

Sofia Gilchenok, Viola





photos by Nichole MCH Photography

Biography (medium length):

Sofia Gilchenok, musically described as “both stylish and entrancing” by the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, began studying the viola at the age of 3 and is now a flourishing young artist. She is currently pursuing a master’s degree at the Juilliard School under the guidance of Misha Amory and is a recipient of the Jerome L. Greene Fellowship. Sofia participated in the 2023 and 2025 Kronberg Academy’s Viola Masterclasses working with Tabea Zimmermann, has served as the principal violist of Symphony in C since 2023, and frequently appears with the Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players, Manhattan Chamber Players, and NOVUS Orchestra. As a guest co-principal, Sofia performed with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra for their 25-26 season-opening concert at Carnegie Hall and tour.

She has had the privilege to work with many top artists, including Antoine Tamestit, Nokuthula Ngwenyama, Roberto Diaz, and Teng Li, to name a few. In addition, Sofia has been featured on NPR and has appeared in recital numerous times at Lincoln Center. She has also been presented as a soloist with various orchestras across the US and received first prize in many competitions, including the Adelphi Orchestra Young Artist Competition, Hartford Symphony Young Artist Competition, and more. Sofia was also invited to participate in the quarter-final round of the 2025 Hindemith International Viola Competition in Munich.

Drawn to repertoire and projects that dance on and outside the lines of classical music, Sofia has performed on both viola and voice with genre-bending and Grammy winning trio Time for Three and Peter Dugan and frequently puts on showstopping performances with Juilliard’s fiddle club. She is also currently in the process of a premiere project in collaboration with the Juilliard School and composer Melinda Wagner: a chamber-vocal work originally commissioned for the Brentano String Quartet which was reimaged into a staged opera and renamed “No Trouble: A Response to Dido’s Lament”.

An avid chamber musician, she has performed with the Brentano and Parker Quartets as well as members of the Dover and Orion Quartets, among many others, and is excited to be an artist at Marlboro Music Festival for the next few summers. Some of her past festival appearances include Music@Menlo, NUME Academy and Festival, Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, Kneisel Hall Young Artist Chamber Program, and Morningside Music Bridge.

A graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music where she held the Tobe Amsterdam Fellowship, Sofia began her collegiate studies early at age 17, studying with Hsin-Yun Huang and Misha Amory for five years. She previously attended Juilliard’s Pre-College Program, where she studied with Hsin-Yun Huang, Molly Carr, Yi-Fang Huang, and Heidi Castleman.

Biography (short length):

Sofia Gilchenok, musically described as “*both stylish and entrancing*” by the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, began studying the viola at the age of 3 and is now a flourishing young artist. She is currently pursuing a master’s degree at the Juilliard School under the guidance of Misha Amory, where she is a recipient of the Jerome L. Greene Fellowship. Sofia participated twice in the Kronberg Academy’s Viola Masterclasses working with Tabea Zimmermann, is the principal violist of Symphony in C, and frequently appears with the Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players, Manhattan Chamber Players, and NOVUS Orchestra. As a guest co-principal, Sofia performed with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra for their 25-26 season-opening concert at Carnegie Hall and tour. An extremely versatile musician, she has performed on both viola and voice with genre-bending and Grammy-winning trio, Time for Three and Juilliard’s fiddle club. Being an avid chamber player as well, Sofia has performed with the Brentano and Parker Quartets as well as members of the Dover and Orion Quartets, among many others, and is excited to be an artist at Marlboro Music Festival for the next few summers. Some of her past festival appearances include Music@Menlo, NUME Academy and Festival, and Norfolk Chamber Music Festival. A graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, Sofia was a student of Hsin-Yun Huang and Misha Amory and previously attended Juilliard’s Pre-College Program.

Solo Repertoire studied 2024-Feb 2026:(works performed in concert during this period begin with an **asterisk**)**Solo and Short Repertoire:**

Arad	12 Caprices for Solo Viola, No. 4 “George”
Bach	*Cello Suite No. 2 in D minor BWV 1008
Bach	Cello Suite No. 4 in E-flat Major BWV 1010
Bach	*Violin Partita No. 2 in D minor BWV 1004
Hindemith	*Sonata for Solo Viola Op. 25 No. 1
Montgomery	*Rhapsody No. 1
Paganini	*La Campanella
Reger	*Suite No. 1 in G Minor for Solo Viola, Op. 131d
C. Schumann	*Three Romances for Violin and Piano, Op. 22 (arr. Gilchenok)
Tchaikovsky	*“None but the Lonely Heart” from Six Romances No. 6 Op. 6 for Voice and Piano (arr. for viola)
Tchaikovsky	Chanson Triste for Viola and Piano
Telemann	Violin Fantasia No. 1 in B-flat Major TWV 40:14
Vieuxtemps	*Elegie in F minor for Viola and Piano, Op. 30
Wallen	Lavinia
Zimbalist	*“Tango” from Sarasateana

Sonatas:

Bowen	*Sonata for Viola and Piano in C minor, Op. 18 No. 1
Brahms	Sonata for Viola and Piano in E-flat Major, Op. 120 No. 2
Hindemith	Sonata for Viola and Piano Op. 25 No. 4
Hindemith	*Sonata for Viola and Piano Op. 11 No. 4
Schubert	Arpeggione Sonata
Vieuxtemps	*Sonata for Viola and Piano in B-flat Major, Op. 36

Concertos:

Bartok	Viola Concerto
Hindemith	“Der Schwanendreher”
Mozart	Clarinet Concerto in A Major K.622 (arr. for viola in G Major)
Smit	*Concerto for Viola and String Orchestra
Stamitz	*Viola Concerto in D Major (Cadenzas and Eingäng by Gilchenok)

