



CONSTELLATIONS
CHAMBERCONCERTS

Album Release Celebration Concert

featuring composer-pianist

Daniel Pesca



with

**Sarah Frisof, flute
Christine Lamprea, cello
Ellen Hwangbo, piano**

**Sunday, June 8, 2025, 3PM
Constellations Music Salon
8817 Belmart Rd, Potomac, Maryland**



Welcome to Constellations Chamber Concerts!

We are thrilled to welcome you to our first full season of live and in-person concerts at the newly improved Constellations Music Salon in Potomac! The mission of Constellations has always been to build a community for magical and intimate chamber music experiences. So

whether you are gathered in person to partake in the artistry of the world-class musicians featured this season, joining from afar over our new live-stream capabilities, or bringing your own instrument to one of our monthly Constellations Chamber Music Parties, we are delighted that you've joined our musical community!

Program

Walk with me, my joy
Album Release Celebration

Sunday, June 8th, 2025, 3 PM
all works by Daniel Pesca (b. 1985)

Gestures of Grace (2021)

- I. Twirling
- II. Flowing
- III. Hinting (interlude)
- IV. Glinting (nocturne)
- V. Dancing

Sarah Frisof, flute
Daniel Pesca, piano

In Solitude (2020)

Christine Lamprea, cello

Chaconne (2023)

Daniel Pesca, piano

from *Walk with me, my joy* (2022)
Variation 6

Christine Lamprea, cello
Daniel Pesca, piano

Pezzettino (2020), after the tale by Leo Lionni

Sarah Frisof, flute
Christine Lamprea, cello
Daniel Pesca, narrator

Salon Suite (2012/2024)

- I. Promenade
- II. Valse Triste
- III. Valse Gaie

Ellen Hwangbo & Daniel Pesca, piano four hands

Program Notes

by *Daniel Pesca*

Just before writing *Gestures of Grace*, my large duo for flute and piano, I spent a great deal of time watching dance videos of many styles and sorts. No matter the genre, I was awed by the dancers' masterful grace of movement. Grace takes many forms in dance, as in this piece: grace in delicacy, but also in strength; in elegance, but also in humor and irony; in moments of repose, but also in moments of excitement and agitation.

I call this piece a sonata both because of its length, and also because of the way the music unfolds: there is a constant sense of development — of “spinning out” — that runs through the piece, beginning from the very first gesture the flute plays. The work is divided into five sections that are joined seamlessly. The first three parts are short (2-3 minutes each) and have the character of vignettes, like movements of a ballet suite. “Glinting” is a starlit nocturnal scene infused with tenderness. “Dancing,” the longest part, brings together many musical strands and characters from earlier in the piece, joined in a playful, fleet-footed rush of motion.

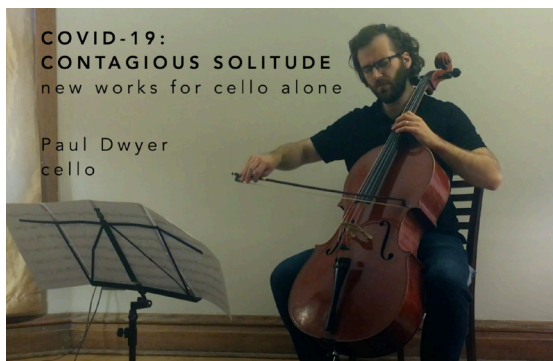


The Frisof/Pesca Duo

As I was composing this work, I was focused on writing gracefully for the two instruments, both as individuals and as a duo. The relationship between the instruments is an equal partnership, a tribute to my many joyful years of making music with Sarah Frisof.

I wrote my solo cello work *In Solitude* in March and April of 2020, as the COVID-19 crisis was seizing our world. Suddenly, we were asked to maintain social distance, and to shelter in place in our homes. The ambient feelings of that time, uncertainty and anxiety, are reflected

in the emotional states the piece moves through: from the searching, plaintive opening through the mind-racing quality of the perpetual motion (which constitutes the middle section of the piece) to the sense of time slowing down towards the end. The piece was composed for Paul Dwyer's project "COVID-19: Contagious Solitude," and is dedicated to Paul with gratitude for his artistry and friendship.



