



THE POLISH WIENIAWSKI PHILHARMONIC



Tomasz Ritter



Wojciech Rodek



Sara Dragan

The Polish Wieniawski Philharmonic

Saturday, January 22nd, 2022

First Baptist Church | 1600 South 8th Street | Fernandina Beach, FL

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PROGRAM

January 22, 2022

The Polish Wieniawski Philharmonic

Wojciech Rodek, *principal conductor*

Sara Dragan, *violin*

Tomasz Ritter, *piano*

Overture to Egmont, Op. 84

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

(1770 - 1827)

Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN

I. *Maestoso*

II. *Larghetto*

III. *Allegro Vivace*

(1810 - 1849)

INTERMISSION

Violin Concerto No. 2 in D minor, Op. 22

HENRYK WIENIAWSKI

I. *Allegro moderato in D minor*

II. *Romance: Andante non troppo in B flat major*

III. *Allegro con fuoco - Allegro moderato, in D minor, (à la Zingara)*

(1835 - 1880)

**Overture to La Giza Ladra
(The Thieving Magpie)**

GIOACHINO ROSSINI

(1792 - 1868)

YAMAHA Grand piano generously provided by Keyboard Connection Pianos & Organs

**Program subject to change*

PROGRAM NOTES

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Overture to Egmont, Op. 84

“Music is a higher revelation than all wisdom and philosophy. Music is the electrical soil in which the spirit lives, thinks and invents.” ~ *Ludwig van Beethoven*

In 1809 Ludwig van Beethoven was commissioned by poet and playwright Wolfgang von Goethe to compose the overture and incidental music for his tragic play, Egmont. Goethe, a leading intellectual, was considered to be the Shakespeare of German literature and was one of the Beethoven’s personal heroes. Carl Rohling’s 1887 painting titled “The Incident at Teplitz” captures the first meeting between the two men. Beethoven, wearing his hat, is in the foreground and is contrasted by a bowing Goethe who has removed his hat to respectfully greet royalty. The two shared similar political views but not necessarily a mutual respect for each other.

Beethoven in an 1822 interview with critic Friedrich Rochlitz said of Goethe: “How patient the great man was the with me...how happy he made me then! I would have gone to death, yes ten times to death for Goethe...he lives and wants us all to live with him. It is for that reason that he can be composed.” However, in a letter written by Goethe

to critic Carl Zelter he said: “(Beethoven) had an absolutely uncontrolled personality, he is not altogether wrong in holding the world detestable, but surely he does not make it more enjoyable for himself or others by his attitude...[nonetheless] Beethoven has done wonders matching music to the text.”

The play centers around the heroic death of Count Egmont (1522-1568.)

The Count, a Dutch nobleman who fought to free his countrymen from Spanish domination, was imprisoned and sentenced to death. Today, in the town square in Brussels, a plaque reads: “Near this spot, on June 4, 1568, Lamoral, Count of Egmont was beheaded, a victim of the implacable hate and tyranny of Philip II, King of Spain.” The Count’s final words were:

“Fight for your hearths and homes and die joyfully-as I do-to save what you hold most dear.”

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN

Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21

“It was an unforgettable picture to see Chopin sitting at the piano like a clairvoyant, lost in his dreams; to see how his vision communicated itself through his playing, and how, at the end of each piece, he had the sad habit of running one finger over the length of the plaintive keyboard, as though to tear himself forcibly away from his dream.”

~*Composer Robert Schumann*

Frédéric Chopin was born on March 1, 1810, in Zelazowa Wola, Poland and throughout his life he remained a Polish patriot. His first published composition, a polonaise, came when he was only

eight years old. A creative genius, his writing for the piano was revolutionary. He specialized in the smaller molds for piano: waltzes, polonaises or mazurkas. Author David Ewen wrote: “The

PROGRAM NOTES *(continued)*

life work of few composers maintains such a consistently high standard...few composers have such a formidable percentage of their works in the living repertory as Chopin."

