



Frank Almond, *Artistic Director*

March 18, 2019 — 7:00 p.m.

Schwan Concert Hall, Wisconsin Lutheran College, Wauwatosa

# The Art Of The Cello

Frank Almond, *violin*

Wei-Ting Kuo, *viola*

Tamás Varga, *cello*

Adam Golka, *piano*

## PROGRAM

***Captain Hume's Last Pavin for Violoncello Solo (2018)* ..... Gregory Vajda**  
Commissioned by Tamás Varga (1973–)

***Blues for Mr. Z for Violoncello Solo (2018)* ..... Aaron Jay Kernis**  
Commissioned by Tamás Varga, Wiener Konzerthaus, and Wien Modern (1960–)

***Ballad in Yellow for Violoncello Solo (2018)* ..... Konrád Varga**  
Commissioned by Tamás Varga (2006–)

***A Song of Kalavinka for Violoncello Solo (2017)* ..... Akira Nishimura**  
Commissioned by Tamás Varga (1953–)

***Sonata for Violoncello Solo Op.8* ..... Zoltán Kodály**  
I. Allegro maestoso ma appassionato (1882–1967)

INTERMISSION

***Piano Quartet No. 1 in g minor, Op. 25* ..... Johannes Brahms**  
Allegro (1833–1897)

Intermezzo: Allegro ma non troppo—Trio: Animato

Andante con moto

Rondo alla Zingarese: Presto



UNITED PERFORMING ARTS FUND



This program was supported in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the state of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts.

**The 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season is lovingly dedicated to Katherine Denton Almond (1968–2017).**

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## BIOGRAPHIES



Violinist **Frank Almond** holds the Charles and Marie Caestecker Concertmaster Chair at the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. He has also held positions as

Photo by Jennifer Brindley  
Concertmaster of the Rotterdam Philharmonic with Valery Gergiev, and Guest Concertmaster of the London Philharmonic with Kurt Masur. Other Guest Concertmaster appearances have included the Seattle Symphony, the Montreal Symphony, the Dallas Symphony, the Grand Tetons Music Festival, and the San Diego Symphony. He continues an active schedule of solo and chamber music performances in the US and abroad including appearances with the Ojai Festival, Frankly Music, An die Musik, the Nara Academy in Nara, Japan, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Music in the Vineyards, Sarasota Music Festival, and various solo

appearances with orchestras. He has been a member of the chamber group An die Musik in New York City since 1997, and also founded and directs the much-loved and somewhat notorious Frankly Music Chamber Series based in Milwaukee. At 17, he was one of the youngest prizewinners in the history of the Nicolo Paganini Competition in Genoa, Italy, and five years later was one of two American prizewinners at the Eighth International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, which was documented in an award-winning PBS film. Since then he has kept up an eclectic mix of activities in addition to his concertmaster duties, appearing both as a soloist and chamber musician. In addition to his work with An die Musik, Mr. Almond's work as a chamber musician has generated collaborations over the years with many of today's well-known institutions, including the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Hal Leonard

Corporation, the Ravinia Festival, La Jolla Summerfest, Music in the Vineyards, and numerous other summer festivals.

He has recorded for Summit, Albany, Boolean (his own label), Innova, Newport Classic, Wergo and New Albion and has appeared numerous times on NPR's Performance Today. In both 2002 and 2004 *An die Musik* received Grammy nominations for its "Timeless Tales" series. The re-release of Mr. Almond's recording of the complete Brahms Sonatas, performed in collaboration with pianist William Wolfram, brought extraordinary critical acclaim, and was also listed in the American Record Guide top recordings of 2001.

With pianist William Wolfram, a CD of sonatas by Respighi, Janáček, and Strauss was released on the AVIE label to much acclaim, and was named a "Best of 2007" by the American Record Guide. A CD of American violin and piano music was released on Innova Recordings with pianist Brian Zeger and has also garnered much press enthusiasm. A recording of selected works of Samuel Barber was released in 2010, in cooperation with the Hal Leonard Corporation. In April 2013 AVIE released *A Violin's Life* featuring works and composers directly associated with the "Lipinski" Stradivarius, charting in the Billboard Top 10 in its first week of release. *A Violin's Life, Vol. 2* was released in May 2016, also charting at the top of Billboard. In 2015, he premiered *Soul of a Nation* in New York and Chicago, a new violin concerto from composer Victoria Bond based on the life and writings of Thomas Jefferson. The work was recorded and released to much acclaim in 2018.

