

**IN ASSOCIATION WITH
DUKE PERFORMANCES
THE CHAMBER ARTS SOCIETY OF DURHAM PRESENTS**



**DAVID FINCKEL, CELLO
& WU HAN, PIANO,
WITH ARNAUD SUSSMANN, VIOLIN
& PAUL NEUBAUER, VIOLA**

SAT, OCT 17
VIRTUAL PERFORMANCE

DUKE PERFORMANCES

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
DUKE PERFORMANCES
THE CHAMBER ARTS SOCIETY OF DURHAM PRESENTS

DAVID FINCKEL, CELLO
& **WU HAN**, PIANO,
WITH **ARNAUD SUSSMANN**, VIOLIN
& **PAUL NEUBAUER**, VIOLA

SAT, OCT 17
VIRTUAL PERFORMANCE

DAVID FINCKEL, CELLO
WU HAN, PIANO
ARNAUD SUSSMAN, VIOLIN
PAUL NEUBAUER, VIOLA

PROGRAM

Sonata for Cello and Piano in F Major, **Ludwig van Beethoven**
op. 5, no. 1 (1770-1827)
Adagio sostenuto –
Allegro
Allegro vivace

Quartet for Piano and Strings **Johannes Brahms**
in G Minor, op. 25, no. 1 (1833-1897)
I. Allegro
II. Intermezzo: Allegro, ma non troppo
— Trio: Animato (C minor, ends in C major)
III. Andante con moto
IV. Rondo alla Zingarese: Presto

BEETHOVEN: SONATA FOR CELLO AND PIANO IN F MAJOR, OP. 5, NO. 1

1796 was a big year for young Beethoven. He'd left his hometown, Bonn, just four years earlier for Vienna, where he hoped to make it big. This turned out to be a good move — not only did he quickly carve out a position among the musical elite, but he also gained financial success through performance and publications. With this solid momentum, he devoted much of '96 to touring several major cities: Prague, Dresden, and Berlin. He ended up spending a month in Berlin, hobnobbing with the King of Prussia, who happened to be a cello enthusiast. Being a savvy sort, Beethoven composed his first two cello sonatas as an overt show of respect to the King. They were premiered before him; Beethoven collaborated with one of the court cellists. In return, Beethoven was given a lavish gold snuffbox, one he described as being fit for an ambassador.

In the context of this extraordinary episode, it's interesting to consider how the first sonata presents itself. The piece is neither deferential nor overly showy, instead striking a careful balance between entertainment value and high-brow sophistication. Initially, this is made evident through a very subtle subversion of expectations. At the time, and contrary to our modern perspective, a sonata such as this would have been billed as a piano feature with cello accompaniment. Instead, Beethoven begins the work with a slow, serious introduction played in unison by both instruments. Immediately, this texture eliminates hierarchical distinctions, which allows the work to unfold unencumbered by convention.

Following the introduction, in the main Allegro, each instrument shares equally in melodic and accompanimental responsibilities. This mode of cooperation is particularly Beethovenian; in an indirect, though not insignificant way, this foreshows the call for brotherhood in the ninth symphony's famous Ode to Joy. The clear sharing of responsibility becomes especially valuable during the movements stormier sections, which amplify harmonic tensions from as far back as the introduction. Together, the instruments help each other find terra firma — mostly. A surprising shift in tone and tempo comes just before the end, which turns out to be a joint cadenza. With a triumphant trill, the two partners cooperatively repeat the movement's main theme one last time to ring in an exuberant conclusion.

This good spirit is maintained right into the Allegro vivace. Compared to the first movement, it engages a comparable harmonic discourse, moving between stable and rocky patches. But now, having established such a strong sense of teamwork, the music proceeds with a real sense of adventure. Beethoven amplifies the spirited move with a jaunty meter and frequent use of ringing open fifth drones in the cello. It is tempting to read a bit of social commentary into this: drones belong to the realm of the commoners, and all these signs of cooperation could have sounded trouble for a concerned monarch, especially with Napoleon on the rise. Based on the King's positive response, though, it seems the message was either missed or accepted as a show of magnanimity. The latter reaction was perhaps the goal, telegraphed by a surprisingly compassionate passage inserted just before the work's climactic end — a structure brilliantly engineered to bring folks together in applause, at least.

