

DUOS FROM MARLBORO

Franz Schubert

(1797-1828)

1 Introduction and Variations on "Ihr Blümlein alle"

D. 802, Op. post. 160 (1824) (22:09)

Paula Robison, flute; Rudolf Serkin, piano
(Recorded August 3, 1968)

Sergei Prokofiev

(1891-1953)

Sonata for Two Violins in C Major, Op. 56 (1932) (16:19)

- 2 I Andante cantabile (3:05)
- 3 II Allegro (3:18)
- 4 III Commodo (quasi allegretto) (4:03)
- 5 IV Allegro con brio (5:42)

Daniel Phillips, violin; Peter Zazofsky, violin
(Recorded 1978)

Leon Kirchner

(b. 1919)

6 Duo No. 2 (2001) (14:41)

Ida Levin, violin; Jeremy Denk, piano
(Recorded August 13, 2002)

(commissioned by Richard and Judith Hurtig and Viola and Richard Morse in memory of Felix Galimir)

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For many years, Mischa Schneider, former cellist of the renowned Budapest String Quartet, served as Director of Recording and Archives at the Marlboro Music Festival. He would listen to each performance and recommend works for possible radio broadcast and, less frequently, for a possible recording release. Over the years, the Marlboro Recording Society issued eighteen recordings on LP and cassette but a few stray works never seemed to fit when it came time to decide on the couplings for a new recording. These included one of Mischa's favorites, the Prokofiev *Sonata for Two Violins*, Op. 56 (1932), which had been performed on August 2, 1974 by Daniel Phillips and Peter Zazofsky and subsequently taken on Musicians from Marlboro tours in the 1977-78 and 1982-83 seasons. The two young violinists, who went on to form the Orion and Muir String Quartets, respectively, were among a stellar group of string players at Marlboro in the summer of 1974 who today can be found as members of the Emerson, Guarneri, Juilliard and Takács String Quartets and the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio.

When Marlboro's current Artistic Directors Richard Goode and Mitsuko Uchida decided that we should bring out a recording of Leon Kirchner's *Duo No. 2* (2001), it was the perfect opportunity to release the Prokofiev – twenty eight years after it was recorded at Marlboro. The third work on this recording – Schubert's *Introduction and Variations in E Minor on "Ihr Blümlein alle,"* – performed by Paula Robison and Rudolf Serkin – was originally issued on a Marlboro Recording Society LP. This disc marks its first appearance on CD. Performed on August 3, 1968, it represents a vital aspect of Marlboro's culture – the interaction between exceptional young musician and master artist, each inspiring the other to find new meaning in the music that they play.

Franz Schubert: Introduction and Variations in E Minor on a Theme ("Ihr Blümlein alle") from the Song Cycle "Die Schöne Müllerin," for Piano and Flute D. 802, Op. post. 160.

Biographies identify the year 1823 as one of illness, sadness and even failure in Schubert's life. But there was great creative compensation. Between the months of May and November of that year, Schubert composed his song-cycle *Die Schöne Müllerin*. The text of these *Lieder* stems from a collection of twenty-three poems written by Wilhelm Müller (1794-1827). Schubert omitted three of these poems, and left posterity a cycle of twenty songs. *Trock'ne Blumen* (Withered Flowers) is the eighteenth song of the cycle. It tells of a miller who is dying of a broken heart. He holds withered flowers given to him by his beloved and requests that the flowers be buried with him in his grave. But in May, other flowers will blossom over the grave as a message of remembrance.

The song *Trock'ne Blumen* became the springboard of another work by Schubert, namely the *Introduction and Variations*, Op. 160, for Piano and Flute or Violin. We do not have much information on the circumstances surrounding the composition. It seems that Schubert wrote the *Variations* in January, 1824, shortly after he had completed *Die Schöne Müllerin*.

On the 13th of February, 1824, Moritz von Schwind, the Austrian painter, wrote to the poet Franz von Schober (like Schwind, a member of Schubert's circle of friends): "Schubert now keeps a fortnight's fast and confinement. He looks much better and is very bright, very comically hungry, and writes quartets and German dances and variations without number."