He was the ultimate perfectionist, being hypercritical of all his compositions. Even after a work had been sent to be published, he continued to change and revise passages. His French partner writer George Sand (Aurore Dudevant) described his work habits. "He analyzed very much when writing down what was conceived as a whole, and his regret that he could not represent it perfectly made him desperate. For days, he locked himself up in his room, running up and down, breaking pens, repeating, changing one single measure a hundred times, writing, scratching it out, and the next morning starting all over again with painstaking and desperate efforts. He would work six weeks on one single page..."

Russian conductor and pianist Anton Rubinstein commented on Chopin's creative versatility: "Tragic, romantic, lyric, heroic, dramatic, fantastic, soulful, sweet, dreamy, brilliant, grand and simple: all possible expressions are found in his compositions, and all are sung by him upon his instrument." To express Chopin's writing composer Franz Liszt eloquently penned: "He confided... those inexpressible sorrows to which the pious give vent in the communication with their Maker. What they never say except upon their knees, he said in his palpitating compositions."

Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21 was completed in the fall of 1829. Although it was published second, it was his first of two concerti. The 19 year old student at the Warsaw School of Music, met and fell in love with another student Konstancja Gładkowska, a Polish soprano.

Both of these "piano arias" in their middle movements reflected his feelings towards her. He told a friend "I have -perhaps to my own misfortune -already found my ideal, whom I worship faithfully and sincerely. Six months have elapsed, and I haven't yet exchanged a syllable with her of whom I dream every night...under her inspiration, the adagio of my Concerto in F minor and, this morning, the little waltz that I'm sending you [the Waltz in B minor, Op. 69 No. 2] have been born...I tell the piano what I confide to you."

The premiere of Op. 21 was led by Karol Kurpinski at a private concert in Warsaw on March 3, 1830. Chopin performed at the piano. The performance was repeated for the public at the National Theatre in Warsaw two weeks later. In a letter to a friend, Chopin expressed his disappointment in the audiences reaction: "My first concert...did not make on the general public the impression I thought it would...it seems to me that people felt they had to show interest ('Ah, something new!') and pretend to be connoisseurs."

The first movement in F minor reveals strong contrasting dynamics woven into a Romantic melody. Interestingly, some critics regard the inspired second movement as one of Chopin's loveliest. The finale's beginning melody mimics a mazurka followed by a virtuosic passage that leads to a contrasting rustic theme. The strings are instructed to play *col legno* with the wood of the bow. After the Polish dance theme, the mazurka, returns, the work concludes with a brilliant horn solo in F major.

HENRYK WIENIAWSKI

Violin Concerto No. 2 in D minor, Op. 22

“[Wieniawski] has always been and still is the craziest risk taking virtuoso I’ve ever heard. Anyone who failed to witness the daring acrobatic leaps that he performed on the viola when we played as a quartet with Ernst and Piatti in the London Beethoven Quartet Society cannot begin to imagine the feats his left hand can perform.”

~Hungarian violinist Joseph Joachim

Henryk Wieniawski was born into a “family who combined an interest in social welfare with a passion for music.” His father had an extensive medical practice and his mother had studied piano in Paris. His brother Józef became one of Europe’s finest pianists and the two brothers would later perform together. Henryk was drawn to the violin and gave his first solo public appearance at age 7. Wanting to further his violin studies at the Paris Conservatoire, he and his mother arrived in France in the fall of 1843. Henryk was only 8 years old and the Conservatoire only accepted students who were French nationals and aged 12 and older. He was granted an exception and was enrolled by special decree as no. 468. Later the young student along with much older students entered the Conservatoire’s final, competitive examination. Wieniawski was declared the winner. At only 11 years old he became the youngest graduate while still theoretically ineligible to begin his Paris studies. The Wieniawski brothers left Paris in 1850. Composer Hector Berlioz wrote: “we are losing one of the greatest violinists that the Paris Conservatoire has ever produced. Henryk Wieniawski is leaving for Russia. This young man, for too long regarded as a child wonder, possesses an unequaled, serious and complete talent. What is more, he composes beautiful pieces for his instrument...He is sure to enjoy deserved success in St. Petersburg.”



