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CMS Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center

ARTIST SERIES: DAVID SHIFRIN

PROGRAM

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

Quintet in A major for Clarinet, Two Violins, Viola, and Cello, K. 581 (1789)

Allegro

Larghetto

Menuetto

Allegretto con variazioni

David Shifrin, clarinet • Danbi Um, violin • Bella Hristova, violin • Mark Holloway, viola • Dmitri Atapine, cello

LUIGI BASSI (1833-1871)

Concert Fantasia on Themes from Verdi's Rigoletto for Clarinet and Piano

David Shifrin, clarinet • Gloria Chien, piano

DUKE ELLINGTON (1899-1974)

Clarinet Lament for Clarinet and Piano (1936) (arr. David Schiff)

David Shifrin, clarinet • Gloria Chien, piano

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

QUINTET IN A MAJOR FOR CLARINET, TWO VIOLINS, VIOLA, AND CELLO, K. 581 (1789)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (Salzburg, 1756 – Vienna, 1791)

Mozart wrote this quintet for Vienna's Society of Musicians (Tonkünstler-Societät) in 1789. The society raised money to provide pensions to widows and orphans of Viennese musicians. Its concerts were regular occurrences on the Viennese social calendar and Mozart composed and performed for them, even though he was not a member, something he would regret right before his death at the age of 35. This quintet premiered at a society concert on December 22, 1789, in between two halves of a cantata by Vincenzo Righini. The clarinetist was Anton Stadler, one of the first virtuosos on the instrument and Mozart's close personal friend. Mozart wrote all of his major clarinet works— this one, the Kegelstatt Trio, and the Clarinet Concerto—with Stadler's playing in mind.

The clarinet was a relatively new instrument in Mozart's day yet he expertly tapped into the instrument's unique singing quality. Mozart's poetic, unhurried voice prevails through the various themes, different tempos, and contrasting sections of this lyrical quintet. Not long into the first movement, he writes a striking moment for the clarinet. The second theme begins with a sinuous line in the first violin that the clarinet repeats with a surprising twist: dark, chromatic alterations that momentarily take the piece into unstable territory. The flowing second movement is so pure, and unfolds so naturally, that it is like a musical depiction of perfection, remaining unruffled through the low closing notes. The menuetto is a jolly dancing affair. The last movement is a bright set of variations interrupted by an introspective adagio digression before the lively main theme bounds back to close the piece.

FROM DAVID SHIFRIN:

In 1789 Mozart had the wonderful idea of combining a clarinet with a string quartet. The result was one of the greatest musical masterpieces of all time and perhaps the most perfect piece of chamber music ever written. This group toured for a couple of weeks performing every night and we really got to know one another both musically and personally. Of course I miss those days of all of us being together but I'm glad that technology has brought us to the point where we can share the music and relive it again.

CONCERT FANTASIA ON THEMES FROM VERDI'S RIGOLETTO FOR CLARINET AND PIANO

Luigi Bassi (Cremona, 1833 – Milan, 1871)

Little is known about Luigi Bassi. He studied at the Milan Conservatory from 1846 to 1853 and started performing in the orchestra at La Scala opera house before he graduated, remaining there until shortly before his death in 1871. While Bassi was still a student, Verdi's smash hit *Rigoletto* premiered in Venice in 1851 and the opera was soon mounted in every major Italian city, quickly entering the standard repertoire. Verdi's melodies were in high demand at the time. During rehearsals for *Rigoletto*, he went so far as to swear the singers and orchestra to secrecy to avoid leaks, according to a biography written soon after his death. After the premiere, his tunes were whistled in the street and a popular subject for fantasies and improvisations. Bassi was a prolific creator of operatic fantasies and published 15 of them in his short life. He is best remembered for this one, a virtuosic flight of fancy that shows off the range and agility of the clarinet.