The last words of this quote refer to the *Variations Trock'ne Blumen* that we hear on this recording. The *Variations* were written for the flautist Ferdinand

Bogner, professor at the Vienna Conservatory. Schubert and Bogner met at the home of Otto Hatwig at Vienna's Schottenhof. In Hatwig's large drawing room, *Hausmusik* was frequently performed. Friends played there for the enjoyment of an informal audience. The programs were mostly improvised. They contained *Lieder* and instrumental chamber music, but also some orchestral works. Many of Schubert's scores were heard there for the first time.

Schubert frequently applied the design of variations to his music. At times he re-used themes from his *Lieder* in a new instrumental environment. The second movement of the posthumous *Quartet in D Minor*, based on the song *Death and the Maiden*, is a familiar example.

The title of the published version of the *Introduction and Variations*, Op. 160, offers an alternative for the solo instrument joining the piano: in the performance of this duo, either flute or violin may be played. But certain aspects of this part suggest preference for the flute. Whatever the selection, the execution demands great technical skill on the part of both performers, for Schubert treated the song to a series of instrumental variations in a virtuoso style.

Writing about the present performance, some thirty-eight years later, flautist Paula Robison says that she "was amazed when Rudolf Serkin asked me to play the Schubert Variations with him. I was a young and inexperienced flute player, and it's a huge piece requiring many hours of loving preparation. And we took all the repeats! And then we performed it in the Concert Hall! Why? Here we were, an older artist and a younger one, working together to find the music, learning together how to get from one note to the next, to the phrase, to the shape and poetry of the whole work. It took me many years to begin to be able to do the things Mr. Serkin asked of me that summer. But, maybe he realized that someday



Paula Robison and Rudolf Serkin

I'd understand and that I'd be able to carry on the living Marlboro spirit."

Sergei Prokofiev: Sonata for Two Violins in C Major, Op. 56 (1932)

Prokofiev left his homeland for the West six months after the 1917 Revolution and did not see it again until 1927, when he returned for a concert tour. A second tour followed in 1929, and a third, in 1932, marked the beginning of his gradual—and entirely voluntary—repatriation, which was completed by 1936. Just before that 1932 visit he composed his *Sonata for Two Violins* during a holiday at Ste. Maxime (near St. Tropez) for performance in the concerts of the Paris chamber music group called Triton. In Moscow he came to know the members of the Beethoven Quartet (a group that became strongly identified with the chamber music of his young contemporary Shostakovich), and the actual premiere of the *Sonata* was given there on November 27, 1932 by that ensemble's two violinists, Dmitri Tziganov, the quartet's longtime leader, and Vassily Shirinsky, who is remembered now as a composer as well as a violinist. Less than three weeks later (December 16), in Paris, Triton presented the first Western performance, given by Samuel Dushkin (who was at that time beginning his long and fruitful association with Igor Stravinsky) and Robert Söetans (for whom Prokofiev subsequently composed his *Second Violin Concerto*).

The four brief movements, which Svyatoslav Prokofiev, the composer's son, characterized as being "lyrical, playful, fantastic and violent in turn," are filled with striking themes. The highly effective sequence apparently reflects the format of the old *sonata da chiesa*, and the actual content gives a fairly clear indication of the warmer style Prokofiev would adopt after his wanderings in the West, increasingly more embracing rather than biting or confrontational as in the scores that had made him notorious in his youth.



Photograph by: Woodrow Leung, 1973

Peter Zazofsky and Rudolf Serkin

Daniel Phillips and Peter Zazofsky both write about their youthful encounter with Prokofiev's *Sonata* with great warmth. *"It is amazing to recall the time around the recording of the Prokofiev Sonata with my old friend Peter Zazofsky. We first learned the work as part of a Music from Marlboro tour which included the two of us, cellist Marcy Rosen, and pianist Stephanie Brown – we were all in our very early 20s! We had a blast on that tour, and I remember Peter talking me into performing the duo from memory!"* Peter Zazofsky writes that *"My first experience with the Sonata came from my father, who was associate concertmaster of the Boston Symphony when he taught it to me in the mid 1960s. Thanks to him I developed a taste for the mechanized rhythm of Soviet industry, and melodies that resisted his most acrid harmonies. When my parents sent me to Meadowmount in 1967, I met my first chamber music partner, 14 year old Daniel Phillips. The beauty and humanity of his playing were a revelation. Dan's father was also a violinist, in the Pittsburgh Symphony, so we shared a common background. Ten years later we performed the Prokofiev Sonata at Marlboro, and took it on two Marlboro tours. Page turns were always a problem, so we did it by heart. After every performance, we came offstage exhilarated but quite unsure how we survived the last page!"*

