

Music in Midtown

THE
GRADUATE
CENTER
CITY UNIVERSITY
OF NEW YORK

Elebash Recital Hall
The Graduate Center
365 Fifth Avenue (at 34th Street), NYC
Thursdays 1:00–2:00 PM



Thursday, April 27, 2023
1:00 p.m.

CHAMBER MUSIC ON FIFTH I

PROGRAM

Légende Mancelle (2010)

Dimitri Tchesnokov
(b. 1982)

Le Merle noir (1952)

Olivier Messiaen
(1908–92)

Rebecca Moranis, flute
Joseph Vaz, piano

Quatre sonnets à Cassandre (1921)

Frank Martin
(1890–1974)

- I. *Qui voudra voir... (Avec mouvement)*
- II. *Nature ornant la dame (Lent et rythmé comme une Sarabande)*
- III. *Avant le temps (Vif et léger)*
- IV. *Quand le te vois (Lent et très intime)*

Sophie Delphis, mezzo-soprano
Yoshi Weinberg, flute
Martine Thomas, viola
Sarah Song, cello

Sonata for Piano and Violin No. 2 in A Major, Opus 100

Johannes Brahms
(1883-97)

Allegro amabile

Andante tranquillo - Vivace - Andante - Vivace di più - Andante - Vivace

Allegretto grazioso - quasi andante

Sophia Stoyanovich, violin
Lora Al-Ahmad, piano

A Wish in Silent Waters (2023)

Lora Al-Ahmad
(b. 1995)

Amber Evans, soprano
Sean Statser, vibraphone

Trio for Oboe, Bassoon, and Piano (arr.) Fp. 43

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)

Presto

Andante

Rondo

Amy Hur, clarinet
Joseph Staten, cello
Mizuho Yoshimune, piano

Crow (1990)

Dušan Bogdanović
(b. 1955)

Amber Evans, soprano
Yoshi Weinberg, flute
Neil Beckmann, guitar
Samuel Zagnit, contrabass

Sonata for Clarinet and Piano (1941-2)

Leonard Bernstein
(1918-90)

Grazioso

Andantino - Vivace e leggiero

Amy Hur, clarinet
Nenad Ivočić, piano

Music in Midtown is a series of lunchtime concerts spotlighting the highly regarded musical performance program at the CUNY Graduate Center. Presented in the warm, intimate, acoustically rich Elebash Recital Hall, these performances feature the music program's renowned faculty, alumni, outstanding performers selected from students in the DMA program and noted guest artists. Some concerts are followed by a master class, which the public is invited to observe. Norman Carey is Director and Jacqueline Martelle is Assistant Director.

About the Program

Ukrainian composer **Dimitri Tchesnokov** wrote about his 2010 piece, *Légende Mancelle* ("Legend of Le Mans"), that he was enchanted by the flute's "rich, mellow tone." He continues, it was "never my intention to write a virtuoso piece but rather to simply let the magic of the sound pervade the piano harmonies."
Program note by Joseph Vaz

Le Merle noir ("The Blackbird") is an early example of French composer **Olivier Messiaen's** fascination with bird song, which would become an obsession and primary compositional element for the rest of his life. Commissioned as a test piece for the 1952 Concours de flûte at the Paris Conservatoire, Messiaen incorporated stylized bird song into the two flute cadenzas. The other, more melodic idea of the piece is taken from the sixth movement, *Jardin du sommeil d'amour* ("Garden of Love's Sleep") of his symphonic masterwork, *the Turangalîla-Symphonie*, tranquilly evoking the titular blackbird's natural habitat. A quick, virtuosic coda brings the work to a spirited close.
Program note by Joseph Vaz

Composed in 1921 and premiered in 1923 in Geneva, Switzerland, **Frank Martin's** *Quatre Sonnets à Cassandre* (*Four Sonnets to Cassandra*) sets poems by Pierre de Ronsard (1524–85) taken from his *Amours* (1552). Famous and frequently turned into songs during Ronsard's own lifetime, the French Renaissance poet's works enjoyed a massive revival starting in the nineteenth century. In the first half of the twentieth century, setting his texts seems to have been almost *de rigueur* if you were a francophone composer. Nearly contemporary to Martin's *Sonnets*, for instance, are Camille Saint-Saëns' *Cinq Poèmes de Ronsard* (1920) Maurice Ravel's *Ronsard à son âme* (1923–24), Francis Poulenc's *Poèmes de Ronsard* (1924–25) and Arthur Honegger's "Chanson de Ronsard" (1924), to name just a few.

It's easy to see why Ronsard's poetry has appealed to so many musicians over the centuries: the language is virtuosic in its use of vowel color, consonance, rhythm and meter (Ronsard perfected and popularized the famous twelve-syllable alexandrine form). The poems' themes of love (often unrequited) and impermanence are accessible to a wide audience. The texts are full of evocative imagery; at turns biting, desperate, witty and elegiac, they remain fundamentally modern in their sharpness, clarity and depth of feeling.

Martin chose a somewhat unconventional instrumentation for his four songs: flute, viola, cello and mezzo-soprano voice. The result is at once rich in varied tone colors and always somewhat exposed. Without the grounding and expansiveness of a piano or a full string quartet, each instrument retains a highly audible individual character even as it melts in and out of ensemble and solo lines.

