

July 16, 2026

7:30 P.M.

George Gershwin

Lullaby

Mary Ellen Briga, violin
Barbara Vaughan, violin
Lu Friedman, viola
Fran Bard, cello

Anton Arensky

Piano trio in D minor, op. 32

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Scherzo: Allegro molto
- III. Elegia: Adagio
- IV. Finale: Allegro non troppo

Barbara Vaughan, violin
Fran Bard, cello
Andrew King, piano

INTERMISSION

Antonín Dvořák

Piano quintet in A major, op. 81

Allegro, ma non tanto
Dumka: Andante con moto
Scherzo (Furiant): Molto vivace
Finale: Allegro

Barbara Vaughan, violin
Mary Ellen Briga, violin
Lu Friedman, viola
Fran Bard, cello
Andrew King, piano

PROGRAM NOTES

Lullaby (1919)

George Gershwin (1898–1937)

No composer of the twentieth century (at least until Leonard Bernstein) would demonstrate as wide a range of styles, genres, and audiences as George Gershwin. He began as a song plugger in Tin Pan Alley. (In 1916, still a teenager, he earned fifty cents for his first published song.) His first national success, the song “Swanee,” was picked up by Al Jolson in 1919. Thereafter, his reputation as a melodist for popular songs grew with a variety of lyricists, until his enduring collaborations with his brother Ira, resulting in successful Broadway musicals and hit songs that comprise what is now known as the “Gershwin songbook.”

Gershwin traveled to Paris, hoping to study composition under Nadia Boulanger or Maurice Ravel. Both declined, concerned that their classical styles would erase the freshness of his American jazz and blues music, with Ravel explaining: “Why do you want to be a second-rate Ravel? You’re a first-rate Gershwin.” The compliment was not fatuous, as anyone can attest who has heard Ravel’s skillful blending of Basque folk music, jazz tonalities and rhythms, and classical orchestration in his 1931 *Piano Concerto in G Major*.

Nonetheless, Gershwin continued to explore the blending of classical and jazz idioms, composing the orchestral suite *An American in Paris* before returning to the US. Its 1928 premiere in Carnegie Hall met with mixed reviews, but it has become established in orchestral repertoires. Another orchestral favorite is *Rhapsody in Blue* (1924).

Despite the success of such orchestral works, music, song, and drama may be Gershwin’s most significant contributions to twentieth-century music. He composed the scores for 14 musicals, including *Of Thee I Sing* (1931), the first musical to win the Pulitzer Prize for drama. His first opera, the one act *Blue Monday* (1922), was premiered on Broadway. The more ambitious opera *Porgy and Bess* (1935) was not an initial success but in subsequent years became a staple of opera houses.

Tonight’s *Lullaby*, although first composed as a chamber piece for Gershwin’s friends, eventually became the melody for one of the arias of *Blue Monday*. The melody would be heard only in rare revivals of that opera until 1967, when the original string quartet was performed publicly for the first time by the Juilliard String Quartet.

Jesse Rothwell describes the single-movement piece thus: “A unison ‘tuning’ note begins the work, followed by high gestures in the violin. The cello then carries the main melody, a tranquil yet swinging tune. In the central section the mood shifts, becoming more inquisitive. Soon the music winds back down and begins the comfortable, bluesy main melody again. At the close, the violins take the melody up into high harmonics and *Lullaby* concludes with a short tremolo, a sigh on the cello, and a unison pizzicato ‘plup.’”

Piano trio in D minor, op. 32

Anton Arensky (1861–1906)

That Arensky has been unjustly ignored, if not nearly forgotten, may be traced back as far as his teacher Rimsky-Korsakoff, who wrote disparagingly that “In his youth, Arensky did not escape some influence from me; later, the influence came from Tchaikovsky. He will quickly be forgotten.” (Thanks for your encouragement, Teach!) However, tonight you are going to hear not the echos of Arensky’s teachers but foreshadowings of his students, among them Rachmaninoff, Scriabin, and Glie`re.

Born into a musical family, Arensky was already composing by the age of nine. He studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, from which he graduated in 1882 with a gold medal. He spent over a decade teaching at the Moscow Conservatory before returning to St. Petersburg and the position of director of the Imperial Chapel Choir, for which he had been recommended by Balakirev. Retiring with a pension in 1901, he continued conducting, performing, and composing until his death at the age of 44.

