



Chamber
Music Society
of Lincoln Center

DAVID FINCKEL AND WU HAN, ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

ROSE STUDIO CONCERT

Thursday, October 31, 2024, at 6:30 pm

Daniel and Joanna S. Rose Studio at CMS

2024-2025 SEASON



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.

The Jerome L. Greene Foundation is the 2024–2025 CMS Season Sponsor.

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*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.*

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Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center

THURSDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 31, 2024, AT 6:30 AND 9:00

► 4,477TH AND 4,478TH CONCERTS

Daniel and Joanna S. Rose Studio at CMS

Julian Rhee, violin

Yura Lee, viola

Jonathan Swensen, cello

Nina Bernat, double bass

James Austin Smith, oboe and host

Tommaso Lonquich, clarinet

Hummel and Prokofiev

**Johann Nepomuk
Hummel**

(1778–1837)

**Quartet in E-flat major for Clarinet, Violin, Viola, and
Cello (1808)**

- Allegro moderato
- La Seccatura: Allegro molto
- Andante
- Rondo: Allegretto

LONQUICH, RHEE, LEE, SWENSEN

**Sergei
Prokofiev**
(1891–1953)

**Quintet in G minor for Oboe, Clarinet, Violin, Viola,
and Bass, Op. 39 (1924)**

- Moderato
- Andante energico
- Allegro sostenuto, ma con brio
- Adagio pesante
- Allegro precipitato, ma non troppo presto
- Andantino

SMITH, LONQUICH, RHEE, LEE, BERNAT

PLEASE TURN OFF CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

Photographing, sound recording, or videotaping this performance is prohibited.

Notes on the Program

BY NICKY SWETT

Johann Nepomuk Hummel

Quartet in E-flat major for Clarinet, Violin, Viola, and Cello

- ▶ Born November 14, 1778, in Pressburg (now Bratislava)
- ▶ Died October 17, 1837, in Weimar

Composed in 1808

- ▶ These are the first CMS performances of this piece.
- ▶ Duration: 27 minutes

At the start of 1804, the pianist and composer Johann Nepomuk Hummel officially took up a position as the head of the musical establishment of Nikolaus II, Prince Esterházy, at the palace of Eisenstadt. Hummel was essentially the replacement for Joseph Haydn, who stayed on as Kapellmeister in name but surrendered most responsibilities to the younger composer. The appointment was not altogether a success. Hummel wrote a lot of great music for the court, but he was treated with skepticism after Haydn's many years in the position. He also found himself distracted, pulled between his responsibilities at Eisenstadt and numerous composing and performing opportunities in Vienna. In 1807, he led a disappointing rendition of Ludwig van Beethoven's Choral Fantasy, Op. 80, an event that created some tension between the two composers, who were already seen as rivals by the musical establishment. By December of 1808, Prince Nikolaus was fed up; he fired Hummel, sending him back to Vienna, where he found plenty of other work.

At the tail end of his Esterházy period, Hummel wrote a quartet for clarinet and strings, dated September 1808 on the extant manuscript. Much of the piece shows the sweet, lyrical side to his writing that he got from W. A. Mozart, who taught

him when he was a boy. In the sighing chorale texture of the violin and viola at the start of his Clarinet Quartet, and in the wandering cello line that closes off the first movement's opening theme, Hummel gives a transparent nod to Mozart's 1789 Clarinet Quintet, K. 581. The wandering development section includes moments of dissonant counterpoint that recall the more adventurous passages from Mozart's string quartets. In the *Andante* third movement, we likewise hear Hummel the Mozart acolyte, who balances moments of sublime lyrical simplicity with operatic flare.

The quartet's second movement, titled *La Seccatura* or "The Bother," involves an abundance of metrical puns. Most of the time, each of the four parts is reading in a different time signature; at first, the collection includes $\frac{2}{4}$, $\frac{3}{8}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, and $\frac{6}{8}$. Though the players' parts are spelled out quite differently, they actually tend to sound in rhythmic unison. Hummel's choice could be thought of as an inside joke for the musicians, but such discrepancies in written meter always have subtle effects on how the same stream of notes gets shaped and accented. Furthermore, in the moments in which the voices do genuinely divide, it is quite exciting: a little burst of tension created by a sense of the players feeling different pulses that have secretly been there the whole time.

The same playfulness pervades the finale, a *Rondo* based on an easy-going clarinet melody. The accompaniment lines provide variety each time the refrain is repeated: first, hurdy-gurdy drones in the cello, then swinging, Romantic pizzicatos, and then combinations of the two ideas. The central

episode is a witty dance introduced by the cellist that displays a perfect Viennese lilt, the kind of music that would have been a

hit when Hummel made his way back to the big city.

