



VIRTUAL
CONCERT
HALLS



Laureate Gala

Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall



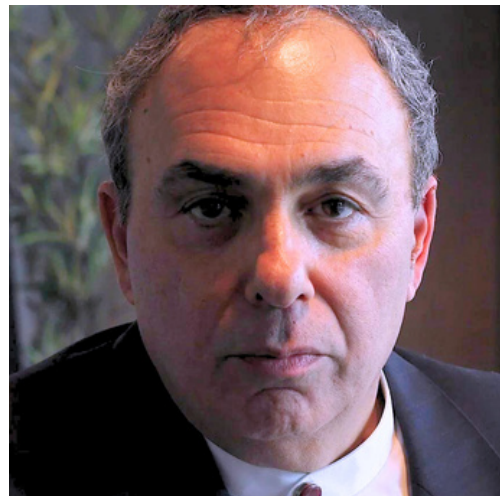
June 28, 2025 @ 1pm



James Welch
Sound Espressivo



Anna Ouspenskaya
*Sound Espressivo &
Virtual Concert Halls*



Jack Price
Price Attractions

Welcome to our 10th Laureate Gala hosted by Sound Espressivo, Virtual Concert Halls, & Price Attractions. Today's program will feature musicians from numerous countries who have won our 2023-2024 Laureate's Auditions.

Our mission is to help musicians of all ages achieve their goals by advancing artistically through innovative formats of online competitions. Since 2020, we have been hosting online and Internet TV events that provide musicians with a live virtual platform to reach out to world-wide audiences, receive expert feedback from professional musicians, share their artistic views, new albums, and to compete for prizes ranging from our Internet TV showcases, to the most prestigious performance venues around the world. We believe that it is important to recognize all the instruction and support that goes into the development of a musician. We also recognize the value of experience and progress. Progress does not always happen at a consistent rate, it may be quicker at one stage, and slower at another. Aspirations also vary at different stages of life, and from person to person. As one steps out of their comfort zone, it takes courage to share one's art for humanity.

Music is an artistic vehicle that brings together storytelling, math, history, art, imagery. Most significantly, it provides an environment and a language for deeply emotional connections. Although music is appreciated by many, art can never be perfected, providing an opportunity for eternal evolution and enjoyment. Music illuminates the gifts of many cultures, our world's biggest historical events, and continues to inspire stories, movies, dance, and enhance social gatherings. Some key ingredients to strong musical training include engaging highly qualified instructors, supportive family and community of friends and fans. It also demands a disciplined practice routine, collaborations with other artists, and many opportunities to perform on various stages and venues. There are endless musical possibilities and unique artistic voices being discovered.

We are thrilled to be working with an amazing team of professionals that continue educating, encouraging, and rewarding musicians of all ages and stages of their careers. Today we are honored to have pianist James Adler from AdlerOaks Music offer the James Adler Audience Favorite Award for a selected pianist or composer.

It would be impossible for us to continue these types of events without the dedication and support of all our families and everyone who contributed!

THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING! Enjoy the Gala!

**Sound Espressivo
Virtual Concert Halls &
Price Attractions**

proudly presents its

10th

Laureate Gala

***Weill Recital Hall at
Carnegie Hall***

June 28, 2025, 1pm

Featuring

***Our Selected Laureates
The New York Chamber Players***

Program
June 28, 2025, 1:00pm
Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall

Opening Remarks

Ach ich fühl's, *from Die Zauberflöte* Mozart
Emily Greene, soprano
Jennifer Savage, piano

Roman Sketches, Op. 7 Griffes
III. The Fountain of Acqua Paola
Elaine Sara Lim, piano

I'm Your Man Mitski
Birds of a Feather Eilish
Gregory C. Brown, guitar
Vee Brown, mezzo-soprano

Rhapsodie espagnole, S. 254, R. 90 Liszt
Jennifer Savage, piano

PAUSE

The New York Chamber Players
Giacomo Franci, Maestro

Casta Diva, *from Norma* Bellini
Fantaisie Brillante sur Carmen Borne-Duda
Sara Mahn, flute