The *Piano Trio in D Minor*, composed in 1894, has four movements. The first, *Allegro moderato*, is gentle and lyrical, ending with a coda (*adagio*). The second, *Scherzo (Allegro molto)* is lively, with a waltz-like middle section. The third, *Elegia (Adagio)* in a minor key is brooding and meditative. The finale (*Allegro non troppo*) begins with an explosion of sound, eventually recapitulating themes from the first and third movements before summarizing its own themes. Dedicated to the memory of the cellist Karl Davydov, the warmth of the friendship between these two friends is prominent throughout this rich work.

Piano quintet in A major, op. 81

Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904)

Dvořák is among Americans’ most beloved European orchestral composers. Born in the Czech region of the Austrian empire, Bohemian by ethnicity and culture, Dvořák came to the United States in 1892, hired as the director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York City. His mission was to discover an American music and adapt it for his compositions, much as he had done with Bohemian music. He identified indigenous and African American themes as the foundation for a national music and was introduced to Negro Spirituals by Harry Burleigh, one of the first Black American composers. He distilled the essence of these musical traditions in his most famous piece, *Symphony No. 9* (“From the New World”), which the New York Symphony Orchestra commissioned in 1893.

His arrival to this North American eminence came by a circuitous route. His talent was recognized in childhood, and he received a robust music education in Prague. His Bohemian ethnicity, however, was met with hostility by the German-dominated musical world, despite his own enthusiasm for the music of Richard Wagner and the robust support of Johannes Brahms.

Dvořák composed two quintets for piano and string quartet, both in A Ma-

jor. He was dissatisfied with the first, op. 5 (1872), and either thoroughly revised it or started from scratch to produce the second, op. 81 (1887), giving us what J. Anthony McAlister has called, “easily one of the finest examples of late Romantic chamber music.” The quintet is comprised of four movements: Allegro, ma non canto (a lyrical section); the Dumka, Andante con moto (alternating melancholy with energetic joy); Scherzo (Furiant, a quick Bohemian folk dance), Molto vivace; and the Allegro finale (moving from a fugue to a chorale, and then to an accelerating dance). Notes by Thomas Long, Jr.



Now Duplicating High Security Automotive Keys!



a FAMILY TRADITION since 1954

1527 Storrs Rd. MansfieldSupply.com 860-429-2990

Quality • Lumber
O.L. Willard Co.
Since 1927
Hardware • Paint

172 - 196 Valley Street
Willimantic, CT 06226
860-423-1666
www.willardslumber.com

July 23, 2026

7:30 P.M.

Olivier Messiaen

Quatour pour la fin du Temps

III. *Abîme des oiseaux* (Abyss of the birds)

Chris Howard, clarinet

Edvard Grieg

Haugtussa, op. 67

1. Det Syng (The enticement)
2. Veslemøy (Young maiden)
3. Blåbærli (Blueberry slope)
4. Møte (Meeting)
5. Elsk (Love)
6. Killingsdans (Kidlings' dance)
7. Vond dag (Hurtful day)
8. Ved Gjætle-Bekken (At the brook)

Julie Reumert, soprano

Andrew King, piano

{Song texts and translations will be available at the concert}

INTERMISSION

Ludwig van Beethoven

String trio in G major, op. 9, no. 1

Adagio – Allegro con brio

Adagio, ma not tanto, e cantabile

Scherzo

Presto

Michael Eby, violin

Arthur Masi, viola

Jacob Nordlinger, cello

Be'la Bartók

Contrasts, Sz. 111

I. Verbunkos: Moderato, ben ritmato

II. Pihenő: Lento

III. Sebes: Allegro vivace

Lu Friedman, violin

Chris Howard, clarinet

Andrew King, piano

PROGRAM NOTES

Ab'ime des oiseaux (1940)

Olivier Messiaen (1908–92)

As a composer, Olivier Messiaen is impossible to categorize. There is Messiaen the serialist (whose Modernist *concordia discors* you will hear at some moments in the piece). Messiaen the syncretist (drawing from the sounds and cadences of Greek and Hindu rhythms, and tones of Javanese gamelan). Messiaen the ornithologist (who employed notes of birdsong in some of his compositions, as we will hear tonight, and whom music critic Paul Griffith described as a more skilled ornithologist than any composer and a more acute musical observer of birdsong than any ornithologist). Messiaen the synesthesiast (seeing colors when hearing or imaging musical notes). Messiaen the Roman Catholic mystic (part of a post-World War II revival of Catholicism in France).

Ab'ime des oiseaux (Abyss of the birds) is the third movement of an eight-movement chamber work, *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* (Quartet for the End of Time), initially composed in 1940 while Messiaen was a prisoner of war. The work was premiered at Stalag VIIIA in Goerlitz near the Polish border in January 1941. Scored for clarinet, violin, cello, and piano—instruments available to musicians in the prison camp—the piece takes its inspiration from the Bible's final Book of Revelation.

