

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center
Radio Program, 2024–2025
Winter Quarter

PROGRAM #: CMS 25-15
RELEASE: December 24, 2024

The Dramatic Mezzo-Soprano

Sitting between soprano and alto, the mezzo-soprano is traditionally known for its warm, rich vocal color with the dramatic mezzo-soprano eliciting a strong, dark tone that has been used as an operatic temptress, trickster, and femme fatale — the witch in *Hänsel and Gretel*, Dalila in *Samson et Dalila*, the sorceress Ortrud in *Lohengrin*. In this program, the mezzo-soprano, Jennifer Johnson Cano takes on roles both light and ghoulish. In Mahler’s *Rückert-Lieder* love poems of German poet and linguist, Friedrich Rückert, are set among beautiful contrasts in harmony and melody. Highlighting the spookier side of the mezzo-soprano, Gregg Kallor sets Edgar Allen Poe’s infamous, “Tell-Tale Heart” poem into an aural representation of guilt as the incessant heartbeat of our protagonists’ victim thumps away through the percussive repetition of the piano.

Gustav Mahler: *Rückert-Lieder* for Mezzo-Soprano and Piano (1901-02)
Jennifer Johnson Cano, mezzo-soprano; Sean Lee, violin; Yura Lee, viola; Keith Robinson, cello; Michael Stephen Brown, piano

Gregg Kallor: *The Tell-Tale Heart* for Voice, Cello, and Piano (2016)
Jennifer Johnson Cano, mezzo-soprano; Nicholas Canellakis, cello; Lucille Chung, piano

PROGRAM #: CMS 25-16
RELEASE: December 31, 2024

Chamber Music at the Movies

In this program, we delve into works by two composers known for their Hollywood contributions. Nino Rota composed more than 150 film scores including all of Federico Fellini’s from *La Strada* and *La Dolce Vita* to *8 1/2* and *The Orchestra Rehearsal* though his most famous work may be composing the scores to Francis Ford Coppola’s *Godfather* series. Rota’s Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano hints at his strong sense of imagery especially in the finale which would find itself at home as the soundtrack to a Fellini circus scene. One of the first composers to craft scores directly suited to the emotions and events on screen, Erich Wolfgang Korngold was heavily influential in creating the modern standard for film composers. His chamber music works showcase this talent including in this Quintet in E major. After a first movement full of urgency and suspense, the second movement introduces variations on his Op. 14 *Lieder des Abschieds*, and closes with a somewhat playful and strange finale.

Nino Rota: Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano (1973)
Tommaso Lonquich, clarinet; Keith Robinson, cello; Wu Qian, piano

Erich Wolfgang Korngold: Quintet in E major for Piano, Two Violins, Viola, and Cello, Op. 15 (1921)

Gloria Chien, piano; Kristin Lee, Sean Lee, violin; Yura Lee, viola; Keith Robinson, cello

PROGRAM #: CMS 25-17
RELEASE: January 7, 2025

Emotion

Emotion is a big, broad word and seemingly all music is emotional in some way or another. However, when it comes to these two works, the overwhelming, unifying theme connecting them was simply raw emotion. Respighi, that most over-the-top composer of some of the world's most bombastic pieces, poured all his passion into this sonata for violin and piano. It's a complex, and almost orchestral-sounding sonata that's easy to forget there are only two players at work. Nearly a decade before Respighi composed his sonata, Mendelssohn turned his attention again to the string quartet, composing a set of three — the Opus 44's. In his first quartet, Op. 13, he eulogized the recently departed Beethoven, and with this quartet he appears to have done so again, as it not only corresponds exactly to Beethoven's own E minor quartet composed in 1806 but also takes on a similar mood.

