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The 2016 Rockport Chamber Music Festival will open June 3 with pianist Menahem Pressler performing with the Parker String Quartet (pictured). Courtesy Photo



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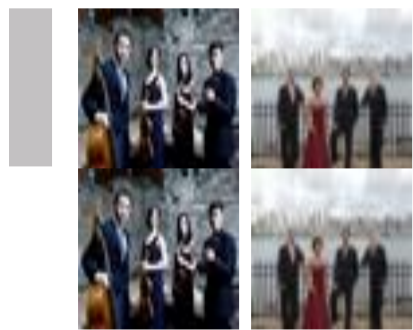
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The 2016 Rockport Chamber Music Festival will open June 3 with pianist Menahem Pressler performing with the Parker String Quartet (pictured). Courtesy Photo



By Keith Powers / Correspondent

Posted Mar. 18, 2016 at 6:19 AM

ROCKPORT

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ROCKPORT

If you go...

WHAT: Rockport Chamber Music Festival

WHERE: Shalin Liu Performance Center, 37 Main St., Rockport

WHEN: June 3 through July 22

TICKETS: \$19-\$98. Visit www.rockportmusic.org or call 978-546-7391.

Thirty-five years is a long time. Especially for

continued excellence.

The Rockport Chamber Music Festival renews its commitment to superior programming this June 3, with an anniversary season featuring — thankfully — more of the same.

Beginning with an opening night program that has the veteran pianist Menahem Pressler pairing up the outstanding young Parker Quartet, almost two months of programs at the Shalin Liu Performance Center bring a series of internationally known quartets, early music groups, pianists and trios to Rockport.

Pianists on tap include the cerebral Jeremy Denk, the vastly talented Kirill Gerstein, Lise de la Salle and George Li in solo recitals. Other pianists, including artistic director David Deveau, Donald Berman, Vassily Primakov, Gilles Vonsattel and Aldo Lopez-Gavilan sit in for collaborative concerts.

Calder Quartet joins the Parker to explore the string quartet literature, along with Harlem and Borromeo, who return to team up with Berman for a world premiere quintet by Elena Ruehr.

Piano trios get their share of attention as well. Deveau partners longtime colleagues Andres Cardenes and Anne Martindale Williams; the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson trio, and Trio Solisti also present recitals.

Early music has become a delightful staple of the summer repertory at RCMF, and this year a staging of "Othello in the Seraglio," a coffeehouse opera derived from old texts and styles by Mehmet Ali Sanlikol, and a return by Jordi Savall with Hesperion XXI and Tembembe Ensemble

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Continuo, highlight the period performances.

Chanticleer, Chameleon Arts Ensemble, a Nuevo-Tango sextet, and the experimental percussion group NEXUS offer alternate chamber settings with unique programs.

The festival runs June 3 through July 22. Admission to some events sells out quickly. For tickets and information visit www.rockportmusic.org or call 978-546-7391.

WEEK ONE

Friday, June 3, 7 p.m.

Parker String Quartet, with Menahem Pressler, piano

This program is terrific: Haydn and Bartok quartets, Dvorak A major quintet. Parker is already one of the most prestigious quartets in America. Pressler, the only member to perform with all the iterations of the Beaux Arts Trio over its 50 years, has collaborated with nearly every major chamber artist as well. No need to mention that he's 92 years old. Don't miss this.

Saturday, June 4, 8 p.m.

NEXUS percussion ensemble

The rise of outstanding percussion ensembles over the past few decades has expanded the repertory significantly. NEXUS is one of those groups, and here they present music of their own, as well as Steve Reich and others.

Sunday, June 5, 5 p.m.

Trio Solisti

Distinguished piano trio makes RCMF debut, with a program that includes Lowell Liebermann's third trio.

WEEK TWO

Thursday, June 9, 8 p.m.

Borromeo String Quartet, with Donald Berman, piano

Potentially the event of the summer season. Selected Bach arrangements from Well-Tempered Clavier, Beethoven's Op. 127 quartet, and a world premiere quintet by Elena Ruehr.

Friday, June 10, 8 p.m.

Brandon Ridenour, trumpet, with Naomi Kudo, piano

Largely French program of beautiful settings and arrangements from Debussy, Ravel, Messiaen, Honegger and others.

Saturday, June 11, 8 p.m.

Ben Capps, cello, with Vassily Primakov, piano

Primakov's January recital was well received by Rockport audiences, and he returns with cellist Capps for sonatas by Britten, Strauss, Schumann and Franck.

Sunday, June 12, 5 p.m.

Othello in the Seraglio: The Tragedy of Sumbul

Composed by Mehmet Ali Sanlikol, this mash-up of Turkish traditions and European stories, with period instruments, has been performed a dozens of venues to warm response. Another important early music presentation by RCMF — this time a work from a contemporary composer.