Of its third movement, Messiaen wrote: “The abyss is Time with its sadness, its weariness. The birds are the opposite to Time; they are our desire for light, for stars, for rainbows, and for jubilant songs.” The movement is scored for solo clarinet, demanding dramatic shifts in dynamics (*pianississimo* to *fortississimo* holding a single note while staying on pitch) and employing the full scale range of the instrument. While some passages are languorous, others imitate bird song arpeggios of sixteenth notes.

Haugtussa, op. 67

Edvard Grieg (1843–1907)

Although Grieg composed nearly two-hundred songs, he completed only one song cycle, consisting of eight songs adapted from poems in *Haugtussa* (1895), a novel in verse by Arne Garborg that inspired Grieg to compose some of his very best songs near the end of his life. Its central character is Veslemøy, a young shepherdess hired to look after cows, sheep, and goats in mountain pastures of western Norway.

The text of the second song (“Young maiden”) in the cycle is a portrait of her, and those that follow for songs 3–8 relate a straightforward tale of disappointment in love. “Blueberry slope” sets the scene, as Veslemøy considers how she'd handle threats to her flock from predators. Her employer's handsome son arrives (“Meeting”) to review her duties and, sheltering from a storm, they spend the night together. In high spirits, she plays with her flock (“Kidlings dance”) and delights in his promise to return on Sunday (“Love”).

When he doesn't show up ("Hurtful day"), she's left to seek consolation in nature ("At the brook").

Grieg's songs are glittering gems, but Garborg's tale itself is rather dark. Veslemøy is clairvoyant, able to hear, sense and foresee what ordinary people cannot, which brings her a lot of grief. She is shunned by neighbors as an alien "haugtussa": a 'hill-troll girl,' or 'hill sprite.' The strange text of the first song in the cycle, sometimes interpreted as a dream of life with her beloved, is in the novel the enticement of a troll: come live with me and be my love.

In choosing poems by Arne Garborg, Grieg was making a statement about cultural politics. Norway was not independent of Denmark until the early nineteenth century, during which time Danish was the official language. It took another century for Norway to settle upon two official languages, and Garborg had championed Nynorsk ("New Norwegian"). Not until 2023 would a Nynorsk writer, Jon Fosse, win the Nobel Prize for Literature. According to Garborg, "To love a person is to learn the song that is in their heart and to sing it to them when they have forgotten." More than a sentimental statement, this expresses a hard-won national identity.

String trio in G major, op. 9, no. 1 Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

For most of us, the visual image of Beethoven is Joseph Karl Stiehler's 1820 painting "Beethoven with the Manuscript of the Missa Solemnis," described by Alessandra Comini as including "all the elements dear to future myth-makers . . . [the] genius inspired by inner voices in the presence of nature, with leonine hair writhing wildly in symbolic parallel to the seething turbulence of creativity." It depicts the tortured Romantic artist at the age of fifty, just a few years before his death, an image of the suffering artist that has captured the public's imagination.

As a young man, he could not have matched this image, but tonight's string trio, written when he was only 23, is a precocious work employing what he had learned from the great Austrian Classical tradition while at the same time giving us, in its energy and passion, what we would come to admire in the emergence of his mature musical romanticism. Its composition preceded more conventional apprenticeship work in the form of string quartets and piano concertos.

This G major piece is first of three comprising op. 9, and "Any suggestion that Beethoven before the age of 30 was no match for Mozart of the same vintage is defeated by the splendor of this work. It is at the same time taut and spacious, lyric and dazzling, spontaneous and brilliantly organized, instrumentally demanding and harmonically advanced." (Orrin Howard)

This trio is in four movements. As Howard has observed: "The slow introduction begins with a grand, curtain-parting gesture that has the three strings loudly proclaiming unison togetherness, after which an air of quiet theatrical expectancy prevails until the movement proper is reached, and reached with

utmost subtlety. The wonderful slow movement, with its pastoral theme in the distant key of E major and its frequent, dramatically colored shifts to minor, is like a preview of the world of Schubert, that Schubert who was born at about the time this work was being written. The breadth of expressiveness, defined both by richness of sonority and harmony, is remarkable, particularly in light of the movement's simplicity of form. A proper contrast to the Adagio's glow comes with the buoyancy of the Scherzo third movement, and then even more vitally with the strenuous vigors of the throw-caution-to-the-winds finale."

