

# *The Elysian Camerata*



In trying to find a name for this ensemble that we felt would be true to our self-image, we looked at words and ideas that would express how deeply we love this music. The term 'elysian' means literally 'heavenly'. We could find no other word that so singularly and so completely expresses how we feel about our work.

## *About us . . . .*

The Elysian Camerata, now in its seventh year, has established itself as a respected member of the Philadelphia chamber music community. Our audiences have joined us on a journey of musical discovery that has taken them to countless times and places in music history. We seek to infuse every performance with the intense dedication and passion we feel for the music we play. Our commitment to connecting with our audiences has earned us a reputation that has led increasingly to performances in more far reaching communities.

The members of the Elysian Camerata, all independently established musicians in Philadelphia, are involved in performance and teaching with numerous area ensembles and institutions. Our instrumentation of two violins, two violas, cello and piano serve as the basis for our ensemble from which we regroup into various sizes and types of ensembles. Our repertoire includes music ranging from unaccompanied works for solo instruments to works for larger ensembles such as quintets and sextets. On occasion we invite guest artists of other instrumentation to join us.

Our individual careers have involved us with most of the area's major ensembles and music schools. The Elysian Camerata's members have performed with the Pennsylvania Ballet Company, the Philadelphia Chamber Orchestra, the Philly Pops, Lehigh Valley Chamber Orchestra, Opera New Jersey, Philadelphia Classical Symphony, the Philadelphia Opera Company, Princeton Symphony Orchestra and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

We all share a strong commitment to passing on our musical legacies through teaching. Some of us have had long standing affiliations with the Settlement Music School network while others teach at area schools and colleges, including Haverford College, Bryn Mawr College and the Community College of Philadelphia. Additionally, we all maintain private teaching studios.

All of us have been involved with chamber music in various ensembles throughout our respective careers. That is the one constant that binds together the members of this ensemble. Other chamber ensembles that the Elysians are or have been involved with include the Danoff String Quartet, the Serafin Quartet, the Gabriel Chamber Ensemble, the Arioso String Quartet, the Castalia String Trio, the Fairmount String Quartet, the Tenor Clef Dwellers and the Soglio Chamber Players.

## Our members . . . .



**Barbara Jaffe, violinist**, received a Master of Music degree in Performance and Literature from the Eastman School of Music, where she was a student of Donald Weilerstein. She graduated magna cum laude from the Philadelphia College of the Performing Arts with a Bachelor of Music degree and was the recipient of the PCPA Book Prize for excellence in the Liberal Arts. Former teachers include Edgar Ortenberg, Charles Castleman, David Cerone and Yumi Ninomiya-Scott. Ms. Jaffe has been a member of the Cascade Quartet in Great Falls, Montana and the Bradley University String Quartet in Peoria, Illinois. She is a founding member of the Arioso String Quartet and the newest member of the Fairmount String Quartet.

Ms. Jaffe has performed with the Delaware Symphony, the Pennsylvania Ballet and Opera Delaware Orchestras, the Fairmount Chamber Ensemble, the Gabriel Chamber Ensemble and the Lehigh Valley Chamber Orchestra. Ms. Jaffe maintains a private teaching studio, teaches violin students at Bryn Mawr/ Haverford Colleges, and coaches chamber music privately. In the summer she is on staff as a chamber music coach and performer at the Vermont Music and Arts Center in Lyndonville, VT.

**Jean Louise Shook, violinist and pianist**, received her Bachelor of Music degree from Temple University where she studied violin and chamber music with Edgar Ortenberg (formerly of the Budapest String Quartet) and piano with George Sementovsky and Natalie Hinderas. She has been a faculty member of the Settlement Music School since 1975, teaching violin, coaching chamber music and performing as a staff accompanist. Since 1999 Ms. Shook has held the 'Mr. and Mrs. Donald Kardon Distinguished Faculty' chair at Settlement. In 2005 she was awarded the Sol Schoenbach Award for outstanding service to the school.

A pianist in great demand, Ms. Shook's accompaniment experience has involved her with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Temple University, as well as accompanying for master classes of Jaime Laredo, David Kim, Leon Bates, Kim Kashkashian and Michael Tree. Ms. Shook performs as violinist with several ensembles throughout the Delaware Valley, and is a member of and the arranger for the Danoff String Quartet. She has also served as a judge in several area music competitions including the Tri-County Concerts Association, the Settlement Music School, and the Episcopal Academy Competitions.