The Violin Concerto No. 2 in D minor, Op. 22 is considered to be his finest work. Although its composition started in 1856, it was not performed until November 27, 1862, in St. Petersburg. Anton Rubinstein was the conductor and the concerto is inscribed to friend and Spanish violin virtuoso Pablo de Sarasate. Wieniawski was the violin soloist. The score calls for an orchestra of solo violin, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, and strings. There are only slight pauses between the three movements. The first movement, a soulful Romance, is linked to the second movement with a brief clarinet solo. Renowned violinist Leopoldo Auer said, “It is a song sung in a way to make us forget the instrument.” The third movement Allegro con fuoco- Allegro moderato, á la Zingara (fast with fire, passionately -moderately fast in the gypsy style) brings back the first movement’s main theme.

GIOACHINO ROSSINI

Overture to *La Gazza Ladra* (The Thieving Magpie)

“Every kind of music is good, except the boring kind.” ~*Gioachino Rossini*

At the age of 71 having only celebrated 17 actual birthdays (he was born on February 29, 1792) Gioachino Rossini wrote in his *Petit Messe solennelle* (Little Solemn Mass): Let us begin with a prayer: *Thou knowest, O Lord, that I was born to write opera buffa. Rather little skill, a bit of heart, and that's all. So be Thou blessed and admit me to Paradise.*



Born in Pesaro, Italy Rossini began composing at age 12. Best known for his operas, both serious and comic, he also composed sacred works and some chamber music. In 1806 while a student at Liceo Musicale in Bologna, he received his first operatic commission. *Demetrio e Polibio* began the list of his rapid fire compositions. Between 1810 and 1822 he steadily composed operas for production in Venice, Milan, Naples and Rome only taking more than a few weeks to write each. He boasted that he could set a laundry list to music.

Written when he was 25, **La Gazza Ladra** (**The Thieving Magpie**) was his twentieth opera. It was one of his four operas released in 1817 and debuted at Milan's La Scala in May. This opera, best known for its **Overture**, unfolds a plot taken from a true scenario where a servant girl accused of stealing some silverware is sentenced to death. Unlike Rossini's earlier well known opera buffa "*Il barbiere di Siviglia* (the Barber of Seville), **La Gazza Ladra** is known as opera semiseria or "a hybrid between entirely serious operas and entirely

amusing ones." It is written for flute and piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, trombone, timpani, two snare drums, bass drum, triangle, and stings.

A solo snare drum roll begins the opera. We hear a vigorous march melody, ominous minor chords, trademark Rossini crescendos, and a fast and furious ending. It is said that Rossini frequently was a last minute composer. According to an often told story the impatient theatre manager-who needed and wanted the Overture-locked the composer in a room the day prior to the La Scala premier. Rossini then threw each sheet out the window to the copyists so that the full parts could then be completed.

All ends happily as the young girl is released because the real thief, a magpie, was discovered and this overture became a favorite staple of orchestral concerts.

~ Emma Mills Bledsoe 2022

THE POLISH WIENIAWSKI PHILHARMONIC



Photo Courtesy Of Stephens Auditorium

The Polish Wieniawski Philharmonic Orchestra commenced its activities in December 1944. Its beginnings go back to numerous chamber and solo concerts given by musicians who after World War II established ties within Poland. The repertoire and artistic considerations, as well as the joy of making music together, led to a premiere chamber music concert, held on February 10, 1945 in the hall of the Music Society. This concert gave the impulse to extend the orchestra and a classical music gala was held on May 18 of the same year – which was at the same time the first symphony concert in post-war Poland. The Polish Wieniawski Philharmonic Orchestra has gone on many concert tours. Performances in

Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Sweden, Germany, South Korea, Denmark and Ukraine were acclaimed both by the critics and the public. The orchestra participated in numerous international festivals and Franco Ferrara Conductors' Seminar in Siena. The Polish Wieniawski Philharmonic is the largest music institution in eastern Poland. It is visited not only by local music-lovers, but by cosmopolitan Polish and international patrons alike. This is a place where you can enjoy art of the highest quality. The Philharmonic offers symphony concerts, recitals, organ and chamber music soirées performed by the most prominent Polish musicians and internationally acclaimed artists.