Concerto in A minor Grieg
I. Allegro molto moderato
Lucas Yang, piano

La Lacrima

*Nohl

Piano Concerto No. 1

Shostakovich

I. Allegro Moderato

II. Lento

III. Moderato

Kaiwei Zhi, piano

Christopher Scanlon, trumpet

Da Tempeste, *from Julius Caesar*

Handel

Vissi d'arte, *from Tosca*

Puccini

Laura Ansaldi, soprano

Danse Macabre

Saint-Säens

Carolina Rodriguez, conductor

Program Notes

La Lacrima

For Orchestra

Music by Katharina Nohl

La Lacrima – the tear I wrote during the final days of my father's passing. It was during the Corona pandemic and lock down. I was unable to visit him hence the telephone was our communication. He enjoyed the music, and it calmed him down. I couldn't hope for more. Since, 4 years have passed and after a revision it will now come on stage, not in Germany but here in New York. Sadness and joy can oddly intertwine. Happy, sad and all in between....to our ancestors!

The New York Chamber Players



Violin I

Francisco Salazar (Concertmaster)
Romulo Benavides
Samuel Gray
Susan Mitchell

Violin II

Yuyu Ikeda (Principal)
Sara Koenig-Plonskier
Svetla Kalcheva

Viola

Kerrick Sasaki (Principal)
Nick Pauli

French Horn

Juvenal Santiago
John Morgan Bush

Piano

Jennifer Savage

Cello

Jim Pedersen (Principal)
Jennifer Shaw

Bass

Stefano Battaglia

Flute

Philippe Delage

Oboe

Michael Witsberger

Clarinet

Fred Rosenberg

Bassoon

Devin de Mauro

Librarian

Luis Clavijo

Giacomo Franci, maestro

The Host



Steve Robinson

Steve Robinson is an American radio manager, producer and executive producer. He has held senior management positions with numerous American radio stations, including WFMT and the WFMT Radio Network/Chicago, WBUR/Boston, WGBH/Boston, WCRB/Boston, KPFA/Berkeley, WBGO/Newark, Vermont Public Radio and Nebraska Public Radio Network. Robinson served as general manager of the statewide Nebraska Public Radio Network (1990-2000) and WFMT and the WFMT Radio Network from 2000 until October 2016. A 50-year radio veteran, he has produced programs ranging from classical music documentaries to public affairs programs and has directed over 100 on-air pledge drives.

In 1984, he co-founded AIR, the Association of Independents in Radio, a service organization to assist independent radio producers in the United States. Robinson wrote AIR's first two successful grants from the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. Throughout his career, Robinson has produced dozens of radio programs that have been heard throughout the world, including live broadcasts from Salzburg, Austria (on the occasion of Mozart's 250th birthday); Durbin, South Africa (for the world premiere for the opera, "Princess Magogo"); Quebec City, Canada (for a live broadcast of Mahler's Symphony of a Thousand with 1000 performers); Jerusalem, Israel (for a broadcast from the Jerusalem International Chamber Music Festival); and has produced numerous live broadcasts from Chicago and throughout the U.S. He has worked with William Schuman, Elliott Carter, Charles Dodge, Roger Reynolds, Alan Hovhaness and other composers on programs about their music. In 2003, he created the daily classical music appreciation radio program, Exploring Music with Bill McGlaughlin. The series is carried by state networks throughout the world including Australia and China. At the WFMT Radio Network he created the first classical music radio exchange between the United States and China.

In 2000, Robinson became the general manager of WFMT and the WFMT Radio Network. Founded in 1951, WFMT is considered as one of the most admired classical music stations in the U.S. and under his leadership many new programs were added to the local schedule, including Introductions, Impromptu and others. Robinson worked on diversifying the programs of WFMT by expanding the amount of live broadcasting from the station.

