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*Tara Helen O'Connor, flute, and
Eight Emerging Artists Alumni
April 6, 2025 • Valley Regional High School*

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Andrew Janss, *cello* (2023)
Mihai Marica, *cello* (2011)

PROGRAM

String Trio in B-Flat Major, D. 471 Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
I. Allegro
II. Andante sostenuto
(Zyzak, Hong, Janss)

Nocturne and Scherzo for Flute and String Quartet Arthur Foote (1853-1937)
(O'Connor, Tokunaga, Zyzak, Fleming, Janss)

Flute Quartet No. I in D Major, K. 285 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
I. Allegro
II. Adagio
III. Rondeau: Allegro
(O'Connor, Scheid, Hong, Marica)

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Octet in E-flat Major for Strings, Op. 20

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

I. *Allegro moderato ma con fuoco*

II. *Andante*

III. *Scherzo: Allegro leggerissimo*

IV. *Presto*

(Murray, Tokunaga, Scheid, Zyzak, Hong, Fleming, Marica, Janss)



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Program Notes

by Barbara Leish

One of the pleasures of today's program is to hear the distinctive voices of three musical giants – Schubert, Mozart, and Mendelssohn – emerging early in their careers. Their three works go well with Foote's melodious Nocturne and Scherzo, which also has a youthful feel.

Franz Schubert: String Trio in B-flat Major, D. 471 (1816, pub. 1890-97)

Young Franz Schubert was at a crossroads. He was living at home and earning a meager living as a teacher in his father's school, but his mind was only on music, and he spent every available moment composing, even snatching time at school when he was supposed to be teaching. His friend Franz von Schober was urging him to leave the crowded family home and the job he hated and devote himself exclusively to his music. In June 1816 he wrote auspiciously in his diary, "Today I composed for money for the first time" – a cantata for a law professor's name day. He began taking part in musicales with friends who admired and championed his music, gatherings that became known as Schubertiads. A world of freedom seemed to beckon, but Schubert hesitated.

Meanwhile he continued to compose at a furious pace, as he had for the past several years. Most remarkable at this point were his songs. Just as Mendelssohn had written his epochal Octet when he was only 16, Schubert was just 17 when he wrote his groundbreaking song "Gretchen am Spinnrade," one of his masterpieces that transformed the German Lied. While he continued to pour out songs, he also was showing an increasing mastery of Viennese Classical form and structure, in works such as his Fifth Symphony and his Seventh String Quartet, both written in 1816. In the single-movement String Trio in B-flat Major – Schubert's first effort at the challenging task of writing for three stringed instruments – he showed just how well he had absorbed the Classical style of Mozart and Haydn.

No one is quite sure why Schubert completed only the first movement of this miniature gem, breaking it off after 39 measures of a second-movement Andante. Alfred Einstein suggests that it was because "he was not clear in his mind about the form and found himself returning far too soon to the beginning." Whatever the reason, the movement is a model of Classical, Mozartian grace. It is in traditional sonata-allegro form, with a genial, melodious exposition, a somewhat more serious and dramatic development, and a return to the untroubled opening spirit in the recapitulation. The scoring includes playful triplets, forte octave runs, and a deft passing of the themes back and forth among the instruments. It is a movement that, as Brian Newbould described it, combines "economy of texture with clarity of thought, re-enacting early Classical ideals in a most amiable way."

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Around the time he wrote the String Trio, in the fall of 1816, Schubert finally left his father's school and home, cast off middle-class security, and began his new bohemian life as a composer first and last.

Arthur Foote: Nocturne and Scherzo for Flute and String Quartet (1918)

Boston in the late 19th century was a flourishing classical music scene, where a group of gifted composers known as the Boston Six were bringing American music to a new level of craftsmanship and sophistication. Steeped in German Romanticism, The Six were writing music that held its own against much of the late Romantic music coming out of Europe. One of that group was Arthur Foote, a distinguished teacher, an accomplished organist (for 34 years was the organist of Boston's First Unitarian Church), and a composer whose music won applause from audiences here and in Europe. The Boston Symphony Orchestra premiered several of his compositions, and Serge Koussevitsky was one of his champions.

