PUC 2026/27 *Debut*

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY CONCERTS

Nemanja Radulović Violin
Double Sens



26/27 SEASON

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY CONCERTS

Dear Friends,

It is a great pleasure to welcome violinist Nemanja Radulović to Princeton University Concerts for the very first time and to introduce you to Double Sens. They are in the midst of their first North American tour, spanning ten states, and we are lucky to be a part of it.

Double Sens began in 2008, when Nemanja gathered his dearest friends: musicians from France, the home he made as a young violinist, and from Serbia and the rest of the former Yugoslavia, where he grew up. He had been asking himself what his music, his friends, and his two homelands added up to, and this ensemble was his answer.

That spirit shapes tonight's program. Beethoven's "Kreutzer" Sonata and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* each began life in a very different form, and here both are reimagined for this ensmeble. It is a rare kind of artistry, and in the hands of friends who listen to one another the way only family can, these beloved works become stories told anew. We hear them as if for the first time.

Please join me in welcoming Nemanja Radulović and Double Sens to Princeton!



Marna Seltzer
Director of Princeton University Concerts

Thursday, November 12, 2026 at 7:30PM • Richardson Auditorium, Alexander Hall

CHARLES S. ROBINSON MEMORIAL CONCERT

NEMANJA RADULOVIĆ Violin
DOUBLE SENS

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
(1770–1827)

Violin Sonata No. 9 in A Major, Op. 47, "Kreutzer"
- Adagio sostenuto—Presto
- Andante con variazioni
- Presto

INTERMISSION

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
(1685–1750)

Chaconne from Partita No. 2 in D Minor, BWV 1004
Nemanja Radulović, Violin

NIKOLAI RIMSKY-KORSAKOV
(1844–1908)

Scheherazade Symphonic Suite, Op. 35
- The Sea and Sinbad's Ship
- The Legend of the Kalendar Prince
- The Young Prince and the Young Princess
- Festival at Baghdad. The Sea. Ship Breaks upon a Cliff Surmounted by a Bronze Horseman

Out of respect for the artists and enjoyment of your fellow concertgoers, please turn off cell phones and other electronic devices before the concert. Photographs and audio/video recording are prohibited during the performance.



About the Program

By Lucy Caplan © 2026 • Program Annotator

Lucy Caplan is Assistant Professor of Music at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. and the author of Dreaming in Ensemble: How Black Artists Transformed American Opera.

Two kinds of translation shape this evening's program. The first is that of musical arrangement, in which a new creative voice reimagines an existing musical work—as violinist Nemanja Radulović has done for the two works bookending this program. Arrangements are capacious: they might complicate or simplify a piece, introduce a new stylistic approach, or bring in new performing forces. The philosopher Peter Szendy calls them a way to "listen to someone listening," a surprisingly intimate window into how another person experiences music.

> "The philosopher Peter Szendy calls [arrangments] a way to 'listen to someone listening.' "

The second kind of translation entails movement across media. Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* takes inspiration from the Middle Eastern folktales of *One Thousand and One Nights*, whereas Beethoven's "Kreutzer" Sonata has inspired literary writing by authors from Leo Tolstoy to Rita Dove. (In turn, the twentieth-century composer Leos Janáček wrote a string quartet inspired by Tolstoy's novella.) By contrast, Bach's Chaconne—a work which has, over the centuries, prompted many musicians to inscribe their own listening in new arrangements—is presented here in its original form. These types of translation may seem dissimilar, but they both help us think about music as perpetually subject to revivifying influences—a fundamentally living art form that, with the support of human listening and human imagination, can generate more and more creativity in our world.

Ludwig van Beethoven, Violin Sonata No. 9 in A Major, Op. 47 ("Kreutzer") (1803) (arr. Radulović)

The violinist George Bridgetower took Europe by storm at the turn of the nineteenth century, delighting audiences from London to Paris to Vienna. Admiring listeners included Haydn, Thomas Jefferson, and none other than Ludwig van Beethoven, who was so moved that he dedicated his ninth violin sonata to Bridgetower. It was an odd dedication: "sonata mulattica." Jokingly equating Bridgetower's racial background as the son of a white Polish mother and an Afro-Caribbean father with the music's character, Beethoven signaled his warmth toward the young violinist who would give the sonata's premiere. That was not to last: at some point, the two men had a falling-out—perhaps

over a woman—and Beethoven rededicated the sonata to the violinist Rodolphe Kreutzer. Partly as a result of this erasure, Bridgetower faded into historical obscurity. But more recently, he has inspired copious scholarly and artistic explorations; the poet Rita Dove, for instance, imaginatively humanizes this elusive man in her 2009 collection *Sonata Mulattica.*