FROM DAVID SHIFRIN:

To complement this broadcast of Mozart's quintet, I wanted to choose things that were completely different. A few generations after Mozart, a whole era of virtuoso Romantic music emerged. It was probably best exemplified by the piano music of Liszt, violin music of Paganini, and so on. For the clarinet—which had undergone tremendous advances since the time of Mozart—von Weber and Spohr in Germany were writing amazing virtuoso works, and in Italy a whole genre cropped up of variations on themes from the famous operas of the day. Luigi Bassi, who was the principal clarinetist in La Scala during the mid-19th century, wrote a series of virtuoso variations on many of Verdi's operas. His most famous is this set of variations based on themes from *Rigoletto*.

CLARINET LAMENT FOR CLARINET AND PIANO (1936)

Duke Ellington (Washington, DC, 1899 – New York City, 1974), Arranged by David Schiff

Duke Ellington spent nearly his entire career leading a jazz orchestra—from age 24 until his death over 50 years later. Ellington composed nonstop, writing over 1,000 works, and toured tirelessly. His orchestra grew through the 20s and 30s and many of the members became famous in their own right. One such performer was the clarinetist Barney Bigard, who joined Ellington's band in 1927, when it started making regular appearances at Harlem's Cotton Club. In 1936, Ellington composed a series of three-minute concertos for band members that were designed for 78 rpm records. *Clarinet Lament* was written to feature Bigard's playing, and he recorded it on February 27, 1936 for Brunswick Records. This arrangement is by composer and author David Schiff, who also wrote the book *The Ellington Century*, a look at Duke Ellington's far-reaching influence on 20th century music. David Shifrin premiered it with pianist Darrell Grant on November 6, 2015 at Reed College in Portland, Oregon.

PROGRAM NOTES BY LAURA KELLER, CMS EDITORIAL MANAGER

FROM DAVID SHIFRIN:

For the final piece, I turned to the musician that the composer/author/arranger David Schiff has called the most important American composer of the 20th century: Duke Ellington. This is a point of view that is more and more widely accepted. Not having been trained as a jazz musician, I was delighted that David Schiff arranged several works of Duke Ellington that had featured the clarinet. The great jazz pianist Darrell Grant and I performed them at a festival of Duke Ellington that was held at Reed College five years ago. This particular piece, the *Clarinet Lament*, is otherwise known as Barney's concerto because it was played so amazingly by jazz clarinetist Barney Bigard with Duke Ellington's band. It's a fantastic recital piece and Gloria got the spirit of it. We had a wonderful time with it to close our recital a few years ago.

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WHEN DID YOU KNOW YOU WANTED TO BE A MUSICIAN?

I was at the national music camp at Interlochen as a 13-year-old, surrounded by music and kids who were into music, and it occurred to me that people do that for a living and it would be far preferable and a lot more fun than working so I decided right then.

WHO WAS ONE OF YOUR GREATEST MUSICAL INFLUENCES?

I would have to say my first music teacher, who was a public school music teacher, a man named Louis Carroll, different spelling than the author, different person. He was our outer-borough New York City music man. He taught private lessons on every instrument and was the orchestra conductor of the junior high school—Parsons Junior High School in Queens. He had a tremendous impact on a lot of young people.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



A Yale University faculty member since 1987, clarinetist David Shifrin is artistic director of Yale's Chamber Music Society and Yale in New York, an annual concert series at Carnegie Hall. He has performed with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center since 1982 and served as its artistic director from 1992 to 2004, inaugurating CMS's Bowers Program and the annual Brandenburg Concerto concerts. He has been the artistic director of Chamber Music Northwest in Portland, Oregon since 1981. He has collaborated with the Guarneri, Tokyo, and Emerson quartets and frequently performs with pianist André Watts. Winner of the Avery Fisher Prize, he is also the recipient of a Solo Recitalist Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. A top prize winner in the Munich and Geneva competitions, he has held principal clarinet positions in numerous orchestras including The Cleveland Orchestra and the American Symphony under Leopold Stokowski. His recordings have received three Grammy nominations and his performance of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto with the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra was named Record of the Year by STEREO REVIEW. His most recent recordings are the Beethoven, Bruch, and Brahms Clarinet Trios with cellist David Finckel and pianist Wu Han on the ArtistLed label and a recording for Delos of works by Carl Nielsen. Mr. Shifrin performs on a MoBA cocobolo wood clarinet made by Morrie Backun in Vancouver, Canada and uses Légère Reeds.