**Louise Jaffe, violist**, received a Master's Degree in Viola Performance from the Eastman School of Music where she studied viola with Heidi Castleman, and chamber music with members of the Cleveland String Quartet. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Viola from the Philadelphia College of the Performing Arts where she studied violin with Charles Castleman and viola with Patynka Kopec. Other notable musicians Louise has worked with include Donald Weilerstein, Mitchell Stern, Edgar Ortenberg and members of the Tokyo and Fine Arts Quartets.

Ms. Jaffe began her performing career as violist with the Shelbourne and Cascade Quartets, string quartets based in Great Falls, Montana. Since then, she has performed in numerous chamber recitals in the United States and abroad, including concerts in Zurich, Boltigen, and Castasegna, Switzerland. Currently, Louise also performs as a member of the Fairmount Chamber Ensemble, Chadds Ford Strings, Vi-VaCe Strings and the Pennsylvania Sinfonia Orchestra. She has performed with the Lehigh Valley Chamber Orchestra, Delaware Symphony, Allentown Symphony, Philadelphia Classical Symphony, and the Pennsylvania Opera Theater. Louise's other love is teaching. Ms. Jaffe maintains an active teaching studio of more than 30 students. Her students range from 3 year olds just beginning to play the violin or viola, to advanced pupils of all ages, including adults. Some of Louise's students have gone on to pursue careers in music, while others are more interested in maintaining music as a hobby. With all of her students, Louise's goal is to instill a lifelong love of music. She believes that studying an instrument teaches the art of discipline and perseverance which will carry over into many other aspects of life.

**Beth Dzwil, violist**, is a graduate of the Philadelphia College of the Performing Arts, where she studied with long time principal violist of the Philadelphia Orchestra, Joseph dePasquale. She is a founding member of the Fairmount String Quartet and is principal violist of the Fairmount Chamber Ensemble and the Pottstown Symphony Orchestra. She has been featured as a soloist with the Pottstown Symphony, the Buxmont Chamber Players and the Fairmount Chamber Ensemble. In 1995, she was the subject of a Philadelphia Inquirer feature article.

Beth's diverse musical activities often take her outside of the classical world. She studied jazz with the Turtle Island String Quartet and has performed internationally and recorded five critically acclaimed jazz albums with the Tyrone Brown String Sextet.

It is her work with this group that earned her

the status of voting member in the Grammy organization. She also performs with the contemporary Christian band "For the Spirit".

In spite of her demanding performing life, Beth feels it is important to pass on, through teaching, the love of music and the musical legacy that has been passed down to her through many generations of master violinists and violists. She has been teaching violin and viola and coaching chamber music for over 25 years. In addition to maintaining a private teaching studio, she teaches at Chestnut Hill Academy, Germantown Friends School and Springside School.





**Cellist Talia Schiff** completed her undergraduate studies at Boston University under cellist Leslie Parnas, where she was the recipient of the Edwin E. Stein Award for Excellence in Musical Studies. As winner of the 1982 Austrian-American Society Mozarteum Scholarship Competition she was awarded a summer of study in Salzburg with legendary cellist Antonio Janigro. She later attended the Peabody Institute in Baltimore, earning her Master's degree in the studios of concert cellists Stephen Kates and Yehuda Hanani. Ms. Schiff subsequently went on to help found the Castalia String Trio, semifinalists in the 1987 Fischhoff International Chamber Music Competition.

In 1989 Ms. Schiff continued to pursue her love of chamber music by becoming a founding member of the Tenor Clef Dwellers: a cello quartet. For the next decade, she devoted much of her artistic energy to developing the performance and repertoire of the cello quartet ensemble. In spring of 2001, a collection of music she had transcribed for the Tenor Clef Dwellers' performances was published by Musicelli Publications.

Formerly the principal cellist of the Opera New Jersey orchestra, Ms. Schiff is currently the principal cellist of the Pottstown Symphony Orchestra and a member of the Princeton Symphony Orchestra. As a substitute cellist she has performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Pennsylvania Ballet orchestra, the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Philly Pops and the Philadelphia Opera Company orchestra. Her diverse musical activities include performing the solo cello part in the July, 2002 world premier of the Ben Steinberg work "Psalm of Thanksgiving" in Philadelphia's Verizon Hall.