The first notes of Beethoven's sonata emerge sturdy yet unplaceable, like a city skyline on a foggy morning. The sky clears as the piano responds, but its steadying presence comes with a dramatic dip into a minor key before wandering toward a resolution. These dualities—the clear and the obscure, the sure and the suspended—pervade the entire atmosphere of the work. Expansive in scope, the first movement sees the violin leap from compact rhythmic gestures to quasi-improvisatory melodies. The piano is not so much an equal conversation partner here as the creator of a vast, harmonically adventurous canvas upon which the violin explores. In the second movement, the piano introduces an elaborate theme which is followed by a of series of variations. Ranging in tone from playfully mechanical to intricate and expressive, they are followed by a serene coda. A brash chord in the piano announces the third movement, a whirling tarantella-like dance whose relative straightforwardness offers a cathartic release from the emotional complexity of the two previous movements. Bridgetower, the work's original dedicatee, premiered the just-completed sonata with Beethoven in the spring of 1803. In her poetry, Rita Dove imagines the moment as one of profound internal meditation for Bridgetower, who reflects on the strange circumstances that brought him to this moment, the bemused reactions of the audience, and his own deep wish that "this world could stop / for a moment / and see me….simply / be and be and be…"

J.S. Bach, Chaconne from Partita No. 2 in D Minor, BWV 1004 (1718–1720)
Johannes Brahms once mused that Bach's Chaconne encapsulated "a whole world of the deepest thoughts and most powerful feelings." With no small amount of jealousy, he continued, "If I could picture myself writing, or even conceiving, such a piece, I am certain that the extreme excitement and emotional tension would have driven me mad." At the time, Brahms was hard at work on an arrangement of Bach's music for piano left hand alone; the resulting piece reflects his predilection for sophisticated restraint, his deep reverence for music of the past.

This evening's program features the Chaconne not in Brahms's arrangement—or in one of the many other arrangements that it has inspired—but rather as the composer originally wrote it. It is the final movement of the Partita No. 2 in D Minor, one of a set of six suites for violin that Bach titled, simply, "Sei Solo." To one early commentator, writing in 1805, the suites

represented "perhaps the greatest example in any art of the freedom and certainty with which a great master can move even when he is in chains." Working with the limited materials of a single instrument, well-known dance forms, and a fairly conservative harmonic and rhythmic palette, Bach created music of astounding profundity. The preceding movements of the Partita include more straightforward dances: an allemande, courante, sarabande, and gigue. The chaconne, though technically a dance as well, here feels more like a dramatic monologue. Its austere opening theme follows the rhythm of a sarabande, with the second of three beats accented. In the piece's first section, brief variations on this pattern proceed in D minor, one after the other, each made fascinating by rhythmic and melodic explorations. Then there is a sudden, astonishing shift: Bach takes us to the key of D major, which has never sounded more sacred or more serene. After this blissful second section, the Chaconne returns to D minor, and to the despairing character with which the piece began.

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Scheherazade, Op. 35 (1888) (arr. Aleksandar Sedlar)
Scheherazade is not quite program music. It is inspired by *One Thousand and One Nights,* the famed collection of stories in which a sultan, who has turned to executing each of his wives after a single night, is beguiled by the storytelling of *Scheherazade,* whose tales entrance him night after night. Yet it is not a direct musical analogue to the folktales, in which the dramatic progression of the music mirrors the written narrative. Rather, Rimsky-Korsakov wrote, "the titles for the four individual sections…were intended only as hints to direct but slightly the individual listener…. All I had desired was that the hearer, if he liked my piece as symphonic music, should carry away the impression that it is an oriental narrative of some numerous fairy-tale wonders and not merely four pieces played one after the other and composed on themes common to all four movements."

If *Scheherazade* is only loosely linked to program music, it is firmly ensconced within other nineteenth-century musical approaches: namely, those of exoticism and Orientalism, in which Western composers depict the East in exaggerated terms as mysterious, opulent, and fundamentally different from (and, implicitly, inferior to) their own culture. The murderous Sultan's theme is aggressive and angry, presented in severe unison by the orchestra. *Scheherazade*, by contrast, is represented by the sweetly feminized sounds of a violin and harp, swirling with intricate ornamentation. Throughout the suite, we hear snippets of what the composer called "fairy-tale wonders": stories associated with the ship of Sinbad the sailor, the tale of the Kalendar Prince, a raucous festival, and a shipwreck. The rather fuzzy relationship between these thematic inspirations and the music itself parallels the way in which Orientalist music only vaguely related to the real places it purported to depict. Yet the varied timbres, gloriously singable melodies, and sheer sonic beauty of Rimsky-Korsakov's music make it easy to be swept away in the musical world he creates.



