

# 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, November 16, 2023, 1:00 p.m.

## Chamber Music On Fifth I

### Program

Piano Trio No. 1 in B Major, Op. 8

1. *Allegro con moto*
2. *Scherzo: Allegro molto*
3. *Adagio non troppo*
4. *Finale: Allegro molto agitato*

Johannes Brahms  
(1833-1897)

*Sophia Stoyanovich, violin*  
*Ethan Brown, cello*  
*Nenad Ivović, piano*

INTERMISSION

*Suite Italienne*

1. *Introduzione*
2. *Serenata*
3. *Tarantella*

Igor Stravinsky  
(1882-1971)

*Abigail Hong, violin*  
*Ryan Jung, piano*

Piano Trio No. 1 in D minor, Op. 63

1. *Mit Energie und Leidenschaft*
2. *Lebhaft, doch nicht zu rasch*
3. *Langsam, mit inniger Empfindung - Bewegeter - Tempo I - attacca*
4. *Mit Feuer - Nach und nach Schneller*

Robert Schumann  
(1810-1856)

*Tiffany Chang, violin*  
*Allen Liang, cello*  
*Ryan Jung, 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 John Musto is Assistant Director.

## About the Program

### **Piano Trio No. 1 in B Major, Op. 8 by Johannes Brahms**

Johannes Brahms's Piano Trio No. 1 in B Major, Op. 8, is a work of profound emotion and youthful vigor. Born in Hamburg in 1833, Johannes Brahms was a German composer and pianist who became one of the most significant figures of the Romantic period. His early life was marked by poverty and hardship, but his extraordinary musical talent was recognized early on. Composed in 1854, when Brahms was just 21 years old, the Piano Trio No. 1 in B Major reflects the influence of both Classical and Romantic traditions, showcasing the composer's remarkable skill and creativity. By the 1850s, Brahms had formed close friendships with several notable musicians, including Robert Schumann and Clara Schumann. The Piano Trio No. 1 in B Major was composed during this period of Brahms's life, and it reflects not only the musical influences of the time but also the personal and artistic struggles Brahms faced as a young composer seeking recognition.

The first movement, *Allegro con brio*, opens with a majestic piano statement, setting the tone for the entire work. The movement is characterized by its expansive melodies, rich harmonic palette, and a sense of urgency. Brahms weaves intricate textures between the piano, violin, and cello, creating a dynamic interplay that propels the music forward. The second movement, *Scherzo: Allegro molto*, is a lively and spirited scherzo, featuring playful rhythmic patterns and contrasting thematic material. The trio section provides a more lyrical and introspective contrast, displaying Brahms's ability to balance lightness and depth within a single movement. The third movement, *Adagio*, is a sublime and expressive slow movement. Brahms pours his soul into this section, creating a melancholic and tender atmosphere. The interplay between the instruments is particularly poignant, with each voice contributing to the emotional depth of the music. The final movement, *Allegro*, returns to the energy and exuberance of the opening, bringing the trio to a triumphant conclusion. Brahms showcases his mastery of form and structure, creating a sense of unity and coherence throughout the work. The trio stands as a captivating and emotionally charged composition that foreshadows the great works he would go on to create later in his career. The blend of youthful exuberance and mature craftsmanship makes it a timeless and enduring piece in the chamber music repertoire.

### **Piano Trio No. 1 in D minor, Op. 63 by Robert Schumann**

Written in the span of two weeks during the summer of 1847, Schumann's first piano trio is one of his most celebrated chamber works. This piece was written in D minor as an homage to Mendelssohn's Piano Trio No. 1, in the same key. It is impossible to disassociate Schumann's personal experiences from his works — only two years prior to this composition, Schumann suffered from a mental relapse, leaving him unable to compose. Struggling with mental tribulations, his music often reflected the intense volatility of inner thoughts, ultimately encapsulating the human condition: one full of struggle, pain, and despair, but also one brimming with possibility, jubilation, and wonder.

Schumann sets the brooding tone of the entire first movement immediately in the opening of the piece, introducing the listeners with a turbulent, feverish melody in the violin. Full of "Energie und Leidenschaft" (energy and passion), Schumann interweaves the lines of all three instruments to create a whirlwind of conversation throughout the exposition. The development is marked by a ghostly hymn that emerges from the cello — the first hints of fantasy and otherworldliness to appear in the piece.

The second movement utilizes a dotted rhythm motif in an exuberant and lively Scherzo. This movement provides much needed relief and reminds us of Florestan, the more outgoing and passionate of

Schumann's personalities, as opposed to Eusebius, his more introverted, thoughtful other half, to which the lyrical yet insistent Trio section possibly alludes.

The third movement returns to a place of darkness, replacing a fiery passion with a desolate vulnerability. The middle section releases listeners from the darkness, and a dreamy melody appears over dancing triplets in the piano, perhaps recalling the ethereal world that Schumann alluded to in the first movement. After both string instruments address this seemingly worry-free melody, the opening tune sneaks into the piano line and gradually brings us back to the longing, tragic atmosphere from the beginning of the movement, now with an additional commentary from the cello.

