

Sunday, February 24, 2008, 3pm  
Zellerbach Hall

## Joshua Bell, *violin* Jeremy Denk, *piano*

### PROGRAM

Giuseppe Tartini (1692–1770) Sonata in G minor, “Devil’s Trill”

Larghetto  
Allegro energico  
Grave — Allegro assai

Serge Prokofiev (1891–1953) Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 80 (1938, 1946)

Andante assai  
Allegro brusco  
Andante  
Allegro assai — Andante assai, come prima

### INTERMISSION

Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904) *Four Romantic Pieces*, Op. 75 (1887)

Allegro moderato  
Allegro maestoso  
Allegro appassionato  
Larghetto

Edvard Grieg (1843–1907) Sonata No. 3 in C minor, Op. 45 (1886–1887)

Allegro molto ed appassionato  
Allegretto espressivo alla Romanza —  
Allegro molto — Tempo I  
Allegro animato

*Joshua Bell records exclusively for Sony Classical—a Masterworks label: [www.joshuabell.com](http://www.joshuabell.com).*

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*Joshua Bell will personally autograph programs and recordings in the lobby following the performance.*

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## Giuseppe Tartini (1692–1770) Sonata in G minor, “Devil’s Trill”

For a man whose letters reveal him to be a person of great warmth, tenderness, sensibility, fastidiousness and personal modesty, Giuseppe Tartini led a rather checkered life. Born in 1692 in Pirano, Italy, Tartini was destined by his parents for a clerical career, but he fled the cloister in 1708 and traveled to Padua without formally renouncing his candidacy for the priesthood. The following year his name appeared among the law students of Padua, though his greatest local reputation was for his prowess as a swordsman. In 1710, he obtained permission to marry by apparently concealing his clerical status, and found himself in enough trouble that he had to leave his new wife to take up secret asylum at a monastery in Assisi. Tartini is said to have studied music in Assisi, and by 1714, he had found employment as a violinist in the opera orchestra at Ancona. A year later he was pardoned by the Paduan authorities and reunited with his wife, but left her again only months later when he determined to perfect his violin technique in self-exile after hearing a performance by the virtuoso Francesco Veracini. By 1720, Tartini had established a considerable reputation as a performer, and he returned to Padua to take up a position at St. Anthony’s Basilica. His contract allowed him to accept outside engagements, the most extended of which was a three-year residency in the distant city of Prague (1723–1726) that may have been prompted by the paternity suit of a Venetian noblewoman. Returned to Padua, Tartini wrote a violin tutor and established a school of violin instruction in 1727 or 1728 which counted among its pupils such prominent musicians as Nardini and Paganelli. An arm injury of unknown cause forced Tartini to abandon the violin in 1740, and thereafter he was absorbed with composition and the study of the acoustical bases of musical theory, which he expounded in flawed treatises published in 1754 and 1767. He died in Padua of gangrene in 1770, only a year after his childless wife had passed away.

It is said that Tartini wrote some 200 concertos for violin and an equal number of solo sonatas, many of which were published during his lifetime. About 130 of each are extant, as are a number of trio

sonatas, concertos for other instruments, and small sacred works for voices. Almost none of these pieces can be dated with any accuracy. His most famous work, for example, the “Devil’s Trill” Sonata, was long attributed to the year 1715, but recent stylistic research has shown that it could not have been written before the 1740s. Though Tartini’s music shows traits of the waning Baroque style as epitomized by Corelli as well as influences of the simpler tonal language of encroaching Classicism, his spirit seems to have been romantic. Many of his manuscripts were inscribed with a curious set of ciphers that baffled musical researchers for years. This system of lines, crosses, angles, full and half circles and other geometric figures, perhaps devised to confuse the religious strictures of his employers, was deciphered by the Greek musicologist Minos Dounias in 1935. Tartini’s “code” concealed poetic mottoes, drawn mostly from the opera librettos of Pietro Metastasio, commenting caustically and ironically on love. “O bitter tears, flowing like streams, fountains and rivers, without drowning this bitter pain of mine,” laments one; “I know you have no pity!” wails another, perhaps directed to Signora Tartini, perhaps to someone else.

