



Chamber
Music Society
of Lincoln Center

DAVID FINCKEL AND WU HAN,
ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

2026–2027 SEASON

Art of the Recital

**BELLA HRISTOVA
& GLORIA CHIEN**

Thursday, October 15, 2026, 7:30 pm

Daniel and Joanna S. Rose Studio at CMS



The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center

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ChamberMusicSociety.org

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Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center

ART OF THE RECITAL

THURSDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 15, 2026, AT 7:30 ▶ 4,748TH CONCERT
Daniel and Joanna S. Rose Studio at CMS

Bella Hristova, violin

Gloria Chien, piano

Igor Stravinsky **Divertimento after *Le baiser de la fée* for
Violin and Piano** (1882–1971) (1928, arr. Stravinsky and
Dushkin 1934)

▶ Sinfonia: Andante

▶ Danses suisses: Tempo giusto

▶ Scherzo: Allegretto grazioso

▶ Pas de deux: Adagio—Allegretto grazioso—
Presto

HRISTOVA, CHIEN

Olivier Messiaen ***Thème et variations* for Violin and Piano** (1908–1992) (1932)
HRISTOVA, CHIEN

Pancho Vladigerov ***“Horo” from Two Bulgarian Paraphrases for
Violin and Piano, Op. 18, No. 1*** (1899–1978) (1925)
HRISTOVA, CHIEN

—INTERMISSION—

PLEASE TURN OFF CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

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

Eunike Tanzil *Rule of Three for Violin* (CMS Co-Commission,
(b. 1998) World Premiere) (2026)
‣ Roots
‣ Ragtime
‣ Rush
HRISTOVA

Sergei Prokofiev *Sonata No. 1 in F minor for Violin and Piano,*
(1891–1953) **Op. 80** (1938–46)
‣ Andante assai
‣ Allegro brusco
‣ Andante
‣ Allegrissimo—Andante assai, come prima
HRISTOVA, CHIEN

Notes on the Program

BY NOÉMIE CHEMALI

Igor Stravinsky

Divertimento after *Le baiser de la fée* for Violin

- ▶ Born June 17 (O.S. June 5), 1882, in Oranienbaum, Russia
- ▶ Died April 6, 1971, in New York City
- ▶ **Composed in 1928, arranged by Stravinsky and Dushkin in 1934**
- ▶ First CMS performance on March 26, 1993, by violinist Ida Kavafian and pianist Lee Luvisi
- ▶ Duration: 22 minutes

Stravinsky's ballet *Le baiser de la fée* (*The Fairy's Kiss*), based on Hans Christian Andersen's *The Snow Maiden*, reached the Paris stage in 1928 to little acclaim—and has never quite shaken that reputation, remaining one of the composer's least-known scores. Yet the music is so witty and charming it makes one question why it never received the attention it so clearly merits. Built from Tchaikovsky songs and piano pieces both familiar and obscure, the ballet is Stravinsky at his most affectionate and mischievous: he takes his predecessor's melodies and, as the musicologist Laurence Morton observed, strips away their "banalities and vulgarities and routine procedures," replacing them with his own rhythmic surprises. The result is homage and irreverence in equal measure.

The score proved far more durable in the

concert hall than in the theater. The Swiss conductor Ernest Ansermet led an authorized orchestral suite in 1931, and the following year Stravinsky turned to his violinist friend Samuel Dushkin, a frequent musical partner and the dedicatee of Stravinsky's Violin Concerto, to help transcribe nearly half the ballet for violin and piano. That chamber arrangement, worked out collaboratively between composer and performer, in turn became the basis for a second, purely orchestral Divertimento that Stravinsky completed in 1934 (later revised in 1950).