**Rahel Inniger, pianist,** received her "lehrdiplom" (teaching diploma) in 1979 from the Konservatorium Bern (Switzerland) where she was a student of Rosemarie Stucki. As a recipient of a Kiefer/ Hablitzel Stiftung scholarship she was able to come to the United States to continue her education. She majored in piano performance at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, from which she received a Master of Music degree in Performance and Literature in 1982. Ms. Inniger's piano teachers at Eastman included Barry Snyder and Barbara Lister-Sink, and chamber music coaches included Abram Loft, Peter Salaff and Rebecca Penneys. Further studies included vocal accompaniment with Daphne Ibbott in Sussex, England and music pedagogy workshops in Stuttgart and Bad Hersfeld, Germany.

In 1982 Ms. Inniger accepted a teaching position at the Musikschule Kandertal in Frutigen, Switzerland where she remained until 1986. During this time she served as accompanist at the Konservatorium Bern in the master classes of clarinetist Jost Michaels and cellist Siegfried Palm and in the studios of clarinet professor Kurt Weber and violin professor Igor Ozim. Ms. Inniger has been employed as staff accompanist at the Settlement Music School as well as collaborating in recital with instrumentalists and vocalists both in the United States and abroad. She is currently on the faculty at Settlement Music School in Philadelphia where she teaches both piano and chamber music, and also maintains a private teaching studio in Ardmore, Pa.



# Repertoire . . . .

**Béla Bartók**

Rhapsody for violin and piano

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

Duet for Viola and Cello with two obligato eyeglasses

String Quartet in D major, Op. 18, no. 3

String Quartet in E minor, Op. 59, no. 2

String Quartet in E-flat major, Op. 74, the "Harp"

String Quintet in C major, Op. 29

**Leonard Bernstein**

Three Meditations from Mass for Cello and Piano

**Johannes Brahms**

Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34

String Quintet No. 1 in F major, Op. 88

String Quintet No. 2 in G major, Op. 111

**Rebecca Clarke**

Dumka for Piano Trio

**Arcangelo Corelli**

Sonata in F Major for two violins and continuo Op. 1 1

**Claude Debussy**

String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10

**Ernő Dohnányi**

Piano Quintet No. 1 in C minor, Op. 1

Serenade for String Trio

**Antonin Dvořák**

Piano Quintet in A major, Op. 81

String Quintet in E-flat major, Op. 97

**Mikhail Glinka**

Three Russian Songs for violin, viola and piano

**Franz Josef Haydn**

String Quartet in F minor, Op. 20 no. 5

String Quartet in C major, Op. 20 no. 2

**Paul Hindemith**

Sonata for Solo Cello, Op. 25 no. 3

Duet for Viola and Violoncello (1936)

**Alan Hovhaness**

String Trio, Op. 201 (1963)

**Arthur Honegger**

Sonatina for Violin and Cello

**Zoltán Kodály**

Intermezzo for String Trio

Sonata for Violoncello and Piano, Op. 4

**Gustav Mahler**

Piano Quartet in A minor

**Felix Mendelssohn**

Piano Trio No. 1 in D minor, Op. 63

String Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Op. 13

String Quintet in B-flat major, Op. 87

**Darius Milhaud**

Sonatine a Trois

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

Piano Trio in G major, K. 496

Piano Quartet in G minor, K. 478

Piano Quartet in E-flat major, K. 493

String Quartet in D major, K. 575

Adagio for String Quintet, KV 411

String Quintet in C minor, K. 406

String Quintet in C major, K. 515

String Quintet in G minor, K. 516

String Quintet in D major, K. 593

**Max Reger**

String Trio No. 1 in A minor, Op. 77b

**Franz Schubert**

String Quartet in A minor, Op. 29

**Clara Schumann**

Romances for Violin and Piano, Op. 22

Piano Trio in E-flat major, Op. 17

**Robert Schumann**

Sonata in A minor for Violin and Piano, Op. 105

Märchenbilder for Viola and Piano, Op. 113

Piano Trio No. 1 in D minor, Op. 49

Phantasiestücke for Piano Trio, Op. 88

Piano Quartet in E-flat major, Op. 47

String Quartet No. 3 in A major, Op. 41 no. 3

Piano Quintet in E-flat major, Op. 44

**Dmitri Shostakovich**

Piano Quintet, Op. 57

**William Grant Still**

Lyric Quartette

**Ralph Vaughan Williams**

Phantasy String Quintet

Entertainment

## Elysian Camerata in full force at Regol Concert

Tuesday, May 18, 2010

By Joe Barron

Staff Writer

*To those who care about such things, the term “piano trio” connotes a single, unchanging combination of instruments — the violin, for melody; the cello, for bass; and the piano, for everything else.*

