin. But let not this not too happy analogy convey any suggestion of those

windy and formless vapourings of Rummagings in Recondite Torridaria, those Huntings of the Slipper in Holy Humbug.

Chausson has a grasp and power in organic form that is worlds above the "cyclic" devices -- so mechanical and naive -- of César Franck; and although Chausson uses this device from time to time, that is to say the derivation of the thematic matter of various movements from one kernel, his way of doing it is far finer and more subtle than Franck's. Compare, for instance, the modification of the linking leading theme of César Franck's lamentable Symphony (the ghastly Salvation Army Slum Revival tune of the finale, the nadir of crudity and vulgarity, that even Elgar can hardly surpass, the very embodiment musically speaking, of that shocking "repository art" that Eric Gill castigates with such just indignation) with what Chausson does to his linking themes in the Concert, the Piano Quintet, or his glorious Symphony.

The Concert [Sorabji uses the French designation for "concerto"] is one of the most original and beautiful chamber music works of modern times. The instrumental treatment and design suggest marked analogies with the Concerto Grosso of the eighteenth century -- a couple of solo instruments, a violin and a piano, with a String Quartet, the String Quartet being no more or less an accompaniment to the solo instruments than the orchestra in those Brandenburg Concerti of Bach which involve the use of concertanti instruments. Chausson treats the two solo instruments with a full soloist freedom and amplitude of writing, sometimes using them as duettists and antiphonally, but all the while the Quartet is treated along generous Quartet lines, and is never subordinated to the solo instruments. One might without undue exaggeration say, that the piano in the Chausson Concert grows out of the Eighteenth Century Continuo, that is to say, something that is heard, as its name implies, continuously, as a tonal backbone to the whole, sustaining and supporting it; pervading it at all times. Here as in all his works, the exquisite distinction, beauty and refinement of Chausson's melodic writing strike one immediately. In this respect he is like all the great French Masters since Berlioz, all of whom have expanded and extended the melodic conception beyond the furthest imaginings of the Germans; they -- the French Masters -- can really be said to have emancipated melody from the deadening and paralysing superstitions of Germanic formal symmetry, the click-clack that reaches to the summit of the infuriating or the nadir of the banal in some of the "sprightlier" songs of that Master who can become oftener, and more, insufferable than almost any three other Germanic composers put together, though Brahms runs him now and then very close -- namely Franz Schubert.

## About the Musicians

Violinist **Jeff Thayer** is Concertmaster of the San Diego Symphony as well as Concertmaster and guest artist of the Music Academy of the West (Santa Barbara). Previous positions include assistant concertmaster of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, associate concertmaster of the North Carolina Symphony, and concertmaster of the Canton (OH) Symphony Orchestra. He is a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Eastman School of Music, and the Juilliard School's Pre-College Division. His teachers include William Preucil, Donald Weilerstein, Zvi Zeitlin, and Dorothy DeLay. A native of Williamsport, Pennsylvania, Mr. Thayer began violin lessons with his mother at the age of three. At fourteen, he went to study with Jose Antonio Campos at the Conservatorio Superior in Cordoba, Spain. He has appeared as soloist with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the San Diego Symphony, the Jupiter Symphony, the North Carolina Symphony, the Canton Symphony Orchestra, the Pierre Monteux School Festival Orchestra, the Spartanburg Philharmonic, the Cleveland Institute of Music Symphony Orchestra, The Music Academy of the West Festival Orchestra, the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra, the Nittany Valley Symphony Orchestra, and the Conservatory Orchestra of Cordoba, among others. He attended Keshet Eilon (Israel), Ernen Musikdorf (Switzerland), Music Academy of the West, Aspen, New York String Orchestra Seminar, the Quartet Program, and as the 1992 Pennsylvania Governor Scholar, Interlochen Arts Camp. Other festivals include La Jolla Summerfest, the Mainly Mozart Festival (San Diego), Festival der Zukunft, and the Tibor Varga Festival (Switzerland). Through a generous loan from Irwin and Joan Jacobs, Mr. Thayer plays on the 1708 "Sir Bagshawe" Stradivarius.

**Jasmine Lin** began violin studies at age four. Since then she has appeared as soloist with orchestras including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Symphony Orchestra of Brazil, Symphony Orchestra of Uruguay, Evergreen Symphony of Taiwan, and National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan, and in recital in Chicago, New York, Nova Scotia, Rio de Janeiro, Montevideo, and Taipei. She was a prizewinner in the International Paganini Competition and took second prize in the International Naumburg Competition. The New York Times describes her as an "unusually individualistic player" with "electrifying assertiveness" and "virtuosic abandon". As a chamber musician Ms. Lin has been a participant of the Marlboro Music Festival and the Steans Institute for Young Artists at Ravinia, and has toured extensively in the United States as part of the Chicago String Quartet, in China as part of the Overseas Musicians, and in Taiwan as a member of Taiwan Connection Music Festival. She has been an adjunct faculty member at Northwestern University and DePaul University and was a faculty member of the Taos School of Music in New Mexico. Ms. Lin is a founding and current member of the Formosa Quartet, which won first prize in the 10th London International String Quartet Competition. The Formosa's recording of works by Mozart,

