TUESDAY EVENING, JULY 8, 2025, AT 7:30 ▶ 4,593RD CONCERT

Alice Tully Hall, Starr Theater, Adrienne Arsht Stage

Home of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center

Evren Ozel, piano Gilles Vonsattel, piano Julian Rhee, violin Dmitri Atapine, cello

Summer Evenings I

Wolfgang Amadeus

Sonata in F major for Violin and Piano, K. 376 (1781) ▶ Allegro

Mozart

(1756-1791) ► Andante

Rondo: Allegretto grazioso

RHEE, VONSATTEL

Beethoven

Ludwig van Trio in E-flat major for Piano, Violin, and Cello, Op. 1, No. 1 (1793)

(1770-1827) ▶ Allegro

- Adagio cantabile
- ▶ Scherzo: Allegro assai
- ▶ Finale: Presto OZEL, RHEE, ATAPINE

INTERMISSION

Nadia Boulanger Three Pieces for Cello and Piano (1914)

(1887-1979)

- Modéré Sans vitesse et a l'aise
- Vite et nerveusement rythmé

ATAPINE, OZEL

Johannes Brahms Trio in C major for Piano, Violin, and Cello, Op. 87

(1833 - 1897)

(1880 - 82)

- ▶ Allegro
- ▶ Andante con moto
- Scherzo: Presto
- ▶ Finale: Allegro giocoso

VONSATTEL, RHEE, ATAPINE

The Summer Evenings Audience Engagement Initiative is underwritten, in part, by Robert S. Feldman and Katherine Vorwerk. Additional support provided by the Musicians Advocacy Fund, Leon Levy Foundation, Judy and Alan Kosloff, a generous anonymous donor, and with public funds from the National **Endowment for the Arts.**

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.

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

From the Artistic Directors

Dear Listener,

Welcome to our inaugural 2025 Summer Evenings concert. It is indeed wonderful to see so many long-time CMS listeners sitting side by side with newcomers in the audience. If you are new to us, these letters (which appear in every Alice Tully Hall program) are our way of welcoming you personally and sharing our perspective on the concert, from our vantage point as CMS's artistic leaders.

Program design is very important to CMS. We believe that a concert should make sense: that works of music should be gathered to complement one another, and that the whole experience should be like eating a multi-course gourmet meal. Certainly, today's concert has a special design, and we'll talk about that now.

You can see right away from the program that we have two pairs of ensembles: duos and trios. Both are ubiquitous in chamber music and can include multiple instrumentations. Our two duos today both include piano and feature the violin and cello, respectively, as partners. The first duo, composed in 1781 by Mozart, is the 24th of his 35 piano-and-violin sonatas. Mozart did not enjoy a long life, dying at only age 35, so how did he manage to compose so many of these? Very simple: he started at age six! The contrasting duo for cello and piano is from another age, country, and kind of composer: Nadia Boulanger composed her Three Pieces for Cello and Piano in 1914, before abandoning composing to concentrate on teaching. Please enjoy her fascinating story in our program notes.

Our two piano trios were composed in different musical ages but are cut from the same cloth: Brahms was widely regarded as the successor to Beethoven, and he lived up to the challenge. We encounter Beethoven through his first published work, which he chose to stake his artistic claim in Vienna at the age of 25, and Brahms, many decades later, composing with Beethoven-esque integrity in the very same city. So, this concert tells stories of evolution, connections, and contrast.

One final word of gratitude goes to tonight's cellist, Dmitri Atapine, for stepping in at the last minute (emergencies do happen, even here!) And, full disclosure: you are hearing the Boulanger because we just heard Dmitri perform it spectacularly at CMS's annual Memorial Day festival in Kentucky, and we thought: "New York simply *has* to hear this!"

Enjoy the performance,

David Finckel Wu ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

Wu Han

Notes on the Program

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Sonata in F major for Violin and Piano, K. 376

- ▶ Born January 27, 1756, in Salzburg
- ▶ Died December 5, 1791, in Vienna

Composed in 1781

- ▶ First CMS performance on February 28, 2003, by violinist Ani Kavafian and pianist Lee Luvisi
- Duration: 17 minutes

In the early 1780s, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart had just moved from Salzburg to Vienna, and he was doing a lot of teaching. He quickly learned to charge a monthly salary rather than a fee per lesson, since the children of aristocracy had a penchant for unexpected cancellations, and he managed to limit himself to three or four students. It was a chore, but he gave some successful concerts with a few of his pupils, including Josefa von Auernhammer, whose playing he quite enjoyed despite finding her "a monster."