Born in Salem to a prominent family – his father was publisher of the Salem Gazette – Foote didn't develop an interest in music until his early teens, and didn't take his first piano lesson until he was 14. A few years later, though, he was ready to enter Harvard as a music major. After he graduated he earned a master's degree from Harvard – the first Masters of Arts degree in music awarded by an American university. Under the tutelage of Harvard professor John Knowles Paine, another of the Boston Six, Foote became steeped in the music of Schumann, Mendelssohn, Brahms, and Wagner. He was greatly influenced by a trip to the Bayreuth Festival in Germany in 1876, which turned him into a lifelong Wagner admirer.

Foote composed steadily for more than 45 years. His chamber music in particular was widely admired and performed. The musicologist David Ewen described his music as “always thoroughly lyrical, with broad and stately melodies, romantic in rhapsodic moods, and classical in structure.” You can hear all this in the Nocturne and Scherzo for Flute and String Quartet. Foote wrote it in 1918; a few years later the Nocturne – which was untitled in the original manuscript – was published separately as “A Night Piece for Flute and Strings” and thereafter became his most performed work.

At its first performance in 1919, the music critic for San Francisco Examiner called the Nocturne and Scherzo “fresh and spontaneous, plentiful in melody and colored with beauty.” The Nocturne begins and ends with the flute playing a melodious, dreamy song. Throughout the movement, flute and strings pass melodies back and forth – sometimes the flute alone, sometimes the strings alone, sometimes together. The tonal combinations are beautiful, the harmonies rich, the rhythms varied. The languid mood is interrupted occasionally by brief, tempestuous surges, especially in the more dramatic middle section. But tranquility is the prevailing mood. The Scherzo that follows is nimble, witty, and light-hearted – a charming change of pace.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Flute Quartet No. 1 in D Major, K. 285 (1777)

Mozart was 21 and eager to find an appointment worthy of his talents. Having left the service of the Archbishop Colloredo in Salzburg, with whom he had a contentious relationship, he was travelling with his mother from city to city in Germany, hoping to find a permanent position in an aristocratic court. His first stops were Munich and Augsburg, but nothing panned out in those towns. In the fall of 1777 he arrived in Mannheim, a bustling artistic center, where he and his mother spent the next four and a half months. He was running low of money when a friend arranged for him to receive a significant commission from a wealthy Dutch amateur flutist, Ferdinand De Jean: He would pay Mozart a handsome fee for three short, simple flute concertos and a couple of flute quartets.

Although Mozart said yes, he was unenthusiastic about the proposal and kept procrastinating and grumbling. To his father he wrote, “Of course I could scribble all day long, and scribble as fast as I can, but such a thing goes out into the world; so I want to make sure that I won't have to feel ashamed, especially when my name appears on the page; besides, my mind gets easily dulled, as you know, when I'm supposed to write a lot for an instrument I can't stand.” Eventually he did produce two concertos (although one was a recycled work for oboe) and two quartets, for which De Jean paid less than half of the agreed-upon fee. What's interesting about this whole episode is that despite Mozart's petulance and his dismissal of the instrument, the works he wrote for De Jean are wonderful additions to the flute repertoire.

Mozart the tunesmith is on display in the delightful D Major Quartet. As Jan Swafford said, “In the whole quartet the melodic writing is irresistible – Mozart seems to be glorying in the flute.” From the opening measures of the sonata-form Allegro with its stream of jaunty themes, flute and strings engage in a graceful collaboration, with the strings providing a harmonic background for the flute's rapid ascending and descending scales (not quite the easy music De Jean had requested). There's a short development section in a minor key before a return to the airiness of the opening. Then it's on to a second-movement Adagio that Alfred Einstein called “perhaps the most beautiful accompanied solo ever written for the flute.” Over a steady accompaniment of pizzicato strings, a wistful flute sings a pensive song. That minor-key moodiness ends with a surprising transition, as the Adagio segues directly into a rollicking Rondo. Filled with cheerful interactions and dynamic contrasts, it's a happy conclusion to this fresh and charming work.

Felix Mendelssohn: Octet in E-flat Major for Strings, Op. 20 (1825)

From an early age, Felix Mendelssohn astonished all who heard him. By the time he was 15, he already had composed hundreds of works -- fugues, songs, operettas, cantatas, little symphonies, a violin concerto, two piano concertos, quartets, a quintet, a sextet, and more.

These youthful compositions showed great technical proficiency. Yet something important was missing: Felix sounded like the composers he admired. When at 15 he wrote his Beethoven-inspired Symphony in C Minor, one of his teachers described it as the work of a boy who “did not want to be Mendelssohn because he did not know what that was.”