Leon Kirchner: Duo No. 2 (2001)

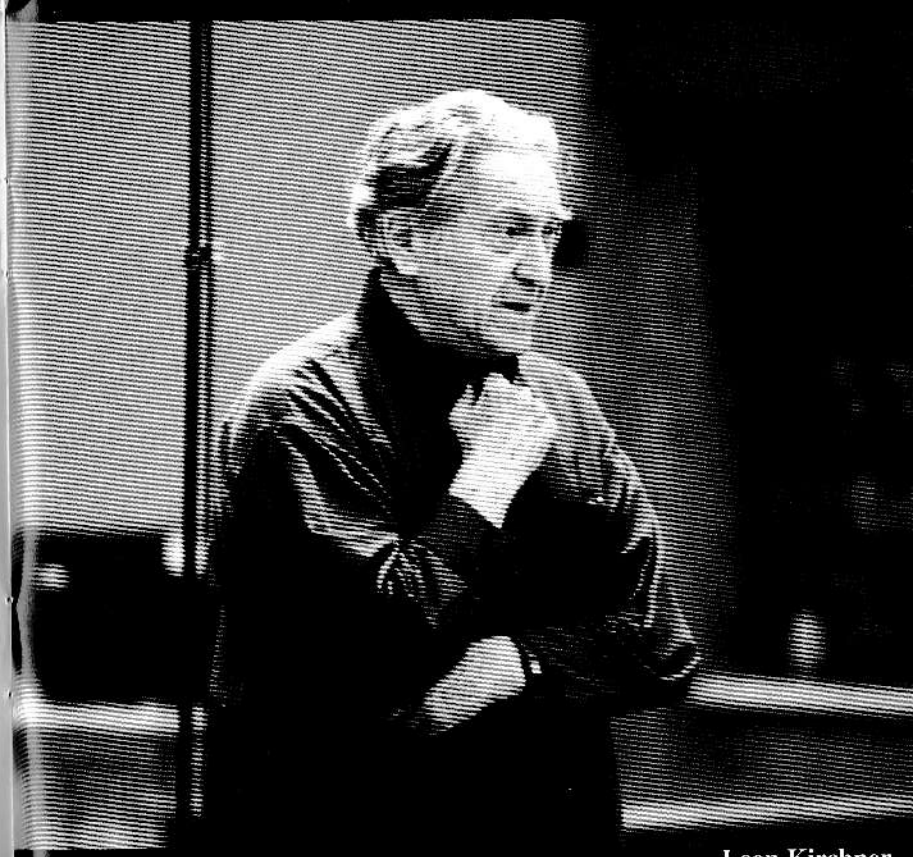
Leon Kirchner provided the following remark about his *Duo No. 2*: *"About four years ago, I received a charming letter from Pamela Frank asking whether I would accept a commission from relatives of Felix Galimir to write a violin/piano work in memory of her beloved mentor, the distinguished musician who was such a loved and respected figure at the Marlboro Music Festival. He*

had for years brought so many young and talented performers into the 20th century, introducing them to the Second Viennese School, a period which he endlessly admired and of which he was a part of as a young musician in Austria. He also shared with them his valuable insights into the works of previous centuries.

I had known Felix for years at Marlboro where we were both protagonists as well as performers. He presented several of my chamber works as a player in groups he had carefully chosen. At one point, Felix had asked if I would write a sonata for him, which never came about but, there in his violin case, a scrap of paper was found with a few measures of a piece I had started to write for him. So, it seemed completely natural to now write a piece in tribute to Felix Galimir. I did not know what a "Felix Galimir" work would be but I was honored by the request from Pamela and from Felix's relatives." The Duo was premiered at Marlboro in the summer of 2002 with Jeremy Denk, piano and Ida Levin violin.

Ida Levin and Jeremy Denk wrote extensively about their collaboration with the composer on the first performance of this work. Ms. Levin "was both excited and touched when approached in 2001 about being involved in the premiere of this new work by Leon Kirchner. That the piece was commissioned to honor the memory of Felix Galimir had tremendous meaning for me as well, as Felix had been my much beloved teacher, mentor and surrogate grandfather for over 20 years. I knew Leon's music, of course, but had not worked with him before.