Tartini’s best-known composition, the “Devil’s Trill” Sonata, was composed no later than the early 1750s, since Leopold Mozart quoted the famous diabolical passage in the finale in his highly regarded violin tutor of 1756 (also the year of Wolfgang’s birth). The score was not published, however, until it appeared in J. B. Cartier’s *L’Art du violon*, issued in Paris in 1798, with the following notice: “Sonata of TARTINI, which his School had named the ‘Devil’s Trill,’ in accord with a dream of the Master, who said he had seen the devil at the foot of his bed executing the trill written in the final movement.” The complete story was told by Tartini himself in Lalande’s *Voyage d’un François en Italie* (1765–1766): “One night in the year 1713 I dreamed I had made a pact with the devil for my soul. Everything went as I wished: my new servant anticipated my every desire. Among other things, I gave him my violin to see if he could play. How great was my astonishment on hearing a sonata so wonderful and so beautiful, played with such great art and intelligence, as I had never even conceived in my boldest flights of fantasy. I felt enraptured, transported, enchanted; my breath failed me,

and—I awoke. I immediately grasped my violin in order to retain, in part at least, the impression of my dream. In vain! The music which I at that time composed is indeed the best that I ever wrote, and I still call it the ‘Devil’s Trill,’ but the difference between it and that which so moved me is so great that I would have destroyed my instrument and said farewell to music forever if it had been possible for me to live without the enjoyment it affords me.”

The finale, the music of Tartini’s dream, alternates a drowsy passage depicting his sleep with a brilliant dance-like strain containing the double-stopped trill that gives the piece its name. Twice more this musico-hallucinogenic progression is heard before the movement culminates in a cadenza for the violinist. The two movements that precede this extraordinary tone painting show that Tartini was as adept at writing touching aria-like melodies and nimble cross-string passages as at evoking the nether world with tone.

## Serge Prokofiev (1891–1953) Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 80

*Composed in 1938 and 1946. Premiered on October 23, 1946, in Moscow by violinist David Oistrakh and pianist Lev Oborin.*

Israel Nestyev headed the chapter of his biography of Prokofiev dealing with the composer’s life from 1945 to 1948, “The Difficult Years.” In January 1945, Prokofiev conducted the premiere of his Fifth Symphony with great success, and it seemed that, at age 53, he had many years of untroubled service to Soviet music in his future. Such was not to be the case. Only two weeks after the Fifth Symphony was introduced, Prokofiev was leaving a friend’s Moscow flat when he was suddenly stricken with a minor heart attack. He lost consciousness, fell down a flight of stairs, and was taken to the hospital, where his heart condition and a concussion were diagnosed. From that moment, his vigorous life style and busy social and musical schedules had to be abandoned. “Almost everything that made his life worth living was taken away,” wrote Lawrence and Elisabeth Hanson in their study of the composer. “He was forbidden to smoke, to drink

wine, to play chess, to drive a car, to walk fast or far, to play the piano in public, to conduct, to stay up late, to excite himself by much conversation, to travel more than a few miles.” He spent the rest of his life—he died in 1953, on the same day as Joseph Stalin—in and out of hospitals, constantly taking precautions against a relapse.

Late in the spring of 1945, Prokofiev went to the country retreat at Ivanova provided by the government for Russia’s professional composers, and he spent the summer there working on his Sixth Symphony. He returned to Moscow in the fall, but was too ill to participate in the bustling artistic and social life of the capital or to attend the premiere of his opera *Betrothal in a Monastery* at the Kirov Theater or a production of *Romeo and Juliet* at the Bolshoi. The commotion of Moscow proved too much for his fragile health, and early in 1946, he acquired a country house in Nikolina Gora, a village some forty miles west of Moscow. The dacha was hidden away in trees and thick underbrush a short distance from the Moscow River, with Prokofiev’s studio facing a dense patch of forest. He loved the place, and left it only for the most pressing appearances and appointments, preferring to meet his colleagues on his glassed-in back porch so that he could show off the flower garden and the large yard and perhaps engage them in a proscribed game of chess. During the summer of 1946, Prokofiev completed a sonata for violin and piano that he had begun eight years before and then laid aside to work on *Alexander Nevsky*, the opera *Semyon Kotko* and other projects. The violinist David Oistrakh continued the story: “I remember the day in the summer of 1946 when I drove out to Prokofiev’s country house at Nikolina Gora to hear a new violin sonata he had written.... Before long, [the composer Nikolai] Miaskovsky, who lived nearby, joined us, and we sat down to listen to Prokofiev’s Sonata. Before beginning to play, Prokofiev enumerated all the movements, after which he played the whole Sonata through without pausing. It made a powerful impression. One felt that this was truly great music, and indeed for sheer beauty and depth nothing to equal it had been written for the violin for many a decade. Miaskovsky had only one word for it: ‘A masterpiece.’” Oistrakh agreed to premiere the new Sonata with pianist Lev Oborin, and reported