The violin-and-piano Divertimento preserves four movements from the ballet: a *Sinfonia*, a set of *Danses suisses*, a *Scherzo*, and a concluding *Pas de deux*. Along the way, Stravinsky trims some sections and supplies new endings for others, tightening the ballet's dramatic arc into something closer to a suite of character pieces. What remains constant is the writing's virtuosity: frilly trills, dense double-stops, quicksilver shifts, and a close, conversational interplay between violin and keyboard that demands real chemistry between the two players—fitting, given that the piece was born from one of Stravinsky's most fruitful performing partnerships.

Olivier Messiaen

Thème et variations for Violin and Piano

- ▶ Born December 10, 1908, in Avignon
- ▶ Died April 27, 1992, in Paris
- ▶ **Composed in 1932**
- ▶ This is the first CMS performance of this piece.
- ▶ Duration: 8 minutes

In June 1932, the 23-year-old Olivier Messiaen married the violinist Claire Delbos.

As a wedding present, he wrote her a piece the young couple could perform together. The premiere took place that November at the Cercle Musical de Paris, not long after Messiaen had taken up his post as the organist at the church of Sainte-Trinité, a position he would hold for more than 60 years.

The gesture was a tender one even in

its smallest details. Messiaen's pet name for Claire was "Mi," the French solmization syllable for the note E, which happens also to be the violin's highest open string. In the first published edition, the dedication to his bride appears not as a printed name but as that single musical note: an intimate, encoded love letter hidden in the score itself.

Formally, the work is unusually straightforward for Messiaen: a theme, stated quietly, followed by five variations that grow steadily more animated before the final variation returns. Each variation reshapes the theme in a different way: neighboring tones creep into the melodic line; the rhythm fractures into three contrapuntal voices; the meter shifts to unsettle the music's symmetry; and, at the height of the set, the theme seems to vanish altogether beneath swirling figuration, only to reassemble itself, whole and triumphant, in the closing pages.

What keeps this youthful, tonally rooted piece from sounding conventional

is Messiaen's harmonic blueprint: what he called "modes of limited transposition." These are symmetrical scales built from repeating intervallic patterns that can only be transposed a handful of times before they start duplicating their own pitch content, unlike a major or minor scale, which can start on any of the twelve notes without repeating. Messiaen prized these modes not for their structural logic alone but for the sensation they produced: he experienced synesthesia, and each mode carried for him a distinct hue. The result is a harmonic language that shimmers rather than drives forward to any home key.

Composed just as Messiaen was beginning to codify this musical vocabulary, the *Thème et variations* offers a rare vantage point: a glimpse of the visionary composer of the *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* and the *Vingt regards sur l'enfant Jésus*, still working within a familiar Romantic form, but already unmistakably himself.

Pancho Vladigerov

"Horo" from *Two Bulgarian Paraphrases* for Violin and Piano, Op. 18, No. 1 and Piano

- ▶ Born March 25, 1899, in Zurich
- ▶ Died September 8, 1978, in Sofia
- Composed in 1925**
- ▶ This is the first CMS performance of this piece.
- ▶ Duration: 8 minutes

Pancho Vladigerov was born in Zurich but raised in Shumen, Bulgaria, and by his teens was already recognized as an exceptional pianist, allowing him, along with his twin brother, the violinist Lyuben Vladigerov, to study in Berlin on a state scholarship in 1912. There he trained at the Berlin Academy of Arts, twice winning the prestigious Mendelssohn Prize, and spent the 1920s working as a pianist and composer for Max Reinhardt's Deutsches Theater. It was also during these Berlin years that he gained

international attention as a composer whose scores were being taken up by Universal Edition in Vienna and recorded by Deutsche Grammophon. Despite his renown in Germany and throughout Europe, he never abandoned his roots, composing *Two Bulgarian Paraphrases* for Violin and Piano, Op. 18, of which "Horo" is the first.

The horo is a traditional line or circle dance found throughout Bulgaria, often built on the asymmetrical, irregular meters characteristic of Balkan folk music. Rather than simply transcribing a folk tune, Vladigerov treats the dance as raw material for a brilliant, high-energy concert showpiece in the 19th-century virtuoso tradition, closer in spirit to Liszt or Sarasate than to exact folkloric imitation. The result is a whirlwind of dazzling violin writing

over the propulsive, stamping energy of the dance, later orchestrated by the composer himself in 1928.