Martin makes little attempt to cohere the timbres into one vertical sound. Instead, he emphasizes the variegated nature of his ensemble in relatively sparse and affectingly simple writing. The second

song (“Nature ornant la dame”) begins with the cello and viola in an open fifth. The two instruments play a slow, contrapuntal duet while the singer begins a melody that is then continued by the flute (marked “chanté,” *sung*) after the first stanza of the poem. Each line is nakedly on display. Completely different in character, the sardonic third song (“Avant le temps tes tempes fleuriront”) brings out individual lines in pithy solo exclamations that fit together like a jigsaw puzzle. The final piece (“Quand je te vois, seule, assise, à part toi”) makes use of silences, interrupted lines and heavily exposed moments to underline the themes of solitude and vulnerability in the text.

Throughout, there’s a suspended preciousness that beautifully matches Ronsard’s writing. Some compositional techniques overtly contribute to a certain sense of “antiquity” in the four pieces – open fifths and fourths, the horizontality of the lines, timbres reminiscent of older instruments, simple vocal writing and certain melodic figures (such as the flute’s final solo line at the end of the first song). But the overall effect is not one of quasi-Renaissance pastiche. More than anything else, these sonnets feel out of time, four little jewelry boxes.

Program note by Sophie Delphis

Johannes Brahms Sonata for Piano and Violin No. 2 in A Major was composed in the summer of 1866 while staying in the town Thun in the Bernese Oberland, Switzerland. Nicknamed the “Thun” and “Meistersinger” Sonata, the piece was composed in perhaps one of the most productive and joyful periods in Johannes Brahms’ life. While visiting, Brahms is quoted as having described the landscape as “so full of melodies that one has to be careful not to step on any.” This spirit is heard in the works composed during this period not exclusive to the Sonata for Piano and Violin No. 2, but additionally his Cello Sonata No. 2 in F Major, Op. 99, Piano Trio No. 3 in C minor Op. 101 and motifs from *Fünf Lieder* (Five Songs), Op. 105.

Comprising three movements, the Sonata for Piano and Violin No. 2 stands as the shortest of the three piano and violin sonatas Brahms wrote during his life. It also traditionally is regarded as the most lyrical and jubilant of the sonatas. Brahms’ friend, Elisabet von Herzogenberg, referred to the sonata as “a caress,” encapsulating the very warm and introspective nature of the piece that never seems to wander very far from its radiant and openly loving center.

By giving the work the formal title of “Sonata for Piano and Violin,” rather than perhaps the more traditional “Sonata for Violin and Piano,” Brahms indicated the piano part was just as important as the violin part. We can see a nod to this in the opening of the sonata’s first movement as the piano announces the opening theme of the movement. Titled *Allegro amabile*, the first movement is as fast and loveable as the title marking suggests with an lyrical and welcoming opening theme shared between both piano and violin in turn. The second subject is developed out of a motif taken from the lied, “*Wie Melodien zieht es mir*,” a song where the poet compares melodies to the scent of flowers.

The middle movement of the sonata *Andante tranquillo – Vivace – Andante – Vivace di più – Andante – Vivace* achieves the semblance of a larger four-movement structure by combining the roles of *Adagio* and *Scherzo* in contrasting sections. The opening *Andante tranquillo* in F major is contrasted against a D minor *Vivace*. Each is heard twice before the *Andante* returns for a third time to evenly round out the movement’s form. However, it is the *Vivace* that has the final say. This comes in the final movement of the sonata, as a graceful *Rondo*.

The third and *finale* movement, titled as an *Allegretto grazioso*, is unusual in that it is devoid of the usual bravura excitement in Romantic-period works. The graceful and elegant rondo begins with a

soulful line expressed in sustained legato. Mid-movement, there is a rather sudden passionate outburst and emotional upheaval. However, the poignantly calm theme of the opening returns to end the work in an expression of triumphant dignity.

Program note by Sophia Stoyanovich

Composer **Lora Al-Ahmad** writes:

After writing my piano trio “Irminden,” which is entirely dedicated to Bulgarian folklore rituals, I decided to continue portraying that mystical world through music. Bulgarian folklore and Slavic folklore in general offer an imaginary world of fairytales, legends and customs that often leave us with an underlying moral lesson. In the case of “**A Wish in Silent Waters**,” you’ll hear the story of Bilyana – the main character, who has a wish for herself in the silent water bowl she prepared for Enyovden (Midsummer celebration). A typical Bulgarian tradition on the eve of Enyovden is for unmarried girls to drop bunches of flowers and rings in a jug of “silent water.” It was called “silent water” because of the special powers it possessed and therefore, was guarded through the night by a fortune-teller. At the morning of Enyovden a girl would be dressed as a bride and with her eyes tied would take out posies and rings, predicting the other girls’ future husbands.

I decided to ask the Bulgarian philologist Gina Didonato, who is also a close friend of mine, to write an original text that has to do with the Bulgarian celebrations involving water as their main principle. In her own words,

“When Lora Al-Ahmad approached me with her idea of a song about a maiden, I immediately started collecting Bulgarian myths, stories and songs for two Bulgarian holidays deeply rooted in our folklore traditions: The first is “Enyovden” (June 24th) and the second is “Voditsi” (January 6th). During both of these holidays, water, youth and transformation are key components. The Legend of Bilyana was inspired by many rituals and songs performed for centuries at these two mirroring, however, also opposing (according to the calendar day; summer vs winter) traditions, with their symbolic, metaphorical meanings and distinct wordings. Bilyana (from Bilka, meaning magical herb) is a character that transforms from an insecure girl, through the power of water and words, and encounters with men into an independent mythical feminine divinity. In designing the Legend of Bilyana, I tried to align it with the transcending and dramatic nature of a song, the most profound expression of a single soul's journey.

The message of my modern legend is that protecting beauty and innocence is a fragile process and the most overlooked responsibility of everyone. Through Bilyana, we are taught that saving fragile youth is, by extension, saving life itself. I am very grateful to Lora Al-Ahmad for trusting me with writing the Legend of Bilyana as it allowed me to add a little contemporary aspect to the multi-layered Bulgarian folklore, hopefully affecting the listener in combination of great composing and captivating performance.”