Immediately following the third, the last movement becomes an ultimate release from previous struggles. Set in a rondo form, the piano and violin engage in a wistful exchange before setting on a fantastical journey. A point of interest in this movement stems from the fugato section ushered in by the cello. This strict compositional technique harkens back to the Baroque era and demonstrates Schumann's unique approach to the canonic material. Not long after the tribute to the earlier masters, the opening is once again celebrated with ample exuberance, driving toward the end with a flurry of excitement and exalting joy.

## About the Artists

### **Sophia Stoyanovich**, violin

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 the Wiener Konzerthaus, Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, Mariinsky Theatre, Elbphilharmonie, Disney Hall, Pierre Boulez Saal, and BBC Proms. She has collaborated in performance with James Ehnes, Anthony McGill, Tessa Lark, Carter Brey, Cynthia Phelps, and Masumi Per Rostad amongst others.

Ms. Stoyanovich will release her debut album with Bridge Records "Rue Paradise" featuring the works of Serbian-American composer Patrick Stoyanovich in the spring of 2024. A native of Bainbridge Island, WA., Ms. Stoyanovich is based in New York City where she received her Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from The Juilliard School. Principal teachers include Mark Steinberg, Sylvia Rosenberg, and Li Lin. Ms. Stoyanovich is in her second year of the CUNY Graduate Center DMA Performance program as a five year fellowship recipient and is on faculty at Hunter College. More information and performance schedule can be found at [www.sophiastoyanovich.com](http://www.sophiastoyanovich.com).

### **Ethan Brown**, cello

Ethan Brown is a cellist from New York City currently pursuing a Doctorate on a fellowship through the CUNY Graduate Center under the guidance of Rafael Figueroa. Ethan earned his Master's degree studying under Desmond Hoebig at Rice University and his Bachelor's degree under the tutelage of Hans Jensen at Northwestern University. Over the years, Ethan has had the opportunity to work with a number of acclaimed musicians, including Yari Bond, Nicholas Tzavaras, Emmanuel Ax, Yo-Yo Ma, Roberto Díaz, among many others. Ethan has participated in music festivals including Spoleto Festival USA, Aspen, and the Tanglewood Music Center. Presently, Ethan serves as a substitute cellist for the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Symphony and the Metropolitan Opera. As a teacher, Ethan guides a small private studio of young cellists and serves on the part-time faculty at Hunter College through his fellowship at the Graduate Center.

### **Nenad Iovic**, piano

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 Katz 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 Doctoral Degree at the City University of New York - Graduate Center, with the guidance of Prof. Julian Martin.

**Abigail Hong**, violin

Born in Cherry Hill, NJ, violinist Abigail Hong is in her second year of doctoral studies at the CUNY Grad Center with Mark Steinberg. She graduated with her Master's degree at The Juilliard School and was awarded the Benzaquen Career Grant and graduated as the Presser Foundation Scholar of her undergraduate class at The New England Conservatory. A dedicated chamber musician, Abigail won top prizes at the Fischhoff and Plowman Chamber Music Competitions and studied with members of the Cleveland, Emerson, Brentano, and Guarneri Quartets. As an educator, Abigail taught at City College Academy of the Arts, Harvard University Quad Program, the Music Advancement Program at Juilliard, and Juilliard Pre-College. Abigail's recent performances include world premieres by Thomas Ades, Tyshawn Sorey, and Rebecca Saunders as Concertmaster of the Verbier, Lucerne, and Spoleto Festival Orchestras. Most of Abigail's summer season is spent in Europe where she has performed in the Berlin Philharmonie, Musikverein, Concertgebouw, Konzerthaus Berlin, Festspielhaus Baden-Baden, KKL Luzern, Kölner Philharmonie, and many others. Abigail has performed at numerous festivals including Gstaad Menuhin, Donaueschingen, Berliner Festspiele, Verbier, Lucerne, Spoleto, Norfolk, Yellow Barn, Taos, Music@Menlo, and Pablo Casals. She regularly plays with The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and San Francisco Ballet and Opera Orchestras. Her earliest teachers include Amy J. Lee and Soovin Kim, and most recent studies are with Catherine Cho. Abigail plays a Mario Miralles violin and Benoit Rolland bow on generous loan through the Maestro Foundation.

**Ryan Jung**, piano

**Tiffany Chang**, violin

Born in Arizona, Tiffany Chang began playing the violin at the age of three. Previous teachers include Miriam Fried, Paul Biss, and Jing Zeng. Tiffany is a prize winner of various state and national competitions, including the Brevard Concerto Competition, Interlochen Concerto Competition, and the Dorothy Bales Violin Competition in which she was awarded a Guarnerius violin (1716) and Benoit Rolland bow for a year. Tiffany served as concertmaster of the New England Conservatory Philharmonia and Symphony under Maestro Hugh Wolff.

