



CHAMBER MUSIC BEGINNINGS

FOR GRADES 3–5

Teacher Resource Guide

2025–2026 SEASON



CONTRIBUTORS/STAFF

CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER

David Finkel and Wu Han

Artistic Directors

Suzanne Davidson

Executive Director

Emily Harper

Director of Education & Community Engagement

Bruce Adolphe

Resident Lecturer & Director of Family Programs

Richard Adger

Assistant Director of Education & Community Engagement

Rachel Lee

School Programs Manager

Photo Credits:

Performance photos by Da Ping Luo,
Cherylynn Tsushima, and Tristan Cook.

Mika Sasaki headshot by Nir Arieli.

Jeffrey Myers and Estelle Choi headshots
by Marco Borgreve.

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

WHAT IS IN THIS RESOURCE?

This Teacher Resource Guide is designed to assist you in creating a high quality experience for your students and can be easily integrated into your existing curriculum. You can also find this guide online at chambermusicsociety.org/CMB. These materials provide additional context and activities to help your students make the most of each concert.

STANDARDS ADDRESSED

The Chamber Music Beginnings curriculum is designed to address the National Core Arts Standards for Music and Common Core State Standards Initiatives, as well as benchmarks in the New York City Department of Education Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts: Music. Please refer to page 30–32 for more information.

INSIDE YOU WILL FIND:

- Structure and learning objectives for the program.
- Tips for Teaching Artist visits and field trip concerts.
- A concert program for both Unit 1 and Unit 2 field trip concerts and biographies of all composers.
- Biographies of performing chamber ensembles and featured instruments at field trip concerts.
- Guided listening prompts and corresponding learning activities to introduce each piece to your students.
- Icons appear throughout the Teacher Resource Guide to signify student activities, along with corresponding print resources, recordings, and other supplemental materials that are available at chambermusicsociety.org/CMB.

OPTIONS FOR TEACHERS OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- **Visual Concert Guide:** We provide a visual concert guide that outlines what students should expect during the concert, ensuring they feel comfortable and engaged throughout the performance. This is available by request.
- **Engagement with Tangible Objects:** We encourage students to interact with the music using tangible objects like handmade instruments (e.g., cups with beans for shakers), rhythm sticks, Orff instruments, and drums.
- **Customized Teaching Artist Visits:** We work closely with partner school teaching staff to curate Teaching Artist visits that best support the needs of your students.

ICON KEY *All icons in the digital pdf version can be clicked on to access accompanying resources.*



This icon appears throughout the guide to indicate a related website.



This icon appears throughout the guide to indicate a corresponding recording available at chambermusicsociety.org/CMB.



This icon appears throughout the guide to indicate corresponding student activity pages available for print or copy.

INTRODUCTION

Chamber Music Beginnings introduces 3rd–5th grade students to chamber music through educational concerts tailored to their developmental and musical needs. Students explore a diverse repertoire, enhancing their musical appreciation and understanding of fundamental concepts.

The program consists of three units throughout the year:

- **UNIT 1 in Fall:** Features an in-school session with a CMS Teaching Artist and a field trip concert at either Merkin Hall, Brooklyn Public Library, or the Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture.
- **UNIT 2 in Winter:** Features a second in-school session with a CMS Teaching Artist, building upon concepts shared in the first lesson, and a second field trip concert at either Merkin Hall, Brooklyn Public Library, or the Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture.
- **UNIT 3 in Spring:** CMS brings an assembly style chamber music concert to your school, featuring repertoire that encapsulates all concepts reviewed throughout the year.

Key Learning Objectives

UNIT 1 in Fall: Musical Conversations

Students will:

- actively listen to a live chamber ensemble performance.
- understand how musicians communicate and collaborate within chamber ensembles, focusing on non-verbal cues, ensemble coordination, and expressive performance.
- explore chamber music as a model for teamwork and social interaction, including comparisons between ensemble types, instrument families, and the interactive roles of melody, harmony, and texture.

UNIT 2 in Winter: Journey Through the World of Chamber Music

Students will:

- actively listen to a live chamber ensemble performance.
- analyze how musical elements such as rhythm, instrumentation, and form reflect diverse cultural traditions, through performance and analysis of folk and classical styles.
- understand music's role in cultural identity and storytelling, highlighting community traditions and encouraging students to actively engage with global musical practices.

UNIT 3 in Spring: Chamber Music in Your Classroom

Students will:

- actively listen to a live chamber music performance and discuss its role in intimate settings, function in various social and cultural contexts, and importance in fostering collaboration and musical expression among musicians.

TEACHING ARTIST VISIT: WHAT TO EXPECT

THE BASICS:

- As scheduling allows, each school will receive two Teaching Artist visits over the course of our year-long curriculum. One during Unit 1 in the Fall and another during Unit 2 in the Winter.
- Each classroom visit is 50 minutes.
- A Teaching Artist will only work with one or two classes at a time, and is limited to three class periods per school (the total visit is not to exceed three hours).

BEFORE THE TEACHING ARTIST ARRIVES:

- Complete registration to ensure we have all necessary and up-to-date information regarding your school, students, and classroom experience.
- A CMS Education & Community Engagement staff member will provide you with this resource guide so that you can introduce the material to your students. They will also share the Teaching Artist's lesson plan, and classroom slides.
- Introduce content from these materials and music with your students prior to the Teaching Artist visit.
- Let your colleagues know that you will have a guest and ask them to limit interruptions during that time.
- Ensure that your security and main office are expecting our Teaching Artist arrival.