The only phrase in the piece that is sung in Bulgarian language is Bilyana’s wish in silent waters. You’ll hear the vocalist portraying Bilyana, as both in-person narrator and a singer in this work. Furthermore, you’ll hear the vocalist playing and improvising on a crystal singing bowl in F, using different mallets. The piece is heavily centered on the note F, as I knew that I wanted to use an F bowl, because of its rich sound and color.

Singing bowls are not normally associated with Slavic culture, but I thought it's interesting and appropriate to use it as part of the narration anyway. The vibraphone, as an equal partner, greatly contributes to the sound world and heavily elaborates on the musical material, directing it to all the different sections in the piece. You will hear different motor speeds that affect the character, as well as the instrument played with a cello bow during Bilyana's wish in silent waters.

Program note by Lora Al-Ahmad

Between 1924 and 1926, **Francis Poulenc** wrote his trio for oboe, bassoon, and piano (later transcribed for clarinet, cello, and piano). It is considered by some to be the first significant work of chamber music by the composer. Poulenc dedicated the Trio to Manuel de Falla, who admired the work and arranged for its performance in Spain. The work's initial performance, in Paris, was very well received, with the final movement being "followed by sustained applause" in that, and each subsequent performance.

The first movement begins with a slow introduction typical to a French Overture, complete with dotted rhythms and stately bearing. It should be noted that in the original score, one of the bassoon's cadential flourishes ends on a low B-flat, a whole tone below the lowest note on a cello. Although the transcription has the cello play this passage up an octave, it is possible for the cellist to tune the low C down to a B flat, which you shall hear in today's performance. After this, the clarinet enters, repeating much of the material from the cello's introduction. Finally, the two instruments join forces to finish off the slow section, after which we enter a playful presto section which sets the tone for the rest of the movement. Poulenc's final edit of the first movement was aided, in part, by tutoring he received from Igor Stravinsky¹, who inspired many of Poulenc's neoclassical traits as a composer.

The second movement, which the composer himself described as "sweet and melancholic"² is full of classical lyricism and long melodies. If you listen composer quotes Gluck's famous *Dance of the Blessed Spirits* from his opera *Orfeo ed Eurydice*.¹ Again, the piano begins alone with the cello joining shortly after, followed by the clarinet. The music alternates between major and minor modes throughout the movement, with balanced phrases and lyrical lines imbuing the music with a classical sensibility. It ends in the dirge-like key of F minor and proceeds without interruption into the starkly upbeat third movement.

The third movement begins in a quick triple meter, and is marked *trés vif*, or "very lively." Poulenc scholar Claude Caré describes the music as having a "frenzy of movement" in its character, due mainly to the piano playing nonstop, and also from the cello and clarinet clashing harmonically whenever they play in unison.² At the end of the movement, Poulenc increases the tempo as the piano, alone, crescendos into a sentimental melody, reiterated soon after by the other two voices. Finally, he ends with a playful and quirky unison between clarinet and cello, and in sticking with the character of the movement, marks the final bars *sans ralentir*, or "without slowing down."

¹Wikipedia contributors, "Trio for oboe, bassoon and piano," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Trio_for_oboe_bassoon_and_piano&oldid=1148123729 (accessed April 11, 2023).

²Moroncini, Barbara. "Trio for Oboe, Bassoon, and Piano." LA Philharmonic Musical Database. Web. Accessed 12 April 2023. <https://www.laphil.com/musicdb/pieces/4348/trio-for-oboe-bassoon-and-piano>

Program note by Joseph Staten

Dušan Bogdanović is a Serbian-born American guitarist, composer, and improviser. Born in Yugoslavia in 1955, he completed his studies in composition and orchestration at the Geneva Conservatory with P. Wissmer and A. Ginastera and in guitar performance with M. L. São Marcos. His compositional style is an amalgamation of classical, jazz, and world music.

Crow was written in 1990 as a ballet-poem setting of poetry by Ted Hughes. The Hughes' poem *Crow: The Life and Songs of the Crow* was written in 1970 as a folk-epic, inspired by folklore, Christianity, and in particular the concepts in Trickster mythology. The poem's main character Crow serves as a companion/adversary to a powerful Creator God, but who is never able to fully understand this God's creations. Throughout the story, Crow searches for an alternative female Creator, along the way discovering Hate, Love, Life, and Death. Crow's obsession with death, decay, and gore feeds him in a way that goes against the Creator God's will. Overall, Hughes' poem is an ideological critique on the Christian creation stories, and through Hughes' lens, Crow can be seen as a living-legend who is unable to find beauty in a world surrounded by filth.

Bogdanović sets five poems from the epic. He begins with the creation story of Crow, who is birthed from blackness and whose hunger for blood pushes him to seek out his own Creator. Bogdanović's use of blues emphasizes the folk-like quality to the story, and of the longing of Crow to break free of his own pitiful life cycle. In the third movement, we see a contrast to Crow's character, Water, who searches for life, but in their search discovers the horrors and tragedy of living. In the end, Water wants only to die. The next two movements return to Crow's journey, seeing the power of Death, Crow arrogantly knows that though Death controls many, he cannot control Crow and his wickedness. The final movement concludes the song cycle with a sparse "meditation" on the journey of Crow. Despite Crow's endeavours to discover Love or Hope, he believes his only source of power is the unending driving force of life itself, free from a power-hungry Creator and of mankind's violence.