Ottorino Respighi: Sonata in B minor for Violin and Piano (1917)
Paul Huang, violin; Alessio Bax, piano

Felix Mendelssohn: Quartet in E minor for Strings, Op. 44, No. 2 (1837)
Escher String Quartet (Adam Barnett-Hart, Aaron Boyd, violin; Pierre Lapointe, viola; Brook Speltz, cello)

PROGRAM #: CMS 25-18
RELEASE: January 14, 2025

Monumental Piano Trios

The piano trio gained popularity amongst composers in the 18th century with Haydn composing around 40 of them and composers like Mozart and Beethoven following suit as the instrumentation allowed perfect flexibility for salon performances. Fanny Hensel (née Mendelssohn)'s Piano Trio premiered in 1847 at one of her Sunday salons to celebrate her sister, Rebecka's birthday. Though sharing a key with her brother, Felix's earlier piano trio, Hensel's trio uses a mostly chromatic melody alluding to her sister's vocal talent as well as her fondness for the works of Frédéric Chopin. By the time Maurice Ravel composed his Trio in A minor, he had established a successful career and become a well-known public figure. This trio has come to be a classic of the literature and showcases an imagination and complexity unique to Ravel and this trio.

Fanny Mendelssohn: Trio in D minor for Piano, Violin, and Cello, Op. 11 (1847)

Michael Stephen Brown, piano; James Thompson, violin; Paul Watkins, cello

Maurice Ravel: Trio in A minor for Piano, Violin, and Cello (1914)
Michael Stephen Brown, piano; Erin Keefe, violin; Mihai Marica, cello

PROGRAM #: CMS 25-19
RELEASE: January 21, 2025

Late 18th Century Classics

Written during a time of immense change in Mozart's life following his departure from the Salzburg court and the loss of his mother, his Quartet for Flute and Strings was composed as a commission for amateur flutist, Ferdinand de Jean, and combines his wit, improvisation methods of the time, and the Classical-era structure. Mozart continued to hone his work with wind instruments and by 1787, found himself in Prague surrounded with immense talent. While his original *Don Giovanni* opera did feature a large wind section, this transcription by oboist Johann Georg Triebensee published three years after the work's premiere, brings the winds to the forefront. Composed toward the later years of the 18th century and of Haydn's own life, his "Sunrise" quartet, named for the arching opening theme, sees a composer turning away from large symphonic works and wind instrumentation to create one of his most limpid and sensual melodic inventions.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Quartet for Flute and Strings in G major, K. 285a (1777–78)
Ransom Wilson, flute; Stella Chen, violin; Matthew Lipman, viola; Nicholas Canellakis, cello

Franz Joseph Haydn: Quartet in B-flat major for Strings, Hob. III: 78, Op. 76, No. 4, "Sunrise" (1797)
Schumann Quartet (Erik Schumann, Ken Schumann, violin; Liisa Randalu, viola; Mark Schumann, cello)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Selections from *Don Giovanni* for Two Oboes, Two Clarinets, Two Bassoons, and Two Horns (1787) (arr. for winds by Josef Triebensee, 1790)
James Austin Smith, Stephen Taylor, oboe; Romie de Guise-Langlois, Tommaso Lonquich, clarinet; Marc Goldberg, Peter Kolkay, bassoon; David Jolley, Eric Reed, horn

PROGRAM #: CMS 25-20
RELEASE: January 28, 2025

Miro Quartet: Ginastera

In this program, we travel to Argentina, a country rich in history, culture, geography, gastronomy, and folklore. Alberto Ginastera was one of the 20th century's most important composers. Ginastera was classically trained yet drew on his homeland's extraordinary elements for inspiration including in his three string quartets. From the first and second movements' depictions of the fiery gauchos, displaying their prowess on horseback, to the slow movement's depiction of a starry night, the first quartet is a tour of Ginastera's beloved Pampas and their rich culture. For his third quartet, Ginastera drew inspiration from Arnold Schoenberg's idea to incorporate a singer, as Schoenberg did in his second quartet from 1908. Premiered in 1974, the Ginastera quartet draws its inspiration from the work of three poets who address broad subjects such as love and war and constitutes one of the most effective and moving chamber works of our time.

