



# The German Society of Pennsylvania

proudly presents

## Pyxis Piano Quartet with Grant Youngblood, Baritone



Sunday, March 17, 2019 at 3:00pm

The German Society of Pennsylvania  
[www.germansociety.org](http://www.germansociety.org)

611 Spring Garden Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19123

# Calendar of Events

## March 2019

- Tues. Mar. 19 KA EXTRA: The Effects of Immigration on German-American Politics with Martin Kaiser, 7:00pm  
Wed. Mar. 20 Humboldt through our Eyes: Discussion with comments from Prof. Harry Liebersohn, 6:00pm

## April 2019

- Sat. Apr. 6 Hamburger Abend, 7:00pm  
Wed. Apr. 10 Konversationsabend: GSP Update with President Tony Michels, 6pm  
Sat. Apr. 13 Buchclub, 1:30pm  
Fri. Apr. 26 Friday Film Fest: *Honig im Kopf*, 6:30pm  
Sat. Apr. 27 Digitization Day, time TBA

## May 2019

- Sat. May 4 Spring Luncheon, 12:00pm  
Wed. May 8 Konversationsabend: *Mal was Lustiges* with Karl Moehlmann, 6:00pm  
Sat. May 11 Buchclub, 1:30pm  
Fri. May 17 Friday Film Fest: *3 Tage in Quiberon*, 6:30pm  
Sat. May 18 500 Years of Lager Brewing: the German Tradition and the American Dream, 2:00pm  
Sat. May 18 Frankfurt in May, 3:00pm

## June 2019

- Sun. June 2 Annual Members Meeting and Elections, 3:00pm  
Sat. June 8 Konversationsabend: Wandertag, 10:30am

## Save the date for our next "Wister and More!" concerts:

- Sun. Apr. 14 **The Casimir Trio**  
The Casimir Trio will present Mozart's Violin Sonata, K. 378; David Finko's Piano Trio (2018); and Smetana's Piano Trio, Op. 15.
- Sun. May 12 **ESTrella Piano Duo**  
"Tales from the East", featuring works by Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin, Stravinsky, and more

All of our events are open to the public.

We welcome members and non-members alike.

Most events require tickets. Please call or email the office to inquire about purchasing:  
215.627.2332 | [info@germansociety.org](mailto:info@germansociety.org)

Pyxis Piano Quartet  
with Grant Youngblood, Baritone  
PROGRAM

Keyboard Quartet in G Major, W.B. 66

I. *Allegro*

II. *Rondo: Allegro*

Johann Christian Bach

(1735-1782)

Eight Poems by Jeffrey Harrison

I. *Fork*

II. *The One That Got Away*

III. *Island, 1979*

IV. *The Oval Pin*

V. *Renewal*

VI. *Commuter Buddhist*

VII. *Whenever You Are*

VIII. *The Figure on the Hill*

Chuck Holdeman

(b. 1946)

- Intermission -

L'Histoire du Tango

I. *Bordel—1900*

II. *Café—1930*

III. *Nightclub—1960*

IV. *Concert d'aujourd'hui*

Astor Piazzolla/arr. Mazzocchi

(1921-1992)

There will be one 15-minute intermission. We offer refreshments from our bar during that time. Your ticket to our concert also invites you to a complimentary reception with the artists in the Ratskeller (downstairs) following the performance.

## Program Notes

Born in Leipzig, Germany, Johann Christian Bach was the eighteenth child of Johann Sebastian and Anna Magdalena Bach. His early musical studies were with his father. After his father's death in 1750, he worked and lived with his second-oldest half brother Carl Philipp Emanuel in Berlin. At the age of 20, he journeyed to Italy where he spent the next years studying and working as an organist in Milan, where he became inspired and interested in opera. He then moved to London in 1762, and became composer to the King's Theatre in London and wrote a number of successful Italian operas. He was known as "the London (or English) Bach", composing orchestral, chamber, and keyboard music, and a few cantatas. His music reflects the pleasant melodiousness of the galant style, which influenced composers of the Classical period, particularly Mozart. The Keyboard Quartet on today's program reflects his elegant style, incorporating balanced phrases with emphasis on melody and accompaniment, without too much contrapuntal complexity.