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE TEACHING ARTIST ARRIVES:

- Welcome your Teaching Artist to your classroom upon their arrival.
- Aid the Teaching Artist in setting up the lesson slides and audio.
- Show the Teaching Artist where the adult restrooms are located.
- Introduce the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center Teaching Artist to your students.

HOW TO PARTNER WITH THE TEACHING ARTIST:

- Actively engage in the lesson plan and interactive activities.
- Clarify information or instructions as needed.

Please be advised:

We kindly remind you of the following guidelines to ensure a smooth and productive experience for everyone.

CLASSROOM PRESENCE:

Please remain in the classroom throughout the session. The Teaching Artist is not certified to supervise students alone, and your presence is vital. You are the essential link between your students and the teaching artist. Your awareness, curiosity, and enthusiasm greatly enhances the learning environment.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR:

As the primary educator, you are responsible for managing student behavior. Our CMS Teaching Artists are guests and may not be familiar with your students, so your support is crucial.

Thank you for your cooperation and dedication to providing an enriching experience for your students.

CONCERT EXPERIENCE

Preparing your class for the concert

Whether performances are held in a concert hall or at your school, they are live performances that deserve our collective attention. We appreciate your support in creating an inclusive and respectful listening environment for everyone. Please share the following guidelines with your students and chaperones:

EMBRACE THE FULL SPECTRUM OF SOUND AND SILENCE

In music, silence can be just as important as sound. Similar to how white space enhances a drawing, silence is essential to create depth and clarity in music. We ask that you honor and appreciate moments of silence in performance.

RESPECT THE PERFORMANCE

Even minimal noise can disrupt a musical experience for others. Please ensure that mobile devices are silenced and all attention is directed towards the stage and performers during the concert.

BE MINDFUL OF OTHERS

Create a supportive environment where everyone can immerse themselves in the performance.

DO

- Enjoy the music
- Gently conduct or move along with the music
- Applaud after each piece

DON'T

- Eat or drink during a performance
- Chew gum
- Unwrap candy
- Talk to your neighbor
- Walk around the theater
- Get up to use the restroom during the music

KNOWING WHEN TO APPLAUD

We often get asked, “When is the best time to applaud?” If you’re unsure whether a piece has concluded, a helpful guideline is to wait until the performers have finished and are no longer actively playing. For instance, pianists might place their hands in their laps, and violinists may lower their instruments.

Following these guidelines will ensure that your applause will be well-timed and appreciated by both the performers and fellow audience members.

RESTROOM VISITS

To minimize disruption, please encourage your students to use the restroom before the concert starts. If a restroom visit is necessary during the performance, we kindly ask that you exit and enter the concert hall quietly between musical selections. This helps us maintain a respectful and immersive environment for all attendees.

Thank you for helping us foster a space where we can all appreciate the beauty of live music.

WHAT IS CHAMBER MUSIC?

Here are some basic concepts to explore at the beginning of the year or in connection with any of the Chamber Music Beginnings concerts.



Summer Palace of Frederick the Great of the Painting by Adolphe Menzel (1852)

Chamber music is music written for a relatively small group of musicians compared to an orchestra (usually 2 to 5 but up to as many as 20) where each person plays their own unique part and there is no conductor. The small size of a chamber ensemble allows the listener to get up close and personal with the music, pay careful attention to detail, and hear the individual sounds of each instrument in dialogue with one another.

The word “chamber” refers to the space in which small ensembles originally performed; it simply means a room. So, chamber music is music for a smaller sized room or concert hall than would be needed for an orchestra.

INTRODUCTION TO CHAMBER ENSEMBLES

Chamber ensembles are groups of musicians who play different instruments together, creating a variety of sounds and harmonies. Here are some examples of chamber ensembles with two to five musicians:



DUO (2 musicians)

A duo is made up of two musicians, one option is a cello and a piano. The cello and piano will alternate roles, with each instrument taking turns playing the melody while the other provides the harmony. This combination is often used in chamber music by composers like Beethoven and Brahms.

Pictured at left: David Finckel, cello, and Wu Han, piano. Our Artistic Directors!



TRIO (3 musicians)

A trio has three musicians and can include many different instrument combinations. One example of a trio includes piano, oboe, and horn, which creates a wide range of sounds. Composers like Reinecke wrote famous pieces for this type of group.

Anne-Marie McDermott, piano; James Austin Smith, oboe; Radek Baborák, horn



QUARTET (4 musicians)

A quartet includes four musicians. A string quartet, for example, has two violins, a viola, and a cello, and is a favorite in classical music. Famous composers like Haydn and Beethoven wrote many pieces for quartets.

The Calidore String Quartet



QUINTET (5 musicians)

A quintet has five musicians, like a piano quintet, which most commonly includes a piano, two violins, a viola, and a cello. Composers like Mozart and Mendelssohn wrote music for this type of ensemble.

Wu Qian, piano; Alexander Sitkovetsky, Lun Li, violin; Yura Lee, viola; Sterling Elliott, cello

These groups allow musicians to work together in different ways, making music more exciting and full of variety!

