

Announcing Our 2019-20 Season

Our 66th season will open on **October 12, 2019**, with the welcome return to our series of the world-renowned **Emerson String Quartet**. The *Seattle Times* has placed it “high in the pantheon of chamber music,” while the *Times of London* has enthused, “with musicians like these there must be some hope for humanity.”

On **October 26, 2019**, we introduce you to the young **cellist Zlatomir Fung**, who will perform with a piano collaborator to be announced. He is the tenth recipient of our Performance Award, which is presented to a winner of the Young Concert Artists International Auditions in New York City. He is a regular member of the Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players, and has been a soloist with the Ann Arbor Symphony, the Boston Pops, and the Lausanne Sinfonietta, among others.

November 16, 2019, will find eight musicians from the unique **Orpheus Chamber Orchestra** on our stage with a program that includes octets by Franz Schubert and Jean Françaix. Founded in 1972, the Orpheus performs without a conductor, and presents an annual concert series in New York City that features performances at Carnegie Hall and the 92nd Street Y.

Making its debut on our series on **March 28, 2020**, will be the innovative **PUBLIQuartet**, applauded by *The Washington Post* as “a perfect encapsulation of today’s trends in chamber music.” For several years the group has been a popular participant in our Partnerships in Education program, completing several day-long residencies in the school districts of Sleepy Hollow, Ossining, and Bronxville.

On **April 18, 2020**, the **Pacifica Quartet** comes back to Sleepy Hollow, this time joined by a frequent collaborator, the **pianist Orion Weiss**. The Pacifica’s performances around the world of several string quartet cycles have been called “brilliant,” “astonishing,” “gripping,” and “breathtaking.” Weiss has been praised for “exceptionally crafted performances that go far beyond his technical mastery.”

Our 66th season will close on **May 2, 2020**, with a trio comprised of the **pianist Wu Han, the violinist Philip Setzer, and the cellist David Finckel**. Han and Finckel are the music directors of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Setzer is Finckel’s former colleague in the original Emerson String Quartet. Said *The Washington Post*, “their ensemble is seamless,” while the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* observed, “they are almost as much fun to watch as to hear.”

Concerts are held on Saturday evenings at 8:00 pm in the Kusel Auditorium of Sleepy Hollow High School in Sleepy Hollow, NY.



Spring Brings Historic Instruments to Pleasantville

Lovers of music played on historical instruments will welcome the return of members of the **Juilliard Baroque Ensemble** on Saturday, March 30. Their unusual program will explore the ways violinist-composers of the 17th century first invented and then explored the sonata form, conversations among three violins that will culminate in Pachelbel’s celebrated and beloved Canon. In addition to the three violins, instrumentation will include a cello, harpsichord, theorbo, and guitar. For this time only, the concert will be in the auditorium of Pleasantville High School, located in Pleasantville, NY not far from the Jacob Burns Theater.

Since its founding in 2009, Juilliard Baroque has made significant contributions to musical life in New York and beyond – in fact, this will be its third appearance on our series. In 2011, the ensemble made its Carnegie Hall debut in a concert that was cited by *The New York Times* as one of the ten best of the season. A 2012 performance of Handel’s *Il Trionfo des Tempo* under the baton of William Christie earned that same distinction.

Members of the group are sought-after period instrument specialists, all of whom have joined Juilliard’s Historical Performance faculty. Collectively, their resumes include the most prominent national and international early music ensembles, such as the Boston Early Music

Help Us Welcome This Israeli Ensemble!

Debating on our series on **Saturday, April 13**, will be the dynamic **Jerusalem Quartet**, which plays with “passion, precision, and warmth,” says *The New York Times*. Performing in the Kusel Auditorium of Sleepy Hollow High School, the group’s program will include Claude Debussy’s String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10; Bela Bartok’s String Quartet No. 5; and Maurice Ravel’s String Quartet in F Major.

