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# ROCKPORT CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL: Kirill Gerstein to perform Sunday

Kirill Gerstein performs Goehr's "Homage to Haydn," tucked into a program of Liszt and Beethoven, Sunday afternoon at the Rockport Chamber Music Festival.

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Kirill Gerstein performs Alexander Goehr's 'Homage to Haydn' with a program of Liszt and Beethoven Sunday afternoon at the Rockport Chamber Music Festival. Courtesy photo / Marco Borggreve

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Kirill Gerstein performs Alexander Goehr's 'Homage to Haydn' with a program of Liszt and Beethoven Sunday

By Keith Powers / Correspondent

Posted Jul. 6, 2016 at 10:58 PM

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ROCKPORT

If you go...

**WHAT:** Rockport Chamber Music Festival

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

**WHEN:** Thursday through Saturday, 8 p.m.

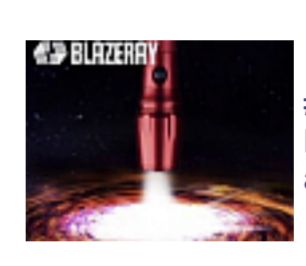


visit [www.rockportmusic.org](http://www.rockportmusic.org)

job: you create the work

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the overstating pianist Kirill Gerstein, but not entirely. With the award, he received which is to be spent works. With the ability to and advise on the scope of has already commissioned pieces for himself by Timo Andres, Chick Corea, Brad Meldau, Oliver Knussen and Alexander



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He performs Goehr's "Homage to Haydn," tucked into a program of Liszt and Beethoven, Sunday afternoon at the Rockport Chamber Music Festival.

"The Gilmore gives you a pen and a blank canvas," Gerstein says. "And it opens certain doors. They close easier than they open, so one has to be smart. It does give me the chance to make music with excellent colleagues."

Alexander Goehr, German-born but raised in England and a longtime British citizen, made an early mark with choral works, and has written

lots of music for the operatic theater. He taught briefly in America, at New England Conservatory and at Yale, in the late 1960s and '70s.

His work has consistently engaged music from the past, and Gerstein says his "Homage to Haydn" (the exact title is "Variations, Op. 93") "is just that — an homage, not directly based on a Haydn theme. Haydn's F minor sonata is a model, but just a model. Goehr's theme is original, and the piece just captures Haydn in gesture.

"It's romantic, expressionistic. It's not tonal in the sense of Haydn, but it's accessible and easy to follow."

The bulk of the program is devoted to works of Beethoven and Liszt, including Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata, selections from Liszt's "Transcendental Etudes," and his Dante Sonata.

"I played most of this recital this past spring in New York," says Gerstein, who was born in Voronezh, in southwestern Russia, but now lives in Berlin. "My idea was to situate the music after Beethoven. So much music after Beethoven stems from Beethoven, but I feel like Liszt was a continuation of the tradition of the first Viennese school — including Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. So many people get distracted by the virtuosity, but the language and the structure in Liszt is related to the Viennese classics. That's how this program was built."

Gerstein has deep roots in jazz as well as classical music — at age 14, he was the youngest student ever to attend the Berklee College of Music, studying with vibraphonist Gary Burton. But don't expect any improvisation Sunday afternoon.

"I know too much about jazz to do it half-heartedly," he says. "One can live intensely in jazz, and one can live intensely in classical music. One has to practice the language. Now I only play jazz when I've had plenty of wine — no improvisations during my concerts at all."

Kirill Gerstein plays music of Goehr, Beethoven and Liszt Sunday afternoon in the Shalin Liu Performance Center as part of the Rockport Chamber Music Festival. For tickets and information visit [www.rockportmusic.org](http://www.rockportmusic.org) or call 978-546-7391.

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

### Week Six at a Glance

#### 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

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### » EVENTS CALENDAR

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Friday, July 8, 2016

 **"The Last Schwartz"** 7:30 pm  
Gloucester Stage Company

 **Jordi Savall and Hesperion XXI** 8:00 pm  
Shalin Liu Performance Center

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

**Sunday, July 10, 5 p.m.**

Kirill Gerstein, piano

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Friday, July 8, 2016						

- "The Last Schwartz"** 7:30 pm  
Gloucester Stage Company
- Jordi Savall and Hesperion XXI** 8:00 pm  
Shalin Liu Performance Center

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