In 1781, he published a set of Six Sonatas for Piano with Violin Accompaniment (not to be confused with Sonatas for Violin and Piano). He dedicated them to Auernhammer, and we can imagine the teacher and student using the pieces as vehicles for study. In many, the violin part is not too difficult; it would not have been hard to find a friend or sibling to come and read it, and the works give the pianist ample opportunity to shine both as a soloist and as a sensitive chamber music collaborator.

Most of the themes of the first sonata in the published collection, in F major (K. 376), are presented initially in the piano and then repeated or varied by the violin. In the first movement, the friendly primary tune in the right hand of the piano carries on above a violin drone; the quiet, descending secondary theme is punctuated by occasional violin chirps; and the exposition's main cadence and initial presentation of a trumpeting closing idea leaves the violin out entirely.

The role of the violin in the second movement remains an accompaniment, but here Mozart shows his many gifts for orchestration. The piano introduces a lyrical theme, and the string player must wait quite a few measures before singing it back. But the ostensibly secondary, flowing lines of sixteenth notes that the violinist plays at the outset and throughout the movement benefit enormously from the warmth of the instrument, lending the music an intimacy and simplicity that would be destroyed were the string player to have a more extroverted role. The cheerful, sing-songy Rondo that closes the sonata returns to the "piano first" model of the first movement. Here, it is almost as if the piano is demonstrating for the violin how the melodies go before inviting a pupil to join in-a playfully pedagogical approach to compositional structure that is perhaps appropriate for a work dedicated to a student by a teacher.

Program note © Nicky Swett

Ludwig van Beethoven

Trio in E-flat major, for Piano, Violin, and Cello, Op. 1, No. 1

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

Composed in 1793

- ► First CMS performance on November 12, 1972, by pianist Richard Goode, violinist Rafael Druian, and cellist Leslie Parnas
- Duration: 30 minutes

In 1792, as France convulsed in revolution and war broke out in Europe, Beethoven moved from his hometown of Bonn to study composition with Franz Joseph Haydn in Vienna. Mozart had died just eleven months before, and the tastemakers of the town were keeping their eyes open for the next big talent. Beethoven—with his wild looks, untamed personality, and unconventional, aggressive pianistic sound, paired with undeniable talent-was a top candidate. He had no trouble finding a series of patronseven several at once. The competition for the bragging rights of facilitating the creation of exciting new works had become so fierce that many families went into tremendous (even ruinous) debt trying to outdo their neighbors. Buoyed by this unabashed enthusiasm, within a handful of years Beethoven's music was printed by no fewer than five of the music publishers in town. Carl Czerny, who would become one of Beethoven's most famous pupils, confirmed the composer "received all manner of support from our high aristocracy and enjoyed as much care and respect as ever fell to the lot of a young artist."

Shortly after his arrival, Beethoven was invited by Prince Karl Lichnowsky and his wife to live with them in their home. Prince Lichnowsky patronized Beethoven for over a decade, and Beethoven became extremely

close to the family. He considered Princess Christiane von Lichnowsky a "second mother" and dedicated works such as the Sonata in C minor, Op. 13 ("Pathétique"), the Sonata in A-flat, Op. 26, and the Symphony No. 2 to the prince. However, over time Beethoven became increasingly agitated by the arrangement. Musicologist Maynard Solomon notes that it "troubled him to think that he was admired primarily for his talents rather than for his qualities as a person," and that he once lamented in a letter to a friend, "Am I then nothing more than a music maker for yourself or the others?" The sentiment wasn't limited to the Lichnowskys. It seems Beethoven felt similarly toward more than one of his patrons. The attention was a double-edged sword.