No one could have predicted that just a few months later, 16-year-old Felix would compose a chamber-music masterpiece: his extraordinary Octet for strings. “That a large-scale piece this genial, original, and sure-handed could come from a youth of 16 would be considered impossible if he hadn’t done it,” as one musicologist said. Not even Mozart had accomplished such a feat at that age. The gifted child suddenly had become a completely assured master.

Mendelssohn conceived of the Octet not as a piece that merged two quartets but as a work for eight individual instruments that interact in myriad combinations. From the opening measures, where the first violin soars over energetic tremolos, the Octet overflows with textural and melodic riches. At times all eight strings play in unison, as they do, for instance, at the end of the first movement’s development section. At other times the scoring is complexly polyphonic, notably throughout the lyrical second-movement Andante and in the breathless finale, which opens with an eight-part fugato. Mendelssohn’s handling of thematic material is equally adept. One remarkable example is the seamless way he brings back and integrates the Scherzo theme into the last movement – “an example of craftsmanship that amounts to genius,” said Charles Rosen.

Among the work’s innumerable highlights is the third-movement Scherzo, an airy, gossamer invention that would become a Mendelssohn trademark. According to Felix’s sister Fanny, Felix’s inspiration was a stanza from the Walpurgis-night dream in Goethe’s Faust: “I was the only one he told what he had in mind. The whole piece is played staccato and pianissimo, with shivering tremolandos and light, brilliant flashes of trills. Everything is new, strange and yet so familiar, so intimate; one feels so close to the world of spirits, lifted so lightly into air; one is tempted to take a broomstick in hand, the better to follow the light-hearted company. At the end the first violin flutters upward, light as a feather – and all is blown away.” It’s a magical moment, one of many in this joyful chamber-music gem.



Tara Helen O'Connor and Eight Emerging Artist Alumni

Tara Helen O'Connor, *flute*
 Tai Murray, *violin*
 Edson Scheid, *violin*
 Keiko Tokunaga, *violina*
 Stephanie Zyzak, *violin*
 Luke Fleming, *viola*
 Brian Hong, *viola*
 Andrew Janss, *cello*
 Mihai Marica, *cello*



Tara Helen O'Connor (*flute*)

Tara Helen O'Connor is a charismatic performer noted for her artistic depth, brilliant technique and colorful tone spanning every musical era. Recipient of an Avery Fisher Career Grant and a two-time Grammy nominee, she was the first wind player chosen to participate in The Bowers Program (formerly CMS Two) and is now a Season Artist of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. A Wm. S. Haynes flute artist, Tara is a regular participant in the Santa

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A much sought-after chamber musician and soloist, she has premiered hundreds of new works and has collaborated with the Orion String Quartet, St. Lawrence Quartet, Emerson String Quartet, Jaime Laredo, Dawn Upshaw, Eliot Fisk, Jeremy Denk, Ida Kavafian, Peter Serkin and David Shifrin. Tara is a member of the woodwind quintet Windscape, the legendary Bach Aria Group and is a founding member of the Naumburg Award-winning New Millennium Ensemble. A passionate advocate of new music, she is a member of the Talea and Cygnus Ensembles. Tara has appeared on A&E's *Breakfast with the Arts* and PBS' *Live from Lincoln Center*. She has recorded for Deutsche Grammophon, EMI Classics, Koch International, CMS Studio Recordings with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and Bridge Records. She has just released a solo CD of American flute works entitled *The Way Things Go* on Bridge Records with pianist Margaret Kampmeier.

Tara holds a DMA from Stony Brook University where she studied with the late Samuel Baron. Her other teachers include Julius Levine, Thomas Nyfenger, Robert Dick and Keith Underwood. Her yearly summer flute master class at the Banff Centre in Canada was legendary. She is Associate Professor of Flute, Head of the Woodwinds Department and the Coordinator of Classical Music Studies at Purchase College School of the Arts Conservatory of Music. Additionally, Tara is on the faculty of Bard College Conservatory of Music, the Contemporary Performance Program at Manhattan School of Music and is a visiting artist, teacher and coach at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. She lives with her husband, violinist Daniel Phillips and their two miniature dachshunds, Chloé and Ava on the Upper West Side of Manhattan.