that they “visited the composer many times and he gave us a great deal of invaluable advice. One could see that this composition was very dear to him, and he took obvious pleasure in working at it with us.... Never have I been so completely absorbed in a piece of music. Until the first public performance, I could play nothing else, think of nothing else.” Oistrakh and Oborin gave the Sonata’s premiere in Moscow on October 23, 1946, to much acclaim, and the work was immediately recognized as one of Prokofiev’s most masterful chamber creations.

“The Violin Sonata No. 1,” Prokofiev wrote, “is more serious in mood than the Second Sonata [Op. 94-bis, a reworking of the Flute Sonata]. The first movement, *Andante assai*, is severe in character and is a kind of extended introduction to the second movement, a sonata-allegro, which is vigorous and turbulent, but has a broad second theme. The third movement is slow, gentle and tender. The finale is fast, and is written in complicated rhythms.” Though Prokofiev gave no hint of any extra-musical associations in his brief description, his biographer Israel Nestyev believed that “the Sonata has something of the quality of a narrative poem and seems to contain a hidden program....” The four movements present four sharply contrasting scenes, which might have been inspired by Russian epic poetry. The first movement is a compact *bylina*-like melody, suggesting the meditation of an ancient bard on the fate of the motherland; the second presents a scene of brutal encounter between warring forces; the third creates a poetic image of a young girl’s lament; and the finale is a hymn to the might of Russia in arms, a paean to the people’s freedom and strength. At the very end of the finale, material from the opening *Andante* returns, underscoring the basic epic-narrative quality of the work.... Prokofiev here succeeded in filling the modest framework of a violin sonata with epic content of truly symphonic proportions.”

**Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904)**  
**Four Romantic Pieces, Op. 75**

*Composed in 1887. Premiered on March 30, 1887, in Prague by violinist Karel Ondříček and the composer.*

By 1886, after his early years of disappointment, poverty and struggle, Antonín Dvořák had become one of the leading composers in the world. That summer, submitting to the regular pestering of his publisher Fritz Simrock, he completed a sequel (for piano duet) to the wildly successful set of *Slavonic Dances* of 1878, and then set out on a concert tour, his fifth, of Great Britain. Dvořák was easily the most revered musician in England since Mendelssohn, and several important cities vied for the privilege of premiering his oratorio *St. Ludmila*. Leeds won the honor, and he conducted the first performance of the work there on October 15. He returned to Prague three weeks later, spent an arduous two months orchestrating the new set of *Slavonic Dances*, and then turned to less strenuous projects.

Living at the same address as Dvořák during the winter of 1887 was a chemistry student and amateur violinist named Josef Kruis. Composer and chemist struck up a friendship, and in the space of just one week (January 7–14), Dvořák composed a trio for Kruis and the young man’s teacher, Jan Pelikán, a violinist with the Prague National Theater Orchestra, and himself as violist. (Dvořák played viola in the National Orchestra years before.) This *Terzetto* proved too difficult for Kruis’s limited technique, however, so the following week Dvořák wrote a simpler set of four *Bagatelles* for two violins and viola. He shortly thereafter arranged the *Bagatelles* for violin and piano as the *Four Romantic Pieces*, and performed them publicly in Prague on March 30 with violinist Karel Ondříček, brother of the virtuoso who had premiered Dvořák’s Violin Concerto four years earlier. Simrock, who constantly encouraged Dvořák to write short, easily salable works in the manner of the *Slavonic Dances* (on which the publisher got very rich), bought the *Romantic Pieces* and issued them later that year. The original version of the music for two violins and viola was not published until 1945.