An avid chamber musician, Tiffany has performed at chamber festivals across the country including the Ravinia Steans Institute of Music, Taos School of Music and Norfolk Chamber Music Festival where she worked with members of the Brentano, Miro, Emerson, and Borromeo quartets. She has also performed alongside coveted musicians including Miriam Fried, Paul Biss, Donald Weilerstein, and Melissa Reardon among others. Tiffany is a member of the piano trio formed at NEC, Trio Rai. In 2021, Trio Rai won the bronze medal award at the Fischhoff Chamber Competition. The trio was also invited as one of two performed ensembles to attend the Ravinia Steans Institute in the summer of 2022. This past summer, the trio was invited to attend both the Perlman Music Program and Norfolk Chamber Music Festival.

Tiffany received her Bachelor's and Master's Degree at the New England Conservatory. She is currently a doctoral fellow at the CUNY Graduate Center, studying with Mark Steinberg. Tiffany plays on a 1768 Testore Violin on generous loan from the Ravinia Steans Institute.

**Allen Liang**, cello

Taiwanese Cellist Cheng “Allen” Liang (24) has performed the Dvorak Cello Concerto in B minor with the Eastman Philharmonia (2020). A two-time winner of the Chimei Arts Award, he is currently pursuing his DMA at the CUNY Graduate Center under the tutelage of Mark Steinberg. He has previously studied with Paul Watkins at the Yale School of Music (MM 2023), Steven Doane and Rosemary Elliott at the Eastman School of Music (BM 2021), and Clive Greensmith at the Colburn Music Academy.

Allen has performed with the Colburn Music Academy Virtuosi Orchestra at the age of 17. He has also competed in the Lillian and Maurice Barbash J.S. Bach String Competition as one of the three finalists in 2022. Being a chamber musician, he has won the bronze medal of the Junior Division of the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition (2017) as a member of the Aurielle Quartet.

At the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, Allen collaborated with Melvin Chen and Wu Man on the premiere of *The Heart is Deeper than the Ocean* by Angel Lam. Besides Norfolk, he has attended the Taiwan Connection, Taos School of Music, the Ashkenasi/Kirshbaum Chamber Music Seminar and the regular program of the Heifetz International Music Institute, Music@Menlo, the Taipei Music Academy & Festival, the Sarasota Music Festival, the Meadowmount School of Music, and the Bowdoin International Music Festival.

**MUSIC IN MIDTOWN**  
**Fall 2023 Season**

**Music in Midtown** is a series of free 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 John Musto is Assistant Director.

**THURSDAYS at 1:00pm Elebash Hall**

• **S E P T E M B E R**

**09.21.23                      Rolf Schulte, Violin and Joseph Liccardo, Piano**

Renowned violinist and Graduate Center faculty, Rolf Schulte, opens Music In Midtown's fall season with a presentation of Mozart's Sonata in E-flat Major, K. 380, Janáček's Violin Sonata, and Sonata Op.120, No. 2 by Brahms. Schulte will be joined by Queens College faculty member, Joseph Liccardo.

• **O C T O B E R**

**10.19.23                      Christopher Pfund, Tenor and Hsiang Tu, Piano**

Graduate Center DMA alum, Christopher Pfund returns to Elebash Hall with a performance of *Romanzen* aus Ludwig Tieck's Magelone, Op. 33 by Johannes Brahms. Pianist Hsiang Tu, praised by *The New York Times* for his "eloquent sensitivity," joins Pfund in this dramatic and richly romantic song cycle presentation.

• **N O V E M B E R**

**11.02.23                      Peter Vinograde, Piano**

Long-time friend of the Music In Midtown concert series, Peter Vinograde presents a program including J.S. Bach's Fantasy in C Minor, BWV 906, Bach's Fantasy and Fugue in A Minor, BWV 944, Sonata No. 4 by George Walker and Sonata No. 2 in F-sharp Minor, Op. 2, by Johannes Brahms.

**11.16.23                      Chamber Music on Fifth I**

Music In Midtown presents a chamber music concert featuring a stellar group of musicians from the DMA performance. Performers may include Lora Al-Ahmad, Samuel Andonian, Claire Bourg, Ethan Brown, Robert Carlson, Tiffany Chang, Amber Evans, Meera Gudipadi, Abigail Hong, Nenad Ivovic, Ryan Jung, Ellen Kim, Allen Liang, Joseph Staten, Sean Statser, Sophia Stoyanovich, Aaron Wolff, and Mizuho Yoshimune.  
Program TBA.

**11.30.23                      Chamber Music on Fifth II**

Music In Midtown ends the fall semester with a program of chamber works performed by our extraordinary artists in the DMA program in music performance. Performers may include Lora Al-Ahmad, Samuel Andonian, Claire Bourg, Ethan Brown, Robert Carlson, Tiffany Chang, Amber Evans, Meera Gudipadi, Abigail Hong, Nenad Ivovic, Ryan Jung, Ellen Kim, Allen Liang, Joseph Staten, Sean Statser, Sophia Stoyanovich, Aaron Wolff, and Mizuho Yoshimune. Program TBA.

**Music In Midtown thanks its generous supporters.**  
**Thursday afternoon Music In Midtown concerts begin at 1:00pm; all concerts are FREE.**  
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