Alberto Ginastera: Quartet No. 1 for Strings, Op. 20 (1948)
Miro Quartet (Daniel Ching, William Fedkenheuer, violin; John Largess, viola; Joshua Gindele, cello)

Alberto Ginastera: Quartet No. 3 for Strings with Soprano, Op. 40 (1973)
Kiera Duffy, soprano; Miro Quartet (Daniel Ching, William Fedkenheuer, violin; John Largess, viola; Joshua Gindele, cello)

PROGRAM #: **CMS 25-21**
RELEASE: **February 4, 2025**

Taste of Scandanavia

Born only 20 years apart, Danish composer, Carl Nielsen and Norwegian composer, Edvard Grieg represent a fruitful tradition of skilled Scandinavian composers. Nielsen became fascinated with wind instruments at an early age, becoming a military trumpeter by 14. After hearing a rehearsal of Mozart's *Sinfonia concertante* by the Copenhagen Wind Quintet, he set out to compose his own work for that instrumentation. His quintet features lighthearted and lyrical passages that perfectly highlight the voice of each instrument. Also composed out of inspiration, Edvard Grieg was commissioned to write a work celebrating the bicentenary of writer and philosopher Ludvig Holberg. The resulting five movement piano suite later arranged for string orchestra, explores a range of musical styles from the 'Olden Style' of Holberg's time to the more modern music known to Grieg at the time.

Carl Nielsen: Quintet for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, and Horn, Op. 43 (1922)
Sooyun Kim, flute; James Austin Smith, oboe; Tommaso Lonquich, clarinet; Marc Goldberg, bassoon; David Jolley, horn

Edvard Grieg: *Holberg Suite, Op. 40 (1884)*
Arnaud Sussmann, Chad Hoopes, Danbi Um, James Thompson, Francisco Fullana, Kristin Lee, violin; Matthew Lipman, Paul Neubauer, Jeremy Berry, viola; Sihao He, Mihai Marica, Dmitri Atapine, cello; Blake Hinson, double bass

PROGRAM #: CMS 25-22
RELEASE: February 11, 2025

Disparate Duos

Two players is all you need to make great chamber music. On today's program, we have two duos by Zoltán Kodály and Beethoven, showcasing how extraordinary a small ensemble can be. By the time Zoltán Kodály composed this duo on the eve of WW1, he had spent more than a decade researching the folk music of his native Hungary, which produced works of unique color and flavor. This music doesn't require intellectual rigor of its listeners, only a willingness to be swept up by its passionate harmonies and infectious rhythms. Beethoven's five Sonatas for Cello and Piano revolutionized the role of the cello in music — they are the first works in which the cello is an equal partner to the keyboard. His first two cello sonatas were written for King Frederick William the Second, an amateur cellist, and patron to Mozart and Haydn. After the pleasing and delightful first Sonata in F major, the second Sonata, dark and brooding, in the serious key of g minor, foretold Beethoven's transformative journey into the full-blown Romantic age to come.

Zoltán Kodály: Duo for Violin and Cello, Op. 7 (1914)
Bella Hristova, violin; Nicholas Canellakis, cello

Ludwig van Beethoven: Sonata in G minor for Cello and Piano, Op. 5, No. 2 (1796)
Paul Watkins, cello; Alessio Bax, piano

PROGRAM #: CMS 25-23
RELEASE: February 18, 2025

Mendelssohn's Magnificence

Well-considered a prodigy, Felix Mendelssohn grew up in a household encouraging artistic excellence. Along with his siblings, he began music instruction early in his life, performed his first concert at just nine years old, and composed his first symphony at fifteen. He studied the Baroque and Classical styles of his predecessors Bach, Mozart, and Haydn though found inspiration in the more contemporary work of the time like Beethoven's late-era compositions. Mendelssohn's Double Concerto highlights both forms with a traditional three-movement structure rife with expansive and energetic passages. Mendelssohn also found inspiration outside the world of music and was an avid reader and fan of the works of Shakespeare composing 13 movements drawn from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He arranged nine of these movements to be performed for piano, four hands of which the *Nocturne* and *Scherzo* so beautifully capture Shakespeare's imagery.