Though Dvořák was himself a professional string player, his small amount of solo music for the instrument (a concerto, two sonatas and a half-dozen brief character pieces) is lyrical and expressive rather than virtuosic. The *Four Romantic Pieces* are lovely, ingratiating miniatures, much in the folk-inspired style that made his *Slavonic Dances* some of the most popular music of his time. In their

original versions for string trio, Dvořák gave titles to the movements (unaccountably omitted in the violin-piano edition) which summarize the mood of each piece: *Cavatina* (a term he borrowed from Italian opera, where it indicated a short, solo song), *Capriccio*, *Romanza* and *Elegia*.

**Edvard Grieg (1843–1907)**  
**Sonata No. 3 for Violin and Piano in C minor, Op. 45**

*Composed in 1886–1887. Premiered on December 10, 1887, in Leipzig by the composer and violinist Adolf Brodsky.*

After two years as conductor and music director of Bergen’s Harmonien Music Society, Edvard Grieg retired from that post in 1882 to devote himself fully to composition and touring, and to preserving his always-frail health. Grieg had never composed easily, however, and as he grew older he felt the need to regiment his work patterns with some care, so even before he had left his conducting position he made the following proposal to Max Abraham, head of the Leipzig publishing firm of Peters and a man who had come to be his close friend during the years of their professional association: “I notice to my surprise that composing is good for my constitution, providing, so to speak, that I am forced into it. I believe that if someone offered to pay me 1,000 *thaler* a year, my conscience would give me no rest until I had finished the agreed quantum.” Abraham replied immediately, offering Grieg an annual stipend of 3,000 *marks*, and requested a second piano concerto, several solo piano pieces, a concert overture and a piano trio or violin sonata or some shorter pieces for violin and piano. It was understood, however, that the agreement would be flexible so that the type and scope of the works involved would be left largely to the composer’s discretion. The first work to be completed under this scheme, during the spring of 1883, was the Sonata for Cello and Piano in A minor, Op. 36. The second piano concerto, much to the principals’ regret, never did take wing (“Pegasus won’t budge,” lamented the composer after being unable to get beyond a few sketches), but Grieg did turn out a set of *Lyric Pieces* for piano almost annually whose

popularity came to make his name well known on both sides of the Atlantic in the decades around the turn of the 20th century.

In 1886, Grieg was inspired to add to this slowly growing collection of instrumental works by a visit of the Italian violinist Teresina Tua to Troidhaugen, his home near Bergen. Though not yet 20, Teresina had already established her reputation with a brilliantly successful European tour and an acclaimed appearance at London’s Crystal Palace; when she stopped in Norway to see Grieg, she was on her way to tour America. Teresina withdrew from the concert stage following her marriage in 1889, but she again started performing in 1895; some of her most successful appearances thereafter were with Rachmaninoff in Russia. She was widowed in 1911, remarried two years later, and taught for a while in Milan and Rome, but she ultimately abandoned both the world and her career, and lived out her last days in a convent in Rome, where she died in 1955. Grieg was charmed by this attractive young virtuoso—“the little fiddle-fairy on my troll-hill,” he called her—and said that it would be entirely due to her if he were “again to perpetrate something for the violin.” Teresina’s impression must have been strong on the 43-year-old composer, because immediately after her departure, Grieg began his Violin Sonata No. 3 in C minor, his first venture in that genre in 20 years. The piece was completed early the next year, and premiered at the Leipzig Gewandhaus on December 10, 1887, by Grieg and the celebrated Russian violinist Adolf Brodsky, who had introduced Tchaikovsky’s Violin Concerto in Vienna six years before and was then teaching at the Leipzig Conservatory. The Sonata found favor at its first performance, and it has remained one of Grieg’s most popular chamber compositions.

Grieg, whose muse favored the miniature rather than the mighty, produced only a handful of full-length concert works: the Piano Concerto, an early Piano Sonata, an unpublished Symphony (recorded several times in recent decades, however, more than a century after Grieg disowned it in 1867 and forbade its performance), and five chamber pieces, including the String Quartet, the Cello Sonata and the three Violin Sonatas. With the Third Violin Sonata, his last chamber piece as well as his last work in Classical sonata form,

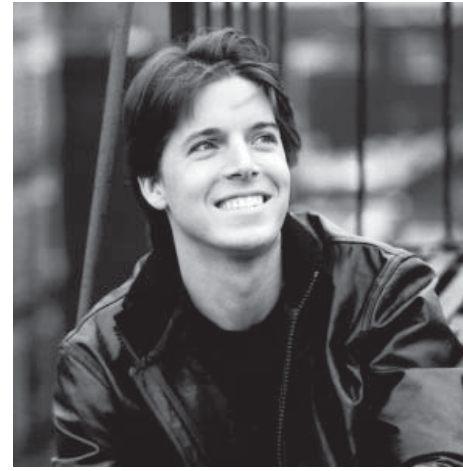
Grieg drew together the academic traditions that he had learned to value as a student at the Leipzig Conservatory many years before and his long experience with Norwegian folk music.

