



Chamber
Music Society
of Lincoln Center

DAVID FINCKEL AND WU HAN, ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

SONIC SPECTRUM III

Thursday, April 11, 2024, at 7:30 pm

Daniel and Joanna S. Rose Studio at CMS

2023-2024 SEASON

A series of approximately ten parallel diagonal lines that sweep from the bottom left towards the top right. The lines are colored in a gradient, starting with a teal blue on the left and transitioning through various shades of brown and orange towards the right.

The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center

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ChamberMusicSociety.org

CMS new music programming is supported, in part, by Francis Goelet Charitable Lead Trusts, Samuel I. Newhouse Foundation, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., and the Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University.

This concert features members of the Bowers Program, CMS's residency for outstanding early career musicians. The Bowers Program is supported by Ann S. Bowers. Additional support by the Marion F. Goldin Charitable Fund and Colburn Foundation.

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The Chamber Music Society is deeply grateful to Board member Paul Gridley for his very generous gift of the Hamburg Steinway & Sons model “D” concert grand piano we are privileged to hear this evening.

The Chamber Music Society wishes to express its deepest gratitude for The Daniel and Joanna S. Rose Studio, which was made possible by a generous gift from the donors for whom the studio is named.

This season is supported by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the City Council; and the New York State Council on the Arts, with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature.



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SONIC SPECTRUM III

THURSDAY EVENING, APRIL 11, 2024, AT 7:30 ▶ 4,424th Concert

Daniel and Joanna S. Rose Studio at CMS

CHELSEA WANG, piano

WU QIAN, piano

TIMOTHY RIDOUT, viola

JONATHAN SWENSEN, cello

SEBASTIAN MANZ, clarinet

FELIPE LARA

(b. 1979)

***Livro dos Sonhos* for Clarinet and Piano
(2004)**

MANZ, WU QIAN

KURT SCHWERTSIK

(b. 1935)

***Haydn lived in Eisenstadt* for Viola and
Piano, Op. 122 (2020)**

▶ À la recherche d'une cantilène perdu

▶ Soliloque

▶ Non réconcilié

RIDOUT, WU QIAN

**JOHANNES MARIA
STAUD**

(b. 1974)

***Lagrein* for Violin, Clarinet, Cello, and
Piano (2008)**

HRISTOVA, MANZ, SWENSEN, WANG

**DAVID
SERKIN LUDWIG**

**Trio No. 4 for Piano, Violin, and Cello,
"Hashkiveinu" (CMS Co-Commission)
(2023)**

WU QIAN, HRISTOVA, SWENSEN

VIET CUONG

(b. 1990)

***Wax and Wire* for Clarinet, Violin, Cello,
and Piano (2014)**

MANZ, HRISTOVA, SWENSEN, QU QIAN

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You are welcome to take photos during the applause. Photography or recording of any kind are prohibited during the performance.

STARTING POINTS

BY PAUL GRIFFITHS

One matter that almost every musical composition has to deal with is how to begin. How is the momentous transition to be effected from silence and expectation to sound? What characteristics and principles will be laid down right as the music comes forward to exert itself? How long will the beginning be: an instant or a longer unfolding?

The starting point in Felipe Lara's *Livro dos Sonhos* (Book of Dreams) is exactly that: a point, a single note, a middle-register E-flat, which becomes a single sound in how Lara scores it as an abrupt stab from both clarinet and piano, the latter somewhat denatured by the pianist, who mutes the relevant strings with a finger (a technique also used in other compositions this evening). This was a starting point in another sense, for the work is one of the earliest in the composer's catalog. As such, it speaks immediately of creative confidence. Lara in his mid-twenties knew his instruments and knew his way. That strongly asserted E-flat is followed by another, with a decorative echo, and then by another that shifts the focus up a little. A trajectory has begun. The "echoes" become longer and wilder as the clarinet uses pitch bends and multiphonics, while the piano separates itself from its partner and takes its own hectic course. But though the two instruments are now independent, they are also interdependent.

An unmistakable climax is reached a little over halfway through the ten-minute piece. After that, as the composer puts it: "The musicians momentarily come together to play a Messiaen-inspired cantilena, creating a fleeting sense

of agreement. However, this accord is short-lived, as the piano gradually punctuates it with its incisive attacks, disrupting the harmony and reaffirming the persistent theme of ever-changing, unpredictable dreams."