UNIT 1 CONCERT PROGRAM

OCTOBER 21–23, 2025

Musical Conversations

Telos Consort

Huizi Zhang, piano

Charlotte Munn-Wood, violin

Thea Mesirow, cello

Thomas Giles, flute, clarinet, saxophone

Kyle Landry, saxophone

-
- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| BEETHOVEN | Trio in D major for Piano, Violin, and Cello, Op. 70, No. 1, “Ghost” (1808)
Allegro vivace e con brio” |
| MENDELSSOHN
HENSEL | Trio in D minor for Piano, Violin, and Cello, Op. 11 (1847)
Allegro molto vivace |
| CUONG | <i>Wax and Wire</i> for Clarinet, Violin, Cello, and Piano (2014) |
| TOWER | <i>Petroushskates</i> for Flute, Clarinet, Violin, Cello, and Piano (1980) |
| REYES | <i>Dot Plot</i> for Flute [or Soprano Saxophone], Baritone Saxophone, Violin, Cello, and Piano (2024) |

2025–2026 CHAMBER MUSIC BEGINNINGS UNIT 1 FEATURED ENSEMBLE

Modular Ensemble

(CONSISTING OF TWO SAXOPHONES, VIOLIN, CELLO, AND PIANO)

Telos Consort

The Telos Consort is a modular ensemble of two saxophones, two strings, and piano. Formed in 2023 with the goal of uniting old and new instruments, this group of creatives is dedicated to the creation of new work for their unique instrumentation. We create an environment for the avid concert-goer and novice new music listener alike, acknowledging the often-exclusionary world of classical music. By programming music by some of the most influential voices and voices-to-be of our time, we encourage genre inclusivity and the presence of the non-traditional. Recent performances include shows at the 92nd Street Y, A4 Collective, Mise-en_Place, and Shapeshifter Lab. The Telos Consort was a Chamber Music America Ensemble Forward grant awardee and will be working with coach Ken Thomson (Bang On A Can All-Stars) throughout 2024.

Upcoming highlights include partnerships with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center



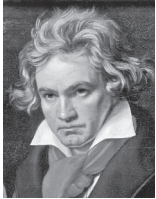
CLICK ME

**Want to learn more about
the Telos Consort?
Visit telosconsort.com**

and the Harmony Program alongside performances in and around New York City. Recent premieres include those from Cole Reyes, Euna Joh, Gabriel Bouche Caro, Nick Batina, and Bobby Ge

who was Telos Consort's Inaugural Artist-in-Residence. In the 2025-2026 season, Telos will be working alongside Sofia Jen Ouyang, who will serve as their Artist-in-Residence.

ABOUT UNIT 1 COMPOSERS



LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)

Beethoven was one of the most famous composers in history. He was born in Germany and moved to

Vienna, where he wrote music that changed the way people thought about sound. Even after he lost his hearing, he kept writing amazing pieces.

During his middle period, while beginning to lose his hearing, he wrote the Piano Trio in D major, Op. 70, No. 1, famously nicknamed the “Ghost” Trio. The eerie second movement may have been inspired by Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, and Beethoven’s student Carl Czerny said it reminded him of Hamlet’s ghost. With slow tremolos, silences, and haunting harmonies, the music creates a spooky mood. Written in 1808 during a period of personal struggle and artistic growth, the trio shows how Beethoven expanded classical forms and gave chamber music new emotional depth.



VIET CUONG (B. 1990)

Viet Cuong is a Vietnamese-American composer whose music has been described as “alluring” and “stirring”

by *The New York Times*. His work has been performed on six continents by major ensembles such as the New York Philharmonic, Sō Percussion, and Eighth Blackbird, and featured at Carnegie Hall

and the Kennedy Center. Cuong enjoys combining unusual sounds in ways that feel whimsical and inventive.

His piece *Wax and Wire* was inspired by artist Michael Gard’s wire sculptures, which begin with wax forms that are later melted away. The piece mirrors this process musically, using scales that gradually dissolve into glissandi and quarter tones. Cuong is Composer-in-Residence at Pacific Symphony and teaches at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. He holds degrees from Princeton, Curtis, and Peabody.



FANNY MENDELSSOHN HENSEL (1805–1847)

Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel was a gifted German pianist and composer who, like her brother Felix Mendelssohn,

showed extraordinary talent from a young age. Although women were discouraged from publishing music in her time, Fanny composed over 460 works, mostly for piano and voice.

Her Piano Trio in D minor was written in 1847 for her sister Rebecka’s birthday and premiered in the family’s Berlin salon concerts, which Fanny led. The trio blends passion, lyricism, and songlike beauty, especially in the second and third movements. Fanny died shortly after its premiere while rehearsing music by Felix, who died just six months later. The trio remains one of her most powerful and personal compositions.

ABOUT UNIT 1 COMPOSERS (continued)



COLE REYES
(B. 1998)

Cole Reyes is a composer, educator, and arts administrator whose music explores the relationship

between personal experience and the world around us. Blending pop, rock, and folk influences with classical forms, his work is known for lyrical expression and rhythmic energy.

Reyes has written for top ensembles including the JACK Quartet and the U.S. Marine Band, and he co-founded Telos Consort in New York City. He teaches at the University of Michigan, where he also studies composition. His upcoming projects focus on nature, housing, and community, reflecting his commitment to socially conscious and genre-crossing music.



JOAN TOWER
(B. 1938)

Joan Tower is one of America's most celebrated living composers. She has taught at Bard College since 1972 and is

known for her powerful, colorful music and rhythmic energy. Tower spent part of her childhood in Bolivia, where Latin American rhythms left a lasting impression on her style.

Her piece *Petroushskates* was inspired by two vivid images: the bright energy of a carnival scene from Stravinsky's *Petroushka*, and the graceful motion of figure skating. By combining the wild spirit of a festival with the smooth curves and jumps of Olympic skating, Tower creates what she calls a "carnival on ice." The piece captures her signature sound, widely known as lively, detailed, and full of motion. With this piece, Tower shows how she brings everyday images to life through music.

MUSICAL CONVERSATIONS: TEACHER KEY

Dialogue in Sound

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Divide the class into pairs.
2. Instruct each pair to create a short dialogue using only sounds (clapping, stomping, snapping, etc.).
3. Have one student begin the “dialogue” and guide responses from the receiving student—and so on.
4. Share with the class and discuss:
 - Who started the conversation?
 - What did they “say”?
 - How did they “say” it?
 - How did you “respond”?
 - How did it end?

CORRESPONDING LISTENING ACTIVITY:

Play a short excerpt of Mendelssohn Hensel’s Trio or Beethoven’s Ghost Trio **3 TIMES** for your students to map the dialogue between instruments:



1. Have students draw which instruments they hear.
Reveal to students which instruments are actually playing:
MENDELSSOHN HENSEL: piano, violin, cello
BEETHOVEN: piano, violin, cello
2. Have students write which instruments play first and which ones respond.
Reveal the correct order.
MENDELSSOHN HENSEL: piano, cello, then violin
BEETHOVEN: the piano and cello begin together, with cello having the melody and the violin responding
3. Have students draw the conversation with shapes, arrows, etc.

MUSICAL CONVERSATIONS: TEACHER KEY

Draw What You Hear



INSTRUCTIONS:

Play an excerpt of **Cuong's Wax and Wire** or **Reyes' Dot Plot**

1. Use the word bank and explain musical vocabulary like 'crescendo,' 'staccato,' or 'legato'. Have students circle what dynamics /articulations they hear/feel from the word bank.
2. Play the excerpt again and have students use crayons or markers to draw lines, shapes, or scenes that match the feeling of the music using the word bank.

WORD BANK/KEY:

- **Crescendo:** A gradual increase in loudness.
- **Decrescendo (or Diminuendo):** A gradual decrease in loudness.
- **Staccato:** Short, detached notes, played with space between them
- **Legato:** Smooth, connected notes with no separation.
- **Forte (f):** Loud.
- **Piano (p):** Soft.
- **Mezzo Forte (mf):** Moderately loud.
- **Mezzo Piano (mp):** Moderately soft.
- **Accelerando:** Gradually getting faster.
- **Ritardando (or Rit.):** Gradually getting slower.
- **Fermata:** A symbol meaning to hold a note longer than usual.
- **Tempo:** The speed at which music is played.
- **Dynamics:** The volume of the music (e.g., soft, loud, changing).
- **Accent:** Emphasis placed on a note.
- **Tenuto:** Hold a note for its full value, sometimes with slight emphasis.
- **Slur:** A curved line connecting different notes to be played legato.
- **Tie:** A curved line connecting two of the same notes, extending their length.
- **Phrase:** A musical sentence or idea, often ending with a pause.

MUSICAL CONVERSATIONS: TEACHER KEY

How to Use the Listening Journals

Play an excerpt of the piece and use the corresponding listening questions and have students reflect in their journals.



BEETHOVEN – Trio in D major for Piano, Violin, and Cello, Op. 70, No. 1, “Ghost” (1808) **Allegro vivace e con brio**

- Can you follow who has the melody? Does it stay with one person or move around?
- Close your eyes. What kind of story or scene could this music go with?

MENDELSSOHN HENSEL – Trio in D minor for Piano, Violin, and Cello, Op. 11 (1847) **Allegro molto vivace**

- What instruments do you hear first? Who do you think is ‘speaking’?
- Can you tell when one musician finishes their idea and another responds?
- If this music were a conversation, what do you think they’re talking about?
- Listen for when the music feels tense or calm. What changes when that happens?

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

- Do you hear anything unusual or surprising in this music?
- Listen closely. What kind of patterns or textures do you hear?
- If this piece had a shape or pattern, what would it look like?
- Which instrument feels like it’s leading? What makes you think that?

TOWER – *Petroushskates* for Flute, Clarinet, Violin, Cello, and Piano (1980)

- How do the musicians keep this fast-paced music together?
- Listen for places where they suddenly all play the same thing. What effect does it create?
- *Petroushskates* was inspired by two vivid images: the bright energy of a carnival scene from Stravinsky’s *Petroushka*, and the graceful motion of figure skating. By combining the wild spirit of a festival with the smooth curves and jumps of Olympic skating, Tower creates what she calls a “carnival on ice.” The piece captures her signature sound, widely known as lively, detailed, and full of motion. With this piece, Tower shows how she brings everyday images to life through music.
Can you hear that in the music?