Felix Mendelssohn: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Piano, Four Hands, Op. 61 (1843)
Gloria Chien, Gilbert Kalish, piano

Felix Mendelssohn: Double Concerto in D minor for Violin, Piano, and Strings (1823)

Richard Lin, violin; Michael Stephen Brown, piano; James Thompson, Kristin Lee, violin; Matthew Lipman, viola; Mihai Marica, cello; Joseph Conyers, double bass

PROGRAM #: CMS 25-24
RELEASE: February 25, 2025

Mozart & Stravinsky

This program's title, Mozart & Stravinsky, sets up a scenario which might seem to be a contentious one; however, the music of Stravinsky and Mozart share many similarities. Both composers were supreme craftsmen who wrote efficiently, composed complex yet transparent, well-balanced works, and both had keen senses of humor provoking listeners with surprises. Mozart's "Dissonant" string quartet shocked listeners in the 18th century with dissonances near the quartet's opening that convinced experts at the time that the notes the musicians played were mistakes. Stravinsky's Divertimento picks up on the lightning-quick possibilities of the violin and keyboard duo genre that was brought to its first real peak with Mozart.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Quartet in C major for Strings, K. 465, "Dissonance" (1785)
Orion String Quartet (Todd Phillips, Daniel Phillips, violin; Steven Tenenbom, viola; Timothy Eddy, cello)

Igor Stravinsky: Divertimento after *Le baiser de la fée* for Violin and Piano (1928, arr. 1934)
Ida Kavafian, violin; Anne-Marie McDermott, piano

PROGRAM #: CMS 25-25
RELEASE: March 4, 2025

Czech Brilliance

The country known as Czechia today, has a long history of artistic expression, military occupation, diverse landscapes, and an overall pride in its homeland. The musical compositions that have come out of this region have long honored that history. Composed as war broke out across Europe in 1914, Janáček's Sonata for Violin and Piano hints at the apprehension its composer felt dealing with the uncertainty of a Russian invasion with repetitive sharp motifs and anxiety-laden melodies. A mere 20 years earlier, Dvořák returned to his home of Bohemia from New York City and finished his final string quartet, his Quartet in A-flat major. This would also mark his final composition of 'absolute music' — instrumental music that is not representational of anything — before focusing on his opera. While only guesses can be made as to whether this was inspired by his time in America, or by the freedom felt upon returning to his homeland, the quartet moves between dark and stormy themes and folk-inspired melodies.

Leos Janáček: Sonata for Violin and Piano (1914-15)
Adam Barnett-Hart, violin; Juho Pohjonen, piano

Antonín Dvořák: Quartet in A-flat major for Strings, Op. 105 (1895)
Shanghai Quartet (Weigang Li, Yi-Wen Jiang, violin; Honggang Li, viola; Nicholas Tzavaras, cello)

PROGRAM #: CMS 25-26
RELEASE: March 11, 2025

French Treasures

Both composers on this program hail from the land of instrumental color and elegance, France. After beginning piano at an early age, Camille Saint-Saëns became one of the top organists in the world. His *Caprice on Danish and Russian Airs* was composed for a tour to Russia and dedicated to the Empress Maria Feodorovna — born a Danish Princess. The work includes both Danish and Russian themes and impressed Anton Rubinstein enough to require his students to attend a performance. Inspired by the work of Saint-Saëns and his contemporaries, Ernest Chausson was one of a group of talented and skillful French composers whose work is not well known outside of France. His Concerto in D major combines the virtues of the solo concerto perfectly with those of chamber music: every part is important, the ensemble must work as a team, and yet, the solo violin and piano share a bright spotlight. Besides the work's obvious structural ingenuity, it is above all a moving, thrilling work of great beauty and excitement.

Camille Saint-Saëns: *Caprice on Danish and Russian Airs* for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, and Piano, Op. 79 (1887)
Adam Walker, flute; James Austin Smith, oboe; David Shifrin, clarinet; Michael Stephen Brown, piano

Ernest Chausson: Concerto in D major for Violin, Piano, and String Quartet, Op. 21 (1889-91)
Arnaud Sussmann, violin solo; Wu Han, piano; Kristin Lee, Yura Lee, violin; Richard O'Neill, viola; Nicholas Canellakis, cello