*Rebecca Clarke, an English composer who lived from 1886 to 1979, bent the rule in the early 1940s with her “Dumka” for violin, viola and piano. Clarke made her living as a violist, and it only makes sense she would write a piece that gave her something to do. Still, the scoring is problematic, not least because the two string instruments are close enough in range to make any strong contrasts difficult to maintain. Mostly, the violin and viola are either mirroring each other or engaging in dialogue, says Talia Schiff, the cellist with the Elysian Camerata.*

*The “Dumka” is a rarely-heard piece by a relatively unknown composer, but it’s certainly attractive, and the Elysian Camerata is doing the public a favor by scheduling it as the opening work in its concert Saturday evening in Jenkintown. The concert marks the group’s return to form after an injury to one of its members forced the cancellation of a concert in March, as well as the return of one of its founding members, the violinist Jean Shook, who had withdrawn from performances for close to a year.*

*It is also the first time all seven members of the Camerata have appeared on the same bill, though they will not all appear together in any one piece, Schiff said recently at her home in Fort Washington. The group consists of five string players and the pianist Rahel Inniger. Very little music exists for that combination of musicians, and so the Camerata selects its repertoire with an eye toward variety, as well as giving some members a night off once in a while.*

*The other two works on Saturday’s program are acknowledged masterpieces — Mozart’s String Quintet in C Minor, K. 406, and Antonin’s Dvorak’s Piano Quintet in A Major, Op. 81.*

*As the first piece of the evening, Clarke’s “Dumka” will give pianist Inniger a chance to warm up before tackling Dvorak’s longer, more challenging quintet, Schiff said.*

*The piece also introduces a theme of sorts to the program, since the second movement of the Dvorak is also titled “Dumka.” The Oxford Dictionary of Music defines the term as a Slavonic folk ballad with alternating slow and fast sections. It might seem odd that an English composer like Clarke would be drawn to an obscure eastern European form, but on reflection, it’s no weirder than Tchaikovsky writing a Spanish serenade. Of course, as a Czech, Dvorak had the music in his bones.*

*Schiff enjoys telling the story of the time, in 1919, when Clarke submitted a viola sonata to a chamber music contest sponsored by the Washington socialite Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge. Clarke came in second to the more famous Ernst Bloch, but her sonata was so good that some members of the press speculated that “Rebecca Clarke” was a pen name, and the composer was so accomplished that she just had to be — well, you know, a man.*

*Not long after reading that story, Schiff heard that Philadelphia’s Jennifer Higdon had just won the Pulitzer Prize for composition.*

*“Women composers have come a long way,” Schiff said.*

*As familiar as it is, the Mozart quintet presented particular challenges. Mozart wrote the piece as a serenade for a dozen wind players and arranged it for string quintet in a rush a few years later. In rehearsal, the Camerata players found themselves puzzling over the articulations, trying to figure out how best to preserve the original flavor of the music on their own instruments.*

*“Obviously, I’m playing the bassoon part a lot of the time,” Schiff said.*

*Trying to pinpoint the best work of a front-rank composer like Mozart is always a subjective enterprise, but there is no doubt that his late quintets are among his greatest chamber music.*

*“They’re the apex of his string output,” Schiff said. “You hear a lot of opera in all his late [instrumental] music, especially his string quintets.”*

**If You Go:**

**Elysian Camerata will perform in a Regol Concert at Grace Presbyterian Church**

**444 Old York Road, Jenkintown, PA 19046**

**Saturday, May 22, 6:30 p.m.**

**Tickets: \$ 8 - \$20.**

**Info: 215-528-0582 or [www.regolconcerts.com](http://www.regolconcerts.com).**

## *Testimonials . . . .*

*“Your performance exceeded my expectations and they were pretty high going in. As you know we stepped a little outside of our normal comfort zone in extending the invitation but I have heard nothing but accolades ever since Sunday’s concert. My wife was in the rear of the hall and she was able to observe the people responding as you played and so many people were demonstrating their pleasure through body language as well as applause.*