REYES – *Dot Plot* for Flute [or Soprano Saxophone], Baritone Saxophone, Violin, Cello, and Piano (2024)

- Can you find a repeating sound or idea? What changes as it repeats?
- What kind of mood does this music create? How does it make you feel?
- How do the musicians ‘talk’ to each other using rhythm or silence?
- Would you describe this music as calm, energetic, or something else?

CHAMBER MUSIC BEGINNINGS

DIALOGUE IN SOUND



NAME: _____ DATE: _____

LISTENING TO: Mendelssohn Hensel's Piano Trio in D minor Beethoven's Ghost Trio

STEP 1: WHO'S PLAYING? Draw a picture of each instrument you hear:

STEP 2: WHO TALKS FIRST? As you listen:

Who plays first?

Write the name of the instrument:

Who answers back?

Write the name of the instrument:

Who answers back?

Write the name of the instrument:

What do you think they are feeling? Circle one:

Talking Arguing
Playing Helping

What do you think they are feeling? Circle one:

Talking Arguing
Playing Helping

What do you think they are feeling? Circle one:

Talking Arguing
Playing Helping

STEP 3: DRAW THE CONVERSATION!

Use shapes, arrows, or faces to show how the music moves from one instrument to another. You can:

- Use arrows to show "who talks to who"
- Use colors for each instrument
- Draw their "conversation" like a comic strip or a zigzag line

CHAMBER MUSIC BEGINNINGS EL DIÁLOGO EN EL SONIDO



NOMBRE: _____ **FECHA:** _____

ESCUCHANDO: Trío para piano en Re menor de Mendelssohn-Hensel Trío Fantasma de Beethoven

PASO 1: ¿QUIÉN ESTÁ TOCANDO? Haz un dibujo de cada instrumento que escuches:

PASO 2: ¿QUIÉN HABLA PRIMERO? Mientras escuchas:

¿Quién toca primero?

Escribe el nombre del instrumento:

¿Quién responde?

Escribe el nombre del instrumento:

¿Quién responde?

Escribe el nombre del instrumento:

¿Qué piensas que sienten?

Selecciona una opción:

Hablando Discutiendo
Jugando Ayudando

¿Qué piensas que sienten?

Selecciona una opción:

Hablando Discutiendo
Jugando Ayudando

¿Qué piensas que sienten?

Selecciona una opción:

Hablando Discutiendo
Jugando Ayudando

PASO 3: ¡DIBUJA LA CONVERSACIÓN!

Usa formas, flechas o caras para mostrar cómo la música pasa de un instrumento a otro.

- Usa flechas para mostrar "quién habla con quién"
- Usa colores para cada instrumento
- Dibuja su "conversación" como una tira cómica o una línea en zigzag

CHAMBER MUSIC BEGINNINGS
DRAW WHAT YOU HEAR



NAME: _____ DATE: _____

LISTENING TO: *Cuong's Wax and Wire* *Reyes' Dot Plot*

WORD BANK

Crescendo • Decrescendo • Diminuendo • Staccato • Legato
Forte (f) • Piano (p) • Mezzo Forte (mf) • Mezzo Piano (mp)
Accelerando • Ritardando (or Rit.) • Fermata • Tempo
Dynamics • Accent • Tenuto • Slur • Tie • Phrase

DRAW WHAT YOU HEAR!

CHAMBER MUSIC BEGINNINGS
DIBUJA LO QUE ESCUCHAS



NOMBRE: _____ FECHA: _____

ESCUCHANDO: *Wax and Wire* de Cuong *Dot Plot* de Reyes

BANCO DE PALABRAS

Crescendo • Decrescendo • Diminuendo • Staccato • Legato
Forte (f) • Piano (p) • Mezzo Forte (mf) • Mezzo Piano (mp)
Accelerando • Ritardando (or Rit.) • Fermata • Tempo
Dinámicas • Acento • Tenuto • Ligadura • Frase

¡DIBUJA LO QUE ESCUCHAS!

UNIT 2 CONCERT PROGRAM

MARCH 24–26, 2026

Journey Through The World Of Chamber Music

CMS Artists in a Piano Quartet

Mika Sasaki, piano

Jeffrey Myers, violin

Laura Liu, viola

Estelle Choi, cello

PRICE	Fantasia No. 1 in G minor for Violin and Piano (1933)
CASSADÓ	Trio in C major for Piano, Violin, and Cello (1926) Recitativo: Moderato ed appassionato--Rondo: Allegro vivo
KODÁLY	Intermezzo for Violin, Viola, and Cello (1905)
TURINA	Quartet in A minor for Piano, Violin, Viola, and Cello, Op. 67 (1931) Vivo
BRAHMS	Quartet No. 1 in G minor for Piano, Violin, Viola, and Cello, Op. 25 (1860–61) Rondo alla Zingarese: Presto

2025–2026 CHAMBER MUSIC BEGINNINGS UNIT 2 FEATURED ENSEMBLE

PIANO QUARTET

(CONSISTING OF CMS ARTISTS PLAYING PIANO, VIOLIN, VIOLA, CELLO)

CMS Artists



Pianist **Mika Sasaki** is a soloist, chamber musician, and educator whose performances have

taken her around the world. She has appeared as a concerto soloist with the Sinfonia of Cambridge, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, 92Y Orchestra, and, more recently, with the InterSchool Symphony Orchestra of New York. She is the pianist of Ensemble Mélange and a core member of Decoda, and appears regularly with the Chameleon Arts Ensemble of Boston, Manhattan Chamber Players, Carnegie Hall's Ensemble Connect, and with her duo partners. An alum of the Peabody Conservatory, Ensemble Connect, and the Juilliard School, Sasaki is now a faculty member at Juilliard.