The first movement, dramatic and passionate in a degree rare in Grieg's music, opens with an anxious main theme in short-breathed phrases. The music swells to a climax, and then relaxes to admit the lyrical subsidiary theme, first sung by the violin and then shared with the piano. The music becomes hushed, pauses, and continues into the development section with a broad violin melody above a rippling accompaniment that proves to be a transformation of the main theme in long note values. A passage of accumulating intensity leads to the full recapitulation of the earlier themes and a recall of the development theme. A coda based on the principal subject brings the movement to a vehement close.

The second movement is a three-part form (A–B–A) in which the outer sections are devoted to a tender melody of folksong simplicity and the central episode to a village-dance strain built from short repeating phrases.

The finale, an abbreviated sonata structure which lacks a central development section, takes a vigorous, gapped-scale melody, evocative of the modalism of folk music, as its main theme. The contrasting second subject, presented quietly in the violin's low register, is smooth and comforting. Both the main and second themes return in intensified settings in the recapitulation before the Sonata ends with a powerful coda in which the main theme breaks into the victorious key of C major.

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Timothy White

Violinist **Joshua Bell** has captured the public's imagination like no other classical violinist of his time. His 2007–2008 season follows a seminal year highlighted by receiving the coveted Avery Fisher Prize, being the only U.S. musician named by the World Economic Forum as one of the 250 Young Global Leaders, and his appointment to the Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music faculty as a senior lecturer. In concerts and on recordings, his bold, charismatic artistry has brought a fresh voice to the most venerable masterpieces while also uncovering lesser known gems and new works, as with the fall 2007 CD release of *The Red Violin Concerto* by John Corigliano. An exclusive Sony Classical artist who has created a richly varied catalogue of recordings, recently released is *The Essential Joshua Bell*, while *Voice of the Violin* continues to soar on the heels of *Romance of the Violin*, which *Billboard* named the 2004 Classical CD of the Year, and Mr. Bell the Classical Artist of the Year. His live recording of the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto continues to win critical acclaim.

After summer performances at Tanglewood, the Verbier Festival in Switzerland and Mostly Mozart at Lincoln Center, Joshua Bell's 2007–2008 performance season includes concerts with the BBC Proms at London's Royal Albert Hall, a European tour with Kurt Masur conducting the Orchestre National de France as well as appearances with the Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and Chicago Symphony, the Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra and the

Tonhalle-Orchester. In October, he premiered a new work written for him by Jay Greenberg with the Orchestra of St. Luke's at Carnegie Hall. He concluded 2007—and welcomed 2008—as the guest soloist with Lorin Maazel and the New York Philharmonic at the annual New Year's Eve Gala at Lincoln Center. A recital tour with Jeremy Denk takes the pair to Europe and the United States, including the Kennedy Center and Carnegie Hall. Mr. Bell will also tour Europe as a guest soloist with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields.

For over two decades, Joshua Bell has been captivating audiences worldwide with his poetic musicality. He came to national attention at the age of 14 in a highly acclaimed orchestral debut with Riccardo Muti and the Philadelphia Orchestra. A Carnegie Hall debut, the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant and a recording contract further confirmed his presence in the music world. Today he is equally at home as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestra leader and his restless curiosity and multifaceted musical interests have taken him in exciting new directions, that has earned him the rare title of “classical music superstar.” In addition to his concert career, Mr. Bell enjoys chamber music collaborations with artists such as Pamela Frank, Steven Isserlis and Edgar Meyer as well as occasional collaborations with artists outside the classical arena, having shared the stage with Josh Groban, James Taylor and Sting.