L'Histoire du Tango is one of the most famous compositions by Ástor Piazzolla, originally written for flute and guitar in 1986. It is Piazzolla's only work for flute and guitar – the instruments associated with the first flowering of the form in Buenos Aires in 1882. However, L'Histoire du Tango is often played with different combinations of instruments, including violin instead of flute and harp or marimba instead of guitar. Pyxis Piano Quartet's violinist, Luigi Mazzocchi, made this transcription for piano quartet.

It was Piazzolla's life work to bring tango from the bordellos and dance halls of Argentina into the concert halls of Europe and America. He is among the varied group of composers enabled by the teaching of Nadia Boulanger to become more authentically themselves. Boulanger encouraged Piazzolla not to become another European-style composer, but to apply to the tango the lessons of his study with her.

L'Histoire du Tango attempts to convey the history and evolution of the tango in four movements: Bordello 1900, Café 1930, Nightclub 1960, and Concert d'aujourd'hui. Piazzolla provided program notes that expand on the individual movements:

**Bordel 1900:** The tango originated in Buenos Aires in 1882. It was first played on guitar and flute. Arrangements then came to include piano and later the concertina. This music is full of grace and liveliness. It paints a picture of the good nature chatter of the French, Italian, and Spanish women who peopled

the bordellos, as they teased the policemen, thieves, sailors, and riffraff who came to see them. This is high-spirited tango.

**Café 1930:** This is another age of the tango. People stopped dancing it as they did in 1900, preferring instead simply to listen to it. It became more musical and more romantic. This tango has undergone total transformation: the movements are slower, with new and often melancholic harmonies. Tango orchestras come to consist of two violins, two concertinas, piano and bass. The tango is sometimes sung as well.

**Nightclub 1960:** This is a time of rapidly expanding international exchange, and the tango evolves again as Brazil and Argentina come together in Buenos Aires. The bossa nova and the new tango are moving to the same beat. Audiences rush to the nightclubs to listen earnestly to the new tango. This marks a revolution and a profound alteration in some of the original tango forms.

**Concert d'aujourd'hui (Modern-day Concert):** Certain concepts in tango music become intertwined with modern music. Bartok, Stravinsky, and other composers reminisce to the tune of tango music. This is today's tango, and the tango of the future as well.

I used to get the daily poem from The Poetry Foundation in my email and that's where I first read **WHEREVER YOU ARE**. I was initially attracted because the style is not unlike that of another poet whose work I had set to music, W. S. Merwin. Also Jeff's work can be humorous, and there is his gift for concise story telling. Gradually I picked poems with musical possibilities from four published books of Jeff's poems. We began an email correspondence in May 2012, I kept him apprised of my choices and composing progress, and I remain grateful for his support for my efforts. I identified two basic approaches, which sometimes overlap: the lyric poems, which became songs, and the short stories told as poems, which became narrations with musical accompaniment. From the beginning I had in mind the voice of Grant Youngblood. For a time there was a slightly different combination of instruments possible, but when my friends in Pyxis, who are also friends of Grant, expressed interest, all the pieces fell together for these performances. I gratefully dedicate my composition to these five performers.

Program note by composer Chuck Holdeman

# Poem Texts

## FORK

Because on the first day of class you said,  
"In ten years most of you won't be writing,"  
barely hiding that you hoped it would be true;  
because you told me over and over, in front of the class,  
that I was "hopeless," that I was wasting my time  
but more importantly yours, that I just didn't get it;  
because you violently scratched out every other word,  
scrawled "Awk" and "Eek" in the margins  
as if you were some exotic bird,  
then highlighted your own remarks in pink;  
because you made us proofread the galleys  
of your how-I-became-a-famous-writer memoir;  
because you wanted disciples, and got them,  
and hated me for not becoming one;  
because you were beautiful and knew it, and used it,  
making wide come-fuck-me eyes  
at your readers from the jackets of your books;  
because when, at the end of the semester,  
you grudgingly had the class over for dinner  
at your over-decorated pseudo-Colonial  
full of photographs with you at the center,  
you served us take-out pizza on plastic plates  
but had us eat it with your good silver;  
and because a perverse inspiration rippled  
through me,

I stole a fork, slipping it into the pocket of my jeans,  
then hummed with inward glee the rest of the evening  
to feel its sharp tines pressing against my thigh  
as we sat around you in your dark paneled study  
listening to you blather on about your latest prize.  
The fork was my prize. I practically sprinted  
back to my dorm room, where I examined it:  
a ridiculously ornate pattern, with vegetal swirls  
and the curvaceous initials of one of your ancestors,  
its flamboyance perfectly suited to your  
red-lipsticked and silk-scarved ostentation.

