

CMS Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center

WEDNESDAY EVENING, JULY 12, 2017, AT 7:30 ▶ 3,728TH CONCERT

Alice Tully Hall, Starr Theater, Adrienne Arsht Stage
Home of The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center

WU HAN, piano
ARNAUD SUSSMANN, violin
DAVID FINCKEL, cello

JOHANNES BRAHMS
(1833–1897) **Sonata No. 1 in E minor for Cello and Piano, Op. 38** (1862–65)
▶ Allegro non troppo
▶ Allegretto quasi Menuetto
▶ Allegro
FINCKEL, WU HAN

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK
(1841–1904) **Sonatina in G major for Violin and Piano, Op. 100** (1893)
▶ Allegro risoluto
▶ Larghetto
▶ Scherzo: Molto vivace
▶ Finale: Allegro
SUSSMANN, WU HAN

INTERMISSION

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

The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center is grateful to **Sally and Stephen Clement** for their generosity in making this evening's post-concert reception with the artists possible.

Millbrook Vineyards and Winery, Hudson River Valley, New York, is the official wine sponsor of *Summer Evenings*.

The Chamber Music Society acknowledges with sincere appreciation **Ms. Tali Mahanor's** generous long-term loan of the Hamburg Steinway & Sons model "D" concert grand piano.

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

ABOUT TONIGHT'S PROGRAM

Dear Listener,

The internet informs us that music festivals exist in greater abundance than anyone could imagine, and that some of them have been around for a very long time. The Fiera della Frecagnola festival in southern Italy began around 1450 A.D. and is still running. They must be doing something right!

It seems that CMS also did something right when we started Summer Evenings three seasons ago. It is with pride and pleasure that we welcome you, our summer audience, as you return or perhaps are attending for the first time. It gives us tremendous satisfaction to know that we are providing so many chamber music enthusiasts with rich doses of our core repertoire at this special time of the year. What has been commonly referred to as the "off-season" now offers special advantages. Not the least of them is the chance to escape—a concept inextricably linked to summer—without leaving New York. And these idyllic evenings in the cool serenity of Alice Tully Hall can be enjoyed during a month where our minds are clear to explore, dream, and simply enjoy the finest things in life.

Following the young tradition of this festival, we are pleased this season to present three delightful and essential works on each concert, performed by ensembles comprised of favorite CMS artists. Some are returning to the festival, while others are equally excited to be making their Summer Evenings debuts. This year, the two of us are fortunate to count ourselves among the latter!

Enjoy the performances,



David Finckel
ARTISTIC DIRECTORS



Wu Han



NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

I can't tell you how happy and excited I am to play for all of you with CMS in the middle of the summer in New York City! Musicians usually spend the whole summer season traveling from one festival to another and it is rare to be able to play at home. I have been fortunate to know and play with David Finckel and Wu Han for the past ten years and it is always an honor to share the stage with both of them. The program will end with the three of us playing Felix Mendelssohn's Second Piano Trio, in C minor. As always, Mendelssohn's music is full of energy and vitality as well as tenderness, particularly in the gorgeous slow movement. The triumphant ending surely will lift everybody's spirit by the end of the concert!

Dvořák wrote his sonatina in New York City and dedicated the piece to his two children. It is a sincere, beautiful work which I can't wait to share with all of you. (A fun fact—I first heard the piece in the old Alice Tully Hall as a Juilliard student. The German violinist Christian Tetzlaff played a recital and as an encore, he performed the last movement of the sonatina. I immediately fell in love with the piece!)

The program starts with one of the cello's most popular works, Brahms' First Cello Sonata, in E minor. Brahms was well known to be a perfectionist and I always get the sense in his music that not a single note is out of place. This sonata is deeply moving and I am looking forward to David and Wu Han's performance of this masterpiece. Enjoy the concert!

—Arnaud Sussmann

Sonata No. 1 in E minor for Cello and Piano, Op. 38

JOHANNES BRAHMS

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

Composed in 1862 and 1865.