Program note by Yoshi Weinberg

Leonard Bernstein, a multifaceted artist known for his wide-ranging talents, left a significant and lasting impact on the world of music. His tireless advocacy for the importance of music in society continues to inspire musicians and music enthusiasts globally. The Clarinet Sonata, composed by Bernstein in 1941, is a dynamic and virtuosic work that showcases the expressive potential of the clarinet. Not only is the piece a crucial addition to the clarinet repertoire due to its association with a distinguished and prominent American composer of the 20th century, but it also effectively demonstrates the instrument's ability to perform both classical and jazz styles. The sonata has close ties to Tanglewood, where Bernstein's name is often associated, as he met clarinet player David Oppenheim at this renowned music school. The piece is dedicated to Oppenheim, befriended by Bernstein while studying conducting with the illustrious Serge Koussevitsky in the summers of 1940 and 1941.

The first movement, *Grazioso*, begins with a captivating and relaxed clarinet melody that interweaves with the piano's steady and rhythmic counterpoint to create a mesmerizing musical interplay. As the movement progresses, Bernstein introduces various rhythmic figures that generate momentum and energy. The syncopated accents and irregular meters lend the music a jazzy feel, reflecting Bernstein's fondness for American popular music. Musicologist Paul R. Laird states that "the *Grazioso* movement's use of syncopation and other jazz-influenced rhythms is typical of Bernstein's music from this period, which often blended elements of classical and popular music styles."

The second movement starts with a moody and dissonant melody but quickly transitions into a lively and upbeat jazz piece, *Vivace e leggiero*, featuring playful clarinet riffs and syncopated rhythms. The soulful mood re-emerges, only to be overtaken once again by the dynamic and ever-shifting jazz rhythms. The piano and clarinet engage in an exuberant conversation, with their melodies building in intensity. Finally, the clarinet reaches the peak of its range, bringing the sonata to a triumphant close.

Program note by Amy Hur

About the Artists

Lora Al-Ahmad is a pianist and a composer from Sofia, Bulgaria. She graduated from Mannes College with honors and holds a BM degree in Piano Performance, a Double Major Master's degree in Piano Performance and Composition, and a Professional Studies Diploma degree in Composition. She studied piano with Pavlina Dokovska and Vladimir Valjarevic and composition with Lowell Liebermann. In May 2019, the last concert of the series "Musical Treasures from Bulgaria," was dedicated to Lora as a composer and pianist. The performance took place at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall. In May 2020, her "Two Skazkas", published by Theodore Presser Company, won the First Prize in the solo flute category of the 2020 Newly Published Music Competition by the National Flute Association in the United States. Festival appearances include The Conservatoire Américain de Fontainebleau in France, Festetics Palace, Keszthely Zala in Hungary, The Bowdoin International Music Festival in Maine, and The Mannes Sounds Festival in New York City. As a committed soloist and chamber musician, Lora has performed in prestigious venues in New York such as Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie, The Bohemian National Hall at the Czech Center, Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, The DiMenna Center, The German House at the United Nations Plaza and others. Her music has been performed by internationally distinguished musicians such as Stefan Ragnar Hoskuldsson, the principal flute of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Billy Hunter, principal trumpet of the Metropolitan Opera in New York, Wolfram Koessel, cellist of the American String Quartet and many others. Lora is an active advocate for new music, often exclusively focusing on works by women composers. In November 2021, Lora was the Guest Composer and Lecturer at SIUE (Southern Illinois University Edwardsville), where the premiere of her piano trio "Irminden" took place. The commissioned work was just featured in a new CD release (2022), titled "One hundred years of Bulgarian Piano Trios," with performance by Miroslav Hristov, violin, Marta Simitdchieva, cello, and Ilia Radoslavov, piano. Lora has given numerous radio and TV interviews in Bulgaria, including her appearances at the Bulgarian National Radio "BNR," "Darik" Radio and "En-face" on TV1 Bulgaria. She is also an executive board member of the well-established organization "BCENY." Lora is currently pursuing doctoral studies in piano performance at the CUNY Graduate Center and is faculty member in the piano department at Bard College Preparatory Division. Her works are published by Theodore Presser Company.

Guest artist **Neil Beckmann** is a Brooklyn-based guitarist, teacher, instrument builder, and arts worker interested in creating an expansive life in music for himself and others. Encompassing performing, teaching, commissioning new works, exploring the diverse plucked string instrument family, and making his own instruments, he hopes to engender a spirit of curiosity for how music can be made, explored, and performed through many different lenses. He has performed at Lincoln Center, Merkin Concert Hall, El Museo del Barrio, the University of Pennsylvania, and MASS MoCA in solo, chamber, improvisational, and orchestral settings. In 2020, he collaborated with Heartbeat Opera on a digital reimagining of Verdi's *Macbeth* entitled *Lady M*, where he played classical and electric guitars, lute, and mandolin. Originally from Cincinnati, Ohio, Neil lives and works in New York City as a freelancer traveling around the city to teach and perform and is the co-

label manager at New Focus Recordings. Formative teachers include David Starobin, David Leisner, Clare Callahan, Rodney Stuckey, Daniel Swenberg, and oodles of books and YouTube videos to learn how to make instruments in his apartment.