One of his most important initiatives at the WFMT Radio Network was the creation of Exploring Music with Bill McGlaughlin, in 2003. This daily, one-hour music appreciation program is heard on over 60 U.S. stations and has a weekly audience of over 400,000 unique listeners. The program is also heard in Australia, Guam, the Philippines and in Beijing. Initial funding for Exploring Music was provided by the National Endowment for the Arts with additional funding from individuals and foundations. The station under his leadership focused on live music by broadcasting a wide array of local Chicago groups and ensembles. In 2007, the Chicago Tribune named him "Chicagooan of the Year" in the arts.

In 2015, he executed a cross-cultural broadcast relationship between America and China by exporting to China for the first time broadcasting concerts by the NY Philharmonic, LA Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Dallas Symphony, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall. He also arranged for concerts from the Shanghai Spring International Music Festival and the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra to be exported to the West with broadcasts in the U.S., Canada and Europe.

In 2004 and again in 2010, Robinson created and produced two, live, 17-hour fundraising campaigns involving all Chicago radio and TV stations to aid victims of the tsunami in the southeast and the earthquake in Haiti. Each campaign raised over \$3 million. Robinson received two Wesbury Awards from the American Red Cross of Greater Chicago for the fundraising campaigns. In 2008, Robinson and Bill McGlaughlin received the Dushkin Award for Exploring Music with Bill McGlaughlin from the Music Institute of Chicago. He has received local and national awards for his work in Chicago, including the Champion Award from the Merit School of Music, the ASCAP/Deems Taylor Award for creative programming and others.

The New York Chamber Players



Giacomo Franci **Maestro**

Maestro Pianist Giacomo Franci is the Artistic Director and the Conductor of The New York Chamber Players, an organization he founded in 2004. For the 2010-11 season Maestro Franci was elected Guest Maestro of Escuela de Dirección de Orquesta in Cordoba, Spain.

Giacomo Franci is world renowned as the leading interpreter of the music of Aaron Copland. He earned this highly coveted position based on the merits of his acclaimed world premiere recording “The Complete Edited Piano Works by A. Copland”, a triple CD released by Fone’ Classics. Maestro Franci performed at Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center, for the centennial of Copland’s birthday in February 2000, receiving rave reviews for his performance.

In December 2010 his World Premiere Recording “Igor Stravinsky: The Complete Published Piano Works” was released by Fone’ Classics. The double CD recording was praised by Audio Review Magazine as “...the Great Igor Stravinsky in the outstanding performance by Giacomo Franci”.