- ▶ First CMS performance on October 27, 2000.
- ▶ Duration: 25 minutes

Brahms was based principally in his hometown of Hamburg during the decade of the 1860s, but he was frequently on tour throughout Germany and northern Europe as a

pianist and accompanist during those years. Seeking to broaden the range of his professional activities, he first visited Vienna and gave a recital there in September 1862 and was cordially received. At the end of the year, he learned that he had been passed over as conductor of the Philharmonic Concerts in Hamburg. Miffed at the rejection by his hometown, he readily accepted the offer of the Vienna *Singakademie* to become its director the following summer and regularly



When the E minor sonata was published in 1866, it was the first of Brahms' duo sonatas that he made public.

visited thereafter until he settled in the city for good in 1870.

One of Brahms' first important contacts in Vienna was Dr. Josef Gänsbacher, a teacher of singing at the conservatory and an administrator of the *Singakademie*, through whose influence he was appointed to the post of that organization. Gänsbacher was also an accomplished cellist, and it was for him that Brahms undertook his Cello Sonata in E minor in 1862. Three movements were written for the work in that year, but the *Adagio* was jettisoned even before Gänsbacher had seen it; it was not until three years later that Brahms returned to the sonata and provided it with what now stands as its finale. (The original *Adagio* may have been reworked as the slow movement of the F major Cello Sonata of 1886.) After the work was finished, Gänsbacher was eager to try it out but as he read through the piece with Brahms he complained that he was being drowned out by the richly voiced piano part. "I can't even hear myself," he protested. "You're lucky," the curmudgeonly Brahms bellowed back. When the E minor sonata was published in 1866, it was the first of Brahms' duo sonatas that he made public, though there are known to have been earlier attempts that the secretive composer destroyed without a trace.

Since Brahms deleted the proposed *Adagio* from the First Cello Sonata, the work has an unusual architectural plan: a large sonata-form structure followed

by smaller movements in the style of a minuet and a fugue. "Hardly ever again did Brahms write such a movement as the first," wrote Walter Neumann in his study of the composer, "so rich and fervent in its inspiration, both human and spiritual, or such an unalloyed record of intimate emotion." The cello announces the movement's main theme, a melancholy song that both Brahms and Bach scholar Karl Geiringer noted was reminiscent of the *Contrapunctus III* from Bach's *The Art of Fugue*. The lyrical nature of the sonata is reinforced by the subsidiary motive, a melody begun by an arpeggio that turns back upon itself before breaking into a large arch of wordless song. A brighter emotion is suggested before the end of the exposition, but the development returns to the introspective melancholy of the opening theme. The second theme and then the third are treated in the development before a full recapitulation of the earlier subjects rounds out the movement.

The second movement is a microcosm of the history of the Austrian popular dance. The outer sections of its three-part form (A-B-A) are marked "quasi Menuetto," and exhibit the polite demeanor associated with that old dance. The central trio, however, more animated in character and more adventurous in its harmonic peregrinations, is one of the tributes to the Viennese waltz that Brahms embedded in a number of his instrumental works, and which also inspired the set of Waltzes for Piano whose opus number (39) immediately follows that of this Cello Sonata.

The finale is a fugue poured into sonata form, the sort of generic hybrid that absorbed much of Beethoven's interest during his last years. The subject, a ribbon of triplets, was probably modeled on the *Contrapunctus XIII* from Bach's *The Art of Fugue*;

the countersubject (in eighth notes rather than triplets) is also used as the second theme in the sonata structure. The movement bristles with precisely worked-out counterpoint in three and

four voices, a circumstance requiring a fullness of texture from the piano. In the final pages, the cello leads through rousing stretto statements of the themes to bring the sonata to a close. ♦

Sonatina in G major for Violin and Piano, Op. 100

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

- ▶ Born September 8, 1841, in Nelahozeves, Bohemia.
- ▶ Died May 1, 1904, in Prague.

Composed in 1893.