Franco-American mezzo-soprano **Sophie Delphis** has performed for Beth Morrison Projects, Opera Parallèle, National Sawdust, SongFest as a Stern Fellow, American Opera Projects, the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, the Tianjin Symphony Orchestra, UMS (University Musical Society), Bronx Opera, Opera on the James, Bare Opera, City Lyric Opera and the iSING Festival, among others. Her operatic roles include: Félicie/Adélaïde (*La Belle et la Bête*, Glass), Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Giunone (*La Calisto*), Carmen and Mercédès (*Carmen*), Flora (*La Traviata*), Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Cenerentola and Tisbe (*La Cenerentola*), Concepción (*L'heure espagnole*), Hansel, (*Hansel and Gretel*) and Elle (*La voix humaine*). An avid recitalist, Sophie regularly produces recital programs and fundraiser concerts for musical and cultural organizations in the United States and China. Recent and upcoming works include: Ravel's *Chansons madécasses* and *Trois poèmes de Stéphane Mallarmé*, Bolcom's *Cabaret Songs*, Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* and *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten* and Messiaen's *Harawi*. Along with classical repertoire, she enjoys collaborating with composers, improvisers and theater artists on new works. Sophie can be heard as the Mother/Witch in the original English cast recording of Matti Kovler's *Ami and Tami* and as a soloist on the Grammy Award-nominated Naxos recording of Milhaud's *Oresteia* trilogy, produced by UMS in association with the University of Michigan's School of Music, Theatre & Dance.

In addition to performing, Sophie is passionate about writing, linguistics and non-musical art forms. She teaches French language and poetics, as well as interpretation of *mélodies* repertoire. She has served as the house translator for the Paris-based classical and jazz label NoMadMusic. She currently resides in New York City, where she is pursuing a doctoral degree in voice performance at the Graduate Center CUNY as a student of Amy Burton.

Amber Evans is an Australian vocalist, conductor and composer currently based in the US. She regularly performs as an early music soloist, chamber ensemble vocalist, and contemporary opera/vocal specialist, with consistent touring engagements in Australia, the US and the UK. Winner of the inaugural US Dwight and Ursula Mamlok Advancement Award for the interpretation of contemporary music, she is committed to the vital artistic collaboration with composers to thoughtfully contribute to the musical canon of the present day. An exponent of the “extra-normal” voice, Amber has premiered over seventy specialized solo vocal chamber works, engaging audiences with ever-changing insights into the paramount role of the voice in the evolution of art-making. She is also a featured soloist and chorusmaster on the CD of Poul Ruders' new opera *The Thirteenth Child* under the Bridge Records label, which was released in conjunction with the Santa Fe Opera premiere in the summer of 2019. In 2022 for Opera Queensland (OQ), Amber joined their Young Artist Program. Most recently, she sang as a featured soloist in the QPAC Concert Hall season of OQ's *The Sopranos* with Queensland Symphony Orchestra, and toured regionally throughout Queensland with the production in May. During her time back in Brisbane, Amber became the inaugural lecturer for aural studies at the Young Conservatorium, stepped in as assistant conductor for The Australian Voices, established the vocal sextet Formant, and directed the music for All Saints Anglican Church. Upon her return to the US, Amber has begun her doctoral studies at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. She has returned to many of her musical endeavors prior to the pandemic, including work with medieval ensemble Concordian Dawn, concerts and services with

the Choir of St. Luke in the Fields, and a permanent extra member of the Ekmeles new music vocal sextet. www.amberevansmusic.com

Korean-American clarinetist **Hae Sol (Amy) Hur** has enjoyed a varied career as a chamber, orchestra, and solo performer. Amy had her solo debut at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall on December 19, 2016, as a winner of the American Protege International Concerto Competition. Some of her notable competition accolades include winning the YoungArts award, Downbeat Music Award, Washington State Korean Music Association Youth Competition, Coeur d'Alene Symphony Young Artist Competition, and MTNA Young Artist Competition. Recently, she was nominated for the 2021 Yale School of Music Alumni Association Prize. Amy has also made appearances at notable music festivals as a fellowship recipient, including the Marrowstone Summer Music Festival, Blackburn Napa Valley Music Festival, Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, and Pacific Music Festival. She also regularly appears with the New Haven Symphony Orchestra and is a substitute member of the New World Symphony. This summer, Amy will be joining the Spoleto Festival as a clarinet fellow. Amy holds a high school diploma from the Interlochen Arts Academy. She completed her Bachelor of Music degree and Performer's Certificate at the Eastman School of Music and pursued her Master of Music and Master of Musical Art Degrees at the Yale School of Music. Her core clarinet mentors include Alexander Fiterstein, Emil Khudyev, Kenneth Grant, David Shifrin and Pavel Vinnitsky. Amy is a first-year Doctoral of Musical Art student at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, studying under Pascual Martínez-Forteza.

At the age of four, **Nenad Iovic** began his musical training at the Music School "Mokranjac" with Prof. Milica Vasiljević Bisenić. He completed his bachelor's degree with distinction at the Belgrade University of Arts under the tutelage of Prof. Nevena Popović at the age of nineteen. Nenad has received recognition for his outstanding musical abilities throughout his career, winning numerous awards at both domestic and international competitions. These include first prize at the Step Towards Mastery competition in Saint Petersburg, second prize at the Arianne Katcz competition in Tel Aviv, and third prize at the Jacob Flier competition in New York. In 2015, Nenad earned his Master of Music Degree from Tel Aviv University while studying with Prof. Emanuel Krasovsky. He has had the honor of collaborating with renowned musicians such as Andras Schiff, Emanuel Ax, Augustin Hadelich, Dmitri Bashkirov, Emerson Quartet, Mikhail Voskresensky, Joseph Kalihstein, Alexander Toradze, Tatiana Zelikman, and Peter Serkin, among others. In May 2019, Nenad completed his Master of Musical Arts degree at Yale University, guided by Prof. Boris Berman. After graduation, he continued working at Yale School of Music as a collaborative pianist and chamber music coach. As of September 2022, Nenad has begun pursuing his Doctorate of Musical Arts degree at the City University of New York - Graduate Center, with the guidance of Prof. Julian Martin.

