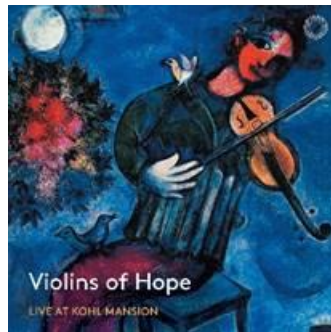




For Immediate Release

**MUSIC AT KOHL MANSION ANNOUNCES WORLD PREMIERE LIVE RECORDING
VIOLINS OF HOPE – LIVE AT KOHL MANSION ON PENTATONE MUSIC FEATURING
JAKE HEGGIE'S *INTONATIONS: SONGS FROM THE VIOLINS OF HOPE*
**MEZZO-SOPRANO SASHA COOKE, VIOLINIST DANIEL HOPE, WITH
KAY STERN, DAWN HARMS, PATRICIA HELLER, EMIL MILAND & SEAN MORI;
ALBUM INCLUDES MUSIC BY SCHUBERT AND MENDELSSOHN
SCHEDULED FOR WORLDWIDE DIGITAL RELEASE JANUARY 22****



<http://www.pentatonemusic.com/violins-of-hope-heggie-schubert-mendelssohn>

Burlingame, California (January 19, 2021) — Music at Kohl Mansion today announced the worldwide digital release of *Violins of Hope – Live at Kohl Mansion*, a new album on classical music label, Pentatone Music, scheduled for January 22. Recorded live in the Great Hall at the historic Kohl Mansion, the recording features the debut performance of composer **Jake Heggie** and librettist **Gene Scheer's** acclaimed chamber work, *Intonations: Songs from the Violins of Hope*. The notable premiere presents renowned international recording artists mezzo-soprano **Sasha Cooke** and violinist **Daniel Hope**, a quartet of musicians from the San Francisco Opera Orchestra: violinists **Kay Stern** and **Dawn Harms**, violist **Patricia Heller**, and cellist **Emil Miland**, and introduces young violin virtuoso **Sean Mori**.

Complementing the Heggie premiere on the album are two masterpieces of chamber music, Franz Schubert's unfinished Quartettsatz in C minor, D. 703, and Felix Mendelssohn's String Quartet No. 6 in F minor, Opus 80, as performed by the San Francisco Opera Orchestra quartet members.

The release of the hard copy CD is anticipated for Friday, February 5 and the SRP is \$19.99.

The album title takes its name from the heroic work of Israeli luthiers **Amnon** and **Avshalom Weinstein**, co-founders of Violins of Hope, whose work includes the on-going recovery and restoration of Holocaust-era string instruments previously played by Jewish prisoners in the European ghettos and concentrations camps. To date, the collection consists of 87 string instruments.

In January 2020, Music at Kohl Mansion produced an eight-week residency with 42 Bay Area organizations showcasing more than 50 of these historic Violins of Hope in public concerts, exhibitions, education programs, film screenings and a variety of community programs coinciding with International Holocaust Remembrance Day and the 75th anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz.

To launch this bold project, Music at Kohl Mansion commissioned Heggie and Scheer for a new chamber work to commemorate the auspicious West Coast debut of the Violins of Hope. Supported by a **Hewlett 50 Arts Commission** grant from the **William and Flora Hewlett Foundation**, and a generous donation by **Diane B. Wilsey**, Heggie and Scheer's *Intonations: Songs from the Violins of Hope* was given two sold-out world premiere concerts at Kohl Mansion with subsequent hearings in other Bay Area venues.

The live recording of these performances is further distinguished in that all of the musicians performed on restored Holocaust instruments from this priceless collection, including a violin formerly played at one of the notorious Auschwitz-Birkenau camp orchestras.

The dramatic work is set in seven sections (*Ashes, Exile, Concert, Motele, Feivel, Lament, and Liberation*) and is inspired, in part, by the book "Violins of Hope: Violins of the Holocaust – Instruments of Hope and Liberation in Mankind's Darkest Hour" by internationally recognized author and musicologist **James A. Grymes**.