Debussy, Wolf and Schubert on the EMI Debut Series has won critical acclaim from Gramophone and The Strad magazines, and the quartet performs in major venues around the world including the Chicago Cultural Center, the Library of Congress, Caramoor Festival, Cornell University, Maui Classical Music Festival, Taipei's Novel Hall, BBC In Tune, and Wigmore Hall. Ms. Lin is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music. She gave her New York debut in Merkin Hall, where the program included her poetry set to music. Her poem "The night of h's" received Editor's Choice Award from the International Poetry Foundation, and her poetry/music presentations have been featured in Chicago, at Cornell University in Ithaca, and on radio in Taipei, and have resulted in collaborations with composers Dana Wilson, David Loeb, and Thomas Oboe Lee. In the 1999-2000 season Ms. Lin was Second Assistant Concertmaster of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. In addition to her activities with the Formosa Quartet, she is a member of Trio Voce with cellist Marina Hoover and pianist Patricia Tao; the Trio recently released its first CD of works by Shostakovich and Weinberg, *Inscapes*, on the Con Brio label. Ms. Lin is also a member of the Chicago Chamber Musicians, whose *Composer Perspectives* series won the ASCAP award for adventuresome programming. She received a Grammy nomination as part of CCM's Grammy-nominated CD of works for winds and strings by Mozart. She is on the faculty at Roosevelt University and a proud native of Chicago.

**Pei-Chun Tsai** of Tainan, Taiwan, made her solo debut in Carnegie Weill Recital Hall in 1997. She holds the first prize in the 1990 and 1992 Taiwan National Violin Competition, and was also a first-prize winner of the Tainan Violin Competition. She has performed as a soloist and a chamber musician in Paul Recital Hall, Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center and the National Concert Hall in Taiwan. Following her debut with The Muse Piano Quartet at the Carnegie Weill Recital Hall, she toured internationally with the sponsorship of the Formosa Chamber Music Society. Pei-Chun has participated in the Alfred, Encore, Yellow Barn, and Taos summer music festivals in the United States as well as the Holland Music Session in Amsterdam. In addition to her performing career, Pei-Chun is a devoted teacher- she holds a Suzuki Teaching Certificate, and as a scholarship recipient from The Juilliard School, she was on the faculty of the Ear Training Department in the pre-college division. She has been on the teaching faculties of the Lucy Moses School, Suzuki on the Island, Strings by the Sea in San Diego, and was the founder of the Suzuki program at Resurrection Episcopal Day School in Manhattan. Pei-Chun completed her Bachelors and the Masters degrees in Music at the Juilliard School where she studied with legendary violinist Joseph Fuchs. In addition, she has studied extensively with Earl Carlyss, Daniel Phillips, Harvey Shapiro, and Sally Thomas. She received her DMA in violin performance from the City University of New York having completed her dissertation entitled "Richard Strauss's Violin Writing in His Early Years from 1870 to 1898- The Influence of the Violin Sonata." She has been a member of the San Diego

Symphony since 2006 and she is on the faculty at San Diego State University. Pei-Chun performs on a 1910 violin by Alfredo Contino.

Taiwanese violist **Che-Yen Chen** (also known as "Brian Chen"), described by the Strad Magazine as a musician whose "tonal distinction and essential musicality produced an auspicious impression", has established himself as a prominent recitalist, chamber, and orchestral musician. He is the first-prize winner of the 2003 William Primrose Viola Competition, the "President prize" of the 2003 Lionel Tertis Viola Competition. Currently the principal violist of San Diego Symphony, Mr. Chen has appeared as guest principal violist with Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. He has performed throughout the US and abroad in venues such as Alice Tully Hall, Merkin Hall, Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Jordon Hall, Library of Congress in D.C., Kimmel Center, Taiwan National Concert Hall, Wigmore Hall, and Snape Malting Concert Hall, among numerous others. A founding member of the Formosa Quartet, the first prize the Amadeus prize winner of the 10th London International String Quartet Competition, Mr. Chen is an advocate of chamber music. He is a member Myriad Trio, Camera Lucida, Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society Two, the Jupiter Chamber Players, and has toured with Musicians from Marlboro after three consecutive summers at the Marlboro Music Festival. A participant at the Ravinia Festival, Mr. Chen was featured in the festival's Rising Star series and the inaugural Musicians from Ravinia tour. Other festival appearances include the Kingston Chamber Music Festival, International Viola Congress, Mainly Mozart, Chamber Music International, La Jolla Summerfest, Primrose Festival, Bath International Music Festival, Aldeburgh Festival, Seattle Chamber Music Society Summer Festival, Taiwan Connection, and numerous others. Mr. Chen has also taught and performed at summer programs such as Hotchkiss Summer Portal, Blue Mountain Festival, Academy of Taiwan Strings, Interlochen, Mimir Festival, and has given master-classes at the Taiwan National Arts University, University of Missouri Kansas City, University of Southern California, University of California Santa Barbara, and McGill University. Mr. Chen began studying viola at the age of six with Ben Lin. A four-time winner of the National Viola Competition in Taiwan, Mr. Chen came to the US and studied at The Curtis Institute of Music and The Juilliard School under the guidance of Michael Tree, Joseph de Pasquale, and Paul Neubauer. Mr. Chen had served on the faculty at Indiana University-South Bend, San Diego State University, McGill University, where he taught viola and chamber music. Mr. Chen is currently teaching at UC San Diego.