Chamber Music Repertoire 2024-Feb 2026:

(all works performed in concert)

Bach	Sinfonia from Cantata BWV 18 for 4 violas and continuo
Borodin	String Quartet No. 2 in D Major
Brahms	Trio for Clarinet (arr. Viola), Cello, and Piano in A minor Op. 114
Brahms	String Quintet No. 2 in G Major, Op. 111 (both viola parts)
Burhans	“Orange” for piano quintet
Clement	Introduction and Polonaise in E Major for violin and string quartet
Dancla	String Quartet No. 8 in G Major, Op. 87
Debussy	String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10
Devienne	Flute Quartet No. 1 in A minor, Op. 66
Dvorak	Piano Quintet No. 2 in A Major, Op. 81
Faure	Piano Quartet No. 1 in C minor, Op. 15
Golijov	“Drag Down the Sky” for string quartet and voice (performance dates 2/18, 2/20, 2/22/26)
Ives	“Hallowe’en” for piano quintet and bass drum
Jalbert	String Quartet No. 5 “Terra Incognita”
Mendelssohn	String Octet in E-flat Major, Op. 20
Meredith	“Tuggemo” for string quartet and electronics
Montgomery	“Voodoo Dolls” for string quartet
Mozart	Divertimento in E-flat Major K.563 for string trio
Mozart	String Quartet in D minor, K.421
Saint-Saens	Piano Quintet in A minor, Op. 14
Saint-Saens	Piano Quartet No. 2 in B-flat Major, Op. 41
Schubert	Quartettsatz in C minor
Schumann	Piano Quintet in E-flat Major Op. 44
Suk	Piano Quartet in A minor, Op. 1
Ravel	Piano Trio in A minor (orch. by Zachary Wadsworth - Premiere)
Tchaikovsky	Souvenir de Florence, Op. 70
Melinda Wagner	No Trouble: A Response to Dido’s Lament (string quartet and 3 voices) (original title “Dido Reimagined” - performance dates 2/18, 2/20, and 2/22/26)

Sample Recital Programs:

Juilliard	Wednesday, January 28, 2026 at 8:00 PM Morse Hall
Sofia Gilchenok, Viola	
Student of Misha Amory	
This recital is being presented as partial fulfillment for the requirements of the Master of Music Degree.	
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CLARA SCHUMANN (1819-1896) arr. for Viola and Piano	Three Romances for Violin and Piano, Op. 22 I. Andante molto II. Allegretto III. Leidenschaftlich schnell
Yi-Fang Huang, Piano	
J.S. BACH (1685-1750)	Suite No. 2 in D Minor BWV 1008, selections Prelude Allemande Minuets
HENRI VIEUXTEMPS (1820-1881)	Sonata for Viola and Piano in B-flat Major Op. 36 I. Maestoso — Allegro II. Barcarolla III. Finale scherzando
Ryan Soeyadi, Piano	
 <small>Sofia Gilchenok is a recipient of the Jerome L. Greene Fellowship.</small>	
<small>Please be considerate to the performers and other members of the audience. If you must leave during the program, do so only at the end of a work. The use of sound recording devices or the taking of photographs without written permission from the management is prohibited in this hall. The Juilliard School welcomes your support to continue this series of free concerts. For information, call the Development Office at (212) 799-5000, ext. 278 or visit juilliard.edu/support.</small>	

This recital program was constructed with the idea of it representing the reality of being a violist. That reality is transcriptions, as so much of our repertoire is not originally written for our instrument. I chose borrowed music from violin and cello repertoire to accompany the Vieuxtemps, which belongs solely to the viola. Existing in the same time period, the Schumann and Vieuxtemps both embody the idea of romance to me. The slow movement of the sonata almost feels as if it's a fourth romance and the program ends with the upbeat, joking manner of the third movement, a welcome relief after the heartache and emotional turbulence of practically all the previous material. And last but not least: Bach is incredibly special to me, with his suites being one of my favorite things to play whenever I need grounding or joy, and this suite feels the most similar to the romantic and melancholic themes that abound in the rest of the program.

Curtis Institute of Music - Field Concert Hall
Wednesday, April 24th, 2024, 7:30pm

Program	
ZIMBALIST	Selections from Sarasateana
HINDEMITH	Sonata, Op. 11, No. 4 Sofia Gilchenok, viola Elena Jivaeva, piano
PAGANINI	La campanella (arr. Primrose) Sofia Gilchenok, viola Yoni Levyatov, piano
INTERMISSION	
TCHAIKOVSKY	None but the Lonely Heart, Op. 6, No. 6 Sofia Gilchenok, viola Elena Jivaeva, piano
SMIT	Concerto Sofia Gilchenok, viola Yoni Levyatov, piano

The inspiration for part of this program was my favorite CD to listen to at the age of 11, Primrose: Viola Transcriptions, by Roberto Diaz and Robert Koenig, as it led to my discovery and later, attendance of Curtis. To complement, I chose Hindemith's Sonata 11/4, as it feels almost improvisatory in its virtuosity. Lastly, the Smit Viola Concerto (with piano reduction instead of string orchestra) was a semi-recent discovery for me. I came across a recording on Instagram and was drawn in by the jazzy rhythms (reminiscent of the Tango from Sarasateana) and funky writing of the third movement. Researching more about Smit and this concerto, I discovered a bit of a similarity to Hindemith's composition in his work, especially with his influence of neoclassical style. Aside from musically, his own history resonated with me as well because he was Ashkenazi Jewish and I'm ethnically half Ashkenazi. One last "fun fact" is that the date of this recital, 84 years previously (April 24th, 1940, and a Wednesday as well), was the date this work had its world premiere at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam.