

A TALE OF THREE TRIOS

SATURDAY EVENING, APRIL 20, 2024, AT 7:30

The Concert Hall at Drew University

EVREN OZEL, piano

WU HAN, piano

ARNAUD SUSSMANN, violin

DAVID FINCKEL, cello

JOSE FRANCH-BALLESTER, clarinet

**LUDWIG VAN
BEETHOVEN**
(1770–1827)

**Trio in B-flat major for Clarinet, Cello,
and Piano, Op. 11 (1797)**

- ▶ Allegro con brio
- ▶ Adagio
- ▶ Tema: Pria ch'io l'impegno

FRANCH-BALLESTER, FINCKEL, OZEL

MAX BRUCH
(1838–1920)

**Selections from Eight Pieces for
Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, Op. 83 (1909)**

- ▶ II. Allegro con moto
- ▶ III. Andante con moto—Andante
- ▶ VI. Nachtgesang: Andante con moto
- ▶ VII. Allegro vivace, ma non troppo

FRANCH-BALLESTER, FINCKEL, OZEL

—INTERMISSION—

JOHANNES BRAHMS
(1833–1897)

**Selections from *Hungarian Dances* for
Piano, Four Hands (1858–68)**

- ▶ Poco sostenuto (F minor)
- ▶ Allegretto (A major)
- ▶ Allegro molto (G minor)

OZEL, WU HAN

**FELIX
MENDELSSOHN**
(1809–1847)

**Trio No. 2 in C minor for Piano, Violin,
and Cello, Op. 66 (1845)**

- ▶ Allegro energico e con fuoco
- ▶ Andante espressivo
- ▶ Scherzo: Molto allegro, quasi presto
- ▶ Finale: Allegro appassionato

WU HAN, SUSSMANN, FINCKEL

PLEASE TURN OFF CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

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

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

BY JACK SLAVIN

Trio in B-flat major for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, Op. 11

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

- Baptized December 17, 1770, in Bonn (likely born December 16)
- Died March 26, 1827, in Vienna

Composed in 1797

- Duration: 21 minutes

Following on the heels of Beethoven's Op. 1—a set of three trios for violin, cello, and piano—his Op. 11 Trio in B-flat major is often referred to as his fourth piano trio. Indeed, it is often heard with a violin instead of a clarinet, in an arrangement that Beethoven himself wrote to increase the commercial potential of the work at a time when the clarinet was far less commonly played. Today it is performed with the composer's original instrumentation, perhaps inspired by Mozart's famous "Kegelstatt" trio, which combined clarinet, viola, and piano.

The first movement begins with three chromatically ascending half-notes played in octaves across all three parts—initially heard as a rather matter-of-fact opening statement, but cleverly reinterpreted in the second theme of the exposition. Before that, however, Beethoven treats the listener to a delightful passage that alternates elegant melodic gestures with sparkling scales in the piano and arpeggios in the clarinet. Though the music is decidedly lighthearted (perhaps uncharacteristically so, even for the composer's so-called early period),

its scope, harmonic exploration, and Beethovenian dynamic contrasts set it apart from earlier Classical trios.

The *Adagio's* first theme is beautiful in its reserved simplicity. The cello's rich sound unites the separate gestures of the theme into a cohesive melody that is then picked up by the clarinet and piano. The movement's brief development explores the dark parallel key of E-flat minor and, unexpectedly, the sunny E major (though this may sound alphabetically close to the E-flat major tonic, it is in reality a distant modulation which Beethoven accomplishes artfully). The refined nature of the first theme is preserved in its more ornate iteration following the development.

Perhaps the most recognizable movement of the trio is the final theme and variations, whose source material is a popular tune from Joseph Weigl's opera *L'amor marinaro*. The movement's subtitle quotes from the first line of a popular number from the opera, "Pria ch'io l'impegno magistral prenda far vuò merenda" ("Before I get to work I need a snack"). The jovial nature of the theme is not surprising in light of this translation; Beethoven's subsequent variations are, however, brilliantly inventive in the variety of characters they embody. The ensemble is split into a virtuosic piano solo for the first variation and a soft clarinet-cello duet for the second. The players reunite for the exuberant third variation, followed by a lugubrious minor-key take on the theme. A major scale bursts out in the piano part of

the fifth variation and delicate two-note slurs set the tone of the sixth. The minor mode returns with the militaristic dotted rhythms of the seventh variation.

The eighth obscures the theme while the ninth celebrates it, leading into an energetic, syncopated coda that closes this lovely trio.

Selections from Eight Pieces for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, Op. 83

MAX BRUCH

- Born January 6, 1838, in Cologne
- Died October, 2, 1920, in Berlin

Composed in 1909

- Duration: 19 minutes

Though Max Bruch is known today for just a few popular works, throughout his lifetime he was a prolific composer, especially of choral music, and a well-regarded pedagogue. In the shadow of like-minded, Classically oriented Romantic predecessors like Mendelssohn and Brahms, and in open disagreement with the musical innovation spearheaded by the next generation, Bruch was often treated as overly conservative by peers and contemporary critics. Much of his oeuvre—save for the Violin Concerto in G minor, the *Scottish Fantasy* for Violin and Orchestra, and *Kol Nidrei*—has, as a result, never received the attention it deserves.

Bruch wrote the Eight Pieces for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano in 1910, at the outset of a decade that saw some of the most ground-breaking works of the 20th century, including Schoenberg's atonal *Pierrot Lunaire* (1912) and Stravinsky's riotous *Rite of Spring* (1913). And yet, this work defies the avant-garde trends of its day, instead harkening back to its septuagenarian composer's roots

in mid-19th-century Romanticism. Composed for his son, a budding clarinetist, this set of eight miniatures is just that—a collection of individual pieces not intended by the composer to be performed in its entirety (in fact he is said to have discouraged that approach). Today, four selections are performed in an arrangement for clarinet, cello, and piano—a recommendation from Bruch's publisher to widen the potential market for the work.

Surging triplet arpeggios open the *Allegro con moto* in the key of B minor. The cello enters with a lyrical theme, picked up shortly by the clarinet. Bruch uses the distinctive three-note motif to build the intensity up to a sublime climax in the major mode. The nervous energy of the opening quickly takes over, but relents in time for a soft B-major ending.

The cello and clarinet play two distinct characters in the third piece (*Andante con moto*). The cello begins with an extended recitative-like passage inflected with dotted rhythms and angular gestures. The clarinet follows with material so different that the listener can hardly believe it to be part of the same piece: a sweet, nostalgic melody with flowing accompaniment in the piano. Initially at odds with one another, the two parts converge in a lovely, if unforeseen, duet.

The sixth piece is subtitled *Nachtgesang*, or "Nocturne." The warmth of the clarinet timbre is especially fitting

and poignantly expresses the tender, introspective nature of this miniature. The subdued nocturne blossoms into an impassioned middle section, linked to the outer ones with consistent use of dotted rhythms and triplets, the latter of which serve as the building blocks of a short clarinet cadenza following the last major summit of the piece, which dissipates to *pianississimo* (extremely quiet) in a series of imitative utterances.

Selections from *Hungarian Dances* for Piano, Four Hands

JOHANNES BRAHMS

- Born May 7, 1833, in Hamburg
- Died April 3, 1897, in Vienna

Composed in 1858–68

- Duration: 9 minutes

Brahms's fascination with the Hungarian and Romani musical traditions can be traced back to the influx into Hamburg of political refugees on their way further west following the upheaval of the Hungarian Revolution of 1848. Brahms is said to have made the acquaintance of one such refugee, a violinist by the name of Ede Reményi, who introduced him to the *style hongrois*—a style that incorporates the musical vocabulary of the Roma people (referred to at the time as gypsies). The influence of this style can be heard throughout Brahms's career, whether in outright homage—as in the *Hungarian Dances* heard today—or more subtly woven into larger pieces.

A brooding melody emanates from the intertwined hands of the pianists at the outset of the *Poco sostenuto*.

The final selection on today's program is the only major-key piece out of the eight. Quite the contrast from the Nocturne, the opening of the *Allegro vivace* is lively, bright, and cheerful. Cheeky trills, playful accents, and crisp staccatos showcase a different side of the Romantic style to which Bruch was so attached with an ebullience reminiscent of the finale of his ever-popular Violin Concerto No. 1, albeit on a smaller scale.

Excitement bubbles in the staccatos of the *secondo*, ushering in a bright and *Vivace* section.¹ A surprising digression to the playful and ornamented *Molto Allegro*—yet a third idea—showcases Brahms's imaginative approach to combining the traditional melodies he learned from the likes of Reményi with his own.

Full of staccatos, ornaments, and bouncy rhythmic figures, the *Allegretto* is brilliantly subtle in its playfulness. From the start, the listener detects a hint of irony in the amusing, spirited gestures of the opening melody. The virtuosic outbursts and the Romantic reinterpretation of the main theme in the middle section are similarly tongue-in-cheek.

The *secondo* part opens the G-minor *Allegro molto*, the first dance in the published edition, with a sensual melody punctuated by fluttering sixteenth-notes in the *primo*. The dotted figures of the middle section are imbued with a fiery bravado that contrasts with the *leggiere*

¹ In four-hand piano music, *primo* refers to the first player's part, often situated in the upper register, and *secondo* to the second, usually in the lower register. However, these terms do not imply any hierarchy; the *primo* is not necessarily more virtuosic than the *secondo*.

(light) sixteenths. A swift cascade of notes brings the passionate dance to an end.

Trio No. 2 in C minor for Piano, Violin, and Cello, Op. 66

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

- Born February 3, 1809, in Hamburg
- Died November 4, 1847, in Leipzig

Composed in 1845

- Duration: 28 minutes

Felix Mendelssohn lived from 1809 to 1847, making him a close contemporary of the likes of Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849) and Robert Schumann (1810–1856). While the latter two are labeled as strictly Romantic composers, the Classical influence on Mendelssohn's writing is too strong to ignore. Much of his oeuvre stays true to the formal structures and elegant balance of the Classical period while exploring the colorful harmonic language, emotive range, and virtuosic limits of the Romantic style. His second piano trio—the last chamber work he saw through to publication—exemplifies this confluence of musical traditions by balancing expressive scope with formal structure. The work pays homage to earlier composers—rather explicitly in the case of Bach and more broadly to Beethoven, for whom C minor was a salient key—while looking ahead to the later Romantic style.

The *Allegro energico e con fuoco* (fast, energetic, fiery) opens with a hurried, rising gesture in the piano and an ominous drone in the lower registers of the violin and cello. The strings pick up the piano's motif and see the frenetic

opening to a definitive cadence in the tonic key. Softly, but retaining the anxiety of the opening, the violin delivers the first truly melodic material of the work, followed quickly by the cello while sixteenth-notes flutter throughout the piano accompaniment. Scholars note that this melody quotes from the *Lieder ohne Worte*, Op. 102, No. 1, composed just a few years prior to this trio. A stately second theme in E-flat major emerges seamlessly—though not subtly, thanks to its *fortissimo* (very loud) marking—from the C-minor tumult. The opening motif is transformed in the development from the soaring, legato momentum of the exposition to a staccato and *leggiere* (light) version that slowly builds tension. What follows is one of the only moments of true calm in this stormy movement: the strings alternate exploratory statements of the second subject over a fluid, arpeggiated accompaniment in the piano. The recapitulation is anything but formulaic; dynamic surges and continued exploration of the three main musical ideas maintain the tempestuous intensity through to the *fortissimo* ending.

The piano introduces the theme of the second movement in a vertical, chorale-like texture before it is picked up by the strings. The compound meter lends a gentle lilt to the melody that is accentuated by the pulsing eighth-notes in the piano. Often likened to a *Song without Words*—a short, lyrical piano form favored by Mendelssohn—this

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2024-2025 SEASON AT DREW UNIVERSITY



POULENC'S HOMAGE TO WINDS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2024 • 7:30 PM

BEETHOVEN Duo No. 3 in B-flat major for Clarinet and Bassoon, WoO 27

GLIÈRE Four Pieces for Horn and Piano, Op. 35

POULENC Sonata for Clarinet and Bassoon

MARTINŮ Sonata for Flute and Piano

GLINKA *Trio pathétique* in D minor for Clarinet, Bassoon, and Piano

POULENC Sextet for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn, and Piano

Michael Stephen Brown, PIANO • Adam Walker, FLUTE • James Austin Smith, OBOE
David Shifrin, CLARINET • Marc Goldberg, BASSOON • Radek Baborák, HORN

MOZART & MENDELSSOHN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2025 • 7:30 PM

MOZART Duo in G major for Violin and Viola, K. 423

MENDELSSOHN String Quintet No. 1 in A major, Op. 18

MOZART String Quintet in C major, K. 515

Richard Lin, Danbi Um, VIOLIN • Aaron Boyd, Paul Neubauer, VIOLA
Jonathan Swensen, CELLO

SCHUBERT'S TROUT QUINTET

SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 2025 • 7:30 PM

W.F. BACH Fugue in F minor for String Trio (arr. Mozart)

MOZART Adagio and Fugue in C minor for Strings, K. 546

MOZART Piano Quartet in E-flat major, K. 493

SCHUBERT Piano Quintet in A major, D. 667, "Trout"

Wu Han, PIANO • Julian Rhee, Arnaud Sussmann, VIOLIN • Paul Neubauer, VIOLA
Sterling Elliott, CELLO • Anthony Manzo, DOUBLE BASS

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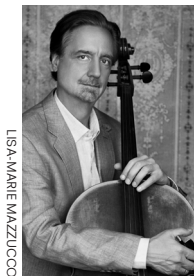
movement showcases the composer's talent for beautiful melodic writing. The scherzo, another quintessentially Mendelssohnian form, whizzes by in a blur of sixteenth-notes. Beginning with staggered entrances of a mischievous G-minor theme, the movement grips the listener's attention, even throughout the brief major-key trio section, where the excitement remains undiluted.

The finale opens with a distinctly dissonant upward leap and subsequent descent in the cello. After development, this dance-like gesture is fragmented and—in a rather remarkable juxtaposition—paired with a Lutheran-style chorale in the piano. There is no consensus among scholars as to the exact source material, or if this even is a quotation, but what is striking is how effectively Mendelssohn weaves this seemingly unrelated musical unit into a finale marked *Allegro appassionato*

(fast, passionately). Indeed, the chorale melody comes back later in the movement with *fortissimo* chords in the right hand of the piano and a *tremolo* (rapid oscillation between two notes) in the left along with double-stop chords in the strings. This effectively removes the chorale from its usual environment (simple, unadorned chords) and situates it in the quasi-orchestral texture of this monumental work—a fitting place for a chorale's emotional gravitas as a musical symbol of the church and the calling card of Mendelssohn's most venerated composer, J. S. Bach. Following this resurgence of the chorale, Mendelssohn builds to one final climax before drawing the trio to a triumphant close in the parallel key of C major.

Jack Slavin is a pianist, music educator, and arts professional based in New York City.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



LISA MARIE MAZZUCCO

DAVID FINCKEL

► Co-Artistic Director of CMS since 2004, cellist **David Finckel** has performed on the world's stages in the roles of recitalist, chamber artist, and orchestral soloist. The first American student of Mstislav Rostropovich, he joined the Emerson String Quartet in 1979, and during 34 seasons garnered nine Grammy Awards and the Avery Fisher Prize. In 1997, he and pianist Wu Han founded ArtistLed, the first internet-based, artist-controlled classical recording label. In 2022, Music@Menlo, a summer chamber music festival in Silicon Valley founded and directed by David and Wu Han, celebrated its 20th season. He is a professor at both the Juilliard School and Stony Brook University, and oversees both CMS's Bowers Program and Music@Menlo's Chamber Music Institute. Along with Wu Han, he received Musical America's 2012 Musicians of the Year Award.



ASHLEIGH TAYLOR

JOSE FRANCH-BALLESTER

► Spanish clarinetist **Jose Franch-Ballester** is the recipient of an Avery Fisher Career Grant and a winner of both the Young Concert Artists and Astral Artists auditions. He is Assistant Professor of Clarinet and Chamber Music at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, and regularly performs as the Principal Clarinetist at Camerata Pacifica in Santa Barbara, California. As a soloist, he has performed with orchestras such as the BBC Concert Orchestra, Louisville Orchestra, Santa Barbara Chamber Orchestra, Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México, I Musici Montreal, and Orquesta Sinfónica Radio Televisión Española. Born in Moncofa into a family of musicians, Franch-Ballester graduated from the Joaquín Rodrigo Music Conservatory in Valencia, continuing his studies at the Curtis Institute of Music. He is an alum of CMS's Bowers Program.



EVREN OZEL

► American pianist **Evren Ozel** is the recipient of a 2023 Avery Fisher Career Grant and a 2022 Salon de Virtuosi Career Grant. He is represented by Concert Artists Guild as a winner of their 2021 competition. A dedicated chamber musician, he has played at the Marlboro Festival and ChamberFest Cleveland with artists including Jonathan Biss, Hsin-Yun Huang, Joseph Lin, Christoph Richter, and Peter Wiley. His 2023–24 season includes his debuts at the Gardner Museum and Frick Collection with violinist

Charlotte Saluste-Bridoux. Ozel received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the New England Conservatory, and is currently a candidate in their

Artist Diploma program, all under the tutelage of Wha Kyung Byun. Other mentors include Jonathan Biss, Imogen Cooper, Richard Goode, and Mitsuko Uchida. Ozel joins CMS's Bowers Program in fall 2024.



MATT DINE

ARNAUD SUSSMANN

► Winner of a 2009 Avery Fisher Career Grant, **Arnaud Sussmann** has recently appeared as soloist with the Vancouver Symphony and the New World Symphony. As a chamber musician, he has performed at the Tel Aviv Museum, London's Wigmore Hall, the Dresden Music Festival, and the Phillips Collection in Washington, DC. He has also given concerts at the Moritzburg, Caramoor, Music@Menlo, La Jolla SummerFest, Mainly Mozart, Seattle Chamber Music, Chamber Music Northwest, and Moab

Music festivals. An alum of CMS's Bowers Program, Sussmann is Artistic Director of the Chamber Music Society of Palm Beach and Co-Director of Music@Menlo's International Program, and teaches at Stony Brook University. In September 2022, he was named Founding Artistic Director of the Boscobel Chamber Music Festival.



LISA-MARIE MAZZUCCO

WU HAN

► Pianist **Wu Han**, recipient of Musical America's Musician of the Year Award, enjoys a multi-faceted musical life that encompasses artistic direction, performing, and recording. Co-Artistic Director of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center since 2004 as well as Founder and Co-Artistic Director of Silicon Valley's Music@Menlo since 2002, she also serves as Artistic Advisor for Wolf Trap's Chamber Music at the Barns series and Palm Beach's Society of the Four Arts, and as Artistic Director

for La Musica in Sarasota, Florida. She is the Founder and Artistic Director of ArtistLed, classical music's first artist-directed, internet-based recording label. A recipient of the Andrew Wolf Award, she was mentored by some of the greatest pianists of our time, including Lilian Kallir, Rudolf Serkin, and Menahem Pressler. Married to cellist David Finckel since 1985, Wu Han divides her time between concert touring and residences in New York City and Westchester County.

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The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center (CMS) was founded in 1969 under the leadership and patronage of Alice Tully and the artistic direction of Charles Wadsworth, beginning a new era for chamber music in the United States.

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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