Jeffrey Myers is first violinist of the Calidore String Quartet. His chamber music career with

the award-winning Calidore String Quartet has established an

international reputation for its informed, polished, and passionate performances. The Calidore are recipients of a 2018 Avery Fisher Career Grant and a 2017 Lincoln Center Emerging Artist Award, and alums of CMS's Bowers Program. The quartet was the first North American ensemble to win the Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship and was a BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist.



Violist **Laura Liu**, a native of Miami, Florida, currently lives in New York City. Liu, hailed by

Classical Voice America as a "standout" with "sound deep, warm, and consistently musical," participated this summer as a Junior Artist at Marlboro Music Festival. Her ardent love of collaboration led her to join the Chamber Music Society of Palm Beach's Rising Artist Program, Sunkiss'd Mozart Summerfest, Kronberg's Chamber Music Connects the World, OlympicMusic Festival's

Fellowship, Music@Menlo's International Performer's Program, Perlman Music Program's Chamber Workshop. Liu recently earned her bachelor's and master's degrees as a proud recipient of a Kovner Fellowship at the Juilliard School. She is currently pursuing her Artist Diploma, also at Juilliard.



Cellist **Estelle Choi** has been praised by the *Los Angeles Times* for "giving the impression that

music and the room are a single living being." She is a founding member of the Calidore String Quartet. She serves on the faculty of the University of Delaware School of Music as Associate Professor of Violin and co-directs the UD Graduate Fellowship Quartet Program and Calidore String Quartet Seminar. She studied with John Kadz and went on to work with Aldo Parisot at the Yale School of Music and Ronald Leonard at the Colburn Conservatory.

Want to learn more about CMS Artists?
Visit chambermusicsociety.org/about-us/people/artists/



ABOUT UNIT 2 COMPOSERS



JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897)

Johannes Brahms was a German composer and pianist, widely regarded as one of the most important musicians

of the Romantic era. Born in Hamburg, he spent most of his career in Vienna, where he became a central figure in European music. A virtuosic pianist and meticulous composer, Brahms drew on the traditions of Bach, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven while developing his own expressive, deeply crafted voice. He wrote symphonies, concertos, piano works, songs, and chamber music, often blending classical form with rich Romantic harmonies and rhythms.

His Piano Quartet No. 1 in G minor, composed in 1861, is among his most beloved chamber works. Its final movement, titled Rondo alla Zingarese, reflects Brahms's fascination with Hungarian and Romani musical traditions. Using fast rhythms, accented meters, and piano textures evoking the cimbalom, Brahms created a fiery, folk-inspired finale. The movement remains a vibrant tribute to the energy and spirit of Eastern European folk music within a classical form.

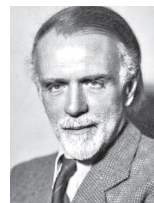


GASPAR CASSADÓ I MOREU (1897–1966)

Gaspar Cassadó was a Spanish cellist and composer, and one of cellist Pablo Casals' youngest and most gifted

students. Born in Barcelona to a musical family, he began cello at age seven and soon earned a scholarship to study in Paris, where he also met other composers like Ravel and de Falla. Known for his elegant playing and deep connection to Spanish musical traditions, Cassadó toured internationally and lived much of his life in Florence.

His Piano Trio in C Major is filled with the colors, rhythms, and flourishes of Spanish folk music. Composed in 1926, it breaks from tradition with its free structure and fiery energy, blending dance-like themes, dramatic contrasts, and lyrical moments into a vivid, Spanish-tinged fantasia.



ZOLTÁN KODÁLY (1882–1967)

Zoltán Kodály was a Hungarian composer, ethnomusicologist, educator, and philosopher, best known

for bringing real Hungarian folk music into the world of classical composition. Born in Kecskemét, he learned violin from his father and sang in a cathedral choir as a child. Kodály studied composition at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest and later earned a PhD in philosophy and linguistics. Around 1905, he began traveling to remote villages to collect and record folk songs, which are some of the first efforts in what became the field of ethnomusicology. These melodies, rooted in Hungarian and other Eastern European traditions, became a vital part of his music.

ABOUT UNIT 2 COMPOSERS (continued)

His Intermezzo for String Trio, written during this period, reflects those influences. Kodály's work is filled with authentic folk rhythms and lyricism. The piece has the feel of a relaxed serenade, showing Kodály's unique ability to blend national identity with classical form and charm.



FLORENCE BEATRICE PRICE (1887–1953)

Florence Price was the first African American woman to have a symphony performed by a major U.S. orchestra.

Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, she studied at the New England Conservatory and became known for blending classical forms with African American musical traditions like spirituals and gospel.

