

# The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center *Autumnal Brahms*

Thursday, October 16, 2014  
Riverside Recital Hall  
Hancher  
University of Iowa



**HANCHER**



THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF IOWA

# THE PROGRAM

## CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER *AUTUMNAL BRAHMS*

**Shai Vosner** *piano*  
**Erin Keefe** *violin*  
**Alexander Sitkovetsky** *violin*  
**Mark Holloway** *viola*  
**Timothy Eddy** *cello*  
**David Shifrin** *clarinet*

*All music by Johannes Brahms*

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### **Trio in A Minor for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, Op. 114 (1891)**

*Allegro*  
*Adagio*  
*Andantino grazioso*  
*Allegro*

*Shifrin, Eddy, Vosner*

### **Sonata in D Minor for Violin and Piano, Op. 108 (1886–88)**

*Allegro*  
*Adagio*  
*Un poco presto e con sentimento*  
*Presto agitato*

*Keefe, Vosner*

### ***Intermission***

### **Intermezzo in E-flat Major for Piano, Op. 117, No. 1 (1892)**

### **Rhapsody in E-flat Major for Piano, Op. 119, No. 4 (1893)**

*Vosner*

### **Quintet in B Minor for Clarinet, Two Violins, Viola, and Cello, Op. 115 (1891)**

*Allegro*  
*Adagio*  
*Andantino; Presto non assai, ma con sentimento*  
*Con moto*

*Shifrin, Sitkovetsky, Keefe, Holloway, Eddy*

*The Chamber Music Society's touring program is made possible in part by the  
Lila Acheson and DeWitt Wallace Endowment Fund.*

# THE ARTISTS

**T**he **Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center (CMS)** is one of eleven constituents of Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, the largest performing arts complex in the world. Along with other constituents such as the New York Philharmonic, New York City Ballet, Lincoln Center Theater, and The Metropolitan Opera, the Chamber Music Society has its home at Lincoln Center, in Alice Tully Hall. Through its performance, education, and recording/broadcast activities, it draws more people to chamber music than any other organization of its kind.

CMS presents annual series of concerts and educational events for listeners ranging from connoisseurs to chamber music newcomers of all ages. Performing repertoire from over three centuries and numerous premieres by living composers, CMS offers programs curated to provide listeners a comprehensive perspective on the art of chamber music. The performing artists of CMS, a multi-generational and international selection of expert chamber musicians, constitute an evolving repertory company capable of presenting chamber music of every instrumentation, style, and historical period. Its annual activities include a full season of concerts and events, national and international tours, nationally televised broadcasts on *Live From Lincoln Center*, a radio show broadcast internationally, and regular appearances on American Public Media's *Performance Today*.

In 2004, CMS appointed cellist David Finckel and pianist Wu Han artistic directors. They succeed founding director Charles Wadsworth (1969-89), Fred Sherry (1989-93), and David Shifrin (1993-2004).

Dedicated to developing the chamber music leaders of the future, CMS created CMS Two, the highly regarded and rigorously competitive three-season residency for the most important chamber music ensembles and individuals, that fully integrates CMS Two artists into every facet of CMS activities. Each year, a number of CMS Two alumni are invited to become CMS Season Artists and Guest Artists, and many of the world's leading artists, such as pianist Lang Lang, cellist Alisa Weilerstein, flutist Tara Helen O'Connor, violinist Hilary Hahn, and many others are alumni of the program. A Season Artist with CMS since he completed the program in 2011-12, CMS Two alumnus cellist Nicholas Canellakis wrote: "There isn't a single musical organization in the country that helps young musicians like the Chamber Music Society does with its CMS Two program."



