

62nd Concert Series 2015-2016



FRIENDS *of* MUSIC

is pleased to present

**Chamber Music
Society of
Lincoln Center**

Ani Kavafian, violin

Erin Keefe, violin

Yura Lee, viola

Matthew Lipman, viola

Nicholas Canellakis, cello

David Finckel, cello

Saturday, April 16, 2016 – 8:00 pm
Ossining High School, Ossining, New York



President:

Betsy Shaw Weiner, Croton

Vice President:

William Altman, Croton

Secretary:

Rosella Ranno, Briarcliff Manor

Treasurer:

Marc Auslander, Millwood

Board Associates:

Keith Austin, Briarcliff Manor

George Drapeau, Armonk

Ann Harbeson, Bethesda, MD

Nyla Isele, Croton

Edwin Leventhal, Pomona

Board of Directors:

Klaus Brunnemann, Briarcliff Manor

Raymond Kaplan, Yorktown Heights

David Kraft, Briarcliff Manor

Tom Post, Mt. Kisco

Who We Are

Friends of Music Concerts, Inc. is an award-winning, non-profit, volunteer organization that brings to Westchester audiences world-renowned ensembles and distinguished younger musicians chosen from among the finest artists in today's diverse world of chamber music. Through our Partnership in Education program in public schools, and free admission to our six-concert season for those 18 years of age and under, we give young people throughout the county enhanced exposure to and appreciation of classical music, building audiences of the future.

We need additional helping hands to carry out our mission. Do consider joining the volunteers listed above. Call us at 914-861-5080 or contact us on our website (see below); we can discuss several specific areas in which assistance is needed.

Acknowledgments

Our concerts are made possible, in part, by an ArtsWestchester Program Support grant made with funds received from Westchester County Government, and by a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. Additional support is received from many friends of Friends of Music Concerts who include subscribers and other ticket holders listed in this program* who give over and above the cost of their attendance, and from the matching grants programs of IBM, Citibank, McKinsey & Co., and others. If you choose this way to help maintain the excellent quality of our concerts, please send your contributions to Friends of Music Concerts, Inc., P.O. Box 675, Millwood, NY 10546.

* as of March 25, 2016

Program

Sextet for Strings from *Capriccio*, Op. 85

Richard Strauss
(1864-1949)

**Sextet in A Major for Two Violins,
Two Violas, and Two Cellos, Op. 48**

Antonín Dvořák
(1841-1904)

Allegro moderato

Dumka (Elegie): Poco allegretto

Furiant: Presto

Finale (Tema con variazioni): Allegretto grazioso quasi andantino

Intermission

**Sextet No. 2 in G Major for Two Violins,
Two Violas, and Two Cellos, Op. 36**

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

Allegro non troppo

Scherzo: Allegro non troppo

Poco adagio

Poco allegro

Please turn off cell phones and other electronic devices.

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

Next Concert

Saturday, April 30, 2016, 8:00 pm at Sleepy Hollow High School, Sleepy Hollow, New York

Yun-Chin Zhou, piano

Program: Sonata in E-Flat Major, Hob. XVI:49 by Franz Joseph Haydn; Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude by Franz Liszt; La Valse by Maurice Ravel; Six Songs by Charles Trenet transcribed for piano by Alexis Weissenberg; Sonata No. 2 in B-Flat minor, Op. 38, by Sergei Rachmaninoff.

Program notes

Sextet for Strings from *Capriccio*, Op. 85

Richard Strauss

Capriccio was Richard Strauss's last operatic venture, and, like the valedictory works of other great composers – Haydn's oratorios, Verdi's *Falstaff*, Elgar's Cello Concerto – it not only summarizes a lifetime of stylistic achievement but also addresses concerns that the accumulation of years could not dim. In this masterful opera, for Strauss those concerns were two: one was the cataloging of his greatest musical loves; the other was a consideration of the essential dilemma of all vocal music – the relative importance of words and music. To demonstrate the music that he held in highest regard, Strauss quoted in the score snippets from the works of Mozart, Wagner, Gluck, and Verdi, and he even included fragments from some of his own compositions.