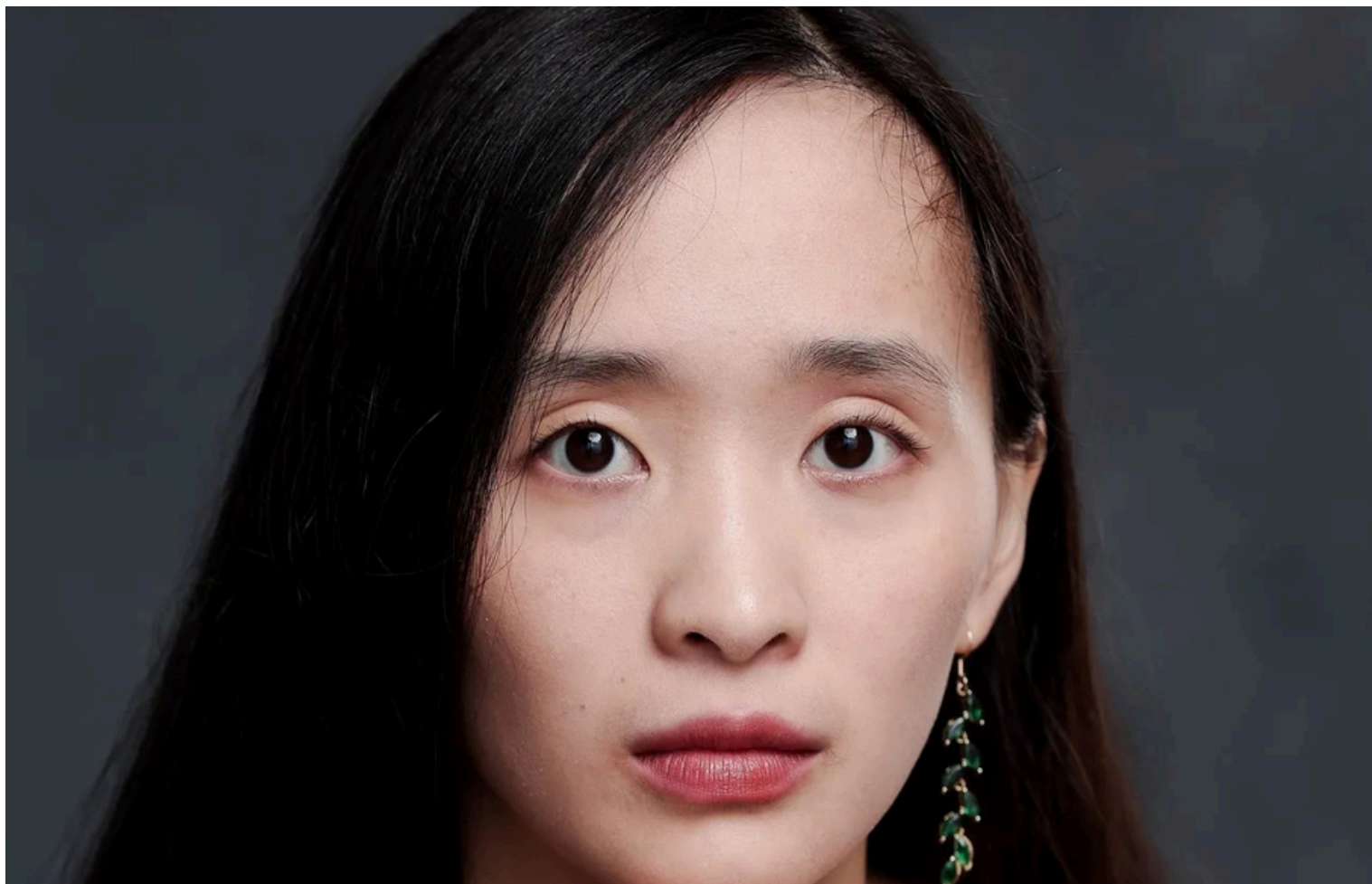
In the year 2016 he started the Recordings of The Complete Piano Sonatas by Beethoven on Sheva Collection Record Company, this year(2020) he has in program the 3rd CD Recording.

In 1998 Franci debuted at the Carnegie Recital Hall and the Italian Music Magazine “Musica” compared him to Glenn Gould and Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli. Mr. Franci hails from Tuscany and now resides in New York City. When not performing he works at The Tribeca Music Studio, a teaching studio for aspiring pianists and singers.

Franci started his Concert Career in Italy with appearances at Teatro Comunale “Guglielmi”, Teatro San Filippo di Torino, Circolo della Musica di Bologna, and Teatro Comunale di Ferrara. When Franci is not performing as a featured pianist/soloist he devotes his time to conducting his new chamber orchestra. He is very excited about the recent attention which he and the orchestra are receiving. The Chamber Orchestra had their debut at the CAMI Concert Hall in New York City in May 2004, performing the Bach Piano Concerto in D minor, and they have been in growing demand ever since. Franci, who is constantly looking to interpret new works, studied with Gaetano Gaeta and Giampiero Semeraro while earning his Bachelor’s Degree in Piano from the Boccherini Music Institute in Lucca. He was awarded his Master’s Scholarship from the Scuola di Alto Perfezionamento Musicale in Saluzzo, studying with Jean Fassinat and the famed Aldo Ciccolini. He also studied conducting with Piero Bellugi and Gustav Kuhn at Teatro Comunale di Pisa. Over the last few seasons Franci has been a featured soloist for engagements throughout the USA, Italy, England, Finland, France, Bulgaria, Chile, Turkey, China, Hungary. He is a returning soloist with : Philharmonic Orchestra of Veneto, Orchestra Sinfonica di Grosseto(where he has been featured as Soloist/Conductor), La Grande Ronde Symphony Orchestra, ISO Symphony, Turkey State Symphony in Istanbul, Richmond County Orchestra, New York Chamber Players, Orchestra da Camera Fiorentina, Bacau Philharmonic Orchestra, Ensemble Orchestral de Bordeaux and The Beijing Symphony Orchestra(where he has been featured as Soloist/Conductor). Since the year 2004 when he founded his Orchestra in New York, he has conducted many great Orchestras such as :The Shanghai Baroque Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra Sinfonica di Grosseto, Beijing Symphony Orchestra, New York Chamber Players , Concepcion Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra dei Pomeriggi Musicali di Milano, Orchestra Modigliani, Boston Chamber Orchestra in Tanglewood and Richmond County Orchestra . Very recently he has been featured in 2 Radio Programs by David Dubal: “Piano Matters” on WWFM Radio and “Reflections from the Keyboard” on WQXR. For some of you that might not know , these radio programs feature the most legendary pianists of today and of all times . He has also appeared on radio and television shows carried by New York One, ABC, WPIX, Manhattan Cable, Hofstra University Radio, Blusat Radio 2000 (an hour long interview broadcast to an audience of over 2 million people) and Antenna 3. In 2008 Maestro Franci was selected to the Cambridge Who’s Who Registry which lists the most accomplished professionals in the U.S.