Photo: Marco Borggreve

Pianist **Shai Vosner** has attracted international recognition for his exceptional artistry, musical integrity, and creative insight. His performances of a broad range of repertoire from Beethoven and Mozart to Schoenberg and Ligeti, as well as music by his contemporaries, communicates his imaginative programming and intellectual curiosity. He has appeared with numerous major orchestras in North America including the Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, the National Arts

Centre Orchestra, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and the symphony orchestras of Atlanta, Baltimore, Berkeley, Cleveland, Dallas, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and San Francisco. He has worked with such conductors

as Daniel Barenboim, Jiří Belohlávek, James Conlon, Alan Gilbert, Günther Herbig, James Judd, Zubin Mehta, Peter Oundjian, Donald Runnicles, and Leonard Slatkin. This season, his orchestral engagements include Mozart piano concertos with the Hamburger Symphoniker conducted by Jeffrey Tate, the BBC Scottish Symphony led by Andrew Manze, and the Discovery Ensemble led by Courtney Lewis at Boston's Jordan Hall. He will also play the German premiere of Michael Hersch's concerto *Along the Ravines* (a work he commissioned and premiered with the Seattle Symphony in 2012) with the Deutsche Radio Philharmonie-Saarbrücken. Mr. Wosner has been widely praised for his interpretations of Schubert's solo works, both in concert and in recording. Of his most recent solo recording, released by Onyx in October 2011, *Gramophone* magazine wrote, "With this recital Shai Wosner declares himself a Schubertian of unfaltering authority and character." He is a former member of Chamber Music Society Two.



Recently named concertmaster of the Minnesota Orchestra, American violinist **Erin Keefe** has established a reputation as a compelling artist who combines exhilarating temperament and fierce integrity. Winner of a 2006 Avery Fisher Career Grant as well as the 2009 Pro Musicis International Award, she took the Grand Prizes in the Valsesia Musica International Violin Competición (Italy), the Torun International Violin Competition (Poland), the Schadt Competition, and the Corpus Christi International String Competition. She has been featured on *Live From Lincoln Center* three times with CMS, performing works by Brahms, Schoenberg, Bach, and Corelli. Her recording credits include Schoenberg's Second String Quartet with Ida Kavafian, Paul Neubauer, Fred Sherry, and Jennifer Welch-Babidge for Robert Craft and the Naxos Label, and recordings of works by Dvořák with David Finckel and Wu Han for the CMS Studio Recordings label. In 2010, she released her first solo CD, recorded with pianist Anna Polonsky. Her festival appearances have included the Marlboro Music Festival, Music@Menlo, Music from Angel Fire, Ravinia and the Seattle, OK Mozart, Mimir, Bravo! Vail Valley, Music in the Vineyards, and Bridgehampton Chamber Music festivals. Ms. Keefe earned a master's degree from The Juilliard School and a bachelor's degree from The Curtis Institute of Music. Her teachers included Ronald Copes, Ida Kavafian, Arnold Steinhardt, and Philip Setzer. A former member of CMS Two, Ms. Keefe is currently an Artist of the Society.



Violinist **Alexander Sitkovetsky** has performed with the Netherlands Philharmonic, London's Philharmonia, Royal Philharmonic, Konzerthaus Orchester Berlin, Tucson Symphony Orchestra, St. Petersburg Symphony Orchestra, Greensboro Symphony, London Mozart Players, and Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. This season, he makes his debut at the Royal Albert Hall with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and embarks on tours with the Brussels Philharmonic and the St. Petersburg Symphony. He also returns to various orchestras and festivals in the UK, Europe, and Japan. He has shared the stage with Julia Fischer, Janine Jansen, Mischa Maisky, Polina Leschenko, and Julian Rachlin. He has recorded for Angel/EMI, Decca, and Orfeo including a recording of the Bach Double Concerto with Julia Fischer. Together with Wu Qian and cellist Leonard Elschenbroich, he performs in the Sitkovetsky Piano Trio, regularly appearing in England at Wigmore Hall and all around the country and across Europe in halls such as Amsterdam's Concertgebouw and the Frankfurt Alte Oper. Born in Moscow into a family with an established musical

tradition, he made his concerto debut at the age of eight and the same year came to study at the Menuhin School. Lord Menuhin was his inspiration throughout his school years and they performed together on several occasions including the Bach Double Concerto and Bartók Duos at St. James' Palace, and he performed the Mendelssohn Concerto under Menuhin's baton. Mr. Sitkovetsky is a member of Chamber Music Society Two.