I received an initial copy of the piece sometime in May 2002 and set about learning it on my own as I live in Los Angeles and Jeremy in New York. During this month, Jeremy worked on the piece numerous times alone with Leon in New York and sent me the most extraordinary sequence of emails detailing Leon's comments. He quoted Leon verbatim in most poetic terms, the comments



Photograph by: Peter Checchia, 2000

Leon Kirchner

almost always addressing the spirit and emotional drive of the music. There were also many changes to notes, registers, rhythms and effects—so much concentration of information, in fact, that Jeremy and I were often on the phone daily, “talking” the piece through as best we could and trying to understand it in a unified way.

It was a great relief at last when Jeremy and I came together in early July in Seattle while at another festival, and were able to play it through many times a day. Shortly thereafter we traveled to Marlboro and began a series of intensive sessions with Leon. Working with composers and striving to become their “voices” can be one of the great pleasures of being an instrumentalist and this period with Leon was special indeed. He worked in a very detailed manner on this intricately woven piece, frequently fussing over one chord release or gesture for many minutes, yet overall his goal for us was ever more passion and abandon. The Duo has an improvisatory feeling that belies its precise composition and needs to be felt as one great stream of consciousness. I cannot calculate how many times Leon exhorted us to make it “more beautiful!!”. He also continued to change notes and passages up until the morning of the premiere. This recording represents changes that were made even after the premiere in the couple of weeks before the recording sessions. His tweaking always felt so right at the moment and, rather than being frustrating, this process was truly exhilarating, as the inspiration so obviously poured out of Leon from the deepest recesses of his heart and soul. Through this I believe Jeremy and I gradually came to feel unified and were so fortunate to be beneficiaries of a piece with which we fell madly in love. I cannot fathom a better way to honor Felix and what he stood for.”

Jeremy Denk writes of spending “several weeks in June in New York before coming to Marlboro that summer (2002). I had a provisional score of the Duo No. 2 in my hands, which I admit kind of mystified me. I wasn’t quite yet



Leon Kirchner

beating my head against the wall, but I was close; Leon invited me to come over and talk about it. It was a warm June, and Leon was staying in a large, sprawling, beautiful apartment on Central Park West which, however, did not mostly have air conditioning. So he was mainly confined to one climate-controlled back room, a small bedroom with tons of books and--I couldn't believe it--an electronic keyboard, piled with music paper. At first he told me the piece was inspired by certain march-like movements of Beethoven, which I didn't quite understand; I perched myself next to him, and he played. The air conditioner hissed loudly. The first measures, which contain the germ of the piece, were a revelation; they had a gorgeous atmosphere and color--even on an electronic keyboard!--but at the same time the rhythms were alive in a way that my fumbblings at home had not yet found or imagined. My strongest impression was how he would stir up the rhythmic ideas, with a constant, goading interplay between the hands, a relentless rhythmic dialogue (perhaps this was the Beethovenian element?); the outbursts and arrivals had tremendous roaring power. But there was another impression: I began to perceive more clearly that the piece has a recurring, haunting four-note descending idea (sometimes five notes); Leon would bring out this idea, each time, even its most fleeting appearances; its obsessive but varied appearances were totally affecting, and always sung so that you heard and felt the relinquishing of this motive, despite whatever else was going on. (It is interesting to contrast this falling idea with the piece's concluding, tremendous reach). Finally I had a sense that everything was aloft, that the piece never stopped changing, that each gesture was created out of the last, rhapsodically, a stream-of-consciousness filtered through Leon's tremendous logical wandering mind. I cannot stress enough how moved I was by this performance, mostly halting, with the composer interjecting amusingly

that he really couldn't play anything; I was blown away.

When I got home, I wrote an email eagerly and happily to my colleague Ida about the piece. I called it a "giant Mahlerian jazz riff," which to my mind now seems like an awful and insulting oversimplification. But I was trying to put into words the spirit of what I had heard. And then I practiced feverishly, and tried to reproduce in sound what I had heard that day, and it was not even close; and then I kept going back to Leon's to get more doses of his playing and thinking, and the rest of the summer, through the premiere and recording, I felt like I was still trying to climb up to the ideas he had showed me on that little keyboard.