In February 2018, he and the Milwaukee Symphony performed a new violin concerto by Pierre Jalbert, co-commissioned by the MSO, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.

In recent seasons he has occasionally appeared as a conductor, most recently with the Cabrillo Chamber Orchestra (CA), the Baltimore Chamber Orchestra, the Traverse Symphony (MI), on the Frankly Music series with members of the Milwaukee Symphony, and the Berlin Sinfonietta.

Mr. Almond holds two degrees from the Juilliard School, where he studied with Dorothy DeLay. Other important teachers included Michael Tseitlin, Felix Galimir, and Joseph Silverstein. He has held academic positions at San Diego State University, Texas Christian University, and Northwestern University, and in 2014 joined the faculty of the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University. In 2014, he was appointed to a newly created Artist-in-Residence position at the Milwaukee Youth Symphony. He usually plays on a violin by Antonio Stradivari from 1715, the "ex-Lipiński".

On January 27, 2014, the "ex-Lipiński" Stradivari was stolen from Mr. Almond in an armed robbery after a Frankly Music concert. The violin was recovered nine days later, and the story continues to make headlines around the world, most recently on the upcoming *Moth Radio Hour*, and the feature film documentary *Plucked*. Mr. Almond is extremely grateful to the Milwaukee Police Department, the FBI, and the thousands of individuals who sent messages of concern and support.

Mr. Almond writes an online column, *nondivisi*, which may be found, along with more information about Frankly Music, *A Violin's Life* and the *Lipiński* Stradivari, at [frankalmond.com](http://frankalmond.com).



A native of Taiwan, **Wei-Ting Kuo**, a section violist of Chicago Symphony Orchestra Since 2014 appointed by Music Director Riccardo Muti. Mr. Kuo has served as Assistant Principal Violist of the

Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra from 2011 to 2014. He began his viola studies at the age of nine.

Kuo came to the United States at age 24, having completed his army service in Taiwan. While a student, he was invited to the Taos Music Festival, Ravinia Festival, and Verbier Festival Academy. He was selected as a finalist for the 2008 Primrose International Viola Competition; he also was a prizewinner at the 2009 Tokyo International Viola Competition, where he additionally received a special prize for the best interpretation.

Kuo is also an active soloist and chamber musician. He was invited to join Nobuko Imai's Asia tour in both capacities. He has appeared with musicians such as Frank Almond, Nai Yuan Hu, Menahem Pressler, and the Arcas Quartet. Kuo also had concerto performed with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra in 2014.

Kuo holds an Artist Diploma from The Colburn School, an MM from Mannes College, and a BM from National Taiwan Normal University where he also minored on piano performance in Taipei. He has studied with Paul Coletti, Hsin-Yun Huang, and Yizhak Schotten in the United States. Kuo will join DePaul University as viola faculty from 2017.



**Tamás Varga** was born in Budapest where he began his training at the age of seven, concluding with distinction at the Franz Liszt Academy. His teachers included László

Mező, Ferenc Rados and György Kurtág. He received additional artistic motivation in master classes held by Miklós Perényi, Menahem Pressler and Uzi Wiesel, with whom he studied on a scholarship to the Rubín Academy of Music in Tel-Aviv. After having won the Hungarian national

competition for the second time in 1987, he established himself as one of the most sought after soloists in Hungary.

He is currently principal cellist with the Vienna Philharmonic and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra. The regular solo appearances he makes with this orchestra are counted among the highlights of his career. Numerous solo and chamber music concerts take him to nearly every country in Europe, as well as to Canada, South Africa and Japan.

As an enthusiastic chamber musician, Tamás Varga is a member of the Wiener Philharmonia Trio and the Vienna Chamber Ensemble, making regular guest appearances with them in the Vienna Konzerthaus, at the Salzburg Festivals and other such important European Festivals. A concert he initiated, "Remembering Piatigorsky", which commemorated the 100th birthday of the famous cellist, Gregor Piatigorsky, received highly favourable media attention.

Likewise, his cycle "Dvořák and the New World" for the Vienna Festival in 2004, along with recitals and chamber music concerts at important festivals such as the Budapest Spring or the Rheingau Music Festival document his high profile on the chamber music scene.