In his *The New Encyclopedia of the Opera*, David Ewen offered this précis: “The almost action-less libretto is little more than a discussion as to which is more significant in opera, the words or the music. Flamand, the musician, becomes the spokesman for the music; Olivier, the poet, for the words. Both are emotionally involved with the Countess Madeleine. When LaRoche, a producer, plans a series of entertainments to celebrate the Countess's birthday, she suggests that they collaborate...Her conclusion is that, in opera, the words and music have equal importance.”

The libretto was written by the conductor Clemens Krauss under the microscopic scrutiny of the composer. The setting is an elegant palace near Paris in 1775, the time when the operatic reforms of Gluck has the words/music controversy consuming the city's intellectual circles. Strauss intended *Capriccio* to be a refined entertainment for his friends. He was surprised therefore, and certainly pleased, at the excellent success that *Capriccio* enjoyed at its premiere in Munich on October 28, 1942 under Krauss's baton.

The lovely string sextet that serves as the introduction to *Capriccio* was first heard six months before the work's official premiere. In 1942 Strauss and his wife moved to Vienna from their Bavarian home in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. Their refusal to hide their disgust with the Nazi leadership had made their position in Garmisch difficult when their Jewish daughter-in-law and her children were threatened with ostracism. The governor of Vienna, Baldur von Schirach, assured Strauss that he would shelter the family if they would make no further public anti-Nazi remarks. In appreciation, Strauss allowed the sextet to be performed privately at Schirach's house on May 7, 1942.

The sextet brings Strauss's opulent harmonic palette and rich instrumental textures to his stylized re-creation of elegant Rococo chamber music. In the opera, the music begins before the stage is revealed. As it continues, the curtain rises to show the characters listening to the music played by an off-stage ensemble as the musician Flamand's birthday offering to the Countess. The words of Michael Kennedy about the complete opera apply equally well to the beautiful sextet with which it begins: “*Capriccio* is Strauss's most enchanting opera. It is also the nearest he came to unflawed perfection in a work of art. It is an anthology or synthesis of all that he did best, and it is as if he put his creative process into a crucible, refining away coarseness, bombast, and excess of vitality.”

Sextet in A Major for Two Violins, Two Violas, and Two Cellos, Op. 48

Antonín Dvořák

In his biography of Dvořák, John Clapham titled the chapter concerning 1878, the time of the A Major String Sextet, “A Genius Emerges.” Just four years before, Dvořák’s income from his compositions and as organist at St. Adalbert’s Church in Prague had been so meager that the city officials certified his poverty, thus making him eligible to submit his work for consideration to a committee in Vienna awarding grants to struggling artists. The members of the selection committee were a distinguished lot – Johann Herbeck, Director of the Court Opera; the renowned critic Eduard Hanslick; and that titan of Viennese music himself, Johannes Brahms. They deemed his work worthy of encouragement, and, on their recommendation, the Minister of Culture, Karl Stremayer, awarded the young musician 400 gulden, the highest stipend bestowed under the program. It represented Dvořák’s first recognition outside his homeland and his initial contact with Brahms and Hanslick, who proved to be powerful influences on his career through their example, artistic guidance, and professional help. An exciting burst of compositional activity followed during the years just after Dvořák learned of his award, in February 1875.

The sextet was composed in only two weeks during May 1878, and first performed on July 29, 1879 at a private soirée in the Berlin home of the master violinist and staunch ally of Brahms, Joseph Joachim. The event marked the first time that a chamber work of Dvořák had received its premiere outside Bohemia, an important market along the road of the composer’s burgeoning international renown. Joachim introduced the sextet to the public on November 9, 1879 in Vienna, and played it twice the following spring in London, where it excited an enthusiasm for Dvořák and his music that remained undimmed for the rest of his life.

