

## Sords set to resume touring after long hiatus

by Daniel Hathaway



Before the novel coronavirus blew into the music world in 2020, bringing with it what he calls “the Great Silence,” violinist Andrew Sords was among the busiest touring soloists and chamber musicians in the industry. He reckons that he spent nearly 200 days on the road in 2019, compared to 40 this year.

This Saturday, October 29 at 7:00 pm at the Federated Church in Chagrin Falls, Sords will join colleagues Mari Sato, violin, Eric

Wong, viola, John Walz, cello, and Elizabeth DeMio, piano, in works by Brahms, Dvořák, and Rachmaninoff. Dvořák’s Piano Quintet is at the center of the program, a work Sords classifies as “a desert island piece” that should become more of a special undertaking for its performers, rather than just a standard repertory item. “It’s an epic project,” Sords said. “But rehearsing it doesn’t even seem like work.”

That’s a healthy attitude Andrew Sords brings to practicing and rehearsing in general. When he picked up the phone for our conversation and I asked where I was reaching him, he announced, “I’m on Pacific Time with my dear friend and colleague in the desert in Palm Springs, musing over Mendelssohn in the hot tub.”

Sords kept busy during the plague months, working on a new house in Chagrin Falls “that kept my hands dirty for a full year” and burrowing into repertoire he’d never had the time to explore before. “Liz DeMio and I rehearsed every day — socially distant with a fan in front of an open window. It’s hard to remember what happened

eighteen months ago, but if I never have to play another concert in a mask it'll be too soon.”

After the holidays, Sords noted that a long list of rescheduled performances is on the calendar in Quebec and Ontario, then the “hamster wheel” starts up again with concerts in Reno and Traverse City that will put the violinist on the road for extended periods of time. He finds himself amused that other freelancers complain about having either too little or too much on their calendars.

Sords also said that while touring can be revelatory, you can also find amazing things in your own backyard. “Federated Church has a tremendous piano and some of the best acoustics in town.”

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