That summer, after graduation, I flew to Europe,  
stuffing the fork into one of the outer pouches  
of my backpack. On a Eurail pass I covered ground  
as only the young can, sleeping in youth hostels,  
train stations, even once in the Luxembourg Gardens.  
I'm sure you remember the snapshots you received  
anonymously, each featuring your fork  
at some celebrated European location: your fork  
held at arm's length with the Eiffel Tower  
listing in the background; your fork  
in the meaty hand of a smiling Beefeater;  
your fork balanced on Keats's grave in Rome  
or sprouting like an antenna from Brunelleschi's dome;  
your fork dwarfing the Matterhorn.  
I mailed the photos one by one—if possible  
with the authenticating postmark of the city  
where I took them. It was my mission that summer.

That was half my life ago. But all these years  
I've kept the fork, through dozens of moves  
and changes—always in the same desk drawer  
among my pens and pencils, its sharp points  
spurring me on. It became a talisman  
whose tarnished aura had as much to do  
with me as you. You might even say your fork  
made me a writer. Not you, your fork.  
You are still the worst teacher I ever had.  
You should have been fired but instead got tenure.  
As for the fork, just yesterday my daughter  
asked me why I keep a fork in my desk drawer,  
and I realized I don't need it any more.  
It has served its purpose. Therefore  
I am returning it to you with this letter.

Jeffrey Harrison, from *Incomplete Knowledge*.

## THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

*for Julie*

We paddled through the winding waterway,  
past lily pads and water hyacinths,  
into the other lake: perfectly calm  
and of a blue much deeper than usual.  
It was that time of day when late sunlight  
intensifies the beauty of everything,  
transforming the trees into a green fire.  
They leaned over us as we paddled by  
as if with the desire to be draped  
in undulating nets of yellow light  
projected by the waves from our canoe—  
waves in which those very trees were mirrored,  
stretched and wavering. We drifted in silence.  
The paddle that I held across my lap  
dripped, as if to count the passing moments—  
**getting slower, but we knew they wouldn't stop.**  
And we knew those nets of light, unraveling  
**all the while, wouldn't catch the afternoon**  
for us to keep—though you turned to me and said  
that this was all you wanted in the world.

Jeffrey Harrison, from  
*The Signing Underneath*, E.P Dutton, 1988.

## ISLAND, 1979

For a week we slept on the least accessible beach  
in a single sleeping bag, or on top of it,  
spreading it out on the black volcanic sand.  
We swam in the blue Aegean, lounged in the sun  
and in the shade of small pines, read books (mine  
was incongruously *Crime and Punishment*),  
made love, and took turns noodling on a little flute  
a friend had given us. Every morning we walked  
into the village of white houses with blue doors  
and bought fresh bread and ripe tomatoes,  
slicing both with my Swiss Army knife.  
We subsisted on tomato sandwiches  
and on each other. We never even bothered  
with the ancient ruins, or the famous nightlife  
we heard about later, never explored the island,  
**didn't feel the need to make sure we weren't**  
missing anything. There was nothing missing,  
except maybe protein. Not that it was perfect:  
you sunbathed topless for the first and last time  
and scorched your breasts, and we did get tired  
of tomatoes and that same bread every meal.  
Still, it was a week worthy of holding dear  
thirty years later, an island of time as remote  
as the real one, never to be returned to,  
**and we don't even have any photographs**  
to show we were there or prove to our teenagers  
**that we were once almost as young as them...**  
though I do remember one we used to have  
of you, beautifully sun-browned in your maroon  
bathing suit, playing the flute under a pine.  
And I have a picture in my mind of the green  
Indian print dress you wore all that summer  
and looked so good in. Long gone now,  
as is the bathing suit. We still have the sleeping bag  
**but not the flute. And I don't know what became**  
of the paperback *I Ching* we'd picked up in Athens,  
and which we consulted, flipping drachmas,  
**to figure out which day we'd leave the island.**

Jeffrey Harrison, from *Into Daylight*.

## THE OVAL PIN

sits on your dresser,  
a gift a friend brought back from Russia:  
a troika painted on black lacquer.

The three horses, one plunging forward,  
one rearing up, one looking back  
at the man and woman in the sleigh,

have some traditional significance  
(she must have told you the story)  
that you no longer remember.

You sense some urgency  
in the way the man raises his whip  
high, like the slimmest gold banner,

in the anxious expression  
the artist managed to portray  
**on the woman's** minuscule face,  
and in the blanket or shawl  
that trails and flaps behind the sleigh  
like a twisted cloud of green smoke—

or almost like a shrouded body.  
Something is wrong. A friend is ill  
and dying. They must hurry.

But though the horses gallop wildly  
like mythical beasts, with coats  
of orange and pink and manes of flame,

though the sleigh lifts up and flies  
through the night as black as lacquer,  
these two on their dire errand

will never arrive in time to see  
their friend alive, to say good-bye—  
as we will never see again

the friend who gave you  
this oval pin, which you reach for now  
and fasten to your black dress.

(Ann Rubin, 1962-1998)

Jeffrey Harrison, from *Feeding the Fire*.

## RENEWAL

At the Department of Motor Vehicles  
**to renew my driver's license**, I had to wait  
two hours on one of those wooden benches  
like pews in the Church of Latter Day  
Meaninglessness, where there is no  
stained glass (no windows at all, in fact),  
no incense other than stale cigarette smoke  
emanating from the clothes of those around me,  
and no sermon, just an automated female voice  
calling numbers over a loudspeaker.  
And one by one the members of our sorry  
congregation shuffled meekly up to the pitted  
altar to have our vision tested or to seek  
**redemption for whatever wrong turn we'd taken**,  
or pay indulgences, or else be turned away  
as unworthy of piloting our own journey.  
But when I paused to look around, using my numbered  
ticket as a bookmark, it was as if the dim  
fluorescent light had been transformed  
to incandescence. The face of the Latino guy  
in a ripped black sweatshirt glowed with health,  
and I could tell that the sulking white girl  
accompanied by her mother was brimming  
with secret excitement to be getting her first license,  
already speeding down the highway, alone,  
with all the windows open, singing.

Jeffrey Harrison, from *Into Daylight*.

## COMMUTER BUDDHIST

I'm learning to be a Buddhist in my car,  
listening to a book on tape. One problem  
is that, before I've gotten very far,

my mind gradually becomes aware  
that it has stopped listening, straying from  
the task of becoming a Buddhist in my car.

I'm also worried that listening will impair  
my driving, as the package label cautions,  
but I haven't noticed that, at least so far.

In fact, I may be driving with more care.  
There's a sensation of attentive calm  
that's part of becoming a Buddhist in your car.

A soothing voice drones on until the car  
is transformed into a capsule of wisdom  
traveling at high speed, and you feel far

from anywhere but where you really are...  
which is nowhere, really. The biggest problem  
is getting the Buddhism out of your car  
and into your life. I've failed at that so far.

Jeffrey Harrison, from *Into Daylight*.

## WHEREVER YOU ARE

When I kissed you in the hall  
of the youth hostel we fell  
into the linen closet laughing  
twenty years ago and I still  
remember though not very often  
the taste of cheap wine in your mouth  
like raspberries the freckle  
between your breasts and the next day  
when we went to Versailles I hardly  
saw anything because I was looking  
at you the whole time your face I can't  
quite remember then I kissed you  
good-bye and you got on a train  
and I never saw you again just  
one day and one letter long gone  
explaining never mind but sometimes  
I wonder where you are probably  
married with children like me happy  
with a new last name a whole life  
having nothing to do with that day  
but everybody has something like it  
a small thing they can't help  
going back to and it's not even about  
choices and where your life might  
have gone but just that it's there  
far enough away so it can be seen  
as just something that happened almost  
to someone else an episode from  
a movie we walk out of blinded  
back into our lives

Jeffrey Harrison, from *Feeding the Fire*.

## About the Artists

Pyxis Piano Quartet was founded in 2009 to perform chamber music concerts that include works from the sonata, duo, and trio repertoire as well as traditional and contemporary masterpieces for piano quartet. Compelling, engaging, and informative, their performances have become increasingly sought after in the mid-Atlantic region.

Pyxis has been heard along the East Coast in concerts from Virginia to Pennsylvania. Their performances have become a highlight of the Delaware arts scene, and this year they are in their eighth season as artists in residence at the Delaware Art Museum. The 2016-2017 season will also see the ensemble's third return to the German Society of Pennsylvania and the Market Street Music Festival Concerts at First and Central Church in Wilmington, Delaware, where they have become frequent guests.



**Luigi Mazzocchi, violin**

Mr. Mazzocchi has performed as soloist with all the leading Venezuelan symphony orchestras and attended international music festivals in the US, Panama, Spain, France and Australia. He is a prize-winner in solo competitions such as the 1995 "Del Castillo" Latin American Competition, the 1997 South Orange Symphony Artist Competition, the 1999 FOSJA Solo Competition in Puerto Rico (performing as soloist at the Casals Festival), and the 2000 Temple University Concerto Competition.

Currently, Mr. Mazzocchi is the Concertmaster of the Pennsylvania Ballet Orchestra, Concertmaster of the Black Pearl Chamber Orchestra, Concertmaster of the Ocean City Pops Orchestra, Associate Concertmaster of the Delaware Symphony, and a member of Opera Philadelphia, the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, the Philly Pops, the West Jersey Chamber Orchestra, Camerata Philadelphia, as well as the Gaudeamus and the Caçhasa Ensembles.



**Amy Leonard, viola**

An exceptionally versatile musician, Amy Leonard has held positions with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, The New World Symphony, and was assistant principal violist with the National Symphony of Ireland, where she also performed with the internationally recognized contemporary ensemble Nua Nos. She has participated in the Aspen, Banff, Spoleto USA music festivals, Mostra Mozart (Venice, Italy), and the Pierre Monteux School (Hancock, Maine) where for several years she directed the school's chamber music series. Amy is in high demand now as a baroque and modern violist, working

with most of the musical ensembles in the area as well as teaching violin and viola students at the Shipley School in Bryn Mawr and at her own studio. She has recorded for the Chandos, Plectra, NMC, Naxos, Meyer Media, and BMG Classics labels, as well as for PBS, NFL Films, and Irish Film Orchestras.



**Jie Jin, cello**

Jie Jin has been widely recognized for performances in music capitals in North America, Europe and Asia. An active chamber musician, Ms. Jin is the founder of the Tang-gu-la String Quartet. The Quartet received numerous honors, winning Second Prize in the First National String Quartet Competition. Shortly after, the quartet appeared in Isaac Stern's Oscar-winning documentary "From Mao to Mozart", and performed for President Bill Clinton.

Ms. Jin began her cello study at age 5. She received her Bachelor's degree from Shanghai Conservatory of Music. Upon receiving a full scholarship from Shepherd School of Music at Rice University, she came to the United States.



**Hiroko Yamazaki, piano**

Hiroko Yamazaki has performed in the United States and abroad and has collaborated with instrumentalists and vocalists including members of Tonhalle Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Delaware Symphony. Festival appearances include Luzerne, Aspen, Rome and International Festival Institute at Round Top, Texas (recorded by NPR).

Ms. Yamazaki has taught at University of Delaware and is currently Associate Head of the Piano Department/Master Piano Faculty with Distinction at The Music School of Delaware. She holds a Bachelor of Music in piano performance and Master of Music in Collaborative Piano from the University of Maryland.

**Grant Youngblood, baritone**



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We also wish to acknowledge with thanks the generous support received from **The Philadelphia Cultural Fund** for this season of our music program.