The next piece is at the opposite end of the spectrum in terms of its place in its composer's output, written by a man in his mid-eighties and carrying a three-digit opus number. Crucial here again, though, is the starting point, which this time is not a single sonic event, but a small set of figures introduced to prompt a musing passage for the viola alone. This is a more traditional kind of opening, but with this composer, Kurt Schwertsik, traditional elements are always likely to be viewed from non-traditional perspectives—light and quizzical, even ironic. Born in Vienna, Schwertsik views his city's musical heritage both askance and with affection.

In *Haydn lived in Eisenstadt*, he recalls the time when, before the great palace of Esterháza was completed, Haydn worked for the Esterházy princes at their ancestral residence in Eisenstadt, forty miles south of Vienna. "Joseph Haydn," he notes, "this freest spirit, wrote his wildest symphonies there," and it is perhaps this imaginative freedom, more than any specific reference, that he wants to evoke in what is effectively a sonata for viola and piano.

Beginning as described, the first movement is a caprice, changing quickly in speed and character while often relating to the initial motifs. "In Search of a Lost Cantilena" is the title. The second movement takes up some of the same material in a soliloquy for two people, the phrases alternating

between the instruments. This time the viola does not enter first but leaves last, escapes. The finale is a *moto perpetuo* nagged again by the first movement's most prominent motif. It takes its title, meaning "Unreconciled" from Michel Houellebecq's book of poems: "I," Schwertsik observes, with a wryness also to be found in his music, "a tiny particle of a human race whose members try to destroy each other with increasingly sophisticated means, on a tiny planet in the unbelievable expanding vastness of space, cannot achieve reconciliation either with myself or with humanity."

A fellow Austrian, but from a long generation junior, Johannes Maria Staud was in 2008 the first composer to be commissioned as part of an unusual initiative by the South Tyrol winemaker Alois Lageder. Appropriately, in his twelve-minute piece for mixed quartet, Staud decided to celebrate one of Lageder's wines, Lagrein, named after a grape variety and offering a nice pun on the vintner's name. An oenophile's description provided a program for the piece: "Medium garnet color with ruby hints. Rich, quite pronounced, spicy aroma with a chocolate character, floral impressions (violets), red fruit and prunes. Soft, smooth taste, full bodied with hints of leather and tar. Firm, dry and somewhat earthy finish."

"This synesthetic approach was", Staud remarked, "my driving force while composing the piece. The tasting of sonorities; the description of light reflexes in sound; the translation of a soft, smooth taste, full-bodied with hints of leather and tar into musical textures and structures — all of this fascinated me during my work on the piece."

As a program for music, however, the wine note lacked something: change. Staud's solution seems to have been to mimic in his music the sensations of savoring a glass. After a full

quarter-minute of notated anticipatory silence, the clarinet begins to sip the sound. This makes an effective starting point for a gentle flow of interacting sonorities, in which the instruments come together in unisons and octaves before drifting apart again. The violin and the cello are often playing harmonics, as is the piano, the pianist holding down strings at specified points to achieve these. With a solo burst from the piano, the music's character changes, moving on towards a powerful section of attacks and surges. This duly comes to a dramatic close and gives way to the finale and a coda for the piano, *alla chitarra*.

From wine to prayer, and a piece for which David Ludwig provides the following note:

"The 'Hashkiveinu' is a Hebrew prayer said at night in preparation for sleep, both in sacred services and in quiet moments alone. It is a prayer of supplication, asking for shelter and protection through the night so that one can be sure to wake the next day. We can imagine the dangers that came after sundown for the ancient people who first uttered these words, and how saying the prayer could have given a feeling of calm and security in asking a higher power to guard them as they slept.

"The 'Hashkiveinu' is the inspiration for my fourth piano trio, as well. The piece has no words but seeks to capture both the fear and hopes described in the prayer. It begins resolutely and returns repeatedly to a series of cantillated melodies set to overlap as if multiple people are singing the same chant—just not quite at the same time. Out of these close canons come long passages of dreaming music which get interrupted by darker interjections. The piece itself is about cycles of day to night, the clearly illuminated and the opaque, and the space that strength and openness share

together.

"My brother-in-law Joel was my friend, mentor, and as close to a father figure as I could ask for in my formative years. He passed away in the spring of 2023, and though he was not religious, this prayer for protection in our most vulnerable moments felt only appropriate to offer in his memory."