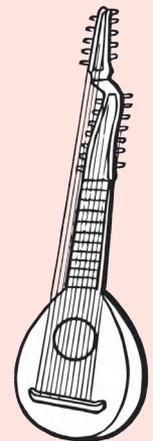
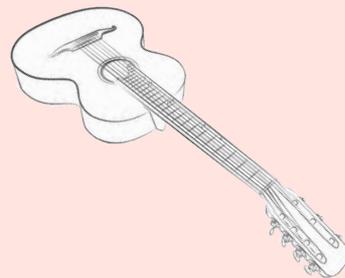
Founded in 1993, the quartet has become known for its virtuosic flair and its ability to create a seamless blend as an ensemble. *The Cleveland Plain Dealer* has highlighted the “warm, silken tone, which they deploy with a noteworthy nimbleness.” Their professional journey has resulted in a wide repertoire as they have appeared on the world’s great concert stages. In the United States, their tours have brought them to New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and Washington as well as to the Ravinia Festival near Chicago. European travels have included regular appearances in London’s Wigmore Hall, stages in Paris and Hamburg, and festivals in Salzburg, St. Petersburg, and many others.

The quartet records exclusively for Harmonia Mundi. Last year their releases included an album that incorporated, with guest artists, Debussy’s String Quintet Op. 97 and Sextet Op. 48, and a much-awaited recording of the quartets by Ravel



and Debussy that are on our program.

This season, following their April tour in the U.S., the Jerusalem will return to Wigmore Hall in May to present Bartok’s six string quartets. Then, combining these with some of Beethoven’s works, they will perform in various venues in Bavaria. 🎵



Juilliard Baroque Ensemble, *continued from page 1*

Festival Orchestra, Les Arts Florissants, the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Musica Antiqua Köln, and Tafelmusik.

Juilliard tours extensively in the United States and abroad, with notable appearances at the Boston Early Music Festival, the Leipzig Bachfest, and the Utrecht Early Music Festival, where the Juilliard was the first-even conservatory-in-residence. It is a frequent collaborator with the Yale Institute of Sacred Music. 🎵

Beginnings: A Personal Story from Cornelia Cotton



George Raymond, a city planner who lived on Mount Airy in Croton-on-Hudson, loved chamber music. He asked his neighbors there if they would be interested in joining together to form a group that would bring performances to the Village. His idea was greeted with enthusiasm, and soon Friends of Music was born. Concerts would take place in the gym of Croton's Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School, a noble structure built in the 1930s under the auspices of the federal Works Progress Administration. There, on the floor, chairs were arranged in three sides of the musicians, all on one level, the way chamber music traditionally had been performed. The first concert, in March 1954, featured a group nobody then had heard much about, the Juilliard String Quartet. It was said that the group was composed of graduates of that famous school, in contrast to the quartets known thus far: all European, and made up of foreign-born players.

My late husband, Bill Cotton, and I were in the audience that evening. Bill was a dedicated amateur violinist who loved quartets, eventually forming his own group; I am the daughter of a family of musicians whose childhood's background music consisted primarily of string quartets. We looked forward to this concert with great anticipation.

It so happened that not long before we had been present at a most unforgettable concert. Before we moved to Croton, we lived in Greenwich Village, an impecunious couple. One day we learned of a recital by the Budapest String Quartet at Washington Irving High School near Union Square. And it was free! That was exciting news.

The Budapest was more than a quartet. It was a myth, surrounded by adulations that reached the heights of a cult. It was the most famous, most esteemed quartet in the world, at a time when the American audience for string quartets still was quite small. We had no trouble getting into the auditorium, and there were a few empty seats in the hall. Listening to the Budapest Quartet that evening carried me into another place and time. They were the most refined, most sophisticated musicians, and to me they seemed steeped in the aura of the nineteenth century, of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, with a touch of the world-weariness of that epoch. I imagined that these four men were old enough to have lived in that empire, at the peak of musical civilization, that they personally knew Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. (In reality, the players were Russians, and all were born around 1900.)

Then, in 1954 when the Juilliard Quartet lifted its bows and began to play in Croton, the audience sat up. The players attacked the music with startling zest, their tempi fast, their spirit bright and cheerful. It was as if they were saying, "We are Americans!" No more world weariness. No more Austrian-Hungarian Empire. A new era had begun. 🎵

Long a subscriber to Friends of Music Concerts, Cornelia Cotton is a photographer and art dealer, proprietor of Croton's Cornelia Cotton Gallery. She was a founder of the Croton Council on the Arts and has remained its arts advisor; she also was a founder of the Croton Housing Network. She often contributes articles to the Croton Gazette. Last year she published her memoir "Stepping Stones."

Where Are They Now? *continued on page 5*

Since we initiated our Performance Award program nearly 10 years ago, we've enjoyed keeping track of the artists whose careers we helped nurture. Here are a few.