The Polish Wieniawski Philharmonic is under the artistic direction of its principal conductor Wojciech Rodek. Zuzanna Dziejczak is the Deputy General Manager. Since 1944 until today, The Polish Wieniawski Philharmonic has attracted a glittering list of prominent conductors, such as Krzysztof Penderecki, Antoni Wit, Kazimierz Kord, Philippe Herreweghe, Jerzy Maksymiuk, Jan Krenz, and soloists: Sviatoslav Richter, David Oistrakh, Konstanty Andrzej Kulka, Wanda Wiłkomirska, Nigel Kennedy, Eugen Indjic, Rafał Blechacz, Kevin Kenner, Ingolf Wunder, Yulianna Avdeeva, Krzysztof Jakowicz, Roman Lasocki, Piotr Pławner, Bartłomiej Nizioł, Tomasz Strahl, Lukas Geniušas, Corina Marti, Vadim Brodski, Ilya Grubert, Georgijs Osokins and many others. Huge repertoire of the Polish Wieniawski Philharmonic Orchestra encompasses compositions from Baroque to contemporary music. Concert programs include works by Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Wagner, Wieniawski, Bruckner, Mahler, Tchaikovsky, Dvořák, Stravinsky, Scriabin, Shostakovich, Lutosławski, Penderecki, and many others. The discography of the Polish Wieniawski Philharmonic Orchestra consists of many albums featuring outstanding artists.

The Orchestra's upcoming plans include numerous concerts with Polish music, and recording of works by Józef Wieniawski and Władysław Żeleński. Foreign tours constitute a particularly important part of the schedule. In December 2021, the Polish Wieniawski Philharmonic Orchestra will perform a series of concerts in Prague, whereas between January and March 2022, it will undertake its first tour of the USA.

The orchestra will be accompanied by first prize-winners of the Chopin International Piano Competition and Wieniawski International Violin Competition.





Wojciech Rodek, Principal Conductor

Polish Wieniawski Philharmonic Orchestra Principal Conductor of the Polish Wieniawski Philharmonic Orchestra was born in 1977 in Brzeg, Poland, birthplace of legendary conductor, Kurt Masur. Wojciech Rodek is one of the most prominent conductors of his generation. Following the traditions of Silesian music culture cultivated in Wrocław, Otto Klemperer's birthplace, he continues the best traditions of the Polish school of conducting. Remaining under the influence of the German performing tradition, during his studies in Moscow he studied under three of Russia's leading conductors: Mark Ermler, Evgeny Svetlanov, Yuri Simonov. He has been an assistant to Kurt Masur, Stanisław Skrowaczewski, Krzysztof Penderecki, Antoni Wit, Pinchas Steinberg, Marc Minkowski and Charles Dutoit. He has been affiliated with the Polish Wieniawski Philharmonic Orchestra as its principal conductor since 2005. The Polish Wieniawski Philharmonic Orchestra and the conductor have established a special bond, involving mutual trust in intense development of a

symphonic ensemble and nurturing the best sound features of the Central European style.

In 2015, he was awarded the Medal of the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage for "Merit to Culture-Gloria Artis". He has conducted many of Europe's leading orchestras, including the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra, the Sinfonia Varsovia, Polish Radio National Symphony Orchestra in Katowice, the Polish Radio Orchestra in Warsaw, the Cracow Philharmonic, the Wrocław Philharmonic, the Polish Baltic Sea Philharmonic, the Ankara Presidential Symphony Orchestra, the Antalya State Symphony Orchestra, the Izmir State Symphony, European Johann Strauss Orchestra, the Lviv Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Camerata Bucharest, the Ostrava Janacek Philharmonic Orchestra. He has worked with outstanding soloists, including Rafał Blechacz, Idil Biret, Gülsin Onay, Ingolf Wunder, Paweł Wakarecy, Lukas Geniušas, Alexandre Dubach, Alexander Markov, Konstanty A. ulka, Krzysztof Jakowicz, Agata Szymczewska, Piotr Pławner, Johannes Moser, Gautier Capuçon.