Dmitri Atapine has been described as a cellist with “brilliant technical chops” (GRAMOPHONE), whose playing is “highly impressive throughout” (THE STRAD). He has appeared on some of the world's foremost stages, including Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center, the Forbidden City Concert Hall in Beijing, and the National Auditorium of Spain. An avid chamber musician, he frequently performs with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and is an alum of The Bowers Program. He is a habitual guest at leading festivals, including Music@Menlo, La Musica Sarasota, Pacific, Aldeburgh, Aix-en-Provence, and Nevada. His performances have been broadcast nationally in the US, Europe, and Asia. His many awards include First Prize at the Carlos Prieto Cello Competition, as well as top honors at the Premio Vittorio Gui and Plowman chamber competitions. He has collaborated with such distinguished musicians as Cho-Liang Lin, Paul Neubauer, Ani and Ida Kavafian, Wu Han, Bruno Giuranna, and David Shifrin. His recordings, among them a critically acclaimed world premiere of Lowell Liebermann's complete works for cello and piano, can be found on the Naxos, Albany, MSR, Urtext Digital, Blue Griffin, and Bridge record labels. He holds a doctorate from the Yale School of Music, where he was a student of Aldo Parisot. Professor of Cello and Department of Music Chair at the University of Nevada, Reno, Mr. Atapine is the artistic director of Apex Concerts and Ribadesella Chamber Music Festival.

Taiwanese-born pianist Gloria Chien has a diverse musical life as a noted performer, concert presenter, and educator. She was selected by the BOSTON GLOBE as one of its Superior Pianists of the year. She made her orchestral debut at the age of 16 with the Boston Symphony Orchestra with Thomas Dausgaard, and performed again with the BSO with Keith Lockhart. In recent seasons she has performed as a recitalist and chamber musician at Alice Tully Hall, the Library of Congress, the Phillips Collection, the Kissinger Sommer festival, the Dresden Chamber Music Festival, and the National Concert Hall in Taiwan. She performs frequently with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and is an alum of CMS's Bowers Program. In 2009 she launched STRING THEORY, a chamber music series at the Hunter Museum of American Art in downtown Chattanooga that has become one of Tennessee's

premier classical music presenters. The following year she was appointed Director of the Chamber Music Institute at the Music@Menlo festival by Artistic Directors David Finckel and Wu Han. In 2017, she joined her husband, violinist Soovin Kim, as Co-Artistic Director of the Lake Champlain Chamber Music Festival in Burlington, Vermont. The duo has recently been appointed Artistic Directors Designees at Chamber Music Northwest in Portland, OR. Ms. Chien received her bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees from the New England Conservatory of Music as a student of Russell Sherman and Wha-Kyung Byun. She is an artist-in-residence at Lee University in Cleveland, Tennessee and is a Steinway Artist.