BRAHMS: QUARTET NO. 1 FOR PIANO AND STRINGS IN G MINOR, OP. 25

As the 1850s progressed, Brahms found himself in an increasingly unfavorable situation. His friend and mentor Robert Schumann died, his first piano concerto was poorly received, he was dropped by his publisher, and he faced backlash for criticizing the artistic directions exemplified by Liszt and Wagner. So, like Beethoven before him, Brahms looked to Vienna, where he hoped he might turn over a new leaf. Work on the first piano quartet comes from this time of transition, and it was one of the pieces he used to introduce himself to the imperial city. The results were resoundingly successful — listeners responded positively to its progressive form, dramatic pacing, and incorporation of folk styles.

One of the piece's more innovative attributes stems from the its opening line. A snaking thing, presented in octaves by the piano, it comes to act as a kernel from which the entire work grows. The movement unfolds in a way that *feels* organic; its deep structure is somewhat traditional, but the music is alive, adapting to changes in shadow and light. Wonderment at nature was a strong element of the zeitgeist during Brahms's life; in its way, this movement channels that fascination by drawing our attention to the growth of this opening line, as it coils its way through the quartet, forever seeking the stability of soil and sun.

Indeed, by foregrounding a craggy melody, and its more lyric offshoots, Brahms asks us to engage with the concept of line. Throughout the Allegro, we find an uncommon quantity of unison writing — the instruments double each other quite often, aurally drawing attention towards the most important melodies. Brahms's doublings also nuance our sense of momentum and direction by constantly shifting the distribution of sonic weight, giving the ensemble a remarkable sense of dynamism through unity.

In the Intermezzo, Brahms maintains many of the musical priorities of the first movement — again, we find unisons, an emphasis on line, and an unfettered sense of direction. But the texture is substantially clearer, and the music's uncommon 9/8 meter carries the action like a swift little creek. In this way, it resonates with the lighter moments of the first movement, increasing the buoyancy of the work as a whole. This seems to have been a deliberate part of the strategy; not only does the title "Intermezzo" imply a dialing-down of urgency, but the movement concludes with a truly delightful little coda. It's amazing what a brief floral moment like this can do for the spirit!

As a response, the Andante con moto poses something of a puzzle. Its main theme paradoxically pits a Mozartian tune against a burdensome texture, making heavy use of loud dynamics and the piano's low register. And this is eventually contrasted with some Grade-A riding music, complete with horse gallop imitations and horn calls. The pairing of these impulses is neither intuitive nor organic, which seems to put the movement at odds with what's come before, at least in terms of strategy. In subject matter, we finally have an unambiguous invocation of the natural world, and the forcefulness of the main theme goes straight to the viscera. We connect with the human effort required to generate these sounds on stage, and also with the impulse to do more than sit as passive listeners; interested has shifted from the cerebral to the physical.

And so to the dance! Building on the kinesthetic implications of the previous movement, the finale makes its intentions abundantly clear. The Rondo alla Zungarese — literally, a Gypsy Round — is intensely athletic, and alarmingly involved. Only briefly, in the middle of this 8-minute whirlwind, are there pockets of relative calm. And even those are striking! Announced by virtuosic piano flourishes, the work's only moments of unaccompanied traditional string trio writing define the eye of the storm. But in

doing so, they remind us of the quartet's opening line, thereby tying this explosive conclusion intimately to the whole. It therefore marks the end of an incredible process — one that leads from thought to action, here calling on all to experience the world with vigor and conviction.

DAVID FINCKEL & WU HAN

David Finckel and **Wu Han** are among the most esteemed and influential classical musicians in the world today. They are recipients of *Musical America's* Musicians of the Year award, one of the highest honors granted by the music industry. The energy, imagination, and integrity they bring to their multifaceted endeavors as concert performers, artistic directors, recording artists, educators, and cultural entrepreneurs go unmatched.

Highlights of their 2019–20 season include a new CD release, a national PBS television special, a new residency appointment, a busy international tour schedule, along with multiple performances with The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center (CMS) in the United States, Taiwan and Columbia.