Rebecca Moranis is a Canadian flutist and music theorist. She is pursuing her PhD in music theory at the City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate Center. Rebecca has performed 20th- and 21st-century chamber works as a member of Barbara Hannigan's Equilibrium Young Artists (EQ) since 2021. With EQ, she has performed on flute and piccolo alongside Hannigan at the Lunenburg Academy of Music Performance (LAMP) in works by Delage, Ravel, Stravinsky, and Walton. Rebecca performed in Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* with The Happenstancers in Toronto in 2022 and premiered new works as part of the Sacred Music at Columbia University concert series in 2023. Rebecca holds a Master of Arts in music theory and a Bachelor of Music in flute performance with a minor in mathematics, both from the University of Toronto. She has performed with the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Opera Orchestra, and Contemporary

Music Ensemble. Rebecca regularly plays flute and piccolo with the Scarborough Philharmonic Orchestra and has performed as principal flute of the Guelph Symphony Orchestra. She performed at Carnegie Hall with the Toronto Youth Wind Orchestra. Rebecca studied primarily with Toronto Symphony Orchestra former principal flutist Nora Shulman. She studied with Boston Symphony Orchestra principal flutist Elizabeth Rowe at the Orford Music Academy in 2018, and has worked with flutists Louise DiTullio, Camille Watts, and Dianne Aitken. Rebecca was a professional ballerina with Opera Atelier from 2014 to 2022, and performed with the company at Koerner Hall, the Elgin Theatre, and the Ed Mirvish Theatre in Toronto, the Royal Opera House in Versailles, and the Harris Theater in Chicago.

Award-winning cellist, **Sarah Song**, is quickly forging an exciting musical career as a chamber musician, soloist and educator across the United States and Mexico. Sarah is a founding member of the *Distortion Quartet*, an ensemble dedicated to changing the concertgoing experience with pre-concert talks. In 2019, the quartet won The Classical Tahoe International String Quartet Apprenticeship led by Laurie Hamilton and Joel Rezven of the Metropolitan Opera. As the quartet-in-residence, Sarah performed the string quartet works of Bartók and Beethoven throughout Incline Village. She was a member of The Classical Tahoe Orchestra performing with members of The Metropolitan Orchestra, LA Phil, Cleveland Orchestra and San Francisco Symphony concertizing with soloists like Itamar Zorman and Emmanuel Ceysson. Sarah is the recipient of the Chamber Music Live Award for her musical leadership at Queens College (2021) and a semi-finalist in the 2020 Coltman Chamber Competition (Austin, TX). She won the 2021 Queens College Concerto Competition performing Schumann's Cello Concerto. She will next appear as a soloist with the New Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra on Elgar Cello Concerto in Spring 2023.

Alongside her performing career, Sarah is passionate about bringing affordable music education to students and has taught in El-Sistema programs around the US and Mexico. In New York City she is seen teaching at The Brooklyn Conservatory of Music and regularly workshops students' original works with The Little Orchestra Society. Sarah holds degrees from Indiana University, The Eastman School of Music, and CUNY Queens College. She has appeared in masterclasses with teachers like Laurence Lesser, Lluís Claret, Paul Katz, Paul Watkins, Philippe Muller, and Astrid Schween. Her teachers include Brandon Vamos and David Ying. A native Houstonian, Sarah is pursuing a Doctorate of Musical Arts degree at The CUNY Graduate Center studying with Marcy Rosen. Her research interests include discovering unexplored works by Korean composers.

Originally from the Hudson Valley in upstate New York, cellist **Joseph Staten** has performed in numerous major music festivals around the world. At 14, Joseph was awarded his solo debut with the Hudson Valley Philharmonic and has appeared in the Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival, the Society of the Four Arts in Palm Beach, the Emerald Coast Music Alliance, and the Festival de Musica Camerata in San Miguel de Allende, among others. Joseph will be a fellow at the Marlboro Music Festival through the 2023–25 season. His solo and chamber performances have been featured on The Violin Channel, WQXR, and many other platforms. A passionate teacher, Joseph maintains a studio in NYC and was a contributing editor to the *First Hour*, an acclaimed scale book by Amit Peled.

Joseph attended The Heifetz International Music Institute, the Keshet Eilon International Mastercourse, the Lev Aaronson Memorial Cello Festival, and performs regularly with such ensembles as the Peabody Peled Cello Gang and the Mt. Vernon Virtuosi. An avid chamber musician, Joseph has collaborated with such artists as Guy Braunstein, Leon Fleisher, Sergei Ostrovsky, and Alon Goldstein. Joseph has played in masterclasses for Frans Helmerson, Lynn Harrell, and Ralph

Kirshbaum among others. He earned his Master's at the Juilliard School studying with Timothy Eddy, and his Bachelor's and Performance Diploma at the Peabody Institute with Amit Peled, to whom Joseph served as teaching assistant in technique class. Joseph is currently pursuing his Doctor of Musical Arts degree at the CUNY Graduate Center, studying with Marcy Rosen.