The sextet’s sonata-form opening movement uses as its main theme a melody of rapturous beauty given as a sweet duet between first violin and first cello. The subsidiary subject is a short-breathed motif of small leaps and skipping rhythms initiated by the violin. The skipping rhythms are given special prominence in the development section. A complete recapitulation and a long coda allow for the full appreciations of the movement’s splendid thematic components. The middle two movements – a *Dumka* and a *Furiant* – so strongly impress their folk idioms upon the sextet that British critic Alec Robertson wrote: “The work has the effect of a brightly colored travel poster advertising Dvořák’s homeland.” The *Dumka* was a traditional Slavic (especially Ukrainian) folk ballad of meditative character often describing heroic deeds. The *Furiant* is a Czech dance whose fiery character is indicated by its name. The sextet’s *Finale* is a set of five variations on the theme given at the outset by the viola to which is appended a whirlwind coda.

Sextet No. 2 in G Major for Two Violins, Two Violas, and Two Cellos, Op. 36

Johannes Brahms

Brahms steadfastly vowed that he would “never undertake either an opera or a marriage,” and though he never broached the hurly-burly world of musical theater, he came perilously close to the nuptial alter in 1858. Brahms then was living mostly in his native Hamburg but devoting the last quarter of the year to his position as the orchestra and chorus conductor at the court of Detmold. That summer, he chose to vacation at Göttingen, where his friends Clara Schumann and Julius Grimm had settled for the season. One of the local citizens Brahms met there was Agathe von Siebold, daughter of a professor of medicine at the University of Göttingen and the possessor of a fine soprano voice. The 25-year-old Brahms enjoyed accompanying her at the piano, visited her frequently, and, before he left for Detmold in September, discovered that they were by no means indifferent to each other. He hurried back to Detmold early in 1859, and paid court to Agathe so intensely that Grimm warned his friend that the town’s gossips were aglow with the delicious prospect presented by this yet-unengaged couple. Brahms told Grimm that he and Agathe already had exchanged rings in secret, but that he was reluctant to take the decisive step toward marriage because he was still a struggling young musician and because he was insecure in his income and because he was uncertain of his prospects and so forth. His lame excuses actually masked a deep anxiety over losing his independence, and he told Agathe so in probably the most tactless letter he ever wrote: “I love you! But I cannot wear fetters. Write to me whether I am to come back, to take you in my arms.” Agathe was furious, shot back a reply saying that the engagement was formally broken, and did not forgive Brahms for the insult until she was well into her old age. “I have played the scoundrel towards Agathe,” Brahms later admitted. Five years after this shoddy episode, he composed the String Sextet in G Major. For reasons he never made clear he wove into the thematic material of the first movement’s exposition a reference to Agathe using the notes A-G-A-H-E (H=B-natural in German notation; T has no musical equivalent.) Brahms remained a bachelor all his life.

The sextet opens with a violin motif that is “positively Greek in its austere and noble Beauty,” according to American composer and critic Daniel Gregory Mason. The main theme group is rounded out by an arpeggiated motif stated by the violin as the immediate continuation of the opening gesture and an accompanimental figure of two wavering notes intoned by the viola. The second theme is a lyrical strain given by the first cello. This section gains in intensity until it reaches the AGA(T)HE motif, used as the closing theme of the expositions. The development is concerned entirely with the motifs of the main theme. A full recapitulation of the earlier subjects closes the movement. The second movement begins almost in a breezy manner, but quickly assumes the rigorous demeanor of a richly contrapuntal and thoroughly worked-out development section fitted into traditional scherzo form; the quicker central trio is reminiscent of the Viennese waltz. The *Adagio* is an elaborate set of five variations. The finale is a compact sonata form that brims with sunny good cheer and ensemble virtuosity.

— Program notes by Dr. Richard E. Rodda

About the Artists

Hailed as a “superb young soloist” (The New Yorker), **Nicholas Canellakis** has become one of the most sought-after and innovative cellists of his generation. In the spring of 2015 he made his Carnegie Hall concert debut, performing Leon Kirchner’s Music for Cello and Orchestra with the American Symphony Orchestra. A former member of CMS Two, he appears regularly with the Chamber Music Society in Alice Tully Hall and on tour. He performs numerous recitals throughout the country each season with his duo partner, pianist/composer Michael Brown. He has produced, directed, and starred in several short films and music videos.