Contrasts, Sz. 111

Be'la Bartók (1881–1945)

Bartók's compositions reflect commitments to Modernism (with its recondite harmonies) and Hungarian nationalism. A remarkable ethnomusicologist, he sought out his own homeland's folk melodies as well as those in neighboring Balkan states. Between the wars, this isolated region was fertile ground for ethnographers and ethnomusicologists equipped with phonograph recording devices. Among these were Milman Parry and Albert Lord of Harvard, whose recordings of live performances of epic singers changed scholars' understanding of the oral composition of classic epic narratives, like *Gilgamesh*, the Homeric epics, and *Beowulf*. (Bartók would later transcribe the music that Parry had recorded.) Like his friend Zolta'n Koda'ly, Bartók adapted the folk music that he had recorded in his travels.

Contrasts, which was suggested by violinist Joseph Szigeti and commissioned by jazz clarinetist Benny Goodman in 1938, incorporates Romanian and Hungarian dance melodies, but does so in ways clearly indebted to Modernist aesthetics. The contrasts of the title include not only those between the three movements (particularly their tempos) but also among the trio of instruments at any one time.

Its three movements are: Verbunkos (Recruiting Dance); Pihenő (Relaxation); Sebes (Fast Dance). The first movement begins with the violin's pizzicato, the clarinet following with the main theme. This section draws on Hungarian music commonly played at military recruitment assemblies. The second movement is introspective and has a continuously shifting mood without a defined theme. The third is a passionate dance that begins with a violin passage, followed by the clarinet's main theme. The violinist must retune two strings for this last movement. Rather than retuning mid-performance, violinists often keep a second instrument for the beginning of the movement, switching back after the opening. In the final movement's first measures with violin, you may be startled, wondering if someone accidentally slipped in the first page of Saint-Saëns's *La Danse Macabre*.

Notes by Thomas Long, Jr.

July 30, 2026

7:30 P.M.

Gerardo Tamez

Aires de son

- I. Aire istmeño
- II. Quedo
- III. Son trunko

Emilio Garcia, guitar

William Grant Still

Lyric quartette: musical portraits of three friends

- I. The sentimental one
- II. The quiet one
- III. The jovial one

Mary Ellen Briga and Barbara Vaughan, violins

Arthur Masi, viola

Jacob Nordlinger, cello

Wolfgang Mozart

Horn quintet in E^b major, K. 407

Allegro

Andante

Rondo: Allegro

Mary Ellen Briga, violin

Laurel Thurman and Barbara Vaughan, violas

Fran Bard, cello

David Vaughan, horn

INTERMISSION

Niccolo' Paganini

Sonata concertata in A major, MS 2

- I. Allegro spiritoso
- II. Adagio assai, espressivo
- III. Allegretto con brio, scherzando

Mary Ellen Briga, violin

Emilio Garcia, guitar

Luigi Boccherini

Guitar quintet in D major, G. 448

Allegro maestoso

Pastorale

Grave assai

Fandango

Barbara Vaughan and Mary Ellen Briga, violins

Arthur Masi, viola

Jacob Nordlinger, cello

Emilio Garcia, guitar

PROGRAM NOTES

Aires de son (2002)

Gerardo Tamez (b. 1948)

Born in Chicago, Tamez is a Mexican guitarist, composer, arranger, and teacher. He was a founding member of Los Folkloristas, and director of the Mexico City Guitar Trio (Terceto de Guitarras de la Ciudad de México) and the Tierra Mestiza Ensemble, both of which he also founded.

Although many North Americans may associate the guitar with popular musical forms like rock and roll, jazz, or folk music, the instrument and its predecessors have a long pedigree in chamber music. The guitar belongs to the family of chordophones. Its origins appear to be in the medieval Islamic world (its name derived from the Andalusian Arabic word, *qithārah*), and its relatives include the oud, the lute, the mandolin, and the vihuela. Its acoustical properties have traditionally made it a chamber instrument. However, plucked instruments performing in concertos (including mandolin and harp) with orchestra emerged in the Baroque period. Music for guitar and symphony orchestra came into its own in the twentieth century, with compositions by Malcolm Arnold, Elmer Bernstein, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Alan Hovhaness, Heitor Villa-Lobos, and most famously Joaquín Rodrigo in his *Concierto de Aranjuez*.

Tamez's compositions explore fusions of folkloric Mexican and Spanish Baroque music. According to musicologist Graham Wade: "*Son*, a generic term for categories of Mexican folk music and dance, varies in its precise meaning from region to region in style and content. *Aires de Son* (1977) is a three-movement suite with evocative atmospheres of the music of southern Mexico. *Aire Istmeño* refers to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, while the second movement, *Quedo*, takes its inspiration from Oaxaca, in southwest Mexico on the Pacific coast. *Son trunco* is an energetic indigenous dance."

Lyric quartette (1960)

William Grant Still (1895–1978)

Deservedly, Still has long been known as the Dean of African-American Composers. His "firsts" are noteworthy: first African American to conduct a major American symphony orchestra, to conduct a major symphony orchestra in the Deep South, to conduct a major American radio orchestra (there was a time when radio and TV networks had their own orchestras), and to have an opera produced by a major American company. His composing was prolific: Nine operas, five symphonies, four ballets, and more than thirty choral works.

He composed art songs, solo instrumental works, and chamber music (as we will hear tonight). He performed with some of the most significant jazz artists and arranged scores for Hollywood films.

His family and teachers recognized his talent early on, and he was fortunate to have patrons who funded his musical education. He studied at Wilberforce and Oberlin, and eventually was tutored by the French composer Edgar

Varese. In the 1930s, Still was awarded three Guggenheim fellowships for composition.

Tonight's quartet has had two other names in addition to the one by which it is best known: *Musical Portraits of Three Friends* and *Impressions*. Even its three sections have been assigned different titles. Conventionally they are known as *The Sentimental One*, *The Quiet One*, and *The Jovial One*. Alternatively, however, Still labeled them *On a Plantation*, *In the Mountains of Peru*, and *In a Pioneer Settlement*. He routinely identified the second movement as inspired by a Peruvian tune.

Horn quintet in E^b major, K. 407

Wolfgang Mozart (1756–91)

Mozart needs no introduction, of course, but the contexts of this quintet are interestingly complicated. He composed it in 1782 for his friend Joseph Leutgeb, and it is one of two ensemble chamber pieces he is known to written for horn, the other being a quintet for piano and winds, K. 452. The paradigmatic score was published in 1883, although the autograph manuscript has subsequently been lost. A solo piece that he composed for Leutgeb is also not extant, known only from an obscure reference in a letter from Mozart's father. (The recent discovery in Paris of a music notebook in Mozarts hand from his early twenties gives us hope that retrieving these lost scores may still be possible.) The quintet was composed after his marriage and around the same time as the composition of the comic opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, which may account for the quintet's ebullient mood.

In addition to the horn and violin, the quintet calls for cello and two violas, giving the piece a richer, deeper sound. It has three movements (most of the string quartets from Mozart's Vienna period had four movements), resembling a concerto. The first, *Allegro*, begins immediately with the horn joined by the strings. In the second, *Andante*, the horn enters a few measures after the strings, and one hears in it the tender lyricism of Mozart's operatic duos and trios. Finally, the *Rondo allegro*, in which the virtuosity required is all the more remarkable when we realize that in Leutgeb's time, the horn had no valves.

Sonata concertata in A major, MS 2

Niccolò Paganini (1782–1840)

In equal measures famous and infamous, Paganini exemplifies the Romantic artist: virtuosic and dissolute. His violin performance technique and extravagant showmanship made him famous in his own time and beyond. As music critic Nate Chinen has observed, "Paganini was dubiously described in his time as a sorcerer, a charlatan, even a demon; he was said to have struck a deal with the devil. Today he's remembered by a juicy sobriquet, 'The Devils Violinist.'" He was famous in mid-twentieth century popular culture, with his memory celebrated in Ella Fitzgerald's hit song, "(If You Can't Sing It) You'll Have to Swing It (Mr. Paganini)," which includes the rhyme, "Mr. Paganini, now don't you be a meanie." A master of both the violin and the guitar, Pa-

ganini raised the status of the guitar from an accompanying instrument to a dialogue partner with other instruments.

Tonight's piece is in three movements: First, *Allegro spiritoso*, the largest movement, characterized by lively dialogue sections and a surprising modulation before returning to the home key. Second, *Adagio, assai espressivo*, lyrical and expressive, providing a calm contrast to the first and third movements. Finally, *Rondeau: Allegro con brio, scherzando*, a playful conclusion allowing both instruments to shine with shared virtuosic vitality.

Guitar quintet in D major, G. 448

Luigi Boccherini (1742–1805)

Prodigious and inventive, Boccherini composed 91 string quartets, 137 quintets (mostly for two-cello ensembles), 30 symphonies, at least 10 concertos, and countless other trios, sonatas, cantatas, masses, piano works, and occasional pieces. Although influenced by the music of Haydn, his compositions were often less formal and more spontaneous, at times even popular and folkloric.

For this piece, Boccherini adapted the three movements of his String Quintet G.270 and String Quintet G.341. As musicologist Timothy Summers has explained: "This guitar quintet, cobbled together from two earlier cello quintets, was commissioned by the Marquis de Benavent for his own private use at chamber-music events in Madrid. That 'Fandango' is related to Flamenco and Spanish dance-styles should be amply evident by the end of the piece."

The opening *Allegro maestoso* is by turns robust and elegant. The *Pastorale* is bucolic and serene, reminiscent of other pastorales in Baroque musical literature. The two-part finale begins solemnly (*Grave*) before moving to the *Fandango* in an incandescent representation of the Flamenco music of the Spanish Roma people.

Notes by Thomas Long, Jr.

Friendly Staff - Great Groceries & Wellness Products - Community Centered

We'll see you at Third Thursday in Willimantic!

Everyone is invited!
You'll love it here!

Open 8AM-8PM
7 days a week

91 Valley St. Willimantic, CT 06226
www.willimanticfood.coop
Member Owned and Operated Since 1980

WILLIMANTIC
FOOD CO-OP
INTEGRITY • COMMUNITY • HEALTH

SNAP

The Musicians

Cellist **Fran Bard** has played with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra for many years. A familiar face to Hop River audiences, she has also performed extensively as a chamber musician. Ms. Bard was responsible for the reinstatement of the Elementary String Program in the Windsor Public Schools in 1996, and in 2003 was named conductor of the Windsor High School String Orchestra. In 2012, she retired from the Windsor school system and now teaches Elementary Strings and Orchestra in the Glastonbury Public Schools. Originally from Chicago, Ms. Bard received her B.Mus. from the Chicago Musical College and her M.M. and Music Educator's Certification from The University of Connecticut. Her cello training was under the tutelage of Channing Robbins, Aldo Parisot, Raya Garbousova, Karl Fruh, and Mary Lou Rylands.

Violinist **Mary Ellen Briga** earned her B.Mus. degree from Bowling Green State University, where she served as concertmaster for its orchestra, accompanying visiting artists such as Joshua Bell, Marion McPartland and Murray Perahia; was instrumental in developing and implementing a Suzuki string program for its College of Musical Arts Creative Arts Program; and co-founded the Willard Street String Quartet, which performed a wide variety of classical concerts throughout Ohio. She received her M.Mus. degree in violin performance from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, which (like BGSU) she attended on full scholarship. Ms. Briga now performs regularly with several regional orchestras, including the Hartford and New Haven Symphony Orchestras. As a free-lance musician, she has played in venues such as the Goodspeed Opera House, Mohegan Sun and the Schubert Theater, accompanying artists ranging from Luciano Pavarotti and Doc Severinsen to the Electric Light Orchestra. She had the pleasure of joining the orchestra on tenor Andrea Bocelli's tour of North America. Sharing her love for music, Ms. Briga has participated in the Hartford Symphony Orchestra's Symphony in the Schools Program and taught in the string program for the Windsor Public Schools, where she was honored as teacher of the year in 2011. When not playing her violin, she enjoys working her horse through the levels of dressage or tending her bees.

Violinist **Michael Eby** is an orchestral and chamber musician. A member of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, he is also Principal 2nd Violin of the Berkshire Opera Festival Orchestra. He served as concertmaster for the 2016 American premiere of Vasco Mendonça's chamber opera *The House Taken Over* at National Sawdust in Brooklyn, NY, appeared as Associate Concertmaster with Festival Orchestra Napa, and was selected as a 2022 Orchestra Fellow at Spoleto Festival USA. Michael has performed as soloist with such ensembles as the North State Symphony, Shasta Symphony, and the Alba Music Festival Virtuosi, and has also toured with the Depue Brothers Band in their "Magical Grassical Christmas" production. He has had master classes in

chamber music at the Berliner Philharmonie and Chamber Music at Lincoln Center, and performed with distinguished artists, including cellist Christopher Costanza of the St. Lawrence String Quartet, violist Jodi Levitz, and violinist Chen Zhao. Michael served on the faculty of Pacific Crest Music Festival, where he presented annual lectures on string technique, and has recently joined the faculty of The Hartt School Community Division. He received his B.Mus. and M.Mus. degrees from the Manhattan School of Music, where he studied with Isaac Malkin, and is currently a D.M.A. candidate (ABD) at UConn, studying under Solomiya Ivakhiv.

Violinist **Lu Friedman** began violin studies at age seven in Beijing, China, and traveled alone to the United States at the age of twelve. She received a full scholarship to study at the Crowden School in Berkeley, California. At the age of fourteen she performed for Aaron Copland and made her solo debut with the San Francisco Symphony at age seventeen. As a chamber musician, she has performed with members of the Tokyo String Quartet. In recent years she was a member of the orchestra at the Opera House in Valencia, Spain, under the direction of Lorin Maazel. She earned her Bachelor of Music from Indiana University and has studied with the Tokyo String Quartet and the Cleveland Quartet. She currently plays with the Hartford Symphony, Springfield Symphony, and Sarasota Opera Orchestra.

