Nordic Chamber Music

NORWAY

Northern Winds & Waves



Saturday, November 7 at 1 pm
First Lutheran Church, Tacoma

Sunday, November 8 at 2 pm
Ballard First Lutheran Church

Featuring
Cassie Lear, flute
Steven Luksan, piano

Northern Winds & Waves

Program

Pastorale e Allegro — Anne-Marie Ørbeck (1911-1996)

Barcarole — Anna Lindeman (1859-1938)
Vuggevise
Humoreske
Aftenstemning, Op. 5, No. 3
Scherzino

Suite — Steven Luksan (b. 1988)
I. -
II. -
III. -
IV. -
V. -

Intermission

Laling og sull — Eivind Groven (1901-1977)

Sonata for Violin & Piano No. 1 in F Major, Op. 8 — Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)
adapted & arranged by Naama Neuman
I. Allegro con brio
II. Allegretto quasi Andantino
III. Allegro molto vivace

Program Notes

The flute has been an essential part of folk music in Norway for centuries, but little has been written by Norwegian classical composers for this instrument. In today's program of music for flute and piano, surprisingly few of the pieces were originally composed for flute and piano. In order to take the form in which you hear them today, many of these compositions have had to undergo a transformation of some sort. Like the landscapes of Norway and the Pacific Northwest that are constantly transformed by wind and waves, the music we hear is a living tradition in constant flux.

Anne-Marie Ørbeck's *Pastorale e Allegro* (1959) is a fine example of a piece that is not originally conceived for flute and piano. Instead, the piece was written for flute and string orchestra, but it was soon published in Ørbeck's own arrangement for flute and piano. Ørbeck, who achieved prominence as the first Norwegian woman whose symphony was performed by the Bergen Philharmonic, studied music in Berlin before the outbreak of WWII. Following the war, she studied modernist trends in music with Nadia Boulanger and Darius Milhaud in Paris and twelve-tone composition with Hanns Jelinek in Vienna. Her music, however, always remained melodic, with hints of Norwegian nationalism and romanticism accenting her modernist harmonies.

The sheet music for Anna Lindeman's flute and piano pieces had to undergo a physical transformation in order to be heard today. Lindeman, one of the founders of the Oslo Conservatory and a prominent piano teacher in the Norwegian capital, published a number of her piano pieces and songs throughout her life, but her music for flute and piano is only preserved in manuscript form. No previous performances of these pieces have been documented, and Steven Luksan has transcribed these pieces into new editions with contemporary notation so that they may be performed. Interspersed among these pieces in today's concert are a few of Lindeman's pieces for solo piano which show the beautifully simple style she used when composing music for her piano students.

About the Artists



Dr. Cassie Lear is principal flute of the Great Falls Symphony in Montana, and has played with the Northwest Sinfonietta, Lake Washington Symphony Orchestra, Village Theater, Seattle Theater Group, Rogue Valley Symphony, Helena Symphony, Oregon Coast Chamber Music Festival Orchestra, and other groups in the Pacific Northwest. Cassie has been featured on Classical KING, NPR Live Sessions, and completed a multi-city tour with the Northwest Edvard Grieg Society in 2023. She is a past first-place winner of the Seattle Flute Society Young Artist Competition, the Maverick Flute Competition in Arlington, TX, a second place winner at the Mid-South Young Artist Competition and the Kentucky Flute Society Chamber Competition, and an alternate winner of the Francis Walton Solo Competition.

Cassie teaches flute at Pierce College, and privately in the Seattle area, with past teaching engagements spanning India, the Caribbean, and across the United States. Her compositions and arrangements have been performed on three continents. She is Vice President of the Seattle Flute Society and the founder of the Rain and Resonance Flute Festival.

Her discography includes *Resilience* with Steven Luksan and *The Last Rose of Summer: A Quarantine Project.* Cassie holds performance degrees from the University of Oregon, the University of North Texas, and the University of Washington, and is a proud graduate of Washington Middle School and Garfield High School in Seattle.



Steven Luksan is a composer, pianist, musicologist, and educator making music in Seattle. He is a pianist at Seattle Opera, the accompanist for the Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle, and the Artistic Advisor for the NW Edvard Grieg Society.