Co-artistic director of the Chamber Music Society, cellist **David Finckel** was named *Musical America’s* 2012 Musician of the Year, one of the highest honors granted to musicians from the music industry in the U.S. He leads a multifaceted career as a concert performer, recording artist, educator, administrator, and cultural entrepreneur. As a chamber musician, he appears extensively with duo partner pianist Wu Han and in a piano trio alongside violinist Philip Setzer. He served as cellist of the nine-time Grammy Award-winning Emerson String Quartet for 34 seasons.

This is violinist **Ani Kavafian’s** 44th year performing with The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Touring the United States, Canada, and Europe, she performs with the Kavafian/Schub/Shifrin Trio, the Da Salo String Trio, her sister Ida Kavafian, and the Triton Horn Trio. Her solo career has included performances with the New York Philharmonic, The Philadelphia Orchestra, The Cleveland Orchestra, and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. She is the concertmaster and a frequent soloist with the New Haven Symphony, and is a full professor at Yale University. She plays a 1736 Stradivarius violin.

Concertmaster of the Minnesota Orchestra, American violinist **Erin Keefe** has established a reputation as a compelling artist who combines exhilarating temperament and fierce integrity. She has been featured on *Live From Lincoln Center* three times with CMS, performing works by Brahms, Schoenberg, Bach, and Corelli. Her festival appearances have included the Marlboro Music Festival, Music@Menlo, Music from Angel Fire, Ravinia, and others. A former member of CMS Two, Ms. Keefe earned a master’s degree from The Juilliard School and a bachelor’s degree from The Curtis Institute of Music.

Violinist/violist **Yura Lee** is a multi-faceted musician, as soloist and as a chamber musician, one of the very few who is equally virtuosic in both violin and viola. She has performed with major orchestras including those of New York, Chicago, Baltimore, Cleveland, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. She has given recitals in London’s Wigmore Hall, Vienna’s Musikverein, Salzburg’s Mozarteum, Palais des Beaux-arts in Brussels, and the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. She is a former member of CMS Two, both as violinist and as violist. Ms. Lee is professor of violin at the Hochschule für Music in Dresden, Germany, dividing her time between New York City and Berlin.

American violist **Matthew Lipman** has been hailed by *The New York Times* for his “rich tone and elegant phrasing” and by the *Chicago Tribune* for his “splendid technique and musical sensitivity.” The only violist featured on WFMT Chicago’s recent list of “30 Under 30” top classical musicians, he has been profiled by *The Strad* and *BBC Music* magazines, and recently performed Krzysztof Penderecki’s Cadenza for solo viola live on WQXR with the composer in attendance. A member of CMS Two, he is the recipient of a Kovner Fellowship at The Juilliard School, where he is a teaching assistant to Heidi Castleman. He performs on a 1700 Matteo Goffriller viola from the REB foundation.

Grantor

ArtsWestchester
New York State Council
on the Arts

Benefactor

Alice and Stanley Goldstein
Anita and David Kraft
Betsy Shaw Weiner

Patron

Marc and Rochelle Auslander
Joan and Keith Austin
Deborah Donaldson and
John Wehr
Ray and Pamela Endreny
Raymond and Elizabeth Kaplan
Jeffrey von Wald and
Michael Levy
Marguerite and Reid Pitts
Rosella and Kurt Ranno
Ruth and David Schwab

Sponsor

William Altman
Dr. Eleanor Bromberg
Miriam and Howard Budin
Serban and Marilena Fotino
David Gildin and Ceil Schrader
David and Cynthia Hodes
Nicholas and Shelley Robinson
Sid and Shirley Singer
Eva and Stanley Taben