Mexican-American classical guitarist **Emilio Garcia** has appeared in concert as a soloist and chamber musician. He earned his B.Mus. and M.Mus. degrees from SUNY Fredonia and, just recently, his D.M.A. in Instrumental Performance from The Hartt School, where he studied under Christopher Ladd and Peter Clemente, and is now an adjunct faculty member. In 2023 he was featured as a solo artist in the “Guitar Sessions” concert series of the Connecticut Guitar Guild (CGG) and in 2024 and 2025 as a guest artist with the Hartford-based vocal group Voce, Inc. He has performed with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra in such programs as “A New World: Final Fantasy” and “The Music of Tina Turner” (2025). Emilio has premiered new works for guitar by American composers, such as Fraser Andras, Jon Howe and Louis Steven Latham, as well as transcribing and performing obscure 20th century Mexican works as part of his research interest in the Mexican classical guitar. In April 2025 he was invited to lecture on “The Development of the Mexican Classical Guitar and its Repertoire” at the 3rd annual CGG Festival in Cromwell, and in April 2026 gave a recital of ‘under-heard’ guitar repertoire in Glastonbury for the Nick Cutroneo Guitar Studio Concert Series.

Christopher Howard performs regularly as an orchestral and chamber clarinetist across New England and is Instructor of Clarinet at Eastern Connecticut State University. He performs frequently with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra and periodically with the Vermont and Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestras. Chris spent 20 years as a clarinetist with service bands in the United

States Navy and Coast Guard, performing in more than 30 states, Canada, Japan and Taiwan, often as a concerto soloist. As a member of the U.S. Coast Guard Clarinet Quartet, Chris performed concerts at Carnegie Hall's esteemed Weill Recital Hall and appeared regularly in International Clarinet Association annual conventions. He has served as principal clarinetist of the Bremerton Symphony Orchestra in Bremerton (WA) and second and solo E-flat clarinetist with the Tallahassee Symphony in Tallahassee (FL). Chris is the owner and operator of Howard Woodwind Company, a specialty clarinet workshop based in Glastonbury. He apprenticed as a clarinet technician with Pete Rodriguez in San Antonio (TX) and has studied woodwind instrument repair with Kristin Bertrand and Mark Jacobi. He holds degrees in clarinet from The University of Texas and Florida State University, and lives in Glastonbury with his wife, Kacey, his two children, a cranky cat, and a hyperactive dog.

Pianist **Andrew King** is a soloist, chamber musician, and collaborative artist based in Connecticut. He has performed throughout the Northeast, including at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall as soloist and accompanist with soprano Julie Reumert for a capacity audience. Mr. King has played in masterclasses for world-class pianists and pedagogues, including Edna Golandsky, Ilya Itin, Paul Roberts, Yael Weiss, and Robert Wyatt. While studying in Vienna, Austria, he and violist Sean Reilly were awarded first prize in chamber music by the Institute for the International Education of Students program in 2003. Mr. King holds a B.A. in Music from Bowdoin College and, as recipient of the William S. Vincent Scholarship, an M.M. in piano performance from the Hartt School of Music. Since 2012, he has performed regularly at the St. John's Summer Music Concert Series in Williamstown, MA. In addition to performing, Mr. King is a Goldansky Institute Associate Instructor of the Taubman Approach, a transformative approach to piano playing that provides the necessary tools for musical expressiveness through coordinate motions at the keyboard. He has studied with Gerald Stofsky in Vienna, Margreet Francis and David Westfall at the Hartt School, and extensively with master Taubman teacher Robert Durso in New York. Visit andrewkingpianist.com for more information.

Violist **Arthur Masi**'s love of music and pathway to a musical career began with an old upright piano that sat in the basement of his childhood home. His father used to peck out popular songs from the 1940s and 1950s on the piano and would try to teach them to his children. Arthur's skill with the piano soon surpassed his siblings'—and his dad's—and formal lessons began in the fourth grade and continued through high school. Sensing a musical talent, his middle school orchestra director suggested Arthur pursue the viola along with the piano, and a budding violist was born. Arthur attended the Manhattan School of Music as a piano major, leaving after one year to begin serious viola study under the tutelage of the late Rosemary Glyde. He graduated from the Hartt

School of Music with a bachelor's degree in viola as a student of renowned chamber musician Scott Nickrenz. He participated in the Chautauqua Institution Music Festival for several years and the Yellow Barn Music Festival in Putney, VT. Arthur has been a member of the viola section of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra since 1980 and continues to enjoy playing in various local orchestras and ensembles. He resides in West Hartford with his spouse.