Sergei Prokofiev

Quintet in G minor for Oboe, Clarinet, Violin, Viola, and Bass, Op. 39

- ▶ April 23 (O. S. April 11), 1891, in Sontsovka, Russian Empire (now Sonstivka, Ukraine)
- ▶ Died March 5, 1953, in Moscow

Composed in 1924

- ▶ First CMS performance on July 26, 2003, by oboist Stephen Taylor, clarinetist David Shiffrin, violinist Ani Kavafian, violist Ida Kavafian, and double bassist Edgar Meyer
- ▶ Duration: 23 minutes

In 1924, the ballet master Boris Romanov commissioned Sergei Prokofiev to compose a score for *Trapèze*, a new stage piece about life in the circus that he was choreographing for his touring company. Prokofiev had recently married the singer Lina Llubera, and they had moved to Paris at the end of 1923. He was in a period of experimentation with dissonance, inspired by contemporary developments in France. He obliged Romanov's request with a quintet for oboe, clarinet, violin, viola, and double bass, and to make the most of the commission, he devised it both as a ballet and as a work that could be published on its own. He released the quintet version in late 1924 as his Op. 39, before the ballet was produced. When Romanov finally staged the piece with his company in 1925, the subsequent tour was a flop; it is entirely thanks to Prokofiev's chamber version that *Trapèze* has remained in the repertoire.

We don't know exactly why Prokofiev chose to include the double bass in this piece. He did have some affection for the instrument, as is clear from later works that feature the bass like the film scores to *Lieutenant Kije* and *Ivan the Terrible*. But

its inclusion here may have related to more practical concerns. The common choice of a low string instrument, the cello, requires a good chair, which can be a nuisance to bring on tour and to squeeze into flexible spaces where a small ballet company might perform. The double bass, meanwhile, can be played standing, so despite its size, it can be an easier fit for traveling troupes.

This quintet is one of Prokofiev's most tonally and formally adventurous works. The note-for-note clashes between instruments are emphasized by the wide range of the ensemble and by the contrasting timbres of the bass, upper strings, clarinet, and oboe. The first two movements introduce the ballerina at the center of the scene, starting with a set of variations. The quite substantial theme follows a three-part form, starting in G minor, moving to A minor, before settling again in G minor. This large tonal arch is foreshadowed by the double bass part at the very beginning, which alternates between the notes A and G. A melancholy first variation with an important bass part and a spritely second variation with furious scrubbing in the violin follow, and the movement closes with a condensed version of the original theme.

Though Prokofiev's harmonic language is dense at times, he includes enough melodic hooks for the music to remain comprehensible and exciting. He also sprinkles the music with cadences: though the phrases might reach very dissonant points, they almost always come to a clear, tonal conclusion. The second movement, still introducing the prima ballerina, is an

Andante energico. Though the tempo never rushes, there are always terse rhythmic ideas, often rather ferocious, which drive the music forward. Toward the end, the violin floats away in a series of quick, ghostly scales, a texture that Prokofiev would go on to use in many of his later chamber works.

The next three movements represent the dances of the circus tumblers. The *Allegro sostenuto* has an infectious rhythmic scheme and calls for the violin, viola, and bass to play aggressive, repeated up-bows, which involve rapidly taking the bow off the string and then sharply reinitiating the sound. The music is in $\frac{5}{4}$ time, but Prokofiev varies the pulse so that sometimes the measures are felt as five even beats, and sometimes as three asymmetrical groups. The tumblers become sad and serious

in the *Adagio pesante*, in which the repeated figures in the viola and drones in the bass and violin support long lines in the winds that grow less and less consonant. The melody shared by clarinet and oboe at the start of the *Allegro precipitato* is a classic Prokofiev wrong-note tune, with lots of leaps and just enough slightly out-of-key pitches to keep the music peppery and fresh. In the final movement of the quintet, the crowd mourns the ballerina, who has had an accident. It alternates between an emotionally stodgy, almost freeze-frame melody and frantic, up-tempo music. The piece ends with a buzzing, panicked run of notes in the strings.

Program notes © Nicky Swett

About the Artists



MASA KUMAJIMA

Nina Bernat

Double bassist Nina Bernat is a recipient of the 2023 Avery Fisher Career Grant and a member of CMS's Bowers Program. First prizes include the Barbash J.S. Bach String Competition, the Juilliard Double Bass Competition, and the 2019 International Society of Bassists Solo Competition. She has performed as a soloist with the Minnesota Orchestra and as guest principal with the Israel Philharmonic and Oslo Philharmonic. Bernat has quickly established herself as a sought-after pedagogue, giving masterclasses around the country while also serving

on the faculty of Stony Brook University. Highlights of the 2024–25 season include recitals at Weill Recital Hall and Merkin Hall. Bernat performs on a beautiful and sonorous early-18th-century bass, attributed to Guadagnini and handed down to her from her father.