Collaborative Pianist

Jennifer Savage



Jennifer Savage received her Master's degree in Piano Performance from the Manhattan School of Music, where she studied with Arkady Aronov and Efrem Briskin, under the Elva van Gelder Memorial and Constance Keene Piano Scholarships. She also studied with Efrem Briskin at MSM's Precollege Division and with Dr. Anna Ouspenskaya at the Levine School of Music.

An avid performer, Jennifer has appeared as a soloist with the Virtuosi Brunensis Orchestra and has played at prestigious venues including the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, Merkin Hall at the Kauffman Center, and the historic Palazzo dei Priori in Perugia, Italy. Other notable performance locations include the DiCapo Opera Theater in New York and the Kimmel Center in Philadelphia.

Jennifer has won numerous competitions in both solo and chamber music categories. She has performed at renowned venues such as the Embassy of Italy, Mexican Cultural Institute, the Lyceum in Alexandria, and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, as well as at the Netherlands Embassy and Alden Theater's Music Friends Concert. Jennifer has also been featured on Cable TV's A Holiday Recital and has given a lecture-concert in Wuhan, China.

Featured Trumpeter

Chris Scanlon



Chris Scanlon, D.M.A., is a highly accomplished trumpeter and educator, currently serving as Assistant Professor of Trumpet at the University of Florida. His diverse performing career spans engagements with orchestras and chamber ensembles across Europe, Asia, Canada, Mexico, the Middle East, and the United States. He has appeared at renowned venues such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Radio City Music Hall, the Kennedy Center, Vienna Musikverein, Zurich Tonhalle, and major opera houses in Dubai and Tokyo. On Broadway, he has performed in productions including *Phantom of the Opera*, *West Side Story*, and *An American in Paris*.

Since 2008, Scanlon has been Co-Principal Trumpet of the Verbier Festival Chamber Orchestra, performing internationally alongside artists such as Joshua Bell, Martha Argerich, Mischa Maisky, and Yuja Wang. He has also performed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Boston Pops, Milwaukee Symphony, Sarasota Orchestra, The Florida Orchestra, Jacksonville Symphony, Miami Symphony, New World Symphony, and many others under conductors like Seiji Ozawa, John Williams, and Simon Rattle.

As a soloist, Scanlon has performed Shostakovich's Concerto No. 1 for Piano and Trumpet with Yuja Wang, Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 2, and Copland's *Quiet City*. He is deeply committed to contemporary music, recording with the GRAMMY-winning Boston Modern Orchestra Project and premiering works by composers such as Augusta Read Thomas and Kevin Day. His 2024 album *Sojourn* with the Palisade Trumpet Collective earned a Silver Medal at the Global Music Awards.