Performer, composer, and educator **Sean Statser** has been called "Lithe, muscular, and mesmerizing" by the New York Times. As an advocate for new music, Mr. Statser actively collaborates with several New York City artists and ensembles including: the Grammy-nominated Metropolis Ensemble, Argento New Music, Ensemble LPR, and Iktus Percussion. He has premiered over 200 works to date by composers Jason Treuting, Timothy Andres, Caleb Burhans, Kati Agocs, Vivian Fung, Angelica Negron, John Luther Adams, Elliot Carter, and more. He regularly performs with the American Symphony Orchestra, American Composers Orchestra, and New York Pops as a section percussionist, and appeared at several venues around New York City including Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, Merkin Concert Hall, Symphony Space, Fisher Center at Bard College, Galapagos Art Space, (Le) Poisson Rouge, and Roulette. Sean has also appeared at the Alba Music Festival, In Tune Music Festival, Ecstatic Festival, three appearances at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention, and Lincoln Center's Out of Doors Festival, under the baton of Maestro Tan Dun. Sean has recorded with a variety of artists, such as: jazz pianist Kenny Werner (No Beginning, No End - Winner of the 2010 Guggenheim Award), Argento New Music, Metropolis Ensemble, Harmonie Ensemble New York, Harold Farberman, and Cadillac Moon Ensemble. He has appeared on Naxos, Nonesuch, Orange Mountain Music, Innova Records, Half Note Records, Albany Records and New Dynamic Records. He received his MM in Instrumental Performance from NYU and holds a BA in Music Performance from Fort Lewis College, where he graduated *Summa Cum Laude*. Upon graduating in 2010, Sean joined the Percussion Studies faculty at New York University. He is currently pursuing his DMA at the CUNY Graduate Center, studying percussion with Jonathan Haas and chamber music with Alan Feinberg.

Hailed as "spectacular" (Bernard Jacobson, Seattle Times) American violinist **Sophia Stoyanovich** has captivated audiences since her debut at age 10, and performs internationally today as soloist and chamber musician. She has appeared at Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, Mariinsky Theatre, Elbphilharmonie, Disney Hall, Pierre Boulez Saal, and the BBC Proms. She has collaborated in performance with James Ehnes, Anthony McGill, Tessa Lark, Carter Brey, Cynthia Phelps, and Masumi Per Rostad amongst others. Recent accolades include first prize of the New York International Artist Association with debut in Weill Hall of Carnegie Hall and joining the roster for Chamber Music America for her work with the podcast *American Stories*. Ms. Stoyanovich has performed with The La Jolla Music Society, Rome Chamber Music Festival, Zermatt Music Festival, Schleswig-Holstein Festival, Norfolk Chamber Music, Four Seasons Chamber Music Festival, Olympic Music Festival, Aspen Music Festival, and has been an artist in residence for the International Contemporary Ensemble Evolution, The Next Festival of Emerging Artists, and Silkroad Global Musicians Workshop. In 2020, she partnered with pianist Derek Wang to launch American Stories, a podcast that examines and celebrates American identity through music in performance, illuminated by personal histories and reflections from featured guests of all walks of life. A native of Bainbridge Island, Ms. Stoyanovich lives in New York City, where she performs with The Versoi Ensemble (praised for their "excellence" by The New York Times) and Symphony in C. She is a chamber mentor for The Midori & Friends Foundation and serves as an UN Chamber Music Society of the United Nations arts advocate. Ms. Stoyanovich received her Bachelor and Master of Music from The Juilliard School. Principal teachers include Mark

Steinberg, Sylvia Rosenberg, and Li Lin. Ms. Stoyanovich currently is pursuing a doctorate at The Graduate Center CUNY, as a fully funded fellowship recipient.

Martine Thomas is a violist, performing internationally as a soloist, chamber musician, improviser, and composer collaborator. She has appeared at the Berliner Philharmonie, Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, Mariinsky Theatre, Disney Hall, the KKL Lucerne, the Beijing National Centre for the Performing Arts, and at the BBC Proms, Mariinsky White Nights Festival, Donaueschingen Festival, and Lucerne Festival. She has performed as a soloist and chamber musician with Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble, the International Contemporary Ensemble, JACK Quartet, Tyshawn Sorey, Kim Kashkashian, and Ghost Ensemble. Martine loves presenting solo recitals and is looking forward to recitals this year in New York City, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and upstate New York. She is also passionate about recitals and concerts in community-oriented settings, including as a Music for Food artist fellow, through Meristem Artists, at the Biophony Festival, and in Celebrity Series Concert for One. Martine has a special interest in contemporary music and working with composers, which has led to recent collaborations and premieres with Tyshawn Sorey, Camila Agosto, Raven Chacon, Rebecca Saunders, George Lewis, Catherine Lamb, Miya Masaoka, and Joy Guidry as well as extensive workshops and performances at the Banff Centre and Lucerne Festival. Martine received her Bachelor of Arts from Harvard and her Master of Music from New England Conservatory, where she studied in the Harvard-NEC Dual Degree program. Her mentors include Paul Neubauer, Martha Katz, Mark Steinberg, Paul Biss, and Vijay Iyer. She is currently working on her doctorate in viola performance at CUNY Graduate Center and is on the string faculty at Brooklyn College Conservatory and Point CounterPoint. For more of her music and writing, please visit martinethomas.com.

Described as “a performer of complex repertoire” (Isle of Wight Arts League Creative Voice), pianist **Joseph Vaz** has performed internationally as a soloist and chamber musician in the United States, Canada, Austria, and Italy. He has performed in venues from Carnegie Hall to the Arnold Schönberg Center in Vienna. Born in Faro, Portugal, Joseph now lives in New York City and studies at the CUNY Graduate Center with the renowned pianist and pedagogue Julian Martin. He is a laureate of several national and international competitions since 2012, most recently at the Seattle International Piano Competition, the West Virginia International Piano Competition, and the upcoming Teresa Carreño International Master Piano Competition. Joseph frequently performs at international festivals, including recent appearances at the Internationale Sommerakademie in Reichenau, the Orford Music Academy, Bowdoin Music Festival, and the Chautauqua Piano Institute. Joseph has performed for several acclaimed artists and pedagogues, including Byron Janis, Jerome Lowenthal, Jon Nakamatsu, John Perry, and Natalya Antonova. His orchestral debut came with the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra in 2015, and he has also performed as soloist with the Seven Hills Sinfonietta and other orchestral ensembles. An active collaborative pianist, he has worked with all types of musicians in chamber music and with multiple orchestras and choirs for operas and concert programs. Joseph is a proponent of new music, working closely with several composers on pieces for world premieres. Interested in many genres of music-making, Joseph enjoys working in contemporary music ensembles, musical theatre, and popular music. Outside of music, Joseph holds a Bachelor’s degree in mathematics and a minor in French from Indiana University, and can often be found reading on the 6 train.