This past November, the young **pianist Nathan Lee** got a standing ovation from members of our audience. They and others will be pleased to know that he will be coming from his Washington State home to perform more or less locally this spring. On **Sunday, April 7**, at 4 pm he will be at the Emelin Theater in Mamaroneck, playing works by Bach, Mozart, Kapustin, Chopin, and Grünfeld. Then, on **Thursday, May 16** at 7 pm he will be featured at Young

Partnerships in Education Expanded This Spring

Thanks to some directed and some end-of-the-year donations to Friends of Music Concerts, we have been able to bring this excellent program to an additional school district. As a result, students in Tarrytown/Sleepy Hollow, Ossining, and Harrison will be able to benefit from one-day residencies by a young, professional ensemble that will include a performance for all music students and small group master classes.

New to the program will be the Harrison Central School District, with the program organized by Charlie Bennett, the high school orchestra teacher. In mid-May, the **PUBLIQuartet**, one of our most popular participants, will be spending the day teaching music students at all levels in the district, from elementary through high school seniors. The PUBLIQ also will demonstrate its unique, improvisatory method of performing.

In late May, the Sleepy Hollow School District, under the leadership of orchestra director Brittney Trenczer, will welcome an ensemble new to the program, the critically acclaimed young **Argus Quartet**. In addition to a performance before the middle school and high school orchestras, the Argus will give master classes to several high school and middle school quartets and to high school and middle school chamber orchestras.

A similar program, under the leadership of band and orchestra director T.J. Bastone, will return to Ossining High School, when the **Vera Quartet**, also new to this program, will fill a one-day residency.

In his application to be a Partner in Education, Charlie Bennett described the benefit to the students in his expanding program: "In Harrison, we feel our students are excited about music but don't get enough exposure to live classical music. Our students would benefit greatly from interacting closely with performers, both in terms of hearing a high level of performance up close, and in getting tips and instruction from professionals other than their teachers. I believe this would deepen their appreciation for the music and help bring them closer to reaching their own goals as young musicians." 🎵

Thoughts about listening.

Sixty-five years ago, Friends of Music Concerts was founded by a group of friends who had gathered once a month to listen to records of classical music and then wanted to bring live concerts to the Hudson Valley. Here are some words from the internationally acclaimed author Haruki Murakami, taken from his recent book of conversations with the conductor Seiji Ozawa, about his own love affair with records.

"Part of me has always derived a lot of joy from collecting records...For example, in my teens I fell in love with Mozart's String Quartet no. 15 in D minor (K. 421), one of the six "Haydn" quartets, in a set recorded by the Juilliard String Quartet, and for a time I listened to it exclusively again and again. So even now, if someone mentions K. 421, I automatically start hearing the Juilliard's keen-edged performance...it's imprinted there, and it tends to be the internal standard by which I judge other performances. Records were expensive back then, and I would give my undivided attention to each precious disc...Once I made a little money, I started buying other records and enthusiastically attending concerts. Then I discovered the joy of comparing performances by different musicians – of relativizing the music, in other words. In this way, over time, I gave shape to what each piece of music meant to me."

In a November Washington Post article, the violinist and music critic Jennifer Gersten bemoaned what she saw as attempts to brand classical music as easy listening muzak in order to increase its popularity. Rather, she said,

"Classical music, considered broadly, represents an irreducible font of sounds. The bristling harmonies of Claudio Monteverdi, cutting yowls of Leos Janacek, and multidimensional textures of Maryanne Amacher offer powerful rejoinders to anyone tempted to assume that all of this music is the same, or similarly placid...Even music that is superficially calm and slow can contain depth, tension, and difficult themes...The landscape of classical and new-music offerings has become more varied and open-minded, thanks to enterprising chamber groups like Eighth Blackbird and the International Contemporary Ensemble, which are helping to bring new voices in classical music to a broader public.... Music will forever be an object of worship for its ability to call forth and defy descriptive language; our fascination with it stems in part from how there is never enough to say." 🎵

A Trio of Works by a Superlative Piano Trio in May



On May 4, our 65th season will close with **Trio Solisti**, an ensemble that *The New Yorker* has called “the most exciting piano trio in America.” Its members – violinist Maria Bachmann, cellist Alexis Pia Gerlach, and pianist Fabio Bidini – will perform Franz Schubert’s Nocturne in E-flat Major, Op. D897

as well as his Piano Trio in B-flat Major, Op. 99, D898, and Johannes Brahms’s Piano Trio No. 2 in C Major, Op. 87.