Photo: Matt Dine

Violist **Mark Holloway** is a chamber musician sought after in the United States and abroad. He has appeared at prestigious festivals such as Marlboro, Music@Menlo, Ravinia, Caramoor, Banff, Cartagena, Taos, Music from Angel Fire, Mainly Mozart, Music at Plush, and the Boston Chamber Music Society. Performances have taken him to far-flung places such as Chile and Greenland, and he plays regularly at chamber music festivals in France and Switzerland, and at the International Musicians Seminar

in Prussia Cove, England. Around New York City, he frequently appears as a guest with the New York Philharmonic and Orpheus. Mr. Holloway has been principal violist at Tanglewood and of the New York String Orchestra, and has played as guest principal of the American Symphony, the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Camerata Bern, and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. He has performed at Bargemusic, the 92nd Street Y, the Casals Festival in Puerto Rico, and on radio and television throughout North and South America, and Europe, most recently in 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 the Marlboro Recording Society, CMS Live, Music@Menlo LIVE, Naxos, and Albany labels. A former member of Chamber Music Society Two and a current Artist of the Society, Mr. Holloway was a student of Michael Tree at The Curtis Institute of Music and received his bachelor's degree from Boston University.



Cellist **Timothy Eddy** has earned distinction as a recitalist, soloist with orchestra, chamber musician, recording artist, and teacher of cello and chamber music. He has performed with the Dallas, Colorado, Jacksonville, North Carolina, and Stamford symphonies, and has appeared at the Mostly Mozart, Ravinia, Aspen, Santa Fe, Marlboro, Lockenhaus, Spoleto, and Sarasota music festivals. He has also won prizes in numerous

national and international competitions, including the 1975 Gaspar Cassado International Violoncello Competition in Italy. He is a member of the Orion String Quartet, which recently recorded the complete Beethoven string quartets for the Koch label and is an Artist of The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. A former member of the Galimir Quartet, the New York Philomusica, and the Bach Aria Group, Mr. Eddy collaborates regularly in recital with pianist Gilbert Kalish. A frequent performer of the works of Bach, he recently presented the complete six cello suites of Bach in two consecutive days at Colorado's Boulder Bach Festival and Vermont's Brattleboro Music Center. He has recorded a wide range of repertoire from Baroque to avant-garde for the Angel, Arabesque, Columbia, CRI, Delos, Musical Heritage, New World, Nonesuch, Vanguard, Vox, and SONY Classical labels. He is currently professor of cello at The Juilliard School and Mannes College of Music, and he was frequently a faculty member at the Isaac Stern Chamber Music Workshops at Carnegie Hall. Mr. Eddy plays a Matteo Goffriller cello (1728).



A Yale University faculty member since 1987, clarinetist **David Shifrin** is artistic director of Yale's Chamber Music Society series and Yale in New York, a concert series at Carnegie Hall. He has been an Artist of the Chamber Music Society for 23 years and served as its artistic director from 1992 to 2004, inaugurating the CMS Two program and the annual Brandenburg Concerto concerts. Currently in his 32nd season as artistic director

of Chamber Music Northwest in Portland, he has collaborated with the Guarneri, Tokyo, and Emerson string quartets and is a member of the Kavafian-Schub-Shifrin Trio. 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 competitions throughout the world, including Munich, Geneva, and San Francisco, he has held principal clarinet positions in 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*. He has also released two CDs of Lalo Schifrin's compositions, one of which was nominated for a Latin Grammy. At home with the work of such contemporary composers as John Adams, Joan Tower, Bruce Adolphe, and Ezra Laderman, Mr. Shifrin commissioned a concerto from Ellen Taaffe Zwilich that he premiered at CMS and with the Buffalo Philharmonic in 2002. He is a Yamaha performing artist.