Tai Murray (violin)

"Technically flawless. . . vivacious and scintillating. . . It is without doubt that Murray's style of playing is more mature than that of many seasoned players. . ." — Muso Magazine

Described as "superb" by *The New York Times*, violinist Tai Murray has established herself a musical voice of a generation.

Appreciated for her elegance and effortless ability, Murray creates a special bond with listeners through her personal phrasing and subtle sweetness. Her

programming reveals musical intelligence. Her sound, sophisticated bowing and choice of vibrato, remind us of her musical background and influences, principally, Yuval Yaron (a student of Gingold & Heifetz) and Franco Gulli. Winner of an Avery Fisher Career Grant in 2004, Tai Murray was named a BBC New Generation Artist (2008 through 2010). As a chamber musician, she was a member of Lincoln Center's Chamber Music Society II (2004-2006).

She has performed as guest soloist on the main stages world-wide, performing with leading ensembles such as the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Symphony Orchestra, and all of the BBC Symphony Orchestras. She is also a dedicated advocate of contemporary works (written for the violin). Among others, she performed the world premiere of Malcolm Hayes' violin concerto at the BBC PROMS, in the Royal Albert Hall.

As a recitalist Tai Murray has visited many of the world's capitals having appeared in Berlin, Chicago, Hamburg, London, Madrid, New York's Carnegie Hall, Paris and Washington D.C., among many others.

Tai Murray's critically acclaimed debut recording for harmonia mundi of Ysaye's six sonatas for solo violin was released in February 2012. Her second recording with works by American Composers of the 20th Century was released by the Berlin-based label eaSonus and her third disc with the Bernstein Serenade on the French label mirare.

Tai Murray plays a violin by Tomaso Balestrieri fecit Mantua ca. 1765, on generous loan from a private collection.

Murray is an Assistant Professor, Adjunct, of violin at the Yale School of Music, where she teaches applied violin and coaches chamber music. She earned artist diplomas from Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music and The Juilliard School.

CREDIT : MEI STONE



Edson Scheid (violin)

Edson Scheid has been praised for his "polished playing" (*The Strad*), and for being a "virtuoso violinist" (*The Boston Globe*). His performance of Strauss's song *Morgen* at Carnegie Hall alongside Joyce DiDonato and Il Pomo d'Oro was described as follows: "The concertmaster, Edson Scheid, proved a worthy foil as violin soloist" (*The New York Times*).

A native of Brazil, Edson Scheid is based in New York City, where he plays with some of the city's leading ensembles, including the Trinity Baroque Orchestra, Orchestra of St. Luke's, American Classical Orchestra, Musica Sacra New York, The Clarion Orchestra and New York Classical Players. He frequently performs throughout the United States, on both modern and period instruments, and in Europe, Asia, North and South America with such ensembles as Il Pomo d'Oro and Les Arts Florissants.

As concertmaster, Edson Scheid has led performances with Seraphic Fire, Washington Bach Consort, Il Pomo d'oro, Music Sacra New York, Juilliard415, The Clarion Orchestra, and Teatro Nuovo, in venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, the Cullen Theater at Wortham Theater Center in Houston, Sala São Paulo, Harris Hall in Chicago, the Rose Theater at Jazz at Lincoln Center, and Alice Tully Hall in Lincoln Center.

Edson Scheid's many performances of Paganini's 24 Caprices, on both period and modern violins, have been received with enthusiasm around the world. He has been featured live in-studio on *In Tune* from BBC Radio 3 and his recording of the Caprices on the baroque violin for the Naxos label has been critically acclaimed: "Far from being mere virtuoso stunts, Scheid's Caprices abound in the beauty and revolutionary spirit of these works..." (*Fanfare Magazine*).

His second solo album, *On Paganini's Trail... H. W. Ernst and more*, has been released under the Centaur Label – the first recording ever of this repertoire on a period violin. *New York Concert Review* writes that "Mr. Scheid is a superb violinist and a musician who can handle the fiendish challenges of this repertoire while finding the music in it," and *Early Music America* praises Edson Scheid for taking "his time through these works, letting them breathe without losing sight of execution or musicality..."

Edson Scheid has given masterclasses as a guest artist at the University of California Santa Barbara and at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He has led a program with students of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and Joyce DiDonato, and offered a presentation on performing Paganini Caprices as part of the Benedetti Foundation's Baroque Virtual Sessions. Since 2020 Edson Scheid is member of the Il Pomo d'Oro Academy, offering masterclasses on period instruments.