Yura Lee

Violinist/violist Yura Lee has a multifaceted career as a soloist and chamber musician. At age 12, she became the youngest artist ever to receive the Debut Artist of the Year prize at the *Performance Today* awards given by National Public Radio. She is the recipient of a 2007 Avery Fisher Career Grant and numerous other international prizes. She plays a Giovanni Grancino violin kindly loaned to her through the Beares International Violin Society by generous sponsors. For viola, she plays an instrument made in 2002 by Douglas Cox. Lee is a professor

at the University of Southern California, Thornton School of Music, holding the Alice and Eleonore Schoenfeld Endowed Chair. She divides her time between Los Angeles, California, and Portland, Oregon.



ANDRE GRILC

Tommaso Lonquich

Italian clarinetist Tommaso Lonquich enjoys a distinguished international career. He is Solo Clarinetist with Ensemble MidtVest, and as a chamber musician has partnered with Christian Tetzlaff, Pekka Kuusisto, Carolin Widmann, Ani and Ida Kavafian, Nicolas Dautricourt, David Shifrin, David Finckel, Nicolas Altstaedt, Wu Han, Gilbert Kalish, Anneleen Lenaerts, Yura Lee, Gilles Vonsattel, and the Danish and Vertavo string quartets. As a guest principal in several orchestras, he has collaborated with conductors including Zubin

Mehta, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Fabio Luisi, and Leonard Slatkin. As a soloist, he has appeared with the Radio Television Orchestra of Slovenia, Orchestra Canova, and the Orchestra del Teatro Olimpico of Vicenza, among others. An alum of CMS's Bowers Program, Lonquich is Founder and Co-Artistic Director of Schackenberg Musikfest, and can be heard on more than twenty albums.



Julian Rhee

Winner of the prestigious 2024 Avery Fisher Career Grant, Korean-American violinist Julian Rhee came to international prominence following his prize-winning performances at the 2024 Queen Elisabeth International Violin Competition and Silver Medal finish at the 11th Quadrennial International Violin Competition of Indianapolis. He has appeared with orchestras including the Milwaukee Symphony, Belgian National Orchestra, Antwerp Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, Richmond Symphony, and San Diego Symphony. Julian is a member of CMS's Bowers Program and

has performed at festivals including Marlboro Music, Ravinia Steans Institute, and North Shore Chamber Music Festival. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees at the New England Conservatory with Miriam Fried, and currently studies with Christian Tetzlaff at the Kronberg Academy. Julian is the recipient of the 1699 "Lady Tennant" Antonio Stradivari violin and a Jean Pierre Marie Persoit bow on extended loan through the generosity of the Mary B. Galvin Foundation and the Stradivari Society.



LAURA EDWARDS

James Austin Smith

Performer, curator, and on-stage host James Austin Smith "proves that an oboist can have an adventurous solo career." (*The New Yorker*). Smith appears at leading national and international chamber music festivals, as Co-Principal Oboe of the conductor-less Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and as an artist of the International Contemporary Ensemble. As Artistic and Executive Director of Tertulia Chamber Music, Smith creates intimate evenings of music, food, and drink in New York and San Francisco, as well as an annual festival in a variety of global

destinations. He serves as Artistic Advisor to Coast Live Music in the San Francisco Bay Area and mentors graduate-level musicians as a professor of oboe and chamber music at Stony Brook University and as a regular guest at London's Guildhall School. A Fulbright scholar and alum of Carnegie Hall's Ensemble Connect and CMS's Bowers Program, he holds degrees in music and political science from Northwestern and Yale University.



MATT DINE

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. He is a member of CMS's Bowers Program.

About the Chamber Music Society

Founded in 1969, the **Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center (CMS)** brings the transcendent experience of great chamber music to more people than any other organization of its kind worldwide. Under the artistic leadership of cellist David Finckel and pianist Wu Han, the multi-generational and international performing artist roster of 140 of the world's finest chamber musicians enable us to present chamber music of every instrumentation, style, and historical period.

Each season, we reach a global audience with more than 150 performances and education programs in our home at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall and on tour with residencies worldwide.

We offer a wide range of learning formats and experiences to engage and inform listeners of all ages, backgrounds, and levels of musical knowledge through our education programs. The Bowers Program, our competitive three-season residency, is dedicated to developing the chamber music leaders of the future and integrates this selection of exceptional early-career musicians into every facet of CMS activities.

Our incomparable digital presence, which regularly enables us to reach millions of viewers and listeners annually, includes our weekly national radio program, heard locally on heard locally on WQXR 105.9 FM on Saturday and Monday evenings; radio programming in Taiwan and mainland China; and appearances on American Public Media's *Performance Today*, the monthly program *In Concert with CMS* on the PBS ALL ARTS broadcast channel, and SiriusXM's Symphony Hall channel, among others. The PBS documentary film *Chamber Music Society Returns* chronicles CMS's return to live concerts at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall and on a six-city national tour. It is currently available to watch on PBS Passport. Our website also hosts an online archive of more than 1,700 video recordings of performance and education videos free to the public.