**Johannes Brahms**

Born May 7, 1833, in Hamburg

Died April 3, 1897, in Vienna

# PROGRAM NOTES

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## **Trio in A Minor for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, Op. 114**

Composed in 1891

Premiered on November 24, 1891, in Meiningen, by clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld, cellist Robert Hausmann, and the composer

A mong Brahms's close friends and musical colleagues during his later years was the celebrated pianist and conductor Hans von Bülow, who played Brahms's music widely and made it a mainstay in the repertory of the superb court orchestra at Meiningen during his tenure there as music director from 1880 to 1885. Soon after arriving at Meiningen, Bülow invited Brahms to be received by the music-loving Duke Georg and his consort, Baroness von Heldburg, and the composer was provided with a fine apartment and encouraged to visit the court whenever he wished. (The only obligation upon the comfort-loving composer was to don the much-despised full dress for dinner.) At a concert in March 1891, he heard a performance of Weber's F-Minor Clarinet Concerto by the orchestra's principal player of that instrument, Richard Mühlfeld, and was overwhelmed. So strong was the impact of the experience that Brahms was shaken out of a year-long creative lethargy, and the Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano (Op. 114) and the Quintet for Clarinet and Strings (Op. 115) were composed for Mühlfeld without difficulty between May and July 1891 at the Austrian resort town of Bad Ischl, near Salzburg. Three years later Brahms produced the two Sonatas for Clarinet and Piano (Op. 120) for Mühlfeld. Both the trio and the quintet were first heard at a private recital at Meiningen on November 24, 1891, presented by Brahms (as pianist), Mühlfeld, and the members of the Joachim Quartet. The same forces gave the public premieres of both works in Berlin on December 12.

Both the trio and the quintet that Brahms devised for Mühlfeld are autumnal in mood, tinged throughout with the bittersweet nostalgia that marked the music of the composer's full maturity, a quality to which the darkly limpid sonority of the clarinet is perfectly suited. The trio's opening movement, a seamlessly woven sonata form that treats the two melody instruments as twin voices, begins with a somber main theme that arches through the cello's tenor register. The ensemble's discussion of this motive leads to a climax, from which emerges the second theme, a lyrical cello melody that, reversing the shape of the main theme, descends then rises. The compact development section, based on the main subject, is draped with ribbons of scales passed among the participants. The themes are somewhat altered upon their returns in the recapitulation, and the movement ends with a whispered reminiscence of the scales from the development. The Adagio is a tender, introspective duet with piano accompaniment that makes superb use of the burnished hues of clarinet and cello. The third movement takes a graceful, languid, waltz-like strain as its principal theme, and creates contrast with a rustic episode in the manner of the countryside Ländler. The main theme of the sonata-form finale, initiated by the cello, comprises bold phrases of leaping intervals followed by a tight, scale-step motive; the contrasting subsidiary subject is more flowing. The development section is dominated by the impetuous main theme. The trio concludes with the recapitulation of the finale's themes and a brilliant coda grown from the principal subject.

## Sonata in D Minor for Violin and Piano, Op. 108

Composed in 1886–88

Premiered on December 22, 1888, in Cologne, with Jenő Hubay as violinist and the composer as pianist

For many years, Brahms followed the sensible practice of the Viennese gentry by abandoning the city when the weather got hot. He spent many happy summers in the hills and lakes of the Salzkammergut, east of Salzburg, but in 1886 his friend Joseph Widmann, a poet and librettist of considerable distinction, convinced Brahms to join him in the ancient Swiss town of Thun, 25 kilometers south of Bern in the foothills of the Bernese Alps. Brahms rented a flower-laden villa on the shore of Lake Thun in the nearby hamlet of Hofstetten, and settled in for a long, comfortable summer. The periods away from Vienna were not just times of relaxation for Brahms but were working holidays, and the three summers he spent at Thun (1886–88) were especially productive: the Violin sonatas Nos. 2 and 3, C-Minor Piano Trio, Second Cello Sonata, Gypsy Songs, Choral Songs (Op. 104), Lieder of Opp. 105–107, and Double Concerto were all written there. Brahms began the Third Violin Sonata, Op. 108, at Hofstetten during the summer of 1886, but composed most of the score during his sojourn two years later. The sonata's premiere was given on December 22, 1888, in Cologne by the composer and the celebrated Hungarian violinist, composer and pedagogue Jenő Hubay.