Edson Scheid holds degrees from the Universität Mozarteum Salzburg, the Yale School of Music and The Juilliard School, where he was the recipient of a Kovner Fellowship. He is a two-time winner of the Historical Performance Concerto Competition at Juilliard, and a recipient of the Broadus Erle Prize at Yale.



Keiko Tokunaga (violin)

Winner of the 2019 GRAMMY Award for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance, violinist Keiko Tokunaga spends most of her days touring and performing globally as a soloist and chamber musician. Keiko has performed, toured and recorded extensively with the internationally acclaimed Attacca Quartet from 2005 to 2019, and has been praised by the *Strings Magazine* for possessing a sound "with probing quality that is supple and airborne" and

for her "pure, pellucid bow strokes." She has soloed with various orchestras including the Spanish National Orchestra, Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona i Nacional de Catalunya and Virginia Arts Festival Chamber Orchestra.

In 2021, Keiko founded an online concert series, Jukebox Concerts, in order to provide artistic outlets for musicians who lost their engagements due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The performances were made available not only to the subscribers, but also to residents of nursing homes, hospitals and assisted living facilities across the country. Later in the year, she created INTERWOVEN, a multi-cultural ensemble whose mission is to eliminate discrimination against the AAAP (Asians, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders) community by integrating the musical traditions of the East and West.

While Keiko played the Attacca Quartet, the ensemble won numerous prestigious awards including the GRAMMY Award for Best Small Ensemble Performance, First Prize of the 7th Osaka International Chamber Music Competition in 2011; the Third Prize and the Australian Broadcast Corporation Classic FM Listener's Choice Award of the 6th Melbourne International Chamber Music Competition in 2011. The Attacca Quartet served as the Graduate String Quartet in Residence at The Juilliard School from 2011 till 2013, and as artist-in-residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art for the 2014-15 season.

When she is not on the road, Keiko enjoys her career as an educator. She is currently on faculty at Fordham University. In the past, she taught at The Juilliard School Pre-College Division; the Hunter College of New York; New York University; the Port Townsend Chamber Music Festival; and Boston University's Tanglewood Institute.

Music is not the only medium Keiko uses to express herself; she draws a series of cartoons about her life as a violinist and as a servant to her cat on Instagram.

Keiko plays on a J. B. Vuillaume violin from 1845, generously loaned by an anonymous donor. She also enjoys playing on a Baroque-style violin made by Antonio Mariani, circa 1669, formerly in the collection of Gabriel Schaff. Her bow was made by Nicolas Maire circa 1850.



Stephanie Zyzak (violin)

Praised for her sensitive musicianship and heartfelt playing, violinist Stephanie Zyzak is quickly gaining a reputation as one of the most soulful and profound musicians of her generation.

At the age of seven, Stephanie made her first solo appearance with the Starling Chamber Orchestra at the Aspen Music School and became the youngest recipient ever to be awarded the Aspen Music School New Horizon Fellowship. The following year, she

performed in Germany as an invited guest of the Internationale Kunst – Akademie Liechtenstein (IKAL). Since making her debut in 2004 with the Louisville Orchestra, Stephanie has performed as soloist throughout Germany, Russia, Austria, Sweden, Spain, Italy, France, and with orchestras including the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Dayton Philharmonic, Southeast Missouri Symphony, and the UC Davis Symphony Orchestra. Recent and upcoming season highlights include performances at Caramoor, Carnegie Hall, the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert series, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, and the Phillips Collection, among others.

A deeply passionate chamber musician, Stephanie has had the privilege of collaborating with renowned musicians including Jonathan Biss, Kim Kashkashian, Ida Kavafian, Alice Neary, Danny Phillips, Marcy Rosen, and Mitsuko Uchida. She has also performed at the Marlboro Music Festival, Ravinia's Steans Music Institute, Caramoor, the Four Seasons Chamber Music Festival, as well as on tour with Musicians From Marlboro. Born in South Carolina, Stephanie is a graduate of New England Conservatory where she studied with Miriam Fried. Currently, she is studying at CUNY The Graduate Center with Mark Steinberg. She is also a founding member of ensembleI32, a roster-based chamber music collective and was a 2020-22 Ensemble Connect fellow at Carnegie Hall.

Stephanie performs on a 1778 Joseph and Antonio Gagliano violin, generously on loan from Ravinia's Steans Music Institute, and a bow by François-Nicolas Voirin.