I remember also one other crucial day, also sunny and very warm, when Ida and I played through the piece for Leon in Happy Valley, with Richard and Marcia Goode sitting in the room. It is one of my happiest Marlboro memories, with Leon emotionally explaining how he had written the piece at least partly in memory of his wife, and also for Felix, and I myself felt very much "in love" with the piece, especially with the way the motives unfolded at the end, unwrapping themselves from their complex surroundings, one by one. Listening to it today, now nearly four years later, I find this emotional response undiminished; I find it just as exciting as the first day when Leon showed me what it could mean."

Felix Galimir's legacy is so much greater than the mere excellence of his musicianship. Galimir's example served as a musical conscience for so many that came into contact with his high standards and profound art. Judith Hurtig, one of the commissioners of Kirchner's *Duo No. 2* writes that "Felix Galimir was my husband's uncle. Felix was a remarkable violinist; a renowned teacher at the Juilliard, Curtis and Mannes conservatories and one of the longtime senior members of the Marlboro Music Festival. The stories about his teaching and coaching -- and his colorful language delivered in a thick Viennese accent -- could fill an evening for

delighted listeners. He was born in Vienna and with his three sisters, formed the Galimir String Quartet which championed the music of Arnold Schoenberg, Anton Webern and Alban Berg. They played all over Europe and made the first recordings of Ravel's String Quartet and Berg's Lyric Suite. Berg dedicated his groundbreaking work to 'Felix Galimir in honor of the exceptional string quartet leader, the famous musician, and the most outstanding musician that I know.'

Having won a coveted seat in the Vienna Philharmonic, Felix was never able claim it because with the rise of the Nazis in Austria, Jews were suddenly banned from playing in the orchestra. Sensing the growing disaster which was about to descend on Europe and particularly its Jews, violinist Bronislaw Huberman urged Jewish musicians to come to Palestine where he was forming the Palestine Orchestra which eventually became the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. Felix and his sister, violist Renee Galimir, heard the call and fled. When Toscanini took up the baton for the inaugural concert of the Palestine Orchestra on December 26, 1936, Felix Galimir was a member of the band. Toscanini was also instrumental in bringing Felix to the United States. From 1939 until 1954 when it disbanded, Felix played in Toscanini's NBC Symphony Orchestra.

From 1954 until his death in 2001, Felix spent his summers at the Marlboro Music Festival. People often talk of the Marlboro Music Festival as the place where chamber music was born and nurtured in the United States. Marlboro was still an infant when Felix showed up.

Felix Galimir dedicated his life to playing music with love, warmth, insight and enthusiasm. His powerful and loving spirit has nurtured thousands of musicians at Marlboro and in the conservatories with which he has been affiliated. There is no better way to celebrate Felix's life than in music. Leon

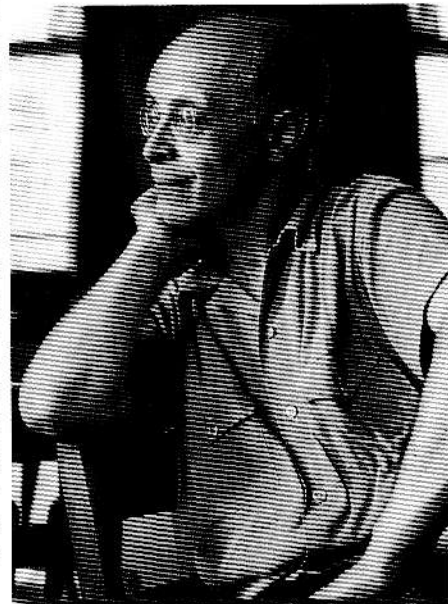
Kirchner's Duo No. 2 for violin and piano is that piece of celebration. And those who listen carefully will identify a musical quote from Schoenberg's Pierrot Lunaire. Felix would have loved it."