The D-Minor Violin Sonata was dedicated to Hans von Bülow. The dedication to the pianist-conductor is especially appropriate for this sonata, since the piano is more thoroughly integrated with the violin than in Brahms's two earlier sonatas, in which the keyboard serves largely as accompanist to the string instrument's wordless songs. Violin and piano share equally the thematic material of the opening movement: the violin presents the principal subject, a lyrical inspiration marked by long notes that give way to quick neighboring tones; the piano's arching second theme is superbly constructed from a two-measure motive of step-wise motion followed by a hesitant dotted-rhythm gesture. The development section is largely occupied with a discussion of the main theme. A full recapitulation and an ethereal coda grown from the main theme close the movement.

The Adagio is one of Brahms's most endearing creations, an instrumental hymn of delicately dappled emotions, touching melody, and suave harmonies that caused Peter Latham to note in his biography of the composer, "Brahms wrote nothing more gracious than these sonatas, in which he never seeks grandeur and woos rather than compels." The third movement (which the score instructs should be played "con sentimento") replaces the traditional scherzo with an intermezzo of precisely controlled intensity and masterful motivic development. The sonata-form finale resumes the darkly expressive eloquence of the opening movement with its impetuous main theme. A chordal subject initiated by the piano provides contrast, but the unsettled mood of the first theme remains dominant through the remainder of the movement. "Perfect as each movement of the three violin sonatas is," wrote Karl Geiringer, "they seem, in this last movement, to have reached their culminating point."



## **Intermezzo in E-flat Major for Piano, Op. 117, No. 1**

## **Rhapsody in E-flat Major for Piano, Op. 119, No. 4**

Composed in 1892 and 1893

**B**rahms was a gifted pianist who toured and concertized extensively in northern Europe early in his career. He made his recital debut in Vienna in 1862, and returned there regularly until settling permanently in that city in 1869. By then, his reputation as a composer was well established, and he was devoting more time to creative work than to practicing piano. He continued to play, however, performing his own chamber music and solo pieces both in public and in private, and even serving as soloist in the premiere of his daunting Second Concerto on November 9, 1881, in Budapest. His last public appearance as a pianist was in Vienna on January 11, 1895, just two years before he died, in a performance of his clarinet sonatas with Richard Mühlfeld.

Brahms's pianism was noted less for its flashy virtuosity than for its rich emotional expression, fluency, individuality, nearly orchestral sonority, and remarkable immediacy, and his compositions for the instrument are marked by the same introspection, seriousness of purpose, and deep musicality that characterized his playing. His keyboard output, though considerable, falls into three distinct periods: an early burst of large-scale works mostly in Classical forms (1851–53: three sonatas, Opp. 1, 2, and 5; Scherzo in E-flat Minor, Op. 4; and Four Ballades, Op. 10); a flurry of imposing compositions in variation form from 1854 to 1863 on themes by Schumann, Haydn, Handel, and Paganini; and a late blossoming of 30 succinct Capriccios, Intermezzos, Ballades, and Rhapsodies from 1878–79 and 1892–93 issued as Opp. 76, 79, 116, 117, 118, and 119. To these must be added the dance-inspired compositions of the late 1860s: the Waltzes (Op. 39) and the Hungarian Dances. Brahms's late works, most notably those from 1892 and 1893, share the autumnal quality that marks much of the music of his ripest maturity. "It is wonderful how he combines passion and tenderness in the smallest of spaces," said Clara Schumann of this music. To which William Murdoch added, "Brahms had begun his life as a pianist, and his first writing was only for the pianoforte. It was natural that at the end of his life he should return to playing this friend of his youth and writing for it. This picture should be kept in mind when thinking of these last sets. They contain some of the loveliest music ever written for the pianoforte. They are so personal, so introspective, so intimate that one feels that Brahms was exposing his very self. They are the mirror of his soul."