Wojciech Rodek prepared premieres for the Theatre Montansier in Versailles, the Wratislavia Cantans Festival, The Grand Theatre-National Opera in Warsaw, the Grand Opera Theatre in Łódź, the Wrocław Opera. He has performed in the most prestigious concert halls across Europe and China, including Dresden, Hamburg, Munich, Salzburg, Vienna, Zürich, Beijing, Shanghai. He took part in the most important classical music festivals. Mr. Rodek's recordings primarily include forgotten Polish music, contemporary works, as well as film productions, among others with music by Jan A.P.

Kaczmarek "City Island", "Get Low". Mr. Rodek believes in the necessity to introduce young people into the world of classical music. On his initiative, the Youth Orchestra of the Wieniawski Philharmonic was established, which brings together the most talented young musicians from across Poland.

**Sara Dragan**, violin

Sara Dragan is 21 years old award-winning concert violinist, emerging as one of the finest violinists of her generation. She started to play the violin at the age of 7, under the tutelage of her parents, Konrad and Alicja Dragan.

Sara is protégée of legendary pedagogue Professor Zakhar Bron. She is student of Escuela Superior de Musica Reina Sofia in Madrid, as well as Zakhar Bron Academy in Switzerland.

The exceptional young violinist is currently playing on an old Italian violin – Nicola Amati (1666) on the generous loan from Florian Leonhard Fine Violins (London & New York).

Despite her young age, Sara won first prize Grand Prix of about 50 violin competitions in Europe, Asia and USA, among others: International Violin H.Wieniawski & K.Lipinski Competition, New York International Artists Association Competition, Novosibirsk International Violin Competition, International G.P.Telemann Violin Competition, International Global Music Partnership Competition.

Sara made her debut after 6 months of studying violin playing. She performed Henryk Wieniawski's "Obertas" with the orchestra. At the age of 12 she played Violin Concerto No.1 in D-major by Niccolò Paganini (with the cadenza of E. Sauret) and Carmen Fantasie by F.Waxman with the accompaniment of the Opole Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Piotr Borkowski. At age 15, she made her United States debut at Carnegie Hall (NYC) where she played Violin Concerto No.1 in F-sharp minor by H.Wieniawski, as well as „The Last Rose of Summer” by W. Ernst.

As a soloist, she gave concerts at Berlin Philharmonic Hall, Carnegie Hall in New York City, Walt Disney Hall of Los Angeles Philharmonic, Haeundae Cultural Center' Concert Hall of Busan in South Korea, Rachmaninov Concert Hall in Moscow, Landovsky's Auditorium in Paris, Auditorium Sony in Madrid, Polish Royal Palace in Warsaw etc. She played in most Polish Philharmonic Halls as well as was touring around Europe, Asia and USA.

Sara Dragan has performed at many prestigious festivals all over the world among those are Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival, Interlaken Classics, Henryk Wieniawski Festival and the "Emanations" Festival at Krzysztof Penderecki European Music Center of Music.

Sara engages herself in many charity events by performing among others during ballgames for gifted young people and promotion of talented children in Hof, Germany as well as taking part in charity auctions for children with Down's syndrome.

"Sara Dragan is an extremely talented young violinist. She is a phenomenon of her age group. She has a large repertoire and is an immensely gifted and creative musician. [...] Sara is a very promising talent." Professor Jadwiga Kaliszewska, 2009.



Tomasz Ritter, piano

Tomasz Ritter – born in 1995 in Lublin (Poland). A graduate of the Moscow P. I. Tchaikovsky Conservatory in the class of piano and period piano of Alexei Lubimov. He also studied with M. Voskresensky (piano), M. Uspienskaya and A. Shevchenko (harpsichord). He graduated from his studies with honors, receiving the title of “The Best Graduate of 2019”. From October 2019, he continues postgraduate studies at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Hamburg in class of prof. Hubert Rutkowski.

In September 2018 he became the 1st Prize winner of the 1st International Chopin Competition on Period Instruments in Warsaw. In 2011 he won the 9th International Competition of Young Pianists “Arthur Rubinstein in memoriam” in Bydgoszcz, also receiving the Prize of Aniela Młynarska-Rubinstein and Ruby Pin of Artur Rubinstein for artistic personality. He is also a prize winner of many other competitions.