Beyond classical music, Scanlon has collaborated with artists including Andrea Bocelli, Josh Groban, and Harry Connick Jr. An active clinician and adjudicator, his students have won prestigious positions and awards. He holds degrees from Boston University, Rice University, Manhattan School of Music, and Stony Brook University, and is a Bach Performing Artist.

2024-2025 Concert Season

11.8 *Modern Classics 1 Album Release*
11.10 *Orchestra Camera di Fiorentina*
11.11 *Orchestra Camera di Fiorentina*
11.15 *Modern Classics 2 Album Release*
11.24 *Laureate Gala - Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall*
11.26 *Price Gala - Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall*
11.27 *New Artist Series Recording Session*
11.30 *Kabalevsky Piano Concerto No. 3 Album Release*
11.30 *The Road to Zlín Album Release*
12.5 *Orquesta Filarmónica Municipal de Guayaquil (Ecuador)*
12.20 *Lviv National Philharmonic (Ukraine)*
2.17 *Laureate Gala - Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall*
2.20 *Laureate Gala - Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall*
3.8 *Paducah Symphony Orchestra*
3.9 *Paducah Symphony Orchestra*
3.29 *Boulder Symphony Orchestra*
3.30 *Boulder Symphony Orchestra*
4.30 *Price Gala - Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall*
5.1 *New Artist Series Recording Session*
6.28 *Laureate Gala - Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall*
6.30 *Laureate Gala - Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall*
07.25 *Tahoe Symphony and Chorus*
07.27 *Tahoe Symphony and Chorus*
09.13 *Paducah Symphony Orchestra*
10.11 *Paducah Symphony Orchestra*
10.23 *Orquesta Filarmónica Municipal de Guayaquil (Ecuador)*
11.15 *Paducah Symphony Orchestra*



VIRTUAL
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Ongoing Audition Calls

New Artist Series Albums

Artist Management with Price Attractions

ALBUM RELEASES



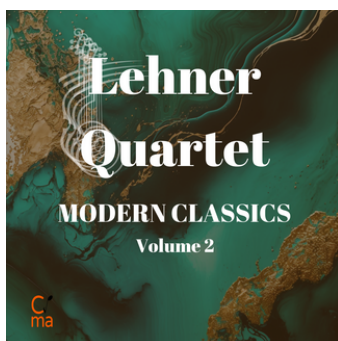
Modern Classics Vol. 1

The Lehner Quartet

String Quartets by Living Composers

Featured Composers: William Toutant, Peter Dickson Lopez, Noam Faingold, & Leopold Brauneiss

Release: November 8, 2024



Modern Classics Vol. 2

The Lehner Quartet

String Quartets by Living Composers

Featured Composers: Joel Feigin & Jana Skarecky

Release: November 15, 2024



Kabalevsky Piano Concerto No. 3

The Cairo Opera Orchestra

Pianist: Kate Lee

Maestro: Gevorg Sargsyan

Release: November 30, 2024



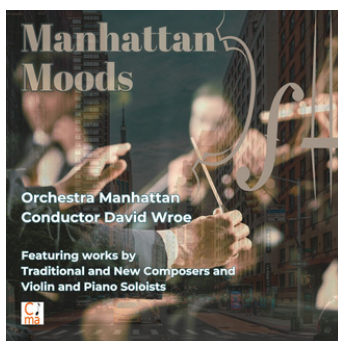
The Road to Zlin

The Bohuslav Martinů Philharmonic

Featured Artists: Jennifer Savage, piano; Gong Qian Yang, composer; Jelena Stefanic, soprano; Kevin Matheson, violin; Louise Ting, piano; Rainer Stegmann, composer; & Zhibin Chiam, piano

Maestro: Gevorg Sargsyan

Release: February 1, 2025



Manhattan Moods

Orchestra Manhattan

Featured Artists: Stas Venglevski, accordion; Kate Lee, piano; Gvantsa Butskhrikidize, violin; Gong Qian Yang, composer; & Ayla Moreno, piano

Maestro: David Wroe

Release: June 18, 2025

Cicerone Music & Art

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**AT WEILL RECITAL HALL AT
CARNEGIE HALL**