Donor

Jeffrey and Mary Dale Allen
Bernie and Lois Bacharach
Alan Bandes
Jewel Bellush
Horst and Gay Berger
Stephen and Susan Butterfass
Helene and Martin Celnick
Bridget L. Cooke
Peter and Gillian Corfield
Jasmin Cowin
Lila d'Adolf
Peter and Phyllis Davies

Ted and Blanche Dolmatch
Sheila and George Drapeau
Andrew and Dominique Fitch
Barbara Gochman
Muriel Fox Hahn
Philip and Ellen Heidelberger
Lee Hemphill and
Elsbeth Lindner
Bob and Betsy Hughes
Nyla and Gerhard Isele
Barry Johnson and
Niamh Fitzgerald
Jacob and Irene Judd
Marvin Kalisch
Doris and Clifford Kaplan
Marcia and Robert Klein
Jon and Erica Kolbrener
Alan and Gail Koss
Anita and David Kraft
in memory of David
Kornreich
Alice Kurland
Shirley Leitner
Edwin and Arlene Leventhal
Richard and Barbara
Lieberman
Missy and Christopher Lipsett
Maggie and Paul
Loewenwarter
Valerie Lyle
James G. McMurtry III, MD
Susan and Avraham Merav
Raymond and Maag Mitton
Dr. Susan Harris and
Thomas Molnar
Mirla and George Morrison
Norman Nadel and
Sandra A. Forster
Kate Nixon
Peter Oden
Jean Pardo
Marianne Phiebig
Vera Plummer
Peggy and Tom Post
George Rehl
Jean Rivlin
Joelyn Rohman

David Gildin and
Cecile Schrader
Jay W. Seligman
Edward and Marion Shiffer
Heda Silverstein
Steven and Rita Waldbaum
Janet and Donald Zagoria

Contributor

Paul and Lilyan Abramson
Doris Appleby
Barbara and Hal Baron
William Becker
Dorothea Bone
William Bronner and
Nancy Bloomgarden
Robert and Mona Buzak
Haya and Zvi Caspi
Martin and Helene Celnick
in memory of David
Kornreich
Rhona and Ed Charkey
Joan Conklin
Nancy deKoven
Paula and Larry Edlavitch
Sallie Edwards
Andrea Erstling and
Philippe Charles
Dora Fisher
Melvin Fitting and Roma
Simon-Fitting
Bruce Fleischer and
Judy Freedman
Carol and Paul Freedman
Louise Goldenberg
Helen G. Goodman
Julia Kosow Grosberg
Eugenie C. Havenmeyer
George and Martha Heller
George and Olive Hill
Dr. Jean Horkans
Lilian and Bernard Joffe
Sally Kellock
Rosemary King
Doris Kinney
Sylvain Kleinhaus
Carolyn and Lawrence Kunin
Elizabeth Laite

Jerome and Estelle Lebowitz
John C. LeFever
Judith Levine
Selma Levy
Mrs. Susan Lichten
Leila Lituchy
David Lubell and Jody Israel
Patricia A. Mackin
Rosemary and Harry
MacLaughlin
Alice Marcus
Bernice Myers
Janet G. Myers
Edna Ortof, PhD
Mona and Seymour Page
Estelle and Gerald Palevsky
Stephanie and Richard Paley
Mr. Edward S. Plotkin
Leslie Grey Puner
George and Renata Rainer
Mr. Roland Reisley
Susan Rose
Nechama and Bill Ross
Ms Joan Rubenstein
Marlene and Gerald Ruthen
Francesco and Jeanette
Sacchini
Mrs. Lee Sack
Elizabeth Sadewhite
Natalie and Vincent Schifano
Robert Schloss and Emily Sack
Esther Schwartz
Laura S. Seitz
Tina Spence
Fern and Jeff Stearney
Rhoda Stephens
Mr. Frank Stern
Lore Strauss
Beverly and Oliver Swift
Dr. Henry and Karen Thomas
Lynne K. Verna and
Michael Stemerma
Rita Wexler
Ruch Wiesenberg
Sandra Zinman