WEEK THREE

Thursday, June 16, 8 p.m.


Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio

Another great trio presentation, by the longtime New York-based group. Major works by Beethoven, Shostakovich and Brahms.


Friday, June 17, 8 p.m.

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Friday, March 18, 2016						
Friday Morning Play Dates at Maritime Gloucester						10:00 am
Maritime Gloucester						
Income Tax Advice						1:15 pm
Town Hall						
 Winter Beach Blast						7:00 pm
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Yevgeny Kutik, violin; Edwin Barker, bass; Eileen Huang, piano

Boston Symphony's principal bass, Barker plays historic works by Eduard Tubin and Serge Koussevitzky in the first half; Huang joins Kutik for virtuoso violin works (Prokofiev, Stravinsky, Handel-Halvorsen) after intermission.

Saturday, June 18, 8 p.m.

Lise de la Salle, piano

An exciting RCMF debut. de la Salle, whose wide-ranging Celebrity Series performance in 2012 was mesmerizing, includes Ravel's Gaspard de la Nuit in this interesting program.

Sunday, June 19, 5 p.m.

Chameleon Arts Ensemble

Bach and his family are highlighted in this long-overdue debut appearance by one of Boston's most adventurous chamber ensembles.

WEEK FOUR

Thursday, June 23, 8 p.m.

George Li, piano

"I was there, then"? Maybe you were there then, in 2011, when 15-year-old Li played Liszt in Rockport, part of a rising stars recital. Now he's a Tchaikovsky medalist, has international management and tours the world. A major solo recital, featuring more Liszt, Chopin, Rachmaninov and Haydn.

Friday, June 24, 8 p.m.

Andres Cardenes, violin; Anne Martindale Williams, cello; David Deveau, piano

RCMF director Deveau and longtime colleagues perform trios by Haydn, Schubert and Ellen Taaffe Zwilich.

Saturday, June 25, 8 p.m.

Frank Huang, violin, with Gilles Vonsattel, piano

Huang left the Ying Quartet in 2015 to become the New York Philharmonic's concertmaster. He joins Vonsattel, long an RCMF favorite. Beethoven ("Spring," "Kreutzer") and Prokofiev sonatas.

Sunday, June 26, 5 p.m.

Andres Cardenes, violin; Yinzi Kong, viola; Anne Martindale Williams, cello; David Deveau, piano

Great program: Dohnanyi Serenade for string trio, and Brahms A major quartet.

WEEK FIVE

Thursday, June 30, 8 p.m.

Jeremy Denk, piano

Denk returns with an intellectual program that has a mission: the history of western music. In one recital. Machaut to Ligeti and back to Machaut. Starry event will be one of the toughest tickets all summer.

Friday, July 1, 8 p.m.

Harlem String Quartet, with Aldo Lopez-Gavilan, piano

Pianist and composer Lopez-Gavilan joins Grammy instrumentalist-winners Harlem Quartet for a jazz-flavored program featuring Lopez-Gavilan's music, Billy Strayhorn, and others.

WEEK SIX

Thursday, July 7, 8 p.m.

Calder String Quartet

Not to miss. Debussy G minor, Beethoven Razumovsky (no. 2), Anders Hillborg's Kongsgaard

Variations, cleverly based on a Beethoven theme (the "Arietta" from his last piano sonata).

Friday, July 8, 8 p.m.

Jordi Savall & Hesperion XXI

An early music treasure. Savall and his small ensemble join with Mexico's Tembembe Ensemble Continuo for a program of interconnected musical cultures.

Saturday, July 9, 8 p.m.

Cho-Liang Lin, violin; David Shifrin, clarinet; Alex Brown, piano; Hector Del Curto, bandoneon; Pablo Aslan, bass; Satoshi Takeishi, percussion

Nuevo Tango enthusiasts, here you go: music of Lalo Schifrin and the great Astor Piazzolla.

Sunday, July 10, 5 p.m.

Kirill Gerstein, piano

One of the great pianists, and most versatile, of this generation. Gerstein's profile, already international, rises precipitously in Boston over the next few seasons with many performances including Boston Symphony recitals next year (Busoni concerto) and a world premiere in 2018 (Thomas Ades concerto). For this program, Liszt (Dante lecture sonata, selected Transcendental Etudes) and Beethoven (including "Moonlight").

Friday, July 22, 5 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Chanticleer

Two shows, with wide ranging repertory (Nico Muhly to Finzi to Desprez), to close the summer classical season.

Keith Powers covers music and the arts for Gatehouse Media and WBUR's ARTery. Follow @PowersKeith; email to keithmichaelpowers@gmail.com

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