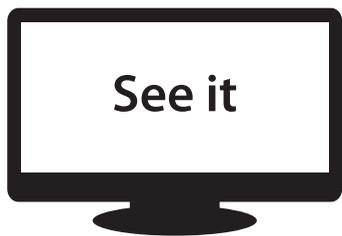
**Charles Curtis** has been a professor in the Music Department of the University of California, San Diego, since Fall 2000. Previously he was principal cello of the Symphony Orchestra of the North German Radio in Hamburg, a faculty member at Princeton, the

cellist of the Ridge String Quartet, and a sought-after chamber musician and soloist in the classical repertoire. He holds the Piatigorsky Prize of the New York Cello Society, and received prizes in the Naumburg, Geneva and Cassado international competitions. He has appeared as soloist with the San Francisco Symphony, the National Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, the Symphony Orchestra of Berlin, the NDR Symphony, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the Orquestra de la Maggio Musicale in Florence, the Janacek Philharmonic, as well as orchestras in Brazil and Chile; under the baton of distinguished conductors such as André Previn, Herbert Blomstedt, Max Rudolf, John Eliot Gardiner and Christof Eschenbach. His chamber music associations have taken him to the Marlboro, Ravinia, Wolf Trap, La Jolla Summerfest and Victoria Festivals, among many others. He has recorded and performed widely with soprano Kathleen Battle and harpsichordist Anthony Newman, as well as with jazz legends such as Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter and Brad Mehldau. A leading interpreter of new and contemporary music, Curtis performs a unique repertoire of major solo works created expressly for him by La Monte Young, Alvin Lucier, Éliane Radigue and Alison Knowles, rarely-heard compositions by Terry Jennings and Richard Maxfield, and works by Cornelius Cardew, Christian Wolff, Morton Feldman and John Cage. Curtis' solo performances this past year have taken him to the Angelica Festival in Bologna, the Guggenheim in New York, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Bordeaux, the Galerie Renos Xippas in Paris, the MaerzMusik Festival in Berlin, Dundee Contemporary Arts, as well as Chicago, Austin, Hamburg and Ferrara. Last month he performed in the Auditorium of the Musée du Louvre in Paris, in the long-awaited Paris premiere of Éliane Radigue's Naldjorlak trilogy, a nearly three-hour work for solo cello and two bassett horns.

Pianist **Reiko Uchida**, First Prize winner of the Joanna Hodges Piano Competition and Zinetti International Competition, has appeared as soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Santa Fe Symphony, the Greenwich Symphony, the Princeton Orchestra, among others. She made her New York solo debut in 2001 at Carnegie's Weill Hall under the auspices of the Abby Whiteside Foundation. She has performed solo and chamber music concerts throughout the world, including the United States, Japan, France, Italy, Germany, Russia, Finland, Bulgaria, and the Czech Republic, in venues including Avery Fisher Hall, Alice Tully Hall, the 92nd Street Y, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, the Kennedy Center as well as the White House in Washington D.C., and Suntory Hall in Tokyo. Her festival appearances include Spoleto, Schleswig-Holstein, Tanglewood, Santa Fe, and Marlboro. As a chamber musician, she was one of the first pianists selected for Chamber Music Society Two, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's program for outstanding emerging artists. She has been the recital partner for Jennifer Koh, Thomas Meglitoranza, Jaime Laredo, and Sharon Robinson, with

whom she performed the complete works of Beethoven for cello and piano. Her recording with Jennifer Koh, "String Poetic", was nominated for a Grammy Award. She has also collaborated with the Borromeo and Tokyo String Quartets. She is a member of the Laurel Trio and a member of the Moebius Ensemble, a group specializing in contemporary music and in residence at Columbia University. Reiko began studying the piano at the age of four with Dorothy Hwang at the R.D. Colburn School and made her orchestral debut with the Los Angeles Repertoire Orchestra at the age of nine. As a youngster, she performed on Johnny Carson's Tonight Show. She holds an Artist Diploma from the Juilliard School, a Bachelor's degree from Curtis Institute of Music, where she studied with Claude Frank and Leon Fleisher, and a Master's degree from the Mannes College of Music, where her principal teacher was Edward Aldwell.





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