Violist Mark Holloway is a chamber musician sought after in the United States and abroad. He is a member of the Pacifica Quartet, in residence at the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University Bloomington, where he is on the faculty. He has appeared at prestigious festivals such as Marlboro, Music@Menlo, Ravinia, Caramoor, Banff, Cartagena, Taos, Angel Fire, Mainly Mozart, Alpenglöck, Plush, Concordia, and with the Boston Chamber Music Society. Performances have taken him to far-flung places such as Chile and Greenland, and he plays at festivals in France, Musikdorf Ernen in Switzerland, and the International Musicians Seminar in Prussia Cove, England. He has often appeared as a guest with the New York Philharmonic, Orpheus, and the Metropolitan Opera, and was principal violist at Tanglewood, New York String Orchestra, and guest principal of the American Symphony, Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Camerata Bern, and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. He has performed at Bargemusic, 92nd Street Y, Casals Festival, with the Israeli Chamber Project, Chameleon Ensemble, and on radio and television throughout the Americas and Europe, including a LIVE FROM LINCOLN CENTER broadcast. Hailed as an "outstanding violist" by AMERICAN RECORD GUIDE, and praised by Zürich's NEUE ZÜRCHER ZEITUNG for his "warmth and intimacy," he has recorded for Marlboro, CMS Live, Music@Menlo LIVE, Naxos, and Albany. An alum of CMS's Bowers Program, Mr. Holloway received his bachelor's degree with Michelle LaCourse at Boston University and a diploma from the Curtis Institute of Music as a student of Michael Tree.

Acclaimed for her passionate, powerful performances, beautiful sound, and compelling command of her instrument, violinist Bella Hristova's growing international career includes numerous appearances as soloist with orchestra including performances with the Milwaukee and Kansas City symphonies, and Beethoven's ten sonatas with acclaimed pianist Michael Houstoun on tour in New Zealand. Last season, she performed ten different works as soloist with orchestra, from Mozart to Sibelius to Bartók, as well as concertos by Florence Price (with the Knoxville Symphony) and David Ludwig (with the Hawaii Symphony and Symphony Tacoma). She has performed at major venues and worked with conductors including Pinchas Zukerman, Jaime Laredo, and Michael Stern. A sought-after chamber musician at festivals, she performs at Australia's Musica Viva, Music from Angel Fire, Chamber Music Northwest, and the Santa Fe Chamber and Marlboro Music festivals. Her recording BELLA UNACCOMPANIED (A.W. Tonogold Records) features works for solo violin by Corigliano, Kevin Puts, Piazzolla, Milstein, and J. S. Bach. She is recipient of a 2013 Avery Fisher Career Grant, first prizes in the Young Concert Artists International Auditions and Michael Hill International Violin Competition, and a laureate of the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis. Ms. Hristova attended the Curtis Institute of Music, where she worked with Ida Kavafian and Steven Tenenbom, and received her artist diploma with Jaime Laredo at Indiana University. An alum of CMS's Bowers Program, she plays a 1655 Nicolò Amati violin.

Praised as an "utterly dazzling" artist (THE STRAD), with "a marvelous show of superb technique" and "mesmerizing grace" (NEW YORK CLASSICAL REVIEW), violinist Danbi Um captivates audiences with her virtuosity, individual sound, and interpretive sensitivity. A Menuhin International Violin Competition Silver Medalist, she showcases her artistry in concertos, chamber music, and recitals. After winning the Music Academy of the West Competition in 2014, she made her concerto debut performing the Walton Violin Concerto with the Festival Orchestra, conducted by Joshua Weilerstein. Highlights of her 2019-20 season included solo appearances with the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia (Kimmel Center) and Brevard Philharmonic, a national tour with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and debut performances at premier national series including Wolf Trap, Cincinnati's Linton Chamber Series, and Chicago's Dame Myra Hess Concerts. An avid chamber musician, she is a season artist of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and an alum of CMS's Bowers Program. Her festival appearances have included those at Marlboro, Ravinia, Yellow Barn, Moab, Seattle, Caramoor, Moritzburg, and North Shore. Her chamber music collaborators have included Vadim Gluzman, Pamela Frank, Frans Helmerson, Jan Vogler, David Shifrin, and Gilbert Kalish. Admitted to the Curtis Institute of Music at the age of ten, Ms. Um graduated with a bachelor's degree. Her teachers have included Shmuel Ashkenasi, Joseph Silverstein, Jaime Laredo, and Hagai Shaham. She is a winner of Astral's 2015 National Auditions and plays on a 1683 "ex-Petschek" Nicolò Amati violin, on loan from a private collection.

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