Noted *Wall Street Journal* critic Terry Teachout proclaimed that Trio Solisti is “the group that to my mind has now succeeded the Beaux Arts Trio as the outstanding chamber music ensemble of its kind.” *The Washington Post* recently lauded them for a “transcendent performance,” while *The Boston Musical Intelligencer* asserted “chamber music connoisseurs should absolutely not miss Trio Solisti.”

Founded in 2001, Trio Solisti performs regularly at the country’s major venues and series, including Great Performers at Lincoln Center, People’s Symphony Concerts at Town Hall in New York, Washington Performing Arts Series at Kennedy Center, Seattle’s Meany Hall and La Jolla’s Revelle Series. At Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in 2015, the ensemble presented the complete piano chamber music of Brahms in a three-concert series praised in *The Strad* for “abundant dynamism, exceptional balance, and a wholly successful grasp of the interpretive essence.”

Trio Solisti’s many recordings have drawn critical raves *Gramophone*, *The New York Times* and many others. Composers who have written works for the trio include Lowell Liebermann, Kevin Puts, and Paul Moravec, whose “Tempest Fantasy” written for the group won the 2004 Pulitzer Prize. 🎵

Where Are They Now? *continued from page 3*

Concert Artists’ Gala Concert at New York City’s Alice Tully Hall, performing Mendelssohn’s Piano Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 25, with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s.

Since appearing with us during the 2012-13 season, the charismatic **violinist Benjamin Beilman** has gone on to win several honors and accolades, including a prestigious Avery Fischer Career grant, and a burgeoning career that has taken him around the world. Last summer he performed at the Caramoor Festival as part of its Rising Stars program, and he makes regular appearances at London’s Wigmore Hall. On **Sunday, April 14**, together with piano collaborator Orion Weiss, he will be at Lincoln Center’s Walter Reade Theater in a Sunday morning Coffee Concert. Their performance of works by Schubert and Beethoven will be followed by coffee and a chance to talk with them.

The career of Taiwanese **violinist Paul Huang**, who appeared with us during the 2013-14 season, also has taken off. For instance, this season he debuts in Hong Kong Bear’s Premiere Music Festival, and the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, while continuing his association with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and Camerata Pacifica. At 11 am on **Wednesday, May 15**, he will be at Caramoor as part of its Wednesday morning concert series, together with violinist Danbi Um and pianist Mika Sasaki. For those who have chosen it, a buffet lunch will follow that concert. 🎵

P.O. Box 675
Millwood, NY 10546
CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #6260
White Plains, NY
10610

2019 Spring Concerts

**AT PLEASANTVILLE
HIGH SCHOOL**
Pleasantville, NY

Juilliard Baroque Ensemble
March 30, 2019 – 8 pm

At Sleepy Hollow High School
Sleepy Hollow, NY

Jerusalem Quartet
April 13, 2019 – 8 pm

Trio Solisti
May 4, 2019 – 8 pm

On March 30: Pleasantville High School

It's at 60 Romer Avenue in Pleasantville, just south of Bedford Road, which can be reached easily from the Saw Mill River and Taconic Parkways and from Route 117. The Mt. Pleasant Public Library is on the corner of Bedford and Romer.

There is a circle in front of the entrance that can be used as a drop-off, but not for parking. Handicapped parking is in the parking lot to the right as you face the school. Additional free parking is available there and also in the parking lot on the left. Overflow parking is available on Romer and parallel Sunnyside Avenue, and on Clinton Street, which connects those two.

See you there!



Friends of Music Notes is a publication of Friends of Music Concerts, Inc., P.O. Box 675, Millwood, NY 10546, an all-volunteer, non-profit organization. For more information about us and our upcoming concerts, please visit our web site: www.friendsofmusicconcerts.org.

Please address correspondence to *Notes* Editor, 38 Teatown Road, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520, or e-mail treetops38@aol.com

ARTSW
ARTSWESTCHESTER

These concerts are made possible, in part, by a Project Support Grant from ArtsWestchester with funds from Westchester County Government, and by other generous friends of Friends of Music Concerts

Pianos by Steinway