Joshua Bell made his first recording at the age of 18, and he has an extensive catalogue of classical recordings resulting in a distinctive and wide-ranging body of work.

For three years, Mr. Bell was deeply involved in the creation of John Corigliano's Academy Award-winning score for the 1999 film *The Red Violin*, released on Sony Classical. Mr. Bell performed the virtuosic solos on the soundtrack and served as an advisor and stand-in in for the film. In his Oscar acceptance speech, a jubilant Corigliano proclaimed, “Joshua plays like a God.” Mr. Bell collaborated with Marin Alsop and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra on the world premiere in 2003 of Corigliano's *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* (“*The Red Violin*”), a concert work drawn from the film score. In June 2006, Mr. Bell, Maestra Alsop and the Baltimore

Symphony Orchestra recorded this concerto for Sony Classical. Corigliano wrote this work with “the sublime young virtuoso,” Joshua Bell, in mind, but also honoring Corigliano’s father, the late violinist John Corigliano, who for many years was concertmaster of the New York Philharmonic and the concerto’s dedicatee. “Joshua’s playing resembles that of my father,” the composer said in a program note, adding that Mr. Bell “is an artist in the grand tradition. No cold, clinical dissection of a work would flow from his bow.” The new Sony Classical disc, released in September 2007, couples the concerto with Mr. Bell’s recording of Corigliano’s Sonata for Violin and Piano.

From the classical repertoire, Mr. Bell has made critically acclaimed recordings for Sony Classical of the concertos of Beethoven and Mendelssohn (both featuring his own cadenzas), and Sibelius and Goldmark, as well as the Grammy Award-winning Nicholas Maw concerto. His Grammy-nominated recording *Gershwin Fantasy* premiered a new work for violin and orchestra based on themes from Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess*. Its success led to an all-Bernstein recording (also a Grammy nominee) that included the premiere of the *West Side Story Suite* as well as a new recording of the composer’s Serenade. With the composer and double bass virtuoso Edgar Meyer, Mr. Bell appears on the Grammy-nominated crossover recording *Short Trip Home* and a disc of concert works by Meyer and the 19th-century composer Giovanni Bottesini. Mr. Bell also collaborated with Wynton Marsalis on the Grammy Award-winning spoken-word children’s album, *Listen to the Storyteller* and Bela Fleck’s Grammy-winning *Perpetual Motiom*. He has twice performed on the Grammy Awards telecast in recent years, playing music from *Short Trip Home* and *West Side Story Suite*.

Mr. Bell has also won the Mercury Music Prize for the Maw Concerto recording with Sir Roger Norrington and the London Philharmonic, and Germany’s Echo Klassik for the Sibelius and Goldmark concertos with Esa-Pekka Salonen and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He received the Gramophone Award for his recording of the Barber and Walton concertos and Bloch’s *Baal Shem*.

With more than 30 CDs recorded, Mr. Bell’s performances for Sony Classical film soundtracks include the Classical Brit-nominated *Ladies in Lavender* and Academy Award-winning film *Iris*, in an original score by James Horner. Mr. Bell has also appeared as himself in the film *Music of the Heart* starring Meryl Streep, and millions of people are just as likely to see him on *Late Night with Conan O’Brien*, *The Tonight Show*, *CBS Sunday Morning* and the PBS programs *Great Performances*—*Joshua Bell: West Side Story Suite from Central Park*, *Joshua Bell at the Penthouse—Live From Lincoln Center*, *Memorial Day Concert*, *Sesame Street* and A&E’s *Biography*. He was one of the first classical artists to have a music video air on VH1, and he has been the subject of a BBC *Omnibus* documentary. Mr. Bell has been profiled in publications ranging from *Newsweek* to *People Magazine*’s “50 Most Beautiful People” issue, *Gramophone* to *The New York Times*.

Mr. Bell and his two sisters grew up on a farm in Bloomington, Indiana. As a child, he indulged in many passions outside of music, becoming an avid computer game player and a competitive athlete. He placed fourth in a national tennis tournament at age 10 and still keeps his racquet close by. Mr. Bell received his first violin at age four after his parents, both psychologists by profession, noticed him plucking tunes with rubber bands he had stretched around the handles of his dresser drawers. By age 12, he was serious about the instrument, thanks in large part to the inspiration of renowned violinist and pedagogue Josef Gingold, who had become his beloved teacher and mentor.