The piece anticipates the direction Vladigerov's career would soon take. In 1932, not long after this period of Berlin acclaim, he returned to Sofia, where he became the founding figure of modern Bulgarian composition. He taught for decades at the

Bulgarian State Conservatory, which is now called the Prof. Pancho Vladigerov National Music Academy, renamed in his honor after he died in 1978. Works like "Horo" and his celebrated *Vardar Rhapsody* established the template he would spend his life refining: folk material reborn as full-blooded concert music, unmistakably Bulgarian.

Eunike Tanzil

***Rule of Three* for Violin**

- ▶ August 17, 1998, in Medan, Indonesia
Composed in 2026
- ▶ This is the world premiere of this piece, which was co-commissioned by CMS.
- ▶ Duration: 9 minutes

Eunike Tanzil was born in 1998 on the Indonesian island of Sumatra and began learning piano at the age of five. At 17 she moved to the United States on a full scholarship to the Berklee College of Music, where she immersed herself in a wide range of styles and met many of the collaborators who would shape her career; she went on to earn a master's degree in composition from the Juilliard School. Now based in Los Angeles, she works fluently across the concert hall and the film studio alike. Her orchestral works have been taken up by ensembles including the Boston Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, while her film credits include scores and songs for *The Addams Family 2* and *I Wanna Dance with Somebody*. Across these different worlds, her music is consistently marked by lyrical melodic writing and richly colored harmony.

Rule of Three is a set of three miniatures for solo violin, each one a window into a different

strand of Tanzil's own musical upbringing. Rather than settling into a single voice, the work moves between three distinct sound worlds: Indonesian traditional music, jazz and blues, and the propulsive energy of the toccata.

The first miniature, *Roots*, reaches furthest back, drawing on the *pelog* scale and the melodic gestures of Indonesian traditional music. Its intervals and inflections carry the sound of a musical heritage rarely heard in the solo violin repertoire, translated here into the instrument's own idiom. *Ragtime* shifts into a looser, more laid-back register, evoking a swing groove alongside the bent notes and expressive inflections of the blues, the violin here taking on something of the phrasing of an improvising soloist. The final miniature, *Rush*, turns to momentum and propulsion, built from rapid repeated notes and double stops that drive the music forward with mounting intensity, bringing the set to a virtuosic close. Taken together, the three movements form what Tanzil calls a personal reflection on musical lineage, tracing the sounds of her childhood and reimagining them through the solo violin.

Sergei Prokofiev

Sonata No. 1 in F minor for Violin and Piano, Op. 80

- ▶ Born April 23 (O.S. April 11), 1891, in Sontsovska, Ukraine
- ▶ Died March 5, 1953, in Moscow
- Composed in 1938–46**
- ▶ First CMS performance on April 9, 1972, by violinist Jaime Laredo and pianist André Watts
- ▶ Duration: 29 minutes

Few of Prokofiev's works had a longer or more troubled gestation than his First Violin Sonata. He began sketching it in 1938, not long after his return to the Soviet Union, but set the project aside to complete other commissions—among them the film score for Sergei Eisenstein's *Alexander Nevsky*—and did not finish the sonata until 1946, eight years and a world war later. By the time it was done, Prokofiev had already written and published his Second Violin Sonata, making the reverse numbering of the two works something of a historical accident.

The long interruption left its mark. Unlike some of Prokofiev's wartime scores, none of the sonata's material was recycled from earlier, more carefree years; instead, the music seems to absorb the fear and grief of the period directly, emerging as one of the composer's darkest and most inward creations. Prokofiev also admittedly drew inspiration from the Baroque sonata's slow-fast-slow-fast movement structure, grounding the large-scale structure of the work in tradition.