*It was a pleasure working with you to arrange your time here and I/we look forward to having you back again. As an old musician I consider music a God-given gift to his people and superior music such as Elysian Camerata’s a special blessing. May he continue to bless all of you with the talent that you demonstrate and bring you the same joy you talent that you demonstrate and bring you the same joy you bring to your audiences.”*

**Rev. Bill Stelger, Cross Keys Village, Fine Arts Coordinator  
New Oxford, PA**

*“The Elysian Camerata performed as part of our 2008/2009 season, rendering wonderfully executed and expressively presented music. This was their debut performance in Atlanta before a very musically sophisticated audience. The program was well-received and commented on repeatedly by those “in the know” for weeks afterward. This is a wonderful group of accomplished musicians who contribute greatly to the performance of chamber music; their repertoire is extensive, and they have a great sensitivity and understanding of their music and a great chemistry in relating between themselves while playing. This bond can only be achieved after extensive practice and performing together. It was a privilege having them perform on our series, which is now in its 29th season.”*

**Ivan Millender, Chairman, Cultural Arts Committee,  
Ahavath Achim Synagogue, Atlanta, GA**

*“The members of the Elysian Camerata have provided consistently outstanding performances. They play with sensitivity, insight and great attention to detail. The Camerata’s creative programming results in refreshing and engaging performances - they are truly an inspired ensemble and one of the area’s real treasures.”*

**Mark Anderson, choirmaster,  
Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill**

*"I started my own concert series in an effort to present only the finest in classical and jazz entertainment. I heard part of a rehearsal, and knew immediately that I just had to have the Elysian Camerata on one of my programs. Judging from the compliments I am still receiving about their May 22, 2010 performance in Grace Presbyterian Church in Jenkintown, PA, I certainly want to have this awesome ensemble back for a return engagement. I have been to many professional chamber music concerts, and quite frankly, as an experienced musician myself, I was impressed with the nuances, phrasing, and deep interpretations by the Elysian Camerata. When I present this great ensemble once again, I know the program will be just as interesting, balanced and varied as the performance they recently gave on my Regol Concerts series. If you see one of their concerts advertised, I strongly suggest you make it your business to be there!"*

**Renee Goldman, President, Regol Concerts, Inc.  
Management, Al Harrison Music**

*"When you started playing, I was carried away with waves of pleasure. I floated in the buoyancy of the music, traveling, isolated from the exterior world. The music selection was superb! Perfect for the musicians, the space, the audience, and my ears! Combined with the excellence, balance & dynamics of the musicians... Heaven! I consider myself lucky to have access to musicians of your caliber and cherish the opportunities to hear you play. I look forward to the next concert!"*

**Fred Rosen, regular Elysian audience member**

*"Splendid! Very professional musicians and delightful choice of pieces!"*

**White Horse Village audience member**

*"An observer could sense in the concentrated attention of The Elysian Camerata's Pennswood Village audience that the artists were reaching them and touching their hearts. The playing of the Dohnanyi Piano Quintet was intense, passionate, and elegant. The applause from the usually reserved listeners was hearty and lengthy."*

**Lionel Ruberg, Chair, Concerts Committee, Pennswood Village**

## *What we offer . . . .*

The Elysian Camerata prides itself on presenting performances of outstanding quality that put an emphasis on the great diversity to be found in the chamber music repertoire. Our concerts typically include three to four chamber works featuring ensembles of differing size and instrumentation which lend interest and an element of unpredictability to our concerts. We tailor our concerts to meet the presenter's format requirements.

Our concerts are often supplemented by brief oral program notes so that the audience will have a greater appreciation for the music. The Elysian Camerata also offers more extensive pre-concert lectures that explore the background of the program in greater detail. These lectures can, at times, include musical demonstrations to alert the audience to thematic material they will be hearing during the concert.

In addition to our concertizing experience, all Elysian Camerata members have extensive backgrounds as teachers and chamber music coaches. We would be pleased to schedule master classes and/or chamber music coachings with students within a presenter's local area.

The Elysian Camerata also offers educational outreach programs aimed at school-aged audiences. If you are interested in scheduling such an event please contact us for more details about this program.

## *Contact information . . . .*

Talia Schiff

1109 Wallace Drive

Fort Washington, PA 19034

(215)643-9446

[elysian\\_camerata@verizon.net](mailto:elysian_camerata@verizon.net)

[www.elysiancamerata.org](http://www.elysiancamerata.org)