About *the* Artists

Founded by violinist Nemanja Radulović in 2008, Double Sens is an ensemble that embodies musical dialogue, freedom, and cross-cultural exchange. Bringing together musicians from France and Serbia, the group reflects Radulović's artistic vision of breaking down boundaries between genres, traditions, and styles. The ensemble's sound moves fluidly between classical repertoire, Eastern European folk influences, and contemporary expression, marked by rhythmic vitality, emotional intensity, and a strong sense of collective storytelling. Through its innovative programming and passionate performances, Double Sens redefines the classical concert experience, inviting listeners into a vibrant and shared musical journey.

For Radulović, Double Sens was born from questions of identity—his music, his friendships, his life between France and Serbia. He brought together Serbian and French musicians he knew personally, confident that their distinct personalities would form a cohesive group united by the joy of sharing music and the stage. From the first performance, there was a shared desire to continue. Even after many years of playing together, that feeling remains, and the anticipation of reuniting is as strong as ever.

Radulović and Double Sens have recorded eight albums together, including *5 Seasons* (Decca, 2011); *Journey East* (Deutsche Grammophon, 2015); *Bach* (2016); *Rococo Variations* in an original arrangement for viola (Tchaikovsky, 2017); and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* (Baïka, 2018). Now exclusive artists with Warner Classics, they have released *Roots* (2022); *Beethoven* (2023), which earned Radulović an OPUS KLASSIK Award; and *Bach* (2024).

The ensemble performs internationally at leading venues including the Philharmonie de Paris, Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall, Berlin Philharmonie, Vienna Konzerthaus, and Munich's Prinzregententheater. Double Sens is currently making its U.S. debut with a coast-to-coast tour spanning ten states, including, in addition to Princeton, performances at New York's Alice Tully Hall (Lincoln Center), Cleveland's Severance Hall, Chicago's Orchestra Hall, Boston's Jordan Hall, and Los Angeles's The Soraya. Their extensive European touring across the season includes the Musikverein Vienna, Konzerthaus Berlin, Mozarteum Salzburg, and Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, as well as concerts in France, Switzerland, and Spain.

This concerts marks the Princeton University Concerts debut of Nemanja Radulović and Double Sens.

This concert is presented with support from the Princeton University Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures; the Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies; and the Princeton University Programs in Contemporary European Politics and Society and in Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies.

About the Charles S. Robinson Memorial Concert

This concert is funded in part by a gift from a trust, initially established in 1924 by Charles S. Robinson in loving memory of his father, John T. Robinson, and in appreciation of Princeton University for its services to the Princeton community. Since 1964, the trust has supported Princeton University Concerts performances of chamber and orchestral music.

A well known benefactor of cultural activities in Princeton, Robinson served on the Princeton Battle Monument Commission and as Princeton's Postmaster. Born into a family of publishers of early Princeton newspapers such as the *Princeton Press* (1854–1860) and the *Princeton Standard* (1859–1870), he was also owner and editor of the *Princeton Press* (1873–1916), a predecessor to both the *Princeton Packet* and the Princeton University Press.

Princeton University Concerts is grateful to the Robinson family for its generous support of tonight's concert.

SUPPORT US

Supporting Princeton University Concerts is critical to our future. Ticket sales cover less than half of the cost of presenting the very best in world-class music. Remaining funds come, in part, from our generous endowment, left to PUC by the Ladies' Musical Committee in 1929. We remain eternally grateful for the support of the Philena Fobes Fine Memorial Fund and the Jesse Peabody Frothingham Fund.

Other support comes from donors like you. We are grateful to the individuals whose support at all levels ensures that musical performance remains a vital part of Princeton, the community, and the region.

If you wish to make a donation to Princeton University Concerts, please call us at 609-258-2800, visit puc.princeton.edu, or send a check payable to Princeton University Concerts to: Princeton University Concerts, Woolworth Center, Princeton, NJ 08544.

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PRINCETON UNIVERSITY CONCERTS

Fall 26

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"KNIFE" BY SALMAN RUSHDIE

Annual Chamber Jam • FREE
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Thursday, October 8 | 7PM
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Performances Up Close
Thursday, October 15 | 6PM & 8:30PM
Pre-Concert: Do-Re-Meet Speed Dating | 6:30PM
SANDEEP DAS & FRIENDS

Performances Up Close
Tuesday, October 27 | 6PM & 8:30PM
Pre-Concert: Do-Re-Meet-LGBTQIA+ | 6:30PM
EMA NIKOLOVSKA,* Mezzo-soprano
SEAN SHIBE,* Guitar

*Princeton University Concerts Debut

Music & Healing
Sunday, November 1 | 3PM
PIANIST MISHKA RUSHDIE MOMEN

Concert Classics Series
Thursday, November 5 | 7:30PM
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Thursday, November 12 | 7:30PM
DOUBLE SENS,* Chamber Orchestra
NEMANJA RADULOVIĆ,* Violin/Leader

At the Princeton Garden Theatre
Wednesday, November 18 | 7PM
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