Yoshi Weinberg (they/them) is a New York City based flutist, harpist, and composer. Lauded for their “sublime tone” and “creative interpretation and technical virtuosity” (*I Care If You Listen*), Yoshi is a dedicated performer of contemporary and experimental works. Yoshi has performed as a soloist across North American and Europe including Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, Rou-

lette Intermedium, National Sawdust (NYC), the Fitzgerald Theater (St. Paul, MN), the Ordway Center (St. Paul, MN), Banff Centre for the Arts (Canada), Mahaiwe Theater (Great Barrington, MA), Orchestra Hall (Minneapolis, MN), Gesellschaftshaus (Magdeburg, Germany), Fondation des États-Unis (Paris, France), among many others. They currently are Artistic Director of InfraSound, and is founding member and flutist for Apply Triangle, InfraSound, and KnoxTrio. An active freelancer, Yoshi has performed with Ensemble Signal, Contemporaneous, the Da Capo Chamber Players, Zeitgeist, and many others. Additionally, Yoshi served as Artistic Director of the Minnesota new music ensemble RenegadeEnsemble for the 2017-2018 season. As a composer, Yoshi's compositions have been described as "a stunning compositional display of polyphony and texture" (ICIYL) and "transcendent, emotional, and intimate" (*Sparks and Wiry Cries*). Their works have been premiered by InfraSound, e(L)ement duo, the dream songs project, and RenegadeEnsemble, and have been featured on Minnesota Public Radio and at the American Harp Society Summer Institute. Yoshi is currently studying their DMA in Flute Performance at CUNY Graduate Center, studying with Robert Dick. They received their MM in Contemporary Performance from Manhattan School of Music, and their BM in Performance from Saint Olaf College.

Born and raised in New York, Japanese American pianist **Mizuho Yoshimune** has won top prizes at competitions including the New York Piano Festival & Competition, Lillian Fuchs Chamber Music Competition, Rosalyn Tureck International Bach Competition, Bronx Arts Ensemble Young Artist Competition, and the New York Music Competition. She has performed at venues in the United States and abroad, including Carnegie Hall, Merkin Concert Hall, Steinway Hall, Sudler Hall at Yale University, Greenfield Hall, Field Hall at the Curtis Institute of Music, Maiori Town Hall in Italy, and Evens Hall in Israel. Ms. Yoshimune has performed in festivals such as the Tel-Hai International Piano Master Classes in Israel, the International Keyboard Institute & Festival in New York City, and the Virtuoso & Bel Canto Festival and Amalfi Coast Music & Arts Festival in Italy. She has performed in numerous master classes including those by Dmitri Bashkirov, Tatiana Zelikman, Alexander Kobrin, Emanuel Krasovsky, Alon Goldstein, Asaf Zohar, Matti Raekallio, Boris Berman, and Akiko Ebi. Ms. Yoshimune's performances have been broadcasted on *Roim Olam* in Israel and *News 12: The Bronx* in New York. Ms. Yoshimune earned her B.A. in Economics from Yale University, where she also studied the piano with Melvin Chen at the Yale School of Music. At Yale, she was the recipient of a number of scholarships, including the John Gaffney Scholarship for aspiring professional musicians, the Governor's Committee Scholarship, and was also the Yale Club of New York's Charlie Guggenheimer Scholar. Ms. Yoshimune recently earned her Master's of Music degree from the Manhattan School of Music, where she studied with André-Michel Schub and was also the recipient of the Cirio Foundation Scholarship. Ms. Yoshimune is currently pursuing her D.M.A. in Piano Performance at the CUNY Graduate Center in New York City, where she is studying with Thomas Sauer.

A versatile bassist, composer, and educator, guest artist **Sam Zagnit** is a New York born and raised musician who enjoys a multifaceted career, from performing in smaller, experimental venues like Bushwick Public House, to touring with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra across the country. Performing and composing contemporary music make up a large part of Sam's career, and he is dedicated to performing works by living composers and creating a more inclusive environment in every musical context. As a composer, his work focuses on self-reflection to deepen connections and build intimacy with his audience and fellow musicians on stage. Sam has worked and studied with many exemplary musicians from many generations, including John Adams, Marin Alsop, Orin

O'Brien, Mattias Pintcher, Lucy Shelton, Jessie Montgomery, and Seth Parker Woods. Sam is part of the duo *confluss*, with soprano Amber Evans, an up-and-coming chamber ensemble committed to the exploration of their unique timbre and sound through performing original compositions for their ensemble, some by Sam himself. Since 2019, Sam has served as Acting Associate Principal Bass with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, where he plays alongside his former teacher, David Grossman. This April, Sam performs with Orpheus at the Carteret Performing Arts Center, The Houston Symphony, and with Amber Evans at the CUNY Grad Center. As an educator, Sam is a teaching artist for the Harmony Program in NYC, and leads workshops and residencies with the arts education program, LEAP. Sam is a graduate of the Yale School of Music, where he studied with Don Palma, and a recent graduate of the Performer/Composer MM at the New School.