



CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES
Sunday, January 25, 2026 at 2:00 P.M.
United Christ Church
First Congregational
Washington, DC
SSgt Daniel Taubenheim, coordinator

Lieutenant Colonel Ryan Nowlin, Director

Edward Gregson (b. 1945)

Three Dance Episodes (1974)

Molto allegro
Andante con espressione
Vivace

GySgt Robert Bonner, SSgt William Berue, and SSgt James McAloon, Jr., trumpet
SSgt Emma Shaw, horn
SSgt Andrew Ribo, euphonium
SSgt Alex Ertl and SSgt Katie Franke, trombone
GySgt William Samson, tuba

William Alwyn (1905–85)

Naiades (1971)

SSgt Christina Hughes, flute
SSgt Taylor Fleshman, harp

Caleb Hudson (b. 1988)

Nothing Less (2024)

Still Small Voice
Prophets of Baal
That They Will Know
Covenant

SSgt Christina Hughes, flute
GySgt Zachary Gauvain, clarinet
SSgt Daniel Taubenheim, trumpet
GySgt Sara Matayoshi, violin
GySgt Clayton, cello

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
edited by Carl Deiss

“Der Hirt auf dem Felsen” (“The Shepherd on the Rock”)

MSgt Harry Ong, clarinet
SSgt Hannah Davis, soprano
GySgt Christopher Schmitt, piano

Silvestre Revueñas (1899–1940)

Homenaje a Federico García Lorca

Baile (Dance)
Duelo (Sorrow)
Son (Sound)

GySgt Courtney Morton, piccolo
GySgt Jonathon Troy, E-flat clarinet
MSgt Brandon Eubank and SSgt Daniel Taubenheim, trumpet
SSgt Alex Ertl, trombone
GySgt Benjamin St. Pierre, tuba
SSgt Jeffrey Grant, percussion
MSgt Russell Wilson, piano
MSgt Christopher Franke and GySgt Sara Matayoshi, violin
SSgt Kevin Thompson, bass
MSgt Robert Singer, conducting

PROGRAM NOTES

Three Dance Episodes (1974)

Edward Gregson (b. 1945)

Edward Gregson is a prolific British composer and musical academic who was born in Sunderland, County Durham. Gregson, whose background is in piano and composition, attended the Royal Academy of Music in London and London University. He has written music for a variety of ensembles, and his music has been performed by premier artists and orchestras around the globe. Gregson wrote *Three Dance Episodes* for James Shepherd, an acclaimed cornet soloist who had formed his own brass ensemble and wanted to perform a new work as part of their first recording. The episodes reflect both Gregson's compositional style and Shepherd's musical and artistic abilities.

The first movement, *Molto allegro* (very fast), evokes elements of traditional fanfare in the upper brass, along with a chorale-like feel in texture and motion between the lower and upper brass. Antiphonal melodies (a call and response pattern) between the lower and upper brass are present, and towards the first movement's end there is a brief foray into the contrapuntal — simultaneous melodies in two different instruments. The second movement, *Andante con espressione* (moderately slow with expression), is modeled after a *Siciliana*, a work within the *pastorale* genre. The *pastorale* in this context refers to a type of Italian folk tune, traditionally performed with a bagpipe-like instrument called a *zampogna* and a *piffero*, an instrument distantly related to the oboe. While it is simplistic in form — taken at a leisurely pace with punctuating dotted rhythms — it is complex in atmosphere, wistful and nostalgic. At the opening the euphonium is perhaps a stand-in for the *piffero*, mournful in tone, and the movement's dense, woven texture conjures feelings of a placid nature and simpler times. The third and final movement, *Vivace* (lively or fast), begins as one might expect: with excitement and vigor. This movement employs a similar feel to the first movement in its instrumentation and texture, with the fanfare in the upper brass returning. Moreover, Gregson's use of mixed meter and driving tempo keeps listeners breathless and on the edge of their seats until the movement's final note. Gregson's vision for this final dance also draws on traditional folk music themes, specifically the music of Béla Bartók, a Hungarian composer known for many works which imbue folk tunes. Gregson revisits the harmonic language and melodic content of the previous two movements, tying the work together in a cohesive whole at the end.

***Naiades* (1971)**

William Alwyn (1905–85)

William Alwyn was born into a family of grocers in England. As a child he was inspired to learn the flute after hearing a local military band rehearse every Sunday afternoon in his local park. At age fifteen, he was accepted as a scholarship student at the Royal Academy of Music in London, focusing primarily on flute and piano until his flute professor, Daniel S. Wood, petitioned for Alwyn to study composition with John Blackwood McEwen. At the young age of twenty-one, Alwyn joined the composition faculty at the Royal Academy while also pursuing a

professional career as a flutist, performing with the London Symphony Orchestra as needed and as a soloist. The start of his compositional career was conveniently timed with significant audio advancements in British cinema, and he was widely renowned as a film composer with eighty-six film scores and 107 documentary film scores in his impressive arsenal of compositions. He also wrote prolifically for the flute, which he still identified as his primary instrument when not teaching composition or composing.

Alwyn wrote *Naiades* for flute and harp duo Christopher Hyde-Smith and Marisa Robles. It is a through-composed piece depicting the mythological “naiades,” nymphs that dwell in bodies of fresh water. The interplay between the flute and harp illustrates the playfulness of the nymphs amongst flowing streams, exhibited by warm expansive phrases reminiscent of French Impressionist composers. The piece is best encapsulated in program notes Alwyn wrote for the Aldeburgh Festival in 1973:

My studio overlooks the river Blyth—tidal waters flanked by a broad expanse of reedy marshes, haunt of shrill seabirds. To wander there on a summer evening, when the reeds are a rustling sheet of gold and the water the colour of the ‘winedark’ sea, is to believe again in Pan and Syrinx, sense the presence of Undine, and hear the Naiads sporting in the shallows, hidden from mortal sight by the shrouding reeds.