Steven's recent projects as a composer include the debut of his chamber opera *Valparaiso* and the composition of a new choral work co-comissioned by Seattle Opera and the US Army Field Band and Soldiers' Chorus. As a performer, Steven was the pianist for Seattle Opera's touring productions of *The Pirates of Penzance* and *Earth to Kenzie,* and he recently toured the US and Norway with soprano Laura Loge for 43 performances of Musical Migration, a recital featuring music by Norwegian-American immigrants on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of Norwegian immigration to America. Steven's research into Norwegian-American immigrant composers has been presented at the International Edvard Grieg Society (Bergen, Norway), at the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies (Seattle, WA), at the Norwegian American Historical Association (Northfield, MN), and at the Norwegian Researchers and Teachers Association of North American (Seattle, WA). His reconstruction of the lost Norwegian-language opera *Leif Erikson* premiered in 2025.

Steven received a MM in Composition from the University British Columbia and degrees in Music Composition and Norwegian from the University of Washington.

Steven Luksan's *Suite* for flute and piano relies on the transformation of a simple musical gesture to tie together the whole work. The first two notes presented by the flute are the same two notes that end the piece, and throughout the piece this descending minor third pops up again and again, even as the musical style swerves through a variety of jazz, folk, and classical styles.

In *Laling og Sull*, composer Eivind Groven calls upon a tradition of vocal folk music and transforms it to be performable on the flute. Laling, a tradition not unlike yodeling, is music meant for communication between humans across mountainous expanses. (A related tradition called *lokking* is meant for communication between humans and animals, such as when shepherds "call in the cattle.") A *sull* is a hummed tune, often a lullaby. Both this piece and Groven's Piano Concerto No. 1 were composed in 1939, and musical motives found in *Laling og Sull* also serve as the primary theme of the Concerto's second movement.

Edvard Grieg, Norway's most famous composer, wrote very little music for flute. Prominent flute parts appear in his orchestral works, especially in the *Peer Gynt Suites* and *Piano Concerto in A Minor*, but flautists have to look for creative transformations of Grieg's music if they want to perform substantial solo works by the composer. For today's program we invite you to listen with fresh ears to Grieg's first violin sonata in a transcription for flute. As we hear a new transformation of an old composition, we might begin to ask ourselves questions about the music that we experience. By transcribing a well-known composition for a different instrument, does the music gain new depth, or does it lose some of its nuance? Is it valuable to transform the music of the past, or should it be left "as is"? Is Grieg's sonata still "Grieg's" if it is played on a different instrument? Whatever your answers to these questions might be, and regardless of what the original form of these compositions were, we take great joy in breathing life into this music for you today.

- Steven Luksan

Join us for our upcoming concerts!

Nordic Chamber Music

Sweden
Swedish Songbirds
January 16 & 17

Nordic Neighbor:
Estonia
Estonian Elegance
March 6 & 7

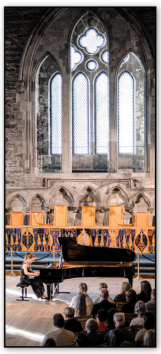
Iceland
Sonorous Sagas
April 3 & 4

Saturdays at 1 pm
First Lutheran Church, Tacoma

Sundays at 2 pm
Ballard First Lutheran Church

Northwest Edvard Grieg Society

2026-2027 Concert Season



Nordic Masters
Monday, December 7, 7:30 pm
Meydenbauer Center Theater, Bellevue
Oda Voltersvik, piano
Issaquah Philharmonic
Jonathan Spatola-Knoll, conductor

Issaquah Philharmonic



THE SAINT MARK'S MUSIC SERIES

Trio Mediæval
Sunday, February 21, 3:00 pm
Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral
Trio Mediæval, vocal trio

Requiem ad Memoriam
A New Swedish Work by Joachim Olsson



Friday, May 21, 7:00 pm
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Port Angeles
Saturday, May 22, 7:00 pm
Trinity United Methodist Church, Sequim
Sunday, May 23, 3:00 pm
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Seattle
Laura Loge, soprano
Port Angeles Symphony
Jonathan Pasternack, Artistic Director

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More info

nwegriegsociety.org

Sunday's reception is generously provided by the Leif Erikson Lodge Sons of Norway. We are grateful for their collaboration and delicious treats. Donations are welcome to support their costs for today as well as for their organization.

SONS of NORWAY
Leif Erikson Lodge 2-001

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