- ▶ First CMS performance on November 17, 1985.
- ▶ Duration: 20 minutes

Dvořák did not get married until he was 32, but not for lack of trying. In 1864, when he was playing viola in the orchestra of Prague's National Theater (under Smetana's direction), he started teaching piano to supplement his meager income. He fell in love with one of his students, Josefa Čermák, the daughter of a prosperous local jeweler, but his affections went unrequited, and Papa Čermák refused to entrust his highly marriageable child to an impecunious musician anyway. Dvořák persevered with his suit for a while without success, but by 1869, he found himself drawn to Josefa's younger sister Anna, who had the additional attraction of singing in the chorus at the National Theater. Anna proved more amenable to his advances than had her older sister, though the elder Čermák still refused his consent, and it was not until the father had died in February 1873 that Dvořák finally won his bride; Anna and Antonín were married at St. Peter's Church in Prague on November 17. Dvořák's career and family blossomed quickly after his marriage. He received a substantial government

grant in 1875 on the recommendation of Johannes Brahms, composed prolifically thereafter, and started getting significant performances of his works. His early period of professional struggle ended with the lightning success of the *Slavonic Dances* in 1878. Those years of increasing recognition were darkened by family tragedy, however, when he and Anna suffered the deaths of all three of their children in quick succession between 1875 and 1877; he vented his grief by making a deeply felt setting of the *Stabat Mater*, the liturgical text describing the pity of the Mother of Christ at the cross. The couple started a new family with the birth of a daughter, Ottilie, in 1878. Five other children followed during the next decade, and when Dvořák left Prague in September 1892 to assume the directorship of the National Conservatory in New York City, one of his most pressing concerns was what to do with his large brood. The two oldest made the trip with their parents; the younger ones were left for a time with their grandmother and arrived a few months later.

After Dvořák had composed both the F major String Quartet, Op. 96 ("American") and the E-flat major String Quintet, Op. 97 during a halcyon vacation from June to September 1893 at a community of Czech immigrants in Spillville, Iowa, he realized that the milestone of his hundredth opus number was quickly approaching. Rather than



The *Larghetto* is based on a haunting melody that Dvořák had scribbled onto his shirt cuff during a visit to Minnehaha Falls in Minnesota the previous summer.



devote that special number to some public musical monument, however, Dvořák decided to reserve it for his private family use by assigning it to a piece written specially for his 15-year-old daughter Otilie and her ten-year-old brother Antonín—the Sonatina for Violin and Piano in G major. (Opp. 98 and 99 were later allotted to the Piano Suite in A major and the *Biblical Songs*.) The sonatina was composed quickly between November 22 and December 3, 1893, in New York City, and played immediately thereafter at the family’s apartment at 327 East 17th Street by Otilie (piano) and little Tony (violin). The composer said that it was his “favorite premiere,” and he instructed Simrock, his publisher, to list all of his children in the dedication on the title page: Otilie, Antonín, Anna, Marenka, Otakar, and Zinda.

Not only is the sonatina imbued with the warmth of Dvořák’s home life, it is also an important document of the American influences that flowed into his music during his three years in this country. Echoes of traditional African-American and Indian songs abound, as do suggestions of Stephen Foster’s parlor and minstrel show music, providing a model for the way in which indigenous sources could serve as the foundation for what he called “a serious and original school of composition to

be developed in the United States.” The sonatina opens with a determined melody that begins like a drawing-room waltz before adding a suave complementary phrase to comprise the movement’s main theme. A gapped-scale strain, part American Indian, part Bohemian folk song, serves as the subsidiary subject. The development section, exactly the right length and weight for this compact sonata form, leads to a full recapitulation of the earlier materials and a short, quiet coda. The *Larghetto*, which Fritz Kreisler often included on his recitals under the title *Indian Lament*, is based on a haunting melody that Dvořák had scribbled onto his shirt cuff during a visit to Minnehaha Falls in Minnesota the previous summer. The center of the movement is given over to a brighter piano theme whose arpeggiated chords and pentatonic scale might suggest a banjo tune. The *Scherzo*, energetic and succinct, takes as its subject yet another folkish, gapped-scale melody. The sonata-form *Finale* provides an emotional microcosm of Dvořák’s New World experience: a perky, syncopated tune reminiscent of an old plantation song is used as the main theme, while the pair of melodies making up the second theme area, one minor and one major, seem to capture his longing for his beloved Czech homeland. ♦

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.