Her *Fantasie No. 1 in G minor* for violin and piano, written in 1933, showcases this fusion beautifully. It mixes the expressive style of Romantic concert music with the back-and-forth patterns of call-and-response found in spirituals. Written during the height of her early success, the *Fantasie* is lyrical and heartfelt, reflecting both her technical skill and cultural voice. Price's music continues to inspire for its elegance, emotion, and groundbreaking legacy.



JOAQUÍN TURINA (1882–1949)

Joaquín Turina was a Spanish composer who combined the traditional forms of European classical music with

the rich sounds of Spanish folk traditions. Born in Seville, Turina studied at the Royal Conservatory in Madrid and later in Paris, where he learned from French composers like Vincent d'Indy. After a conversation with fellow Spaniard pianist Isaac Albéniz, Turina turned toward writing music that reflected the rhythms, melodies, and spirit of Spain.

His *Piano Quartet in A minor* is a perfect example, blending formal structure with sounds inspired by Andalusian nights, castanets, and Spanish dances. Each movement uses folk-inspired elements while still following classical form, creating music that feels both familiar and uniquely Spanish.

JOURNEY THROUGH THE WORLD OF CHAMBER MUSIC: TEACHER KEY

Musical Mapping

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Play excerpts from each piece in Unit 2.
2. Use the world map to mark where each composer is from.
 - Florence Beatrice Price - Arkansas, Usa
 - Gaspar Cassadó I Moreu - Barcelona, Spain
 - Joaquín Turina - Seville, Spain
 - Johannes Brahms - Hamburg, Germany
 - Zoltán Kodály - Kecskemét, Hungary
3. Discuss:
 - a. What makes each piece sound unique?
 - b. How might the place influence the music?



Performance Postcard

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Before the concert, students write a 'postcard' imagining they just attended the concert. Have students circle who they are writing to: their future or their past.
2. Prompts:
 - a. My favorite piece was...
 - b. The musicians sounded like...
 - c. Something surprising was...
3. After the concert, revisit and revise based on real experiences.



JOURNEY THROUGH THE WORLD OF CHAMBER MUSIC: TEACHER KEY

Build-A-Rhythm

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Introduce your students to the Zingarese rhythmic pattern from the final movement of Brahms' Piano Quartet No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 25.

ta ta ti-ti ti-ti ta ta ta ta ti-ti ti-ti ti-ti ta ta ta ta

2. Have students mimic with body percussion (clapping, snapping, patting).

CORRESPONDING LISTENING ACTIVITY:

ROLES:

- **Leader:** begins and leads the changing of the rhythms through non-verbal body percussion
 - **Followers:** follows the leader's rhythm through the same non-verbal body percussion
 - **Detective:** tries to guess who the leader is
1. Arrange the students into medium-sized groups. The Detective steps outside. While they're gone, select a Leader.
 2. The Leader starts a beat—clapping, snapping, stomping, or tapping—and everyone copies it. Every few seconds, the Leader changes the rhythm, and the group must follow without giving it away!
 - a. Encourage students to use the rhythm they just learned, or let them create their own!
 3. The Detective comes back in and watches closely to figure out who's secretly leading. They get three guesses.
 - a. If they guess right, they switch places with the Leader.
 - b. If not, they pick the next Detective, and the game starts again!

JOURNEY THROUGH THE WORLD OF CHAMBER MUSIC: TEACHER KEY

How to Use the Listening Journals

Play an excerpt of the piece and use the corresponding listening questions and have students reflect in their journals.



FLORENCE PRICE – *Fantasie No. 1 in G minor for Violin and Piano (1933)*

- How does this music show emotion without words?
- What do you think the musician is trying to express?
- Do any parts of the melody remind you of spirituals, hymns, or singing?
- Can you move your hand in the air like a conductor to match the rise and fall?

GASPAR CASSADÓ – *Trio in C major for Piano, Violin, and Cello (1926) Recitativo: Moderato ed appassionato—Rondo: Allegro vivo*

- Can you imagine characters or animals acting out this music?
- Listen for short repeated ideas. How do they build energy?

ZOLTÁN KODÁLY – *Intermezzo for Violin, Viola, and Cello (1905)*

- Which instrument plays the melody first? What happens next?
- This music was inspired by Hungarian folk songs. What clues do you hear?
- Can you tap the beat while listening? Does the rhythm feel regular or tricky?
- If this music told a story from a village, what might it be about?

JOAQUÍN TURINA – *Quartet in A minor for Piano, Violin, Viola, and Cello, Op. 67 (1931) Vivo*

- What makes this music sound like it might be from Spain?
- Can you imagine dancing to this music? What kind of dance would it be?
- What color or texture would you give to this music?

JOHANNES BRAHMS – *Quartet No. 1 in G minor for Piano, Violin, Viola, and Cello, Op. 25 (1860–61) Rondo alla Zingarese: Presto*

- What makes this music sound like a celebration?
- Try counting or clapping the beat. How fast is it? Does it feel steady?
- What words would you use to describe the energy of this piece?

CHAMBER MUSIC BEGINNINGS
MUSICAL MAPPING



NAME: _____ DATE: _____



CHAMBER MUSIC BEGINNINGS
MAPEO MUSICAL



NOMBRE: _____ FECHA: _____



CHAMBER MUSIC BEGINNINGS
PERFORMANCE POSTCARD



Dear Future/Past Me...