Paul Dwyer's "Contagious Solitude" Project

The **Chaconne** is an ancient genre — to compose one today is to engage in a dialogue with history. The challenge of the form is to construct a grand arc from an enchainé series of brief variations. In my Chaconne, a broad, dramatic opening section presents the harmonic fields that recur cyclically throughout the 18 variations that follow. The piece then unravels into a short, reflective cadenza, leading to a closing gigue of mounting virtuosity. The work was commissioned by the University of Rochester, the University of Rochester Medical Center, and the Howard Hanson Institute for American Music and is dedicated to Dr. Mark B. Taubman in grateful appreciation for over 20 years of leadership and service to the University, its Medical Center, and the Rochester community.

My quartet ***Walk with me, my joy*** unfolds as a spacious series of reflections on the Irish folksong "Shule Agra," which was sung to me as a lullaby from my earliest childhood. Some sections of the work are somewhat like a traditional theme and variations, where the melody's contours and phrases can be clearly heard. Other times, there are longer, rhapsodic passages, where motives from the poignant theme are isolated and become one strand among many, refracted among the four instrumental parts. The work lives in a world of memory, specifically the blurry mental images of our childhood that we carry with us forever. There is a paradox in their strength: despite the fact that we

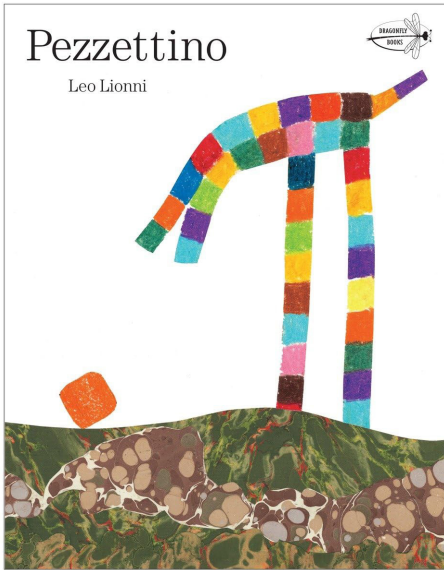


World premiere of “Walk with me, my joy” at Constellations, March 2022

often cannot clearly recreate them in our imagination, they shape us so fundamentally. My consciousness bears the musical imprint of “Shule Agra” in just this way.

In this piece, I am contemplating those foundational experiences in life that enable us to rise up and walk on our own. Most of all, I am thinking of my parents. This work was commissioned by Constellations Chamber Concerts, and I express my eternal gratitude to Ellen Hwangbo for making this piece happen.

Pezzettino is a musical setting of Leo Lionni’s classic children’s book of the same name. The simple, poetic tale is a moving reflection on the nature of identity and selfhood, filled with wondrous images and adventures. The musical telling of the story for flute and cello responds to the varied characters and environments. The piece is designed to work well in educational settings, but also may be enjoyed in the concert hall by all audiences. *Pezzettino* is dedicated with great fondness to flutist Emlyn Johnson and cellist Dan Ketter.



Pezzettino by Leo Lionni



Daniel Pesca has been hailed as “the perfect composer-virtuoso pianist” (All about the Arts) and “equally talented as pianist, composer and advocate of his peers’ works” (Fanfare). The common theme in Daniel’s myriad activities is his passion for collaboration. His partnerships with a variety of ensembles, individual musicians, and fellow composers have cultivated a prolific body of work.

Among Daniel’s most recent compositions are *Walk with me, my joy* for Constellations Chamber Concerts in Washington, D.C., and *New Examples of Confusion* for the Chicago Center for Contemporary Composition at University of Chicago.

Other recent works have been commissioned with support from national granting organizations including the National Endowment for the Arts and New Music USA, for ensembles such as the American Wild Ensemble and the Oberlin Contemporary Ensemble, and for artists such as guitarist Dieter Hennings, tenor Zach Finkelstein and flutist Sarah Frisof. His music has been heard at festivals and venues across the United States and in Europe.

As pianist, Daniel has premiered over 150 works, is a founding member of the Grossman Ensemble and co-director of the Zohn Collective, appears on a dozen commercial recordings (including a solo album, Promontory), and has performed as soloist with orchestras in works by Messiaen, Bernstein, Berg, Carter, and others.

Daniel is currently assistant professor of composition at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. He was on faculty at University of Maryland, Baltimore County from 2019 to 2023, and prior to that taught at University of Chicago, Northeastern Illinois University, Ithaca College, and Syracuse University. He holds degrees in composition and piano from Eastman and University of Michigan.