Finally, for the same foursome as the Staud piece, Viet Cuong offers *Wax and Wire*, its title referring to the process by which the San Francisco artist Michael Gard creates his dancing human figures of woven wire. First the figure is modeled in wax; then wire is threaded around this wax pattern, after which the wax is melted away. In Cuong's piece, which plays for just seven minutes, it is easy to imagine the downward chromatic scales

in the piano, ultrachromatic (quarter-tone) in the clarinet, and glissandos from the violin as malleable wax, the fast syncopated movement as weaving wire. "By the end," Cuong points out, "these smears of wax melt away, revealing a transformation of a rigid idea presented earlier in the piece." The starting point this time is like a shot from a firing pistol, a sharp attack by the pianist on a finger-damped string. But, as with the Felipe Lara work we heard at the program's opening, we are close here to the beginning of a composer's whole creative career, for Cuong, too, was in his mid-twenties when he came up with *Wax and Wire*.

Paul Griffiths is a music critic, novelist, and librettist.

LEARN MORE ABOUT TONIGHT'S PROGRAM

SCAN HERE



FOR MORE ABOUT THE PROGRAM,
INCLUDING INTERVIEWS WITH
COMPOSER DAVID SERKIN LUDWIG
AND CLARINETIST SEBASTIAN MANZ,
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ABOUT THE ARTISTS



LISA-MARIE MAZZUCCO

BELLA HRISTOVA

► Acclaimed for her passionate, powerful performances, violinist **Bella Hristova** has performed as a soloist with orchestras around the US, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and New Zealand. She was the featured soloist for a concerto commission written for her by her husband, composer David Serkin Ludwig, and has recorded the complete Beethoven and Brahms sonatas with renowned pianist Michael Houston. She received a 2013 Avery Fisher Career Grant and first prizes in the Michael Hill International Violin Competition and the Young Concert Artists International Auditions. Hristova studied with Ida Kavafian and Jaime Laredo. She is an alum of CMS's Bowers Program and plays a 1655 Nicolò Amati violin.



MARCO BORGREVE

SEBASTIAN MANZ

► Clarinetist **Sebastian Manz** has performed as a soloist with major European orchestras such as the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra, the Munich Chamber Orchestra, and the National Youth Orchestra of Germany. As a chamber musician, he has performed at the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Beethovenhaus Bonn, Festspiele Mecklenburg Vorpommern, and MDR Musiksommer in Germany, collaborating with artists like Danae Dörken and the Danish String Quartet. At the ARD International Music Competition in 2008, he won first prize in the clarinet category and the coveted Audience Prize. He is Principal Clarinet of the SWR Symphony Orchestra in Stuttgart. His recording *A Bernstein Story* was awarded with the Opus Klassik award in 2020, and he recently released a recording of clarinet concertos by Carl Nielsen and Magnus Lindberg, as well as a recital recording of works by Brahms and Schumann with pianist Herbert Schuch. He is an alum of CMS's Bowers Program.



TIMOTHY RIDOUT

► **Timothy Ridout**, a former BBC New Generation Artist, Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship 2020 winner, and recipient of the Royal Philharmonic Society 2023 Young Artist Award, is one of the most sought-after violists of his generation. The 2023–24 season sees him join WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, and Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra. Further highlights include his return to America with Camerata Pacifica and his debut with Royal Northern Sinfonia. Born in London in 1995, Ridout studied at the Royal Academy of Music, graduating with the Queen's Commendation for Excellence. He completed his master's at the Kronberg Academy with Nobuko Imai in 2019 and, in 2021, joined CMS's Bowers Program. He plays a viola by Peregrino di Zanetto c. 1565–75 on loan from a generous patron of Beare's International Violin Society.



JONATHAN SWENSEN

► Cellist **Jonathan Swensen** is the recipient of an Avery Fisher Career Grant and was featured as “One to Watch” in Gramophone. He made his concerto debut performing the Elgar Concerto with Portugal’s Orquestra Sinfónica do Porto Casa da Música, and has performed with the Philharmonia Orchestra, Orquesta Ciudad de Granada, Copenhagen Philharmonic, Mobile Symphony, Greenville Symphony, and the Aarhus, Odense, and Iceland symphonies. He has captured first prizes at the Windsor International String

Competition, Khachaturian International Cello Competition, and the Young Concert Artists International Auditions. A graduate of the Royal Danish Academy of Music, Swensen continued his studies with Torleif Thedéen at the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo and Laurence Lesser at New England Conservatory, where he received his Artist Diploma. In fall 2024, he joins CMS’s Bowers Program.