He was nominated for the “Polityka’s Passports” award (an annual Polish cultural award presented by the weekly magazine “Polityka” since 1993) in the “Classical Music” category. He is also the winner of the Artistic Award of Elżbieta and Krzysztof Penderecki (2018) and the scholarship holder of the “Young Poland” program (2019).

He began his education with B. Bechta-Krzemińska at the K. Lipinski Music School in Lublin. In 2008, he became a student of Irina Rumiancewa-Dabrowski at the K. Szymanowski Complex of State Music Schools in Warsaw. He participated in master courses, including with V. Merzhanov, T. Shebanova, A. Kouyoumdjian, K. Kenner, and A. Jasinski. He also gained experience in playing old instruments, collaborating with Petr Šeřfl from Prague and courses with J. Sonnleitner, U. Bartkiewicz (harpsichord), M. Bilson, A. Steier, T. Beghin and T. Koch.

He has performed in many European countries, Russia, Japan, and Israel. He has played, among others, with the Polish Radio Orchestra, Sinfonia Varsovia, Orchestra of the eighteenth Century, {oh!} Historical Orchestra, Bach Collegium Japan and others, under the baton of such conductors as J. Maksymiuk, Ł. Borowicz, M. Suzuki, M. Pijarowski, D. Vermeulen, G. Nowak, I. Hobson; collaborated with Kvarteto Martinů, Stradivari Quartett, with violinist Stefan Tarara, pianist Sergey Kasprov and baroque flautist Benedek Csalog.

In 2014, he released his first album with works by Bach, Beethoven, Szymanowski and Ginastera (Polskie Nagrania Label), and in 2019 a CD with works by F. Chopin and K. Kurpinski, published by the Fryderyk Chopin Institute.

This list represents contributions and pledges for the 2021/2022 Festival made from the start of the 2021 fiscal year on August 1, 2021, until December 23, 2021. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy. If we have omitted or incorrectly listed a name, we sincerely apologize and ask that you notify us at 904-261-1779 or send an email to info@aicmf.org for corrections.

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Join for FREE. More details at <https://ameliachambermusic.org/young-patrons/>

Look Forward to Future Concerts



Sunday, February 13, 2022

Dover Quartet

The Dover Quartet, the Festival's quartet-in-residence, is one of the most in-demand ensembles in the world. The Dover Quartet is the first-ever quartet-in-residence for the Kennedy Center, and the recipient of the coveted Avery Fisher Career Grant, the Dover also is quartet-in-residence for the Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University, Chamber Music Northwest, Artosphere, and Peoples' Symphony in New York.

The Dover Quartet appears by arrangement with the Curtis Institute of Music, where it serves as the Penelope P. Watkins Ensemble in Residence.



Tuesday, March 8, 2022

Tango Argentina

Dancers Ivana Ayala and Pedro Sanchiz create a perfect dance couple, with synchronous movements of great interpretive technique. Their virtuosity leaves audiences amazed as well as the participation of other dance couples comprising Tango Argentina. Ayala has created a musical show designed so that the public can for a moment imagine how the tango has evolved throughout its history which originated in Buenos Aires.

Tickets at aicmf.org

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sunday, February 13, 2022	Dover Quartet 3 PM Historic Nassau County Courthouse
Tuesday, March 8, 2022	Tango Argentina 7:30 pm The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island
Thursday, March 31, 2022	Danish String Quartet 7:30 pm Amelia Plantation Chapel
Saturday, April 2, 2022	University of North Florida Big Band Ensemble I 1 pm Amelia Park
Sunday, April 10, 2022	Dover Quartet with Roberto Díaz, Elissa Lee Koljonen and Christopher Rex 3 pm Amelia Plantation Chapel
Saturday, April 16, 2022	Gibson Brothers 7:30 pm Peck Center Gymnasium
Friday, April 22, 2022	Zukerman Trio 7:30 pm The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island
Saturday, May 7, 2022	“The Legend of Peer Gynt” – A Concert for All Ages 1 pm Courtyard Amelia Island by Marriott
Sunday, May 22, 2022	Beer & G-Strings – Musical Fireworks 5 pm Courtyard Amelia Island by Marriott

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**Times and venues are subject to change. For tickets and more information please visit www.aicmf.org*