Equally at home in the solo, chamber, and orchestral stages, **Sarah Frisof** is a passionate flutist and educator. As a soloist, Dr. Frisof was the second-prize winner of both the National Flute Association Young Artist Competition and the Heida Hermanns International Woodwind Competition, and she was a semi-finalist in the 2009 Kobe International Flute Competition. Dr. Frisof has concertized throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia. As a committed proponent of contemporary music, Dr. Frisof frequently premieres major works. Recent premieres include Ingrid Stölzel's work *The Voice of the Rain*, Damian Montano's *Concerto for Flute and Harp* with the Dallas Winds and Joel Puckett's *Knells for Bonnie* for flute and wind ensemble. The Puckett Concerto was released on the Klavier Label in February of 2017. In June of 2016, Dr. Frisof released her first solo CD, *The Flute Music of Joseph Schwantner*, an authoritative recording of all of Schwantner's major works for flute. This recording, which was released on the Centaur Label, includes the world premiere recording of *Taking Charge*, a new chamber work for flute, piano, and percussion.

In addition to Dr. Frisof's work as a solo artist, she is an active orchestral musician, having worked with major symphony orchestras across the country, including the Baltimore Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Boston Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Dallas Symphony, Kansas City Symphony and many others. Dr. Frisof also serves as the principal flute of the Dallas Winds, the premier wind band in the United States.

A graduate of the Eastman School, The Juilliard School, and the University of Michigan, she was formerly the Professor of Flute at University of Kansas and the University of Texas at Arlington. Ms. Frisof is currently the Associate Professor of Flute at the University of Maryland.



Christine Lamprea is a dynamic artist with a reputation as a firebrand cellist with a “commitment to the highest standards” (Palm Beach Daily News). Upon her Carnegie Hall debut as soloist in 2013, she has since returned to Carnegie, as well as performed with orchestras such as Costa Rica National Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Houston Symphony, National Symphony of Michoacan, New Jersey Symphony, San Antonio Symphony, Santa Fe Pro Musica, and toured with the Sphinx Virtuosi across the U.S. As a recitalist, Ms. Lamprea has appeared on prestigious series at Illinois’ Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, Florida’s Kravis Center for the Performing Arts, Pepperdine University, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Washington Performing Arts Society. In demand as a chamber musician, she performs regularly with the Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players, and has performed with such musicians as Shmuel Ashkenasi, Sarah Chang, Itzhak Perlman, Roger Tapping, and Carol Wincenc.

Recent performances include the Schumann concerto at Carnegie Hall’s Stern Auditorium, the premiere of a concerto written for her by Jeffrey Mumford, as well as a last minute replacement for Lynn Harrell with Symphony Silicon Valley. As a recitalist, Christine recently performed premieres of her own arrangements of Colombian music for Supreme

Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor and the Colombian Ambassador to the United States. Other credits include Illinois’ Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, Florida’s Kravis Center for the Performing Arts, and the Washington Performing Arts Society. Ms. Lamprea began her concert career in 2013 upon winning Astral Artists’ National Auditions, the Sphinx Competition, and the Schadt National String Competition. In 2018, she received the Sphinx Medal of Excellence for her contributions to the field as an artist of color.



Lauded as an “excellent pianist” (Daily Gazette) and “amazing ... young talent” (Silicon Valley Insider), **Ellen Hwangbo** is known for her “harmony, energy and elegance” and her ability to deliver “truly potent and dramatic” experiences (Rutland Herald) that leave her audiences “wanting to hear more” (Times Union). A top-prize winner of the Music Teachers National Association’s National Young Artist Competition in 2006, she has performed to great acclaim across Asia, Europe, and North America.



As a spirited chamber musician, Ellen is renowned for her “wonderful interplay” with colleagues (Rye News), and broad range of expression from “moody sobriety” (Boston Musical Intelligencer) to “bold exuberance” (Daily Gazette). She performs regularly with world-renowned musicians and ensembles, such as Anthony Marwood, Richard Lester, Benjamin Beilman, Soovin Kim, Tessa Lark, Colin Carr, William Sharp, Lucy Shelton, Eduardo Leandro, Aaron Berofsky, Sandbox Percussion, and the icarus Quartet, among others. Ellen’s passion for sparking new and exciting connections through chamber music led her to found Constellations Chamber Concerts, a DC-area concert series, where she has served as Artistic Director since 2019. As an engaged advocate for new music, she has worked directly with composers David Ludwig, William Bolcom, Stefano Gervasoni, Jörg Widmann, Brett Dean, and many others, including for several world premieres and recordings.

Ellen began her piano studies with Peter Cooper and continued with Logan Skelton at the University of Michigan, graduating summa cum laude. She received her Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from SUNY Stony Brook, where she studied under luminary pedagogue Gilbert Kalish.

Thank you to our generous supporters!

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