The opening *Andante assai* sets the tone: a somber, processional movement built over a low, insistent piano line that functions almost like a passacaglia ground bass, against which the violin traces an increasingly urgent, lamenting melody. It closes with a haunting effect that Prokofiev described to the sonata's dedicatee and champion, violinist David Oistrakh, as sounding like "the wind in a graveyard." A biting, restless *Allegro brusco* follows, its violent energy standing in stark relief against the hushed music around it. The third movement, a lyrical *Andante*, offers the sonata's warmest and most consoling music before a driving final *Allegro*—framed by a return of the somber *Andante* material—brings the work full circle, characteristically ending not in triumph but in the same haunted stillness with which it began.

Oistrakh, who had already worked with Prokofiev to arrange the Flute Sonata, Op. 94, for violin two years earlier, provided the encouragement that finally pushed the composer to finish the piece, and gave its premiere. The sonata went on to earn Prokofiev the Stalin Prize in 1947—an official honor that sits uneasily alongside music so shadowed by the very regime that bestowed it.

Program notes © Noémie Chemali

About the Artists



PILVAX STUDIOS

Gloria Chien

Pianist Gloria Chien has a diverse musical life as a performer, concert presenter, and educator. She made her orchestral debut at age 16 with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Thomas Dausgaard. In 2009 she launched String Theory, a chamber music series in Chattanooga, and the following year was appointed Director of the Chamber Music Institute at Music@Menlo. In 2017, she joined her husband, violinist Soovin Kim, as Co-Artistic Director of the Lake Champlain

Chamber Music Festival in Burlington, Vermont. The duo became Artistic Directors at Chamber Music Northwest in 2020, and were named the recipients of the 2021 Award for Extraordinary Service to Chamber Music from CMS. Ms. Chien received her bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees from New England Conservatory, where she was named the Advisor for the prestigious Institute for Concert Artists in 2024. She is an artist-in-residence at Lee University in Cleveland, Tennessee; a Steinway Artist; and an alum of CMS's Bowers Program.



DARIO ACOSTA

Bella Hristova

Bulgarian-American violinist Bella Hristova has won international acclaim for her “expressive nuance and rich tone” (*New York Times*) and “impressive power and control” (*Washington Post*). A recipient of the Avery Fisher Career Grant, she is known for a diverse repertoire, bold programming, and a warmly beguiling stage presence. Hristova has performed as a soloist with orchestras across the United States, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and New Zealand, and has given recitals at

Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, and Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. A devoted champion of living composers, she has premiered new concertos by Anthony Ritchie and her husband, David Serkin Ludwig. Her commissioning project, *Lineage*, features six new solo violin works and will be released as an album on Azica Records in 2027. She plays a 1655 Nicolò Amati violin once owned by Louis Krasner.

About the Chamber Music Society

Founded in 1969, the **Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center (CMS)** brings the joy of chamber music to more people than any other organization in the world. Under the artistic leadership of cellist David Finckel and pianist Wu Han, the multi-generational and international performing artist roster of more than 140 acclaimed musicians enables CMS to present chamber music of every instrumentation, style, and historical period.

CMS reaches a global audience with more than 150 performances each season—at its Lincoln Center home (both in Alice Tully Hall and the Daniel and Joanna S. Rose Studio), in free community concerts throughout New York City, and on tour around the world. CMS also offers a wide range of master classes, lectures, and educational programs to engage and inform listeners of all ages, backgrounds, and levels of musical knowledge. Through the Bowers Program, a competitive three-season residency, CMS develops the next generation of classical music leaders, offering exceptional young professional musicians the opportunity to participate in every facet of the organization's activities.

CMS's robust digital presence, which reaches millions of viewers and listeners annually, includes a weekly national radio program, heard locally on WQXR; a partnership with Apple Music Classical; and appearances on SiriusXM's Symphony Hall channel and *In Concert with CMS* on PBS ALL ARTS. Additionally, CMS hosts an online archive of more than 2,000 video recordings of performance and education videos free to the public, as well as extensive digital learning resources.

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