WU QIAN

► Winner of a 2016 Lincoln Center Emerging Artist Award and first prize in the Trio di Trieste Duo Competition, pianist **Wu Qian** has performed worldwide for over two decades. As soloist she has appeared with the Konzerthaus Orchester in Berlin, the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, the Brussels Philharmonic, Hong Kong Sinfonietta, the London Mozart Players, I Virtuosi Italiani, the European Union Chamber Orchestra, and the Munich Symphoniker. She is a founding member of the Sitkovetsky Piano Trio with which,

in addition to performing in major concert halls and series around the world, she has released critically acclaimed and prize-winning recordings on the BIS and Wigmore Live labels. Wu Qian is an alum of CMS’s Bowers Program and is the Artistic Director of the Surrey Hills International Festival in Surrey, UK.



CHELSEA WANG

► Praised by the *New York Times* as an “excellent young pianist,” **Chelsea Wang** has appeared as a soloist and chamber musician throughout North America, Europe and Asia. She is a prizewinner of many international piano competitions, and has performed with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, Des Moines Symphony and musicians from the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. Her festival appearances include Music@Menlo, Ravinia Steans Music Institute, Bravo!Vail, Tippet Rise, and many others. A native of West Des Moines, Iowa, Ms.

Wang is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and Peabody Conservatory, where she studied with Meng-Chieh Liu, Ignat Solzhenitsyn, Leon Fleisher, and Yong-Hi Moon. She is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree at Northwestern University’s Bienen School of Music with James Giles. Additionally, Wang is a member of Ensemble Connect, a fellowship program under the joint auspices of Carnegie Hall, the Weill Institute, and the Juilliard School.

ABOUT THE COMPOSERS



AARON JAY YOUNG

VIET CUONG

► Called “alluring” and “wildly inventive” by the *New York Times*, the music of American composer Viet Cuong has been performed on six continents by musicians and ensembles such as the New York Philharmonic, eighth blackbird, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Sō Percussion, Alarm Will Sound, Atlanta Symphony, Sandbox Percussion, Albany Symphony, PRISM Quartet, and Dallas Winds, among many others. Cuong’s music has been featured in venues

such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and the Kennedy Center, and his works for wind ensemble have amassed several hundreds of performances worldwide. Passionate about bringing these different facets of the contemporary music community together, he includes among his recent projects a concerto for eighth blackbird with the United States Navy Band. Cuong also enjoys exploring the unexpected and whimsical, and he is often drawn to projects where he can make peculiar combinations and sounds feel enchanting or oddly satisfying. His works thus include a snare drum solo, percussion quartet concerto, and double oboe concerto. He is currently the Pacific Symphony’s Composer-in-Residence and serves as Assistant Professor of Music Composition at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Cuong holds degrees from Princeton University, the Curtis Institute of Music, and Peabody Conservatory.



CELESTESLOMAN

FELIPE LARA

► **Felipe Lara** is hailed as a gifted Brazilian-American modernist by the *New York Times*. Recently, Lara has been commissioned by leading soloists and institutions, including the Arditti Quartet, Brentano Quartet, Claire Chase, Conrad Tao, Donaueschinger Musiktage, Ensemble InterContemporain, Ensemble Modern, Helsinki Philharmonic, International Contemporary Ensemble, Los Angeles Philharmonic, São Paulo Symphony, and Talea Ensemble. His works have been performed by esteemed conductors such as Dirk Kaftan,

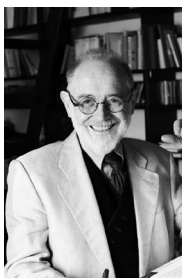
Ilan Volkov, Peter Eötvös, Susanna Mälkki, Steven Schick, Thomas Adès, and Vimbayi Kaziboni. Currently, he serves as Associate Professor and Chair of the Composition Department at the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University. He has previously held teaching positions at Boston Conservatory at Berklee and the Faculty of Arts and Science at New York University. He has also served as a Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Chicago and Visiting Lecturer at Harvard’s Department of Music, where he was recognized with two Harvard Excellence in Teaching Awards. Having been honored with a Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study Fellowship from Harvard University, Lara holds a PhD from New York University (GSAS), where he was a distinguished Henry M. MacCracken Fellow. He also obtained a master’s degree from Tufts University and a bachelor’s degree from Berklee College of Music.