Luke Fleming (*viola*)

Praised by *The Philadelphia Inquirer* for his “glowing refinement,” violist Luke Fleming’s performances have been described by *The Strad* as “confident and expressive ... playing with uncanny precision,” lauded by *Gramophone* for their “superlative technical and artistic execution,” and by *The Boston Music Intelligencer* as “Luminous ... Luke Fleming achieved a simultaneously meticulous and warmly mellow syntax.”

Festival appearances include the Marlboro Music School and Festival, the Steans Institute at Ravinia, Perlman Music Program, the Norfolk and Great Lakes Chamber Music Festivals, Bravo!Vail, and Festival Mozaic. Formerly the violist of the Grammy Award-winning Attacca Quartet, he has served as Artist-in-Residence for the Metropolitan Museum of Art and received the National Federation of Music Clubs Centennial Chamber Music Award. He was awarded First Prize at the Osaka International Chamber Music Competition and top prizes at the Melbourne International Chamber Music Competition.

In 2015, Luke became the Founding Artistic Director of both the Manhattan Chamber Players and the Crescent City Chamber Music Festival, and in 2024 he was named Artistic

Program Director of Crescent City Chamber Music Festival. He currently serves on the Viola and Chamber Music faculties of the University of New Orleans, Atlantic Music Festival, Festival del Lago, and The Woodlands Chamberfest.

Luke has performed as guest violist with the Escher, Modigliani, and Pacifica Quartets, the Eroica, Lysander, and Gryphon Piano Trios, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Decoda, Ensemble Connect, Sejong Soloists, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, and the New York Classical Players, and has given masterclasses at UCLA, Louisiana State University, Baylor University, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Ithaca College, Columbus State University, Syracuse University, and Melbourne University, among others. Fleming has served on the faculties of the Innsbrook Institute, Renova Music Festival, and Fei Tian College, and as Lecturer-in-Residence for Project: Music Heals Us.

Luke holds the degrees of Doctor of Musical Arts, Artist Diploma, and Master of Music from The Juilliard School, a Postgraduate Diploma with Distinction from the Royal Academy of Music in London, and a Bachelor of Music summa cum laude from Louisiana State University. He is represented with the Manhattan Chamber Players by Arts Management Group.



Brian Hong (*viola*)

Korean-American violist and violinist Brian Hong has forged a notable career as a chamber musician and educator. Known for his commanding stage presence, he joined the Grammy-nominated Aizuri String Quartet as their violist in 2023. He has performed concertos with such orchestras as the Juilliard Orchestra, New York Classical Players, Fairfax Symphony, American Youth Philharmonic, Chesapeake Orchestra, US Army Orchestra, National Philharmonic, and the Springfield Symphony. A dedicated chamber musician, Brian has

served on the faculty of the Manchester Music Festival and as guest artist at the Sebago-Long Lake Music Festival and Kneisel Hall. Other festival credits include Marlboro, Yellow Barn, Bowdoin International Music Festival, Music Academy of the West, the Taos School of Music, and the Perlman Music Program.

Brian joined the esteemed viola faculty at Bard College Conservatory of Music in Fall 2022. He has taught private lessons, public masterclasses, and chamber coachings on both violin and viola at George Mason University's Reva and Sid Dewberry Family School of Music, Missouri State University, and The Juilliard School. He has also taught live virtual masterclasses for the Joven Camerata de El Salvador as well as the Edward Said National Conservatory of Palestine. Hong's mission as a teacher is to provide thoughtful and well-rounded instruction to students that maximizes their musical inspiration while illuminating the technical steps needed to achieve repeatable results. He believes in bringing

the unique qualities of each student to life, and in the right of every student to have a high-quality musical education regardless of socio-economic status.

Brian is a graduate of Juilliard's Artist Diploma program under the guidance of Laurie Smukler and Catherine Cho. As a Fellow of Carnegie Hall's Ensemble Connect, he performed and taught in a variety of venues in New York City and abroad, as well as maintaining a two-year teaching-artist partnership with Celia Cruz High School for Music in the Bronx. He also holds a Master's degree from The Juilliard School, where he studied with Laurie Smukler and Li Lin and was awarded a prestigious Kovner Fellowship. Brian earned his bachelor's degree under Donald Weilerstein from the New England Conservatory of Music, where he was a member of three different honors ensembles and studied both classic and contemporary quartet repertoire with mentors including Laurence Lesser, Kim Kashkashian, Donald Weilerstein, and Lucy Chapman.