Beethoven wrote the set of three piano trios, published as Op. 1, for Lichnowsky during the halcyon days of their relationship, to be performed at a home salon (various accounts exist, but Haydn may have been in attendance). Divided into four movements, the opening sparkles with elegant Viennese classism, but is tinged with the unmistakably muscular quality of Beethoven. This is balanced by the second movement, in which his masterful writing of achingly beautiful melodies is on full display. The spotlight is particularly given to the piano—not accidentally, as it is the part Beethoven himself played at the premiere. In the rollicking third movement we already hear a foreshadowing of the kind of élan infused in his later scherzos, like that of the Symphony No. 7, while the finale displays the composer's spirit of playful virtuosity. Listen for the sneaky return of the first movement's opening arpeggio motive in the very last measures of the work.

Program note © Kathryn Bacasmot

Nadia Boulanger

Three Pieces for Cello and Piano

- ▶ Born September 16, 1887, in Paris
- Died October 22, 1979, in Paris

Composed in 1914

- ▶ This is the first CMS performance of this piece.
- ▶ Duration: 7 minutes

In 1921, a new summer music school opened at the Chateau of Fontainebleau outside of Paris. This so-called "Conservatoire américain" gave opportunities for young composers from the United States and Europe to gather for lessons, collaborations, and concerts. One of their founding faculty members was Nadia Boulanger, a pianist, composer, and pedagogue whose methods for teaching harmony and counterpoint were gaining renown in France and abroad. Numerous American composers, including Aaron Copland, Virgil Thomson, Walter Piston, Dorothy Rudd-Moore, and Elliott Carter spent summers at Fontainebleau studying with Boulanger, often staying on in Paris to work with her more in the following months and years.

Her teaching methods focused on harmony and counterpoint, and the distinction between the two. She was surprised by the lack of robust experience in these areas that her American students demonstrated, and she gave them numerous studies and exercises to build awareness and facility with various trajectories of vertically experienced harmonies and linear relationships between individual voices that combine to form a meaningful contrapuntal texture. American composer Allen Shawn saw these assignments as "doorways that led to discourse on every aspect of life . . . and seamlessly back to the music at hand. Her aim here . . . was to reveal the life present in the basic materials of music, to show the beauty and shape of small as well as large structure."

Boulanger found success as a composer with her early published works, winning second prize at the Prix de Rome in 1908 for a controversial instrumental fugue. But after the sudden death in 1918 of her sister Lili, who also composed to great acclaim, Nadia lost interest in writing music and turned her attention to performing and teaching. She penned her final pieces in 1922 before shutting that door in order to focus on her growing career as a pedagogue. She wrote her set of three miniatures for cello and piano in 1914. The first, a subdued Debussy-inspired cello aria sung out above a syncopated piano ostinato (repeated pattern), displays a gift for subtle harmonic motion and orchestration. The piano stays in roughly the same register for the movement, while the cello takes advantage of every possible range, from the top of the A-string, the instrument's highest string, to a final closing fifth played at the very bottom of its tessitura. If the first piece is an exploration of harmonic and instrumental color, the second shows off Boulanger's counterpoint skill. The cello presents a modal tune that has the quality of a children's song; the piano follows by a beat and imitates in a close canon that builds in density but never loses that innocent quality. The nervously rhythmic final piece, cued by a piano outburst marked "brusque," shatters some of that innocence. The strumming of the cello and the brash, motoric tune first presented by the piano suggest the bustle, intensity, and irony of adult life. In a slow middle passage, she turns the "brusque" figure of the opening into a sultry, sauntering gesture—a reminder of how there is enormous vitality and variety present in "the basic materials of music," and how even a short piece like this can be extremely beautiful.

Program note © Nicky Swett

Johannes Brahms

Trio in C major for Piano, Violin, and Cello, Op. 87

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

Composed in 1880-82

- First CMS performance on February 21, 1971, by pianist Richard Goode, violinist James Buswell, and cellist Leslie Parnas
- Duration: 28 minutes

When Johannes Brahms wrote his second of three piano trios, he was settling into contentment as a widely venerated composer. His Violin Concerto in D major (1878), written for virtuoso Joseph Joachim, won immediate acclaim, and his First (1876) and Second (1877) Symphonies silenced any doubts about Brahms having a voice of his own in the shadow of Beethoven. (This all came at the expense of his masterful piano playing; Brahms's close friend Clara Schumann noted that "Brahms plays more and more abominably. It is now nothing but bump, bang, and scrabble.")