David Finckel and Wu Han are currently in their third term as Artistic Directors of The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Under their leadership, CMS is celebrating three global broadcasting initiatives bringing chamber music to new audiences around the world, via partnerships with Medici TV, Radio Television Hong Kong and the All Arts broadcast channel. David and Wu Han are the founders and Artistic Directors of Music@Menlo in Silicon Valley, and of Chamber Music Today, a festival held in Seoul, South Korea. Wolf Trap appointed Wu Han to serve as Artistic Advisor of its Chamber Music at the Barns series, and this season, she is Montclair State University's Artist in Residence.

Leaders of the classical recording industry, they created ArtistLed in 1997, the first musician-directed and internet-based classical recording company. David Finckel and Wu Han have also overseen the establishment of the CMS Studio Recordings label, the Society's partnership with Deutsche Grammophon, CMS's live stream programming, and Music@Menlo LIVE, which has been praised as "the most ambitious recording project of any classical music festival in the world" (*San Jose Mercury News*).

David Finckel and Wu Han have received universal praise for their passionate commitment to nurturing the artistic growth of countless young artists through a wide array of educational initiatives. Under their leadership at CMS, the Bowers Program identifies and inducts the finest young chamber artists into the entire spectrum of CMS activities. As Artistic Directors of Music@Menlo, their Chamber Music Institute has provided hundreds of students with incomparable, immersive musical experiences over seventeen summers. From 2009-2018, David Finckel and Wu Han directed the LG Chamber Music School in South Korea, which served dozens of young musicians annually, and they also led an intensive chamber music studio at the Aspen Music Festival and School. David Finckel and Wu Han's website recently launched a new initiative which addresses the challenges and opportunities facing today's classical music performers and presenters. David Finckel and Wu Han reside in New York.

ARNAUD SUSSMANN

Winner of a 2009 Avery Fisher Career Grant, **Arnaud Sussmann** has distinguished himself with his unique sound, bravura and profound musicianship. Minnesota's *Pioneer Press* writes, "Sussmann has an old-school sound reminiscent of what you'll hear on vintage recordings by Jascha Heifetz or Fritz Kreisler, a rare combination of sweet and smooth that can hypnotize a listener. His clear tone is a thing of awe-inspiring beauty, his phrasing spellbinding."

A thrilling young musician capturing the attention of classical critics and audiences around the world, Arnaud Sussmann has appeared with the American Symphony Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic, New World Symphony, Pacific Symphony, Paris Chamber Orchestra, Jerusalem Symphony and the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. Further solo appearances have included a tour of Israel and concerts at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, Dresden Music Festival in Germany and at the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C. Mr. Sussmann has been presented in recital in Omaha on the Tuesday Musical Club series, New Orleans by the Friends of Music, Tel Aviv at the Museum of Art and at the Louvre Museum in Paris. He has also given concerts at the OK Mozart, Chamber Music Northwest and Moritzburg festivals and appears regularly at the Caramoor, Music@Menlo, La Jolla SummerFest, Seattle Chamber Music, Moab Music and Saratoga Springs Chamber Music festivals.

Recent concerto appearances include performances with Maestro Valery Gergiev and the Mariinsky Orchestra at the White Nights Festival in St Petersburg, the Santa Rosa Symphony, the Albany Symphony, the Jacksonville Symphony and the Grand Rapids Symphony. This past season, chamber music performances included tours with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center to Korea's LG Arts Center, Shanghai's Oriental Center and Hong Kong's Music Academy.

Arnaud Sussmann has performed with many of today's leading artists including Itzhak Perlman, Menahem Pressler, Gary Hoffman, Shmuel Ashkenazi, Wu Han, David Finckel, Jan Vogler and members of the Emerson String Quartet. He has worked with conductors such as Cristian Macelaru, Marcelo Lehninger, Rune Bergmann and Leon Botstein. A dedicated chamber musician, he has been a member of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center since 2006 and has regularly appeared with them in New York and on tour, including a recent concert at London's Wigmore Hall.