- ▶ First CMS performance on September 14, 1969.
 - ▶ Duration: 28 minutes
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Mendelssohn was among the most successful musicians of the 19th century. His career showed none of the reverses, disappointments, and delays that were the rule for the other great Romantic composers; indeed, it was precisely the overwork and exhaustion to meet the demands for his presence, his performances and his compositions that led to his untimely death at the age of 38.

The most intensely busy time of Mendelssohn's life was ushered in by his appointment in 1835 as the administrator, music director, and conductor of the Leipzig Gewandhaus concerts. In very short order, he raised the quality of musical life in Leipzig to equal that of any city in Europe, and in 1842 he founded the local conservatory to maintain his standards of excellence. (The school was to be the most highly regarded institution of its kind in the world for the next half century.) In 1841, he was named director of the Music Section of the Academy of Arts in Berlin, a cultural venture newly instituted by King Frederick William IV of Prussia, which required him not only to supervise and conduct a wide variety of programs but also to compose upon royal demand—the incidental music that complements his dazzling 1826 Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was written to fulfill one of Frederick's

requests. Mendelssohn toured, guest conducted, and composed incessantly, and on March 28, 1837, he took on the additional responsibilities of family life when he married Cécile Jeanrenaud. "A conscientious chronicle of Mendelssohn's next few years [after 1835] would merely weary the reader," noted the late George Marek in his fine biography of the composer. "It would link work with more work, string success after success, place tribute next to tribute, and enumerate an ever larger register of acquaintances and friends."

Mendelssohn won a brief hiatus from the press of his accumulating duties when he took a leave of absence from his post at the Gewandhaus during the 1844–45 season. Before his sabbatical began, however, Mendelssohn had to fulfill a commitment to conduct the London Philharmonic Society Orchestra in a series of concerts during the late spring of 1844. He arrived in England in May, and proposed to perform there Schubert's C major Symphony (No. 9, "The Great"), which he had given its premiere at the Gewandhaus five years before, but the players derided the lengthy and difficult finale so uproariously that he withdrew the work, and refused to serve up his own popular Ruy Blas Overture to the London audiences as recompense. The rest of his English engagement, however, created the spectacular success that marked each of his other eight visits to that country: he conducted Beethoven's Violin Concerto with Joachim as soloist, presented the whole of his recent *Midsummer Night's Dream* music, served as soloist in his own G major Piano Concerto,

and participated in endless rounds of social engagements and chamber music soirées. Mendelssohn returned to Germany in July to conduct a music festival in Zweibrücken. The balance of the summer was spent in rest and composition at his home in Frankfurt, his main project at that time being the completion of his long-gestating Violin Concerto for the concertmaster of the Gewandhaus Orchestra, Ferdinand David. He fulfilled some obligations in Berlin during the autumn, most notably a performance of his oratorio *St. Paul* given on the order of King Frederick, and then announced that he was cutting back significantly on his duties at the Academy. By the beginning of 1845, he had finally managed to clear his schedule sufficiently to devote himself to composition, and he made significant progress on *Elijah*, scheduled for its premiere at the Birmingham Festival the following year, and completed the String Quintet in B-flat major (Op. 87) and the C minor Piano Trio (Op. 66). In the autumn, the King of Saxony convinced him to return to his post at the Gewandhaus. His frantic pace of life was reactivated; he was dead within two years. Except for the F minor String Quartet (Op. 80), the C minor Trio was the last important chamber work of Mendelssohn's career.