In 1989, Mr. Bell received an Artist Diploma in Violin Performance from Indiana University. His *alma mater* also honored him with a Distinguished Alumni Service Award only two years after his graduation. He has been named an “Indiana Living Legend” and received the Indiana Governor’s Arts Award. In 2005, he was inducted into the Hollywood Bowl Hall of Fame. Mr. Bell currently serves on the Artist Committee of the Kennedy Center Honors.

Joshua Bell plays the 1713 Gibson ex Huberman Stradivarius. Please visit [www.joshuabell.com](http://www.joshuabell.com).



Lisa-Marie Mazzeo

Pianist **Jeremy Denk** has steadily built a name as one of today’s most compelling young artists, with an unusually broad repertoire.

Mr. Denk has appeared as a soloist with many major orchestras, including the Philadelphia Orchestra, the St. Louis Symphony, the Atlanta Symphony, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the Orchestra of St. Luke’s, the London Philharmonia, the Dallas Symphony, and the Houston Symphony. This season, he appeared for the third time with the San Francisco Symphony, replacing an ailing Itzhak Perlman and performing Beethoven’s First Concerto. He appears often in recital in New York, Washington, Boston, and Philadelphia. He will an artist-in-residence at this year’s Gilmore Keyboard Festival, and this upcoming season he will give a recital tour pairing the Ives “Concord” Sonata and Beethoven’s “Hammerklavier,” culminating with a solo debut at Carnegie Hall’s Zankel Hall.

At the 2004 Spoleto Festival, Mr. Denk met and first performed with violinist Joshua Bell, who subsequently invited him to do a recital tour. They continue to tour as an acclaimed duo this season (2007–2008), throughout Europe and the United States. A Philadelphia reviewer noted their “equal partnership, with no upstaging.” He and Mr. Bell recently recorded the Corigliano Violin Sonata for Sony Classical.

Mr. Denk maintains working relationships with a number of living composers, and has participated in many premieres: Jake Heggie’s concerto *Cut Time* with the Eos Orchestra in 2001; Libby Larsen’s *Collage: Boogie*; Kevin Putz’s *Alternating Current* and Ned Rorem’s *The Unquestioned Answer*. In 2002, he recorded Tobias Picker’s Second Piano Concerto with the Moscow Philharmonic. He has worked closely with composer Leon Kirchner on

many of his recent compositions, recording finally his Sonata No. 2 (2001). This season, he performs works by György Ligeti, Elliott Carter, Morton Feldman, Thomas Adès and Charles Ives.

Mr. Denk has always been an avid chamber musician. He has collaborated with many of the world’s finest string quartets, has appeared at both the Italian and the American Spoleto festivals, the Santa Fe and Seattle chamber music festivals, and the Verbier Festival. Jeremy Denk has spent several summers at the Marlboro Music School and Festival in Vermont and been part of “Musicians from Marlboro” national tours.

Mr. Denk maintains a widely read blog, entitled “Think Denk.” It has been praised by colleagues and the music press alike, and records some of his touring, practicing, and otherwise unrelated experiences, as well as delving into fairly detailed musical analyses and essays. Numerous arts blogs link to his, and “Think Denk” was cited by the music critic of the *New Yorker*, who called him a “superb musician who writes with arresting sensitivity and wit.” Moreover: “This is a voice that, effectively, could never have been heard before the advent of the Internet: sophisticated on the one hand, informal on the other, immediate in impact. Blogs such as this put a human face on an alien culture.” Numerous reviewers have noted Mr. Denk’s urge for freshness and rethinking in his musical interpretations (as well as in the blog). “Mr. Denk is the ideal interpreter for music that defies easy classification,” wrote a critic for the *Richmond Times*, and the critic of the *New York Sun* called his “Waldstein” Sonata a “Radical Take on a Revolutionary Work.” *The Washington Post* referred to “Brilliant Playing at the Edge of Schumann’s Sanity.”

After graduating from Oberlin College and Conservatory in piano and chemistry, Mr. Denk earned a master’s degree in music from Indiana University as a pupil of György Sebök and a doctorate in piano performance from The Juilliard School, where he worked with Herbert Stessin. He lives in New York City, and his website and blog are at <http://jeremydenk.net>.