A frequent recording artist, Arnaud Sussmann has released albums on Deutsche Grammophon's DG Concert Series, Naxos, Albany Records and CMS Studio Recordings labels. His solo debut disc, featuring three Brahms Violin Sonatas with pianist Orion Weiss, was released in December 2014 on the Telos Music Label. He has been featured on multiple PBS' Live from Lincoln Center broadcasts alongside Itzhak Perlman and the Perlman Music Program and with musicians of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

Born in Strasbourg, France and based now in New York City, Arnaud Sussmann trained at the Conservatoire de Paris and the Juilliard School with Boris Garlitsky and Itzhak Perlman. Winner of several international competitions, including the Andrea Postacchini of Italy and Vatelot/Rampal of France, he was named a Starling Fellow in 2006, an honor which allowed him to be Mr. Perlman's teaching assistant for two years. Mr. Sussmann now teaches at Stony Brook University on Long Island and was recently named Co-Artistic Director of Music@Menlo's International Music Program.

PAUL NEUBAUER

Violist **Paul Neubauer's** exceptional musicality and effortless playing led the *New York Times* to call him "a master musician." He recently made his Chicago Symphony subscription debut with conductor Riccardo Muti and his Mariinsky Orchestra debut with conductor Valery Gergiev. He also gave the U.S. Premiere of the newly discovered *Impromptu* for viola and piano by Shostakovich with pianist Wu Han. In addition, his recording of the Aaron Kernis Viola Concerto with the Royal Northern Sinfonia, was released on Signum Records and his recording of the complete viola and piano music by Ernest Bloch with pianist Margo Garrett was released on Delos. Appointed principal violist of the New York Philharmonic at age 21, he has appeared as soloist with over 100 orchestras including the New York, Los Angeles, and Helsinki philharmonics; National, St. Louis, Detroit, Dallas, San Francisco, and Bournemouth symphonies; and Santa Cecilia, English Chamber, and Beethovenhalle orchestras. He has premiered viola concertos by Bartók (revised version of the Viola Concerto), Friedman, Glière, Jacob, Kernis, Lazarof, Müller-Siemens, Ott, Penderecki, Picker, Suter, and Tower and has been featured on CBS's *Sunday Morning*, *A Prairie Home Companion*, and in *Strad*, *Strings*, and *People* magazines. A two-time Grammy nominee, he has recorded on numerous labels including Decca, Deutsche Grammophon, RCA Red Seal, and Sony Classical. Mr. Neubauer is the artistic director of the Mostly Music series in New Jersey and is on the faculty of The Juilliard School and Mannes College.



Alsarah talking to students at Durham School of the Arts.

In addition to performing this weekend, the ensemble members will be participating in two virtual October residency engagements: a visit with the Duke Wind Symphony and Symphony Orchestra, and a violin master class, led by Arnaud Sussmann, for students in Duke's Department of Music.

Last season, **Duke Performances** held over 100 residency events with visiting artists, reaching over 2,000 Duke students and 2,000 members of the Durham community through class visits, public conversations, master classes, workshops, and pop-up concerts, as well as K-12 engagement with Durham Public Schools.

We bring diverse and virtuosic artists to classrooms and public forums in ways that enrich our vibrant campus and community and foster conversation around the themes, traditions, and perspectives embodied in the work of these visiting artists.

Your contribution to Duke Performances ensures that we can continue to make these meaningful and memorable opportunities available at no cost to the community.

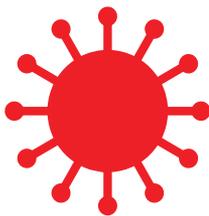
Thank you for your support.

For a list of our donors, or to give a gift to Duke Performances, visit www.supportdukeperformances.org





**DON'T WORRY,
WE'LL HOLD
HANDS AGAIN.**



**RESIST
COVID**
A SOCIAL STUDIES 101 PROJECT
TAKE 6!
RESISTCOVIDTAKE6.ORG

THE SHOW
MUST GO
ONLINE!



CUARTETO CASALS

SAT, NOV 7



CHRISTINA & MICHELLE NAUGHTON, DUO PIANO

SAT, DEC 5

TICKETS ON SALE NOW! | [DUKEPERFORMANCES.ORG](https://www.dukeperformances.org)

DUKE PERFORMANCES