The second of his three piano trios exemplifies his genius for conveying rich, emotional expression within the structure of Classical form and his command as a chamber music composer. It pleased even Brahms, a formidable self-critic, who wrote to his publisher, "You have not yet had such a beautiful trio from me and very likely have not published its equal in the last ten years."

In the trio's opening, the violin and cello introduce the stately theme paired in octaves, a ritual they will repeat in each successive movement. Soon after the piano joins, the music rushes to cathartic heights before settling into a gentler field of G major. Brahms notably employs at least four thematic ideas in this breathless, organic movement and develops them in a vast expressive sweep.

From its emotive first note, the second movement turns melancholy. Though simple, the A-minor main theme whispers of Brahms's longstanding interest in Hungarian folk tunes. A mournful quality pervades the ensuing four variations, which ebb briefly into the sweetness of A major before the theme's final incantation.

The third movement launches restlessly into a C-minor scherzo that demands feats of virtuosity—especially for the piano—tossed off within the constraint of a *piano* dynamic. The middle section is all lush golden singing in C major by the violin and cello, then the terse chatter reappears and the entire movement fades away nearly unnoticed.

The irrepressible energy that drives much of the trio launches the C-major finale. For all its Brahmsian majesty and richness, the music skips and laughs under the musical direction of *giocoso* (playful), and the boisterous theme at times conjures the *Academic Festival Overture*, which was composed at the same time and perhaps still rang in Brahms's ears. The violin and cello toss the motif back and forth, piano chasing after them, and romp to the end.

Program note © Katelyn Simone

About the Artists



Dmitri Atapine

Cellist Dmitri Atapine has been praised for his "brilliant technical chops" (*Gramophone*) and performances that are "highly impressive throughout" (*The Strad*). He has appeared at leading venues worldwide and performs frequently with CMS, where he is an alum of the Bowers Program. He has been featured at festivals including Music@Menlo, La Musica Sarasota, Aldeburgh, and Aix-en-Provence. His recordings appear on Naxos, Bridge, MSR, and other labels, and include a world-premiere release of cello sonatas by Lowell Liebermann. He has

received awards including first prize at the Carlos Prieto Cello Competition and top honors at the Premio Vittorio Gui and Plowman competitions. He holds a doctorate from the Yale School of Music, where he studied with Aldo Parisot. Atapine is cello professor at the University of Nevada, Reno; Artistic Co-Director of Friends of Chamber Music Kansas City; founder of Apex Concerts (Nevada); and Co-Director of Music@Menlo's Young Performers Program.



Evren Ozel

American pianist Evren Ozel, praised for his compelling artistry and technical mastery, is the Bronze Medalist of the 2025 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, where he also received the Mozart Concerto Prize. He has appeared with the Cleveland Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, and Fort Worth Symphony under conductors including Marin Alsop and Carlos Miguel Prieto. A recipient of a 2023 Avery Fisher Career Grant, Ozel released his debut album of Mozart concertos with the ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra and

Howard Griffiths on Alpha Classics in 2025. Ozel is a 2024–27 Bowers Program Artist at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and performs widely in recital, chamber music, and international festivals. A graduate of the New England Conservatory, he studied with Wha Kyung Byun and has worked with Mitsuko Uchida, Sir András Schiff, and others. He is managed by Concert Artists Guild and makes his home in Boston.



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 Stuttgarter Kammerorchester, Oregon Symphony, Milwaukee Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, Belgian National Orchestra, Antwerp Symphony, Indianapolis Sym-

phony, 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 studied at the New England Conservatory with Miriam Fried, and currently works 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.



Gilles Vonsattel

Swiss-born American pianist Gilles Vonsattel boasts remarkable versatility and artistic originality. Winner of an Avery Fisher Career Grant, the 2016 Andrew Wolf Chamber Music Award, and top prizes in the Naumburg and Geneva competitions, he has graced prestigious stages worldwide, collaborating with renowned orchestras and enthralling audiences with recitals and chamber performances. As a champion of new music, he has premiered compositions by celebrated composers such as Jörg Widmann, Heinz Holliger, Anthony Cheung,

and George Benjamin. He is an alum of CMS's Bowers Program, and has earned degrees from Columbia University and the Juilliard School. Today, Vonsattel shares his passion for music as a Professor of Piano at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and on faculty at Bard College Conservatory of Music.



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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.

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Updated on June 17, 2025

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