Photograph by: Woodrow Leung, 1974



Felix Galimir

Rudolf Serkin (1903-1991) was born in Bohemia (now the Czech Republic), later moving to Vienna where he studied piano with Richard Robert, and composition with Joseph Marx. Hailed as a child prodigy, he made his debut with the Vienna Philharmonic at age 12. After studying with Arnold Schoenberg in 1918-1920, Serkin lived in Berlin with violinist Adolf Busch and his family, later marrying Busch's daughter, 18-year-old Irene. With the rise of the Nazis, the Serkins and Busches emigrated to the U.S. where major recital, concerto and chamber music performances and recordings quickly established Serkin as one of the leading pianists of our time. He was appointed to the piano faculty of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where he later served as Director from 1968 to 1976. In 1951, Serkin and Busch, together with Hermann Busch and Marcel, Blanche and Luis Moyse, founded the Marlboro Music School and Festival in Marlboro, Vermont. Serkin succeeded Adolf Busch as its Artistic Director in 1952 and for four decades served as mentor and inspiration to generations of leading young musicians, playing a seminal role in the explosion of interest in chamber music in the U.S. and abroad.



Photograph by: Clemens Kalischer, 1950



Rudolf Serkin and Felix Galimir

Photograph by: George Dimock, 1983

Paula Robison's elegant artistry and passionate intellect have inspired the musical world. Her playing spans a strikingly diverse repertoire and she is renowned for her masterclasses, original transcriptions and books on the art of flute playing. Leon Kirchner, Toru Takemitsu, Oliver Knussen, Robert Beaser, Kenneth Frazelle and Michael Tilson Thomas have all composed works for her. She has collaborated with the New York Philharmonic, Leipzig Gewandhaus Bach Orchestra, I Solisti Veneti, Budapest Strings, Mostly Mozart, Jazz at Lincoln Center and the Marlboro and Santa Fe Music Festivals. Recital appearances include an annual sold-out series at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Violinist **Daniel Phillips** enjoys a versatile career as an established-chamber musician, solo artist and teacher. A member of the Orion String Quartet, Mr. Phillips has also performed as soloist with many of the country's leading orchestras, including Pittsburgh, Houston, New Jersey, Phoenix, San Antonio and Yakima. He appears regularly at the Spoleto, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Chamber Music Northwest, and the International Musicians Seminar in Cornwall, England. Currently violin soloist with the renowned Bach Aria Group, he has toured and recorded in a string quartet for SONY, with Gidon Kremer, Kim Kashkashian, and Yo-Yo Ma. Daniel Phillips is Professor of Violin at the Aaron Copland School of Music of Queens College.



Daniel Phillips and Peter Zazofsky

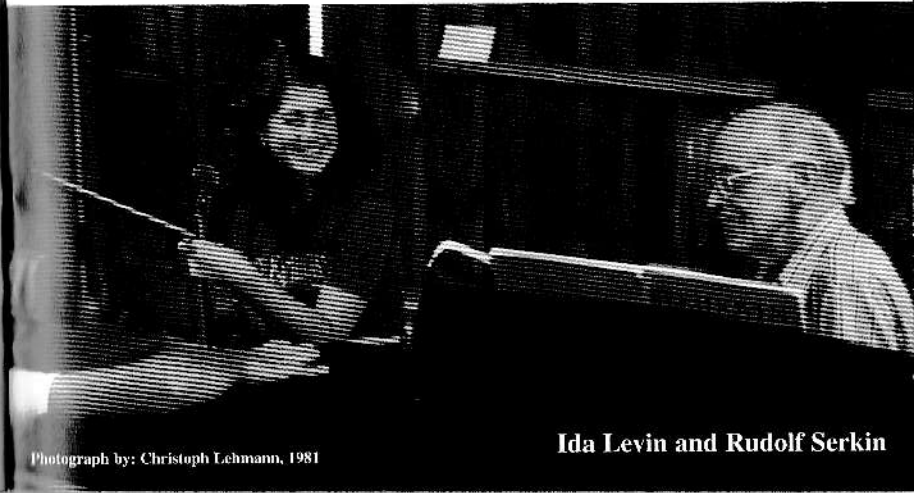
Photograph by: George Dimock, 1977-78



Violinist **Peter Zazofsky** has been a soloist with many of the great orchestras in the US and Europe, including the Boston Symphony, Berlin Philharmonic, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, and Philadelphia Orchestra, in collaboration with maestros Tennstedt, Ozawa, Ormandy, Kurt Sanderling and Charles Dutoit. He also tours the world's music centers as first violinist of the Muir String Quartet and as a solo recitalist. Peter Zazofsky was born in Boston, where his father was assistant concertmaster of the Boston Symphony. Joseph Silverstein was his first teacher, and he later studied with Dorothy DeLay, Jaime Laredo and Ivan Galamian at the Curtis Institute. Beginning in 1974, Mr. Zazofsky won a series of prizes and awards including a Gold Medal at the 1980 Queen Elisabeth Competition and the Grand Prize of the 1979 Montreal International Competition.