***Nothing Less* (2024)**

Caleb Hudson (b. 1988)

American trumpeter, composer, and professor Caleb Hudson has enjoyed a remarkable and boundary-pushing career. He earned both his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the Juilliard School, and he has performed with ensembles such as the Philadelphia Orchestra, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra of St. Lukes, and many more. Hudson was a member of the Canadian Brass for over ten years, and he began arranging and composing during that time. He now serves as associate professor of trumpet at the Butler School of Music at the University of Texas at Austin, and he previously taught trumpet at the University of North Texas and Colorado State University. Hudson’s debut solo album titled *Nothing Less*, from which today’s piece is taken, is a perfect example of his collaborative and musical prowess. Hudson introduces the listener to a new sonic palette through the unusual but well-balanced instrumentation of flute, clarinet, trumpet, violin, and cello.

Nothing Less is an exploration of themes from the Old Testament story of Elijah. Hudson writes, “this music is a meditation on a core aspect of the human condition: our tendency to forsake truth for self-exaltation.” The composition unfolds in four movements. The first, “Still Small Voice,” is a beautiful and intimate reflection, inviting the listener to a moment of solitude with long and introspective lines. “Prophets of Baal,” the second movement, is a musical depiction of Baal’s 450 prophets through hectic dances and fervent prayers. Hudson writes of this movement: “The trumpet, symbolizing Elijah, pierces through with taunting calls, underscoring the prophet’s vain endeavors.” The third movement, “That They Will Know,” begins with a jubilant and almost exaltation-like atmosphere, but serenely fades into a beautiful and hymnal moment of solemn prayer by Elijah. The piece’s final movement, “Covenant,” synthesizes many of the musical themes explored in the prior three movements and employs the musical technique hocketing, in which the melodic content is split into shorter segments and distributed between multiple voices. Hudson describes this movement as “a faithful response to Elijah’s prayer [which] paints an aural landscape of the people’s spiritual reawakening.”

“Der Hirt auf dem Felsen” (“The Shepherd on the Rock”)

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

edited by Carl Deis

Composed in October 1828 during the final weeks of Franz Schubert’s short life, “Der Hirt auf dem Felsen” stands uniquely among the composer’s legacy of over 1,000 works. The piece was written at the specific request of the distinguished operatic soprano Anna Milder-Hauptmann. In addition to creating the title role of Leonore in Beethoven’s *Fidelio*, she premiered Schubert’s “Die Forelle” and was the dedicatee of “Suleika II.”

She asked Schubert for a “brilliant” concert piece that would allow her to display a wide range of emotions and vocal virtuosity. Distinct from the intimate songs for which Schubert is best known, this work is constructed as a grand, multi-sectional concert aria featuring a clarinet obbligato. The clarinet serves not merely as accompaniment but as an equal partner to the voice, providing a pastoral voice that echoes the shepherd’s call. Schubert tragically died only weeks after completing the score at the age of thirty-one and never had the opportunity to hear the work performed.

To fulfill Milder-Hauptmann’s request for varied expression, Schubert assembled text from verses by Wilhelm Müller (the poet of his song cycles *Die schöne Müllerin* and *Winterreise*) and Karl August Varnhagen. The musical structure follows the emotional arc of these texts in three distinct sections. The opening section depicts a high alpine setting where the shepherd’s melodies echo through the valley. This gives way to a darker, introspective middle section where the clarinet and voice intertwine to express profound loneliness and grief. The mood shifts dramatically in the finale, however, as the shepherd anticipates the arrival of spring. The piece concludes with a jubilant cascade of scales and arpeggios, bringing the work to a bright, optimistic close.

Homenaje a Federico García Lorca

Silvestre Revueltas (1899–1940)

Silvestre Revueltas was a Mexican composer, conductor, and violinist. Early in his career, he focused more on violin, living and performing in both the United States and Mexico. He returned to Mexico City in 1929 to work with composer and conductor Carlos Chávez on modernizing Mexico’s musical institutions. At this time, he began composing more, including for the orchestras with which he was working and later for film and stage. In his final years, his music was informed by the political Left and various non-Mexican Hispanic cultures.

Revueltas’s *Homenaje a Federico García Lorca* was written in 1936 as a tribute to the Spanish poet and playwright, composed in the immediate aftermath of García Lorca’s assassination during the Spanish Civil War. Written for a small chamber orchestra, the work channels both Revueltas’s political outrage and his deep artistic kinship with García Lorca. The unusual instrumentation, featuring piccolo, E-flat clarinet, trumpets, trombone, tuba, percussion, piano, violins, and bass, creates a raw, cutting sonority that mirrors the turmoil of the era. Revueltas fuses vigorous rhythmic drive with biting harmonic colors, crafting a sound world that is at once folk-inflected and modernist. The absence of low woodwinds, violas, and cellos is intended to evoke a Mexican village band.

Across its three movements, the piece moves between haunting lament and explosive, almost frenetic energy. The opening *Baile* evokes a distorted Spanish dance, its jaunty rhythms pushed into an unsettled, sarcastic edge. The central *Duelo* serves as the emotional core: a stark, mournful elegy shaped by sparse textures and aching melodic fragments. Strings and piano play a slow ostinato while the trumpet assumes the melodic weight of this movement in solo laments. The final *Son* draws on Mexican popular idioms, reminiscent of a mariachi, bringing a sense of collective struggle and defiant vitality. The work ends with an intense and boisterous climax. In honoring García Lorca, Revueltas created not only a memorial but a political cry, an affirmation of artistic freedom and human dignity in the face of violence.