Commenting on the release of this album, *Violins of Hope – Live at Kohl Mansion*, composer Jake Heggie said, "Creating *Intonations* for these astonishing performers with my long-time librettist Gene Scheer was a transformative event personally and professionally. We had the rare opportunity to go deep into the bones of these historic instruments to tell their stories and honor those who suffered unimaginable persecution and loss. We also had the rare privilege of working directly with Amnon and Avshi Weinstein - to honor their life's work and create something that might resonate for generations to come. All of us involved felt forever changed and transformed by the experience."

Amnon Weinstein commented, "Since the Shoah, when the Jewish cultural world was eradicated, I seek out the remaining sliver of culture: dusty violins in thousands of pieces, and together, with my son Avshi, we renew their lives as we repair and renovate them, piecing them together and cleaning them so that they may play their lively tunes once again. And even if the Jewish violinists have disappeared, I try to promise to them that their legacy will be born again as the notes are played. That spirit has found true expression in this beautiful recording and performance."

Violins of Hope co-founder Avshalom Weinstein said, "It has been a very difficult year in so many new ways, and having the recording of this wonderful and meaningful Heggie piece, coming out now, gives it even more import. We hope that any listener will enjoy it as much as we did during the performance and that they will be inspired by the music. Thank you very much Jake and Gene for creating this new work; to the stellar artists who so beautifully performed it; and to Patricia for producing the commission and the Bay Area residency of

the Violins. This powerful recording reaffirms the commitment of the Violins of Hope collection to never forget the past and always let resilience and tolerance be our future guide.”

Music at Kohl Mansion Executive Director Patricia Kristof Moy said, “As we reflect one year after the world premiere of Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer's magnificent work for the *Violins of Hope*, the international release of this Pentatone recording takes on new and poignant significance. This brilliant performance of *Intonations* now joins the chamber music canon in perpetuity. Together with seminal works by Schubert and Mendelssohn played on the historic *Violins of Hope* instruments and through the transformative power of music, this recording honors the memory of the lives saved and lost in WWII Europe.”

Produced by Music at Kohl Mansion (MAKM), a leading Bay Area presenter of an international chamber music series and music education programs now in its 38th season, the *Violins of Hope San Francisco Bay Area* residency was three years in-the-making and led by MAKM Executive Director Patricia Kristof Moy and Associate Producer, **Pam Lampkin. Katherine and Roy Bukstein** served as *Violins of Hope San Francisco Bay Area* Leadership Council Co-chairs.

Major support for this project was provided by: **The Ann & Gordon Getty Foundation, Walter and Elise Haas Fund, Victoria & Terry Rosen, Carlstrom Productions, Kenneth Gundry & Susan Kasdan Gundry, John & Marcia Goldman, Katherine & Roy Bukstein, Daniel Springer & Lisa Coscino, Donna Dubinsky & Len Shustek, Hellman Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Judy Preves Anderson & David Anderson, Diane & Stephen Heiman, Linda & Frank Kurtz, and Bernice Lindstrom.**

For more details, visit www.musicatkohl.org and www.pentatonemusic.com.

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Here is the link for press to subscribe and gain access to the direct digital assets including the audio: <http://www.pentatonemusic.com/b2b/violins-of-hope-heggie-schubert-mendelssohn>

Audio Resolution for digital files: 96/24 PCM surround, 96/24 PCM stereo and 44.1k/16 PCM stereo

Please Note: artist biographies and images from the world premiere performance are attached, credit Matthew Washburn.

Please Note: Jake Heggie has a vast Pentatone discography, including his opera *It's a Wonderful Life* (2017) and song recital albums by numerous artists including Jamie Barton (*Unexpected Shadows*, 2020), Melody Moore, Lisa Delan and Joyce DiDonato. Sasha Cooke returns to Pentatone after having been featured on the Grammy Award-winning opera by Mason Bates, *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* (2018). Daniel Hope, Sean Mori, Kay Stern, Dawn Harms, Patricia Heller and Emil Miland all make their Pentatone label debut with this recording.