Photograph by: George Dimock, 1978

Ida Levin has established an international reputation as soloist, recitalist and chamber musician. She began her violin studies at age three in her native Santa Monica, California, and made her professional debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at age ten. The recipient of both the Leventritt Award and an Avery Fisher Career Grant, Ms. Levin was invited by Rudolf Serkin to appear with him in a joint recital for President and Mrs. Reagan, broadcast by PBS as "In Performance at the White House." She has performed at Carnegie Hall as soloist with the American Symphony Orchestra and the New York String Orchestra and with the orchestras of St. Louis, Utah, Toulouse, Kammerphilharmonie Berlin, the Prague Symphony and the Edinburgh Chamber Orchestra. She has been on the faculties of Harvard University, the European Mozart Academy and the Sándor Véghe Academy in Prague, and currently hold the position of Lecturer at UCLA.

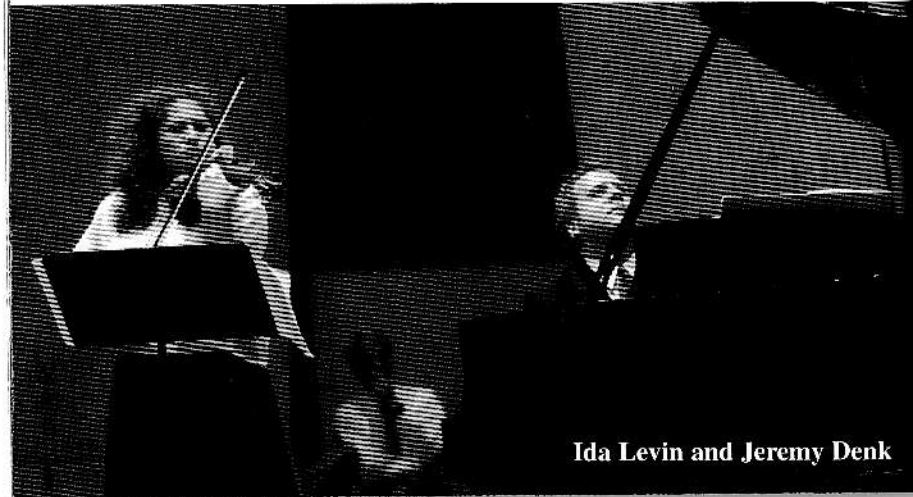


Photograph by: Christoph Lehmann, 1981

Ida Levin and Rudolf Serkin

Jeremy Denk was a 1998 recipient of the Avery Fisher Career Grant and in 1997 won the Young Concert Artists International Auditions. He has appeared with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Dallas Symphony, and the London Philharmonia, and is scheduled (2006-2007) to debut with the St. Louis, Houston, Atlanta, and San Francisco Symphonies, and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. He received degrees in chemistry and piano from Oberlin College/Conservatory, where he studied with Joseph Schwartz. He earned a master's degree in music from Indiana University as a pupil of György Sebök, and a doctorate in piano performance from the Juilliard School, where he worked with Herbert Stessin. Denk has spent six summers at the Marlboro Music Festival and been part of many "Musicians from Marlboro" national tours.

Photograph by: Peter Checchia, 2002



Ida Levin and Jeremy Denk



Marlboro's founders in 1951. Left to right: Marcel Moyse, Louis Moyse, Rudolf Serkin, Blanche Moyes, Adolf Busch, Herman Busch (with cellist Nathan Chaikin second from left)

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Mixing Engineer: Paul Zinman (Prokofiev)

Mastering Engineers: Paul Zinman at Soundbyte Productions, Inc., NYC and
Adam Abeshouse (Schubert)

Annotators: Frederick Dorian (Schubert); Richard Freed © 2004, used by permission
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