Brian is the Programming Director of Project: Music Heals Us, a nonprofit dedicated to providing musical education, access, and healing to marginalized populations with limited ability to access it themselves. He is also a Co-Artistic Director of NEXUS Chamber Music Chicago in Illinois, an artist-driven collective of musicians whose mission is to make classical music culturally relevant through live concerts and multimedia content. In his spare time, Brian can be found brewing espresso or single origin pour-overs at his home coffee bar.



Andrew Janss (*cello*)

Hailed by *The New York Times* for his “muscularity and shimmering lyricism,” “insightful musicianship,” and “sumptuous elegance,” cellist Andrew Janss’ performances have been enjoyed across five continents in venues including Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, The Sydney Opera House, and the Louvre.

Andrew has collaborated in concert and recording with a long list of iconic classical artists, including Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zukerman, Lynn Harrell,

Leon Fleisher, and Richard Goode, as well as chart-topping performers such as Paul McCartney, Bruce Springsteen, Lana Del Rey, Mary J. Blige, Florence + the Machine, Erykah Badu, and The Roots.

In March 2020, while Executive Director of the non-profit organization Project: Music Heals Us, Andrew worked with Dr. Rachel Easterwood of New York Presbyterian hospital to launch a live, I-on-I virtual bedside program, which ultimately provided relief and comfort for over 15,000 isolated hospital patients in 46 healthcare facilities around the country. While at PMHU, Janss also lead the organization's music composition program for incarcerated individuals: conceiving, directing, recording, and engineering

their groundbreaking Music For The Future course, which was piloted for students by the Bard Prison Initiative in Fall 2022. In Spring 2023, to further these endeavors, he launched the Amplify Foundation, an arts and technology nonprofit organization which aims to expand and deepen the healing impact of human connection through the arts.

For his arts service accomplishments, Janss was nominated for a 2020-21 Emerson Collective Fellowship by his childhood (and current) idol Yo-Yo Ma.

Early in his musical career, Andrew was the founding cellist of the Escher Quartet, with whom he was in residence at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center as part of Chamber Music Society Two from 2007-10. From there, he went on to be a cellist at the Marlboro Music Festival from 2010-12. He has served as Guest Principal Cellist of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and has toured extensively with the Mark Morris Dance Group throughout the U.S., China, Italy, and Australia.

Andrew also tours and records for the groundbreaking cello rock band Break of Reality, both in the United States and as cultural ambassadors for the U.S. Department of State. Recent tours through American Music Abroad have taken the band to Eastern and Central Asia, Haiti, and Brazil, collaborating with local musicians and composers in each country they visit.

Andrew attended the Manhattan School of Music, and was awarded an Artist Diploma in 2012. His major teachers include Andrew Cook, David Geber, Clive Greensmith, and David Soyer.



Mihai Marica (*cello*)

Romanian-born cellist Mihai Marica is a first-prize winner of the Dr. Luis Sigall International Competition in Viña del Mar, Chile, as well as the Irving M. Klein International Competition, and is a recipient of Charlotte White's Salon de Virtuosi Fellowship Grant. He has performed with orchestras such as the Symphony Orchestra of Chile, Xalapa Symphony in Mexico, the Hermitage State Orchestra of St. Petersburg in Russia, the Jardins Musicaux Festival Orchestra in Switzerland, the Louisville

Orchestra, and the Santa Cruz Symphony in the U.S. He has also appeared in recital performances in Austria, Hungary, Germany, Spain, Holland, South Korea, Japan, Chile, the United States, and Canada.

A dedicated chamber musician, Mihai has performed at the Chamber Music Northwest, Norfolk, and Aspen music festivals where he has collaborated with such artists as Ani Kavafian, Ida Kavafian, David Shifrin, André Watts, and Edgar Meyer. He is a founding member of the award-winning Amphion String Quartet. A recent collaboration with

dancer Lil Buck brought forth new pieces for solo cello written by Yevgeniy Sharlat and Patrick Castillo. He recently joined the acclaimed Apollo Trio.

Marica studied with Gabriela Todor in his native Romania and with Aldo Parisot at the Yale School of Music, where he was awarded master's and artist diploma degrees. He is an alum of Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's Bowers Program.

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