The Piano Trio No. 2 was dedicated to Louis Spohr, the renowned violinist and conductor who, around 1820, was among the first maestros to threaten orchestral musicians from the podium with a pointed wooden stick rather than a violin bow or a bare hand. Mendelssohn, who had been a friend since meeting Spohr as a teenager in Berlin, followed this extraordinary practice, and wielded the revolutionary baton for his epochal revival of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* in

1829 and in all of his concerts thereafter. Something of Spohr's sturdy Classical Romanticism is heard in the trio.

In his study of the chamber music, John Horton noted of the opening movement of the C minor Trio, "Mendelssohn never wrote a stronger sonata-form *Allegro*." The urgent rising-and-falling phrases of the main theme, announced by the piano, generate a subsequent arch-shaped melody for the violin, which is given above the keyboard's restless accompaniment. A sweeping subject sung in duet by violin and cello in a brighter tonality serves as the second theme. These motives are elaborated with immense skill and deep emotion as the movement unfolds. The following *Andante* is an extended song-without-words in which the piano often serves as interlocutor for the tandem flights of the strings. The movement is laid out in a smoothly flowing three-part form whose middle section is marked by a heightened animation and a sense of adventurous harmonic peregrination. The gossamer *Scherzo* is musical featherstitching such as has never been as well accomplished by any other composer—Mendelssohn is simply incomparable in evoking this elfin world of nocturnal wisps and fairy wonder. The finale is built from two contrasting thematic elements: a vivacious principal subject that is launched by a leaping interval from the cello and a broad chorale melody introduced in a chordal setting by the piano. The main theme returns for a vigorous working-out before the chorale melody, traced by Eric Werner in his biography of Mendelssohn to the hymn *Vor Deinem Thron* (Before Your Throne) from the *Geneva Psalter* of 1551, is summoned in a grand, nearly orchestral guise to cap this masterwork of Mendelssohn's fullest maturity. ♦

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS



USA MARIE MAZZUCCO

DAVID FINCKEL

► Co-Artistic Director of the Chamber Music Society, cellist David Finckel is a recipient of *Musical America's* Musician of the Year award, one of the highest music industry honors in the United States. He leads a multifaceted career as a concert performer, recording artist, educator, administrator, and cultural entrepreneur that places him in the ranks of today's most influential classical musicians. He appears extensively with CMS, as recitalist with pianist Wu Han, and in piano trios with violinist Philip Setzer. Along with Wu Han, he is the founder and Artistic Director of Music@Menlo, Silicon Valley's acclaimed chamber music festival and institute; co-founder and Artistic Director of Chamber Music Today in Korea; and co-founder and Artistic Director of the Chamber Music Workshop at the Aspen Music Festival and School. Under the auspices of CMS, David Finckel and Wu Han also lead the LG Chamber Music School. Mr. Finckel is the co-creator of ArtistLed, classical music's first musician-directed and Internet-based recording company, whose 19-album catalogue has won widespread critical praise as it approaches its 20-year anniversary. The latest release features the Dvořák Cello Concerto and a work written for him by Augusta Read Thomas. *Piano Quartets*, a Deutsche Grammophon release recorded live at Alice Tully Hall, features David Finckel, Wu Han, violinist Daniel Hope, and violist Paul Neubauer. David Finckel served as cellist of the nine-time Grammy Award-winning Emerson String Quartet for 34 seasons. The first American student of Rostropovich, he is on the faculty of The Juilliard School and Stony Brook University.