Cellist **Jacob Nordlinger** is an active performer and teacher, currently based in Connecticut and New York City. He has a passion for chamber music collaborations and won first prize in the Ruth Widder String Quartet Competition at Manhattan School of Music and the Fuchs Chamber Music Competition. He received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees—and the Hugo Kortschak Award for Outstanding Achievement in Chamber Music—from Manhattan School of Music, where he studied with David Geber and Julia Lichten. He is now pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree at UConn under the tutelage of Sophie Shao. Jacob has performed throughout New York in venues such as Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, Symphony Space, The National Arts Club, and United Nations Headquarters. In February 2017, he joined the faculty of the VerArte String Academy in Arequipa, Peru. He is a member of the Luminae Piano Trio, which has been honored with a Chamber Music America Ensemble Forward Grant (2023), a (New York) City Artist Corps Grant (2021), and prizes in the Lancaster Chamber Music Competition (2021) and the American Prize Competition in both Chamber Music and American Music Performance categories (2023). As part of the Luminae trio, Jacob will be releasing his first album, "American Luminaries", with MSR Classics.

Now a lyric soprano living in New York City, **Julie Reumert** was born in Denmark and began her studies very early at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen. At age 10, she sang for the Queen of Denmark on national television. After receiving her Master Degree in Voice, she was accepted as the first Danish singer at the Manhattan School of Music, graduating in 2012 with a Master of Music degree in Opera. Asked in a 2021 interview what drew her to opera, she explained, "I saw an opera with my dad when I was six years old. The soprano came out on stage and I just knew." Julie has performed widely in numerous operatic roles, such as Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel* for New York Lyric Opera, Amor in Monteverdi's *The Coronation of Poppea* at Lincoln Center, Kate Pinkerton in *Madame Butterfly* at Carnegie Hall, and Euridice in Gluck's *Orfeo and Euridice* for Fynske Opera in Denmark. She is also known, here and abroad, for lieder and other non-operatic works. Earlier this year she sang songs by Scandinavian composers with pianist Andrew King at NYC's Weill Recital Hall. Her performance with Shattered Glass for a TED Conference of the prayer from Henryk Górecki's Symphony No. 3, Mvt. 2, may be heard on YouTube. When not performing, Julie coaches young professional singers at her private studio.

Violist **Laurel Thurman** received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the University of Memphis, and was awarded a Doctor of Musical Arts in violin performance from the University of Arizona. Her research in string pedagogy has taken her to England and Japan, where she studied with Sheila Nelson and Shinichi Suzuki. Ms. Thurman has taught strings and pedagogy in public schools in Arizona and Connecticut, and at Northern Illinois University and the University of Connecticut. Active as a chamber and orchestral musician, Ms. Thurman has been a member of the Hartford, Memphis, Tucson, and Rockford (Illinois) Symphony Orchestras, the Ravinia Festival Orchestra in Chicago, and most recently the Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra.

Violinist **Barbara Vaughan** received her B.Mus. degree from the Manhattan School of Music and her M.M. from UConn. She has performed with numerous orchestras throughout the eastern United States, including the Savannah Symphony, Augusta Symphony, the Florida Festival Orchestra, the American Philharmonic Orchestra, Newport Jazz Festival, Summer Music at Harkness Park and the New Haven Symphony Orchestra. As a chamber musician, Ms. Vaughan was a regular member of the UCONN Chamber Players from 1984 to 1991, and she has performed annually with Hop River Chamber Music since 1986. She recently retired from the Mansfield Public Schools, where she directed the Suzuki string program. She still plays regularly with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, and teaches violin and viola at her home studio.

David Vaughan, horn, studied at the New England Conservatory of Music (NEC), where he was the recipient of the Francis Parson Hunt Scholarship. He has performed with the NEC Sinfonietta, where he was Principal Horn under the direction of Hugh Wolfe; with the Jordan Winds; and with the Discovery Ensemble, appearing on WGBH and in venues throughout Boston. He has been principal horn of the Connecticut All-State Orchestra, and was a winner in both the wind and vocal divisions of the Windham Regional Arts Council's Young Artist Competition. David began his horn studies with Andrew Spearman, studied with Richard Mackey at NEC, and participated in master-classes with Barry Tuckwell, William Caballero and Richard Sebring. With Hop River Chamber Music, David has performed Mozart's quintet for horn and strings, Brahms' horn trio, and Schubert's octet.