I'm excited to hear about what
you feel after the concert!

From,
Future/Past Me



NAME

STREET ADDRESS

CITY / STATE / POSTAL CODE

COUNTRY

CHAMBER MUSIC BEGINNINGS
POSTAL DE CONCIERTO



A mi ser del futuro/pasado...

**¡Tengo muchas ganas de que
me cuentes cómo te sientes
después del concierto!**

**De,
Mi ser del futuro/pasado**



NOMBRE

DIRECCIÓN

CIUDAD / ESTADO / CÓDIGO POSTAL

PAÍS

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS FOR MUSIC

COMMON ANCHOR #1

Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

COMMON ANCHOR #2

Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

COMMON ANCHOR #3

Refine and complete artistic work.

COMMON ANCHOR #4

Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation.

COMMON ANCHOR #5

Develop and refine artistic work for presentation.

COMMON ANCHOR #6

Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

COMMON ANCHOR #7

Perceive and analyze artistic work.

COMMON ANCHOR #8

Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

COMMON ANCHOR #9

Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

COMMON ANCHOR #10

Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

COMMON ANCHOR #11

Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

Cr

Creating

Found on Page:

14, 15, 25

Pr

Performing,
Presenting,
Producing

14, 25

Re

Responding

14, 15, 16, 24,
25, 26

Cn

Connecting

14, 16, 24, 25, 26

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS INITIATIVES

Through student-centered activities, culturally responsive classroom sessions, and interactive concerts featuring our resident chamber ensembles, Chamber Music Beginnings addresses the Common Core State Standards and prepares students for post-secondary success in college, career, and life.

While the focus of Chamber Music Beginnings is to introduce students to the chamber music art form, it similarly encourages students to draw interdisciplinary connections and build core capacities in English and Math. Through activities centered on active listening, performance, and musical analysis, students:

- Demonstrate independence
 - Build strong content knowledge
 - Respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline
 - Comprehend as well as critique
 - Value evidence
 - Use technology and digital media strategically and capably
 - Come to understand other perspectives and cultures
- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
 - Reason abstractly and quantitatively
 - Construct viable argument and critique the reasoning of others
 - Use appropriate tools strategically
 - Attend to precision
 - Look for and make use of structure
 - Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

Chamber Music Beginnings provides a unique opportunity for students to integrate English Language Arts and Math skills through an introductory exploration of chamber music. For more information, visit www.chambermusicsociety.org/CMB

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts: Music

Aligned with the five strands of the NYC Department of Education’s Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts: Music, Chamber Music Beginnings offers students a unique opportunity to explore chamber music through interactive concerts, in-school teaching sessions, and bilingual resources. Through Chamber Music Beginnings, students develop an understanding of music through analysis, performance, and an exploration of historical and cultural contexts. By attending live performances by professional chamber musicians, students broaden their perspectives, discover their musical potential, and develop a lifelong appreciation for music.

		Found in Unit:
STRAND 1: Music Making	By exploring, creating, replicating, and observing music, students build their technical and expressive skills, develop their artistry and a unique personal voice in music, and experience the power of music to communicate. They understand music as a universal language and a legacy of expression in every culture.	1, 2, 3
STRAND 2: Music Literacy	Students develop a working knowledge of music language and aesthetics, and apply it to analyzing, evaluating, documenting, creating, and performing music. They recognize their roles as articulate, literate musicians when communicating with their families, schools, and communities through music.	1, 2
STRAND 3: Making Connections	By investigating historical, social, and cultural contexts, and by exploring common themes and principles connecting music with other disciplines, students enrich their creative work and understand the significance of music in the evolution of human thought and expression.	1, 2
STRAND 4: Community & Cultural Resources	Students broaden their perspective by working with professional artists and arts organizations that represent diverse cultural and personal approaches to music, and by seeing performances of widely varied music styles and genres. Active partnerships that combine school and local community resources with the full range of New York City’s music and cultural institutions create a fertile ground for students’ music learning and creativity.	1, 2, 3
STRAND 5: Careers & Lifelong Learning	Students consider the range of music and music-related professions as they think about their goals and aspirations and understand how the various professions support and connect with each other. They carry physical, social, and cognitive skills learned in music, and an ability to appreciate and enjoy participating in music throughout their lives.	1, 2

TEACHER NOTES



Chamber Music Society
of Lincoln Center

70 LINCOLN CENTER PLAZA
10TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10023

Acknowledgements

CMS education and community engagement programs are made possible, in part, with support from the **Hearst Foundations; Diamonstein-Spielvogel Foundation; The Chisholm Foundation; John Armitage Charitable Trust; Colburn Foundation; Tiger Baron Foundation; Sally D. and Stephen M. Clement, III; Kenneth Johnson and Judy Tobey; Alden Warner and Peter Reed; Judi Sorensen Flom; The Rea Charitable Trust; The Frank and Helen Hermann Foundation; Con Edison; Beatrice A. Liu and Philip Lovett; Alice Ilchman Fund; the Daniel and Joanna S. Rose Fund; and a generous anonymous donor.** Public funds are provided by **New York City Council Member Gale A. Brewer; 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 the **Office of the Governor** and the **New York State Legislature.**



Council on
the Arts

NYC Cultural
Affairs