Tamás Varga places great emphasis on passing on his experience to younger musicians. He has given instruction for years at the International Orchestra Institute in Attergau and has held master classes in Pretoria, South Africa; at the Bruckner University in Linz; at the Franz Liszt Academy for Music in Budapest; and in Kusatsu, Japan, as well as part of the Gustav Mahler Academy in Bolzano and Potenza, Italy. For CD, Tamás Vargas has recorded all of the Cello Suites of J.S. Bach and the two sonatas for Cello and Piano of Brahms, as well as other compositions.



Polish-American pianist **Adam Golka** was recently selected by Sir András Schiff to perform recitals at the Klavier-Festival Ruhr in Germany, Tonhalle Zürich, as well

as in Berlin and New York (organized by the 92nd Street Y). Adam has been regularly on the concert stage since the age of sixteen, when he won first prize at the 2nd China Shanghai International Piano Competition. He has also received the Gilmore Young Artist Award and the Max I. Allen Classical Fellowship Award from the American Pianists Association.

With his extensive concerto repertoire, Golka has appeared as a soloist with dozens of orchestras, among those the BBC Scottish, Atlanta, Houston, Dallas, Indianapolis, New Jersey, Milwaukee, Phoenix, San Diego, Fort Worth, Vancouver, Seattle, and Jacksonville symphonies, Grand Teton Festival Orchestra, National Arts Centre Orchestra of Ottawa, the Sinfonia Varsovia, the Shanghai Philharmonic, the Warsaw Philharmonic, and the Teresa Carreño Youth Orchestra of Venezuela. Adam made his Carnegie Hall Isaac Stern Auditorium Debut in 2010, performing Rachmaninoff's Third Concerto with the New York Youth Symphony, and also performed a cycle of all five Beethoven concerti in 2011 with the Lubbock Symphony, under the baton of his brother, Tomasz Golka.

As a recitalist, he has performed scores of solo concerts, among those at excellent venues such as Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall in New York (presented by the Musicians Emergency Fund), Concertgebouw's Kleine Zaal, and Musashino Civic Cultural Hall in Tokyo, and at festivals such as Mostly Mozart, the Gilmore Keyboard Festival, the Ravinia Festival, the New York City International Keyboard Festival at Mannes, the Newport

Music Festival, and the Duszynki Chopin festival. As a chamber musician, his appearances have included prestigious festivals such as Marlboro, Caramoor, Ravinia, and Music@Menlo. Adam Golka has premiered solo works written for him by Richard Danielpour, Michael Brown, and Jarosław Gołembowski. His début disc, featuring the first sonata of Brahms and the Hammerklavier Sonata of Beethoven, was released in 2014 by First Hand Records.

During the 2017–18 season, he performed at the Minnesota Beethoven Festival with the Manhattan Chamber Players, followed by concerts at the extraordinary Tippet Rise Arts Center in Fishtail, Montana in a recital of Schubert, Liszt, and Brahms and in the Schumann Quintet with the Ariel String Quartet; at Krzyzowa Festival in Poland and with the Fort Worth Symphony for Mozart Cto. No. 27, K. 595, with Music Director Miguel Harth-Bedoya. He has also recently performed in recitals and chamber music in Milwaukee, Washington, D.C., at the Cliburn in Fort Worth, Boston, Sedona, and at the College of the Holy Cross, where he is Artist-in-Residence. With orchestra, Adam plays Mozart Cto. No. 25 with the Harrisburg Symphony, Ravel G Major in Lubbock, and Rachmaninoff Cto. No. 2 with the Tallahassee Symphony.

As a child, Adam studied with his mother, Anna Golka, as well as with Dariusz Pawlas. For most of his teenage years and as a young adult, Adam studied with the late José Feghali, whom he considers his most significant influence. Adam also spent four years at the Peabody Conservatory studying with Leon Fleisher. Since finishing his official studies, Adam has continued his work with great musicians such as András Schiff, Alfred Brendel, Richard Goode, Murray Perahia, Ferenc Rados, and Rita Wagner.

Adam Golka acts as Artist-in-Residence at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts.

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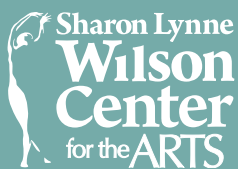
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