Brahms headed the Intermezzo in E-flat Major, Op. 117, No. 1 (1892), the most gentle of his piano pieces, with a German translation from Johann Gottfried Herder's late-18th-century folk-song collections of lines from an old Scottish song known as "Lady Anne Bothwell's Lament": Schlaf sanft mein Kind, schlaf sanft und schön! Mich dauert's sehr, dich weinen sehn. (Sleep softly my child, sleep softly and well! It fills me with regret to see you cry.) The original text is generally thought to tell the sad tale of Lady Anne Bothwell, daughter of a sixteenth-century Bishop of Orkney, who was seduced by a young nobleman and abandoned with an infant. The original text begins: Baloo [an old Scots word for a lullaby], my boy, lie still and sleep....It grieves me sore to hear thee weep....If thou'lt be silent I'll be glad....Thy moaning makes my heart full sad...

The Rhapsody in E-flat Major, Op. 119, No. 4 (1893) is built from a noble strain in march-like rhythms and a passage in anxious triplet figurations in a darker key that surround a flowing, subtly decorated melody at the center. The work's closing section comprises a return of the triplet rhythms and a playful, staccato version of the noble opening strain and then its reprise in its original form before the rhapsody closes with a powerful coda in a stern minor key.

## Quintet in B Minor for Clarinet, Two Violins, Viola, and Cello, Op. 115

Composed in 1891

Premiered on November 24, 1891, in Meiningen, by Richard Mühlfeld and the Joachim Quartet

The mood of the Clarinet Quintet, Op. 115, is expressive and autumnal, with many a hint of bittersweet nostalgia, a quality to which the darkly limpid sonority of the clarinet is perfectly suited. The opening movement follows traditional sonata form, with the closely woven thematic development characteristic of all Brahms's large instrumental works. The main theme, given by the violins in mellow thirds, contains the motivic seeds from which the entire movement grows. Even the swaying second theme, initiated by the clarinet, derives from this opening melody. The Adagio is built in three large paragraphs. The first is based on a tender melody of touching simplicity uttered by the clarinet. The central section is an impetuous strain in sweeping figurations seemingly derived from the fiery improvisations of an inspired Gypsy clarinetist. The Adagio melody returns to round out the movement. Brahms performed an interesting formal experiment in the third movement. Beginning with a sedate Andantino, the music soon changes mood and meter to become an ingenious combination of scherzo and rondo that is closed by a fleeting reminiscence of the movement's first melody. The finale is a theme with five variations, the last of which recalls the opening melody of the first movement to draw together the principal thematic strands of this masterful work.

*Dr. Richard E. Rodda is a prolific program annotator for numerous orchestras, chamber ensembles, festivals, publications, and presenters throughout the United States.*

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The groundbreaking Kronos Quartet returns to Iowa City to perform a new multimedia work—composed by Aleksandra Vrebalov with a film by Bill Morrison—commemorating the centennial of the outbreak of World War One. The program will also include a new work by Mary Kouyoumdjian, *Bombs of Beirut*, co-commissioned by Hancher as part of the quartet's Under 30 Project.



## **Pacifica Quartet**

Friday, March 6 at 7:30 pm  
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Renowned for exuberance in performance and for daring repertory choices, the Pacifica Quartet is internationally recognized as one of the finest chamber ensembles performing today. The program will feature a new work, *Glitter, Doom, Shards, Memory*, by Pulitzer Prize winner Shulamit Ran, co-commissioned by Hancher via Music Accord.

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