CARLIN MA

ARNAUD SUSSMANN

► Winner of a 2009 Avery Fisher Career Grant, Arnaud Sussmann has distinguished himself with his unique sound, bravura, and profound musicianship. Minnesota's *Pioneer Press* writes, "Sussmann has an old-school sound reminiscent of what you'll hear on vintage recordings by Jascha Heifetz or Fritz Kreisler, a rare combination of sweet and smooth that can hypnotize a listener." A thrilling young musician capturing the attention of classical critics and audiences around the world, he has appeared on tour in Israel and in concert at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, the Dresden Music Festival in Germany, and the Phillips Collection in Washington, DC. He has been presented in recital in Omaha on the Tuesday Musical Club series, New Orleans by the Friends of Music, Tel Aviv at the Museum of Art, and at the Louvre Museum in Paris. He has also given concerts at the OK Mozart, Moritzburg, Caramoor, Music@Menlo, La Jolla SummerFest, Mainly Mozart, Seattle Chamber Music, Bridgehampton, and the Moab Music festivals. Mr. Sussmann has performed with many of today's leading artists including Itzhak Perlman, Menahem Pressler, Gary Hoffman, Shmuel Ashkenasi, Wu Han, David Finckel, Jan Vogler, and members of the Emerson String Quartet. A former member of Chamber Music Society Two, he regularly appears with CMS in New York and on tour, including performances at London's Wigmore Hall.



WU HAN

► Co-Artistic Director of the Chamber Music Society, pianist Wu Han is among the most esteemed and influential classical musicians in the world today. She is a recipient of *Musical America's* Musician of the Year award, one of the highest music industry honors in the US, and has risen to international prominence through her wide-ranging achievements as a concert performer, recording artist, educator, arts administrator, and cultural entrepreneur. Wu Han appears

extensively with CMS; as recitalist with cellist David Finckel; and in piano trios with violinist Philip Setzer. Along with David Finckel, she is the founder and Artistic Director of Music@Menlo, Silicon Valley's acclaimed chamber music festival and institute; co-founder and Artistic Director of Chamber Music Today in Korea; and co-founder and Artistic Director of the Chamber Music Workshop at the Aspen Music Festival and School. Under the auspices of CMS, David Finckel and Wu Han also lead the LG Chamber Music School in South Korea. Wu Han is the co-creator of ArtistLed, classical music's first musician-directed and Internet-based recording company, whose 19-album catalogue has won widespread critical praise as it approaches its 20-year anniversary. Recent recording releases include *Wu Han LIVE II* and *Piano Quartets*, a Deutsche Grammophon release recorded live at Alice Tully Hall with cellist David Finckel, violinist Daniel Hope, and violist Paul Neubauer. Wu Han's most recent concerto performances include appearances with the Aspen Chamber Orchestra, the Atlanta Symphony, and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

UPCOMING CONCERTS AT CMS

SUMMER EVENINGS III

SUNDAY, JULY 16, 2017, 5:00 PM ► ALICE TULLY HALL

Prokofiev's D major Violin Sonata, Op. 94a, one of his most joyful creations, anchors a concert that also includes works by Beethoven and Dvořák in the luminous key of D major.

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ABOUT THE CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center (CMS) is known for the extraordinary quality of its performances, its inspired programming, and for setting the benchmark for chamber music worldwide: no other chamber music organization does more to promote, to educate, and to foster a love of and appreciation for the art form. Whether at its home in Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center, on leading stages throughout North America, or at prestigious venues in Europe and Asia, CMS brings together the very best international artists from an ever-expanding roster of more than 150 artists per season, to provide audiences with the kind of exhilarating concert experiences that have led to critics calling CMS "an exploding star in the musical firmament" (*The Wall Street Journal*). Many of these extraordinary performances are livestreamed, broadcast on radio and television, or made available on CD and DVD, reaching thousands of listeners around the globe each season.

Education remains at the heart of CMS' mission. Demonstrating the belief that the future of chamber music lies in engaging and expanding the audience, CMS has created multi-faceted education and audience development programs to bring chamber music to people from a wide range of backgrounds, ages, and levels of musical knowledge. CMS also believes in fostering and supporting the careers of young artists through the CMS Two program, which provides ongoing performance opportunities to a select number of highly gifted young instrumentalists and ensembles. As this venerable institution approaches its 50th anniversary season in 2020, its commitment to artistic excellence and to serving the art of chamber music, in everything that it does, is stronger than ever.

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David Finckel and Wu Han, *Artistic Directors* ♦ Suzanne Davidson, *Executive Director*

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