DAVID SERKIN LUDWIG

► **David Serkin Ludwig**'s first memory was singing Beatles songs with his sister; his second was hearing his grandfather perform at Carnegie Hall; foreshadowing a diverse career collaborating with many of today's leading musicians, filmmakers, and writers. His choral work *The New Colossus* opened the private prayer service for President Obama's second inauguration. The next year NPR Music named him in the world's "Top 100 Composers Under Forty." He holds

positions and residencies with nearly two dozen orchestras and music festivals in the US and abroad. Ludwig has received commissions and notable performances from many of the most recognized artists and ensembles of our time, including the Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Minnesota, and National Symphony Orchestras, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Dresden Music Festival, as well as Jonathan Biss, Jeremy Denk, Jennifer Koh, Jaime Laredo, David Shifrin, eighth blackbird, the Dover and Borromeo Quartets, and the PRISM Saxophone Quartet. In 2022 Ludwig was awarded CMS's Stoeger Prize. He received the 2018 Pew Center for the Arts and Heritage Fellowship, as well as the First Music Award, and is a two-time recipient of the Independence Foundation Fellowship, a Theodore Presser Foundation Career Grant, and awards from New Music USA, the American Composers Forum, American Music Center, Detroit Chamber Winds, and the National Endowment for the Arts. In 2021 Ludwig was named a Steinway Artist by Steinway and Sons and was recently appointed Dean and Director of Music at the Juilliard School. He lives in New York City with his wife, acclaimed violinist Bella Hristova.



KURT SCHWERTSIK

► **Kurt Schwertsik** studied composition with Joseph Marx and Karl Schiske, and horn at the Vienna Academy of Music. In 1958 he co-founded the new-music ensemble "die reihe." Schwertsik attended the Darmstadt Summer Courses at their peak around 1960, and was a pupil there and in Cologne of Karlheinz Stockhausen. However, the influence of John Cage and other American composers, together with Schwertsik's friendship with Cornelius Cardew, opened alternative creative paths, leading to his ultimate rejection of serialism

and reorientation towards tonality as a means of musical communication. In 1965 with the composer/pianist Otto Zykan he co-founded the Salon Concerts in Vienna and published a manifesto attacking certain aspects of the post-war avant-garde. Over several decades, Schwertsik has attracted a reputation as one of Austria's leading composers. He has been honored in his home city with the largest retrospective of his music at Wien Modern in 1992. His most significant compositions include the fantasy opera *Fanferlieschen Schönefüßchen* and the cycle of five orchestral works *Irdische Klänge*. Concertos by Schwertsik include those for violin, timpani, guitar, double bass, alphorn, trombone, and *Instant Music* for flute and wind orchestra. He has collaborated with the noted choreographer Johann Kresnik on the four ballets *Macbeth*, *Frida Kahlo*, *Nietzsche*, and *Gastmahl der Liebe*. Recordings of music by Schwertsik

have appeared on the EMI, Largo, ABC Classics, ORF, and Chandos labels.



JOHANNES MARIA STAUD

► Born in Innsbruck in 1974, Johannes Maria Staud draws much of his inspiration from literature and the visual arts. Reflections on philosophical questions, social processes, and political events also influence his compositions. He studied musicology and philosophy in Vienna before continuing his compositional studies with Hanspeter Kyburz in Berlin. In 2002, just one year after graduating, he won the Erste Bank Composition Prize; in 2003 he received the International Rostrum of Composers prize, followed by the Ernst von Siemens Composers' Prize in 2004 and

the Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival's Paul-Hindemith-Prize in 2009. Prestigious commissions followed from the Berlin Philharmonic, the Vienna Philharmonic, and others. Recent premieres include *Missing in Cantu* (with a libretto by Thomas Köck) at the Kunstfest Weimar and the percussion concerto *Whereas the reality trembles* (Christoph Sietzen, Cleveland Orchestra, Franz Welser-Möst). For the coming season, Johannes Maria Staud is composing a wind quintet for the Ensemble Windkraft (premiere at the Osterfestival Tirol) and a new work for the Munich Chamber Orchestra. With *Die schöne Müllerin/These Fevered Days*, an ensemble version of Franz Schubert's song cycle with new songs on texts by Emily Dickinson, is being created for the Schubert interpreter Christoph Prégardien and the Ensemble Kontraste. Staud is Professor of Composition at the Mozarteum University in Salzburg since autumn 2018. He is co-initiator of the annual summer academy of composition Arco, which alternates between Marseille and Salzburg.

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Through its many performance, education, and digital activities, CMS brings the experience of great chamber music to more people than any other organization of its kind. The performing artists constitute a multi-generational and international roster of the world's finest chamber musicians, enabling CMS to present chamber music of every instrumentation, style, and historical period. The Bowers Program, our competitive three-season residency, is dedicated to developing the chamber music leaders of the future and integrates this selection of extraordinary early-career musicians into every facet of CMS activities. CMS reaches a growing global audience through a range of free digital media, including livestreams, an online archive of 1,500+ video recordings, as well as broadcasts that are distributed to millions of listeners.

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