**iClassical Academy
Recognition Awards**



iClassical
ACADEMY

The Musicians



Emily Greene
Soprano

Emily Greene has had a love of music, languages, and the performing arts from a very young age. She is currently a sophomore at Bowdoin College, studying for her Bachelor of Arts degree, including classical voice under Christina Astrachan. Outside of college, she studies both classical voice and musical theater with Mary Johnston Letellier. Her earlier private voice teachers include Samantha Loomis and Paul Stickney. In addition to performing vocally, Emily loves playing instruments, including violin, guitar, and piano. Her first private music lessons, shortly after turning five, were on violin with Deirdre Oehrtmann of the Portland Symphony Orchestra.

In high school, Emily was inducted into several honor societies, including the Tri-M Music Honor Society, the French Honor Society, the Latin Honor Society, and the National Honor Society. She also earned the distinction of being an AP Scholar with Distinction. She received medals for participation in the National Latin Exam since 2020 and the Grand Concours since 2013, as well as receiving her B2 level DELF Certification in 2018. Emily fell in love with opera in 2016, when she secured a spot in the children's chorus as part of the production of Carmen with Opera Maine, blending her passion for music with her enthusiasm for languages. In 2017, Emily also collaborated as a librettist to produce the story for the opera "Girl in Six Beats", a combined project of Opera Maine, The Telling Room, and The School of Music at The University of Southern Maine. That summer, Emily joined Opera Maine Teens, a division of Opera Maine, later serving as coordinator for the group.

Emily has diverse performance experiences, from playing in school choirs and individual music recitals since pre-school and orchestras since middle school, to participating in dance recitals and theatrical programs beginning at age four. Her most recent theatrical roles are Mabel in The Pirates of Penzance, Antonio in Twelfth Night, Emma Carew in Jekyll and Hyde, the Musical, and Gabriella Montez in High School Musical. She is currently studying for the role of Rapunzel from Into the Woods. She was the guest vocalist for Portland Conservatory of Music's Piano Palooza in 2022 and performed in various roles, including Susanna from The Marriage of Figaro, during PCM's Opera Summer Scenes under the tutelage of Mary Letellier and Jane Clukey in 2021. She has been a group participant and soloist in the Southern Maine Choral Music Academy at the University of Southern Maine and participated in recitals for Opera Maine Teens. She has attended district and all-state music festivals for both violin and voice, attaining the position of concertmaster for the District II Instrumental Festival and the highest audition score for the District II Vocal Festival in 2023.



Greg Brown
Guitarist

American performer, composer and recording artist Greg C. Brown has released over 25 CDs either under his own name or in various other projects. He has performed across the US, Canada, and Europe including St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin, Ireland. He has taught guitar professionally for over 25 years, including Mary Baldwin University and other private institutions. He is currently teaching privately in his hometown of Charlottesville, Virginia.

Greg is a graduate of the Music, Video and Business program at The Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale, has a Bachelor's in Business from City University in Bellevue, Washington with a specialty in Music Industry and completed his Master's in Music Composition at the Vermont College for Fine Arts in 2022. Brown is a member of the Guitar Foundation of America, the Charlottesville Classical Guitar Society, the College Music Society, Chamber Music America, and the Society of Composers, Inc. His music can be heard on TV, Film, Video Games, and radio stations around the world and has even been transcribed into Braille. Greg's recordings can be purchased or streamed on most major platforms.

His orchestral music has been performed by the Charlottesville Camerata Rotunda Chamber Orchestra at the University of Virginia, and his chamber music has been performed by such exceptional artists as the Trio Lunaire, the Chatham Baroque Trio, the Thalea String Quartet and Ari Streisfeld from Duo Cortana, just to name a few. Greg has also shared the stage with Blues/Jazz artists such as John D'Earth, Daryl Davis and Phil Wiggins. The sheet music to his compositions are available through Les Productions D'Oz and J.W. Pepper.

Additionally, Greg has received formal instruction from various teachers, performers and composers, including Pepe Romero (California State University, San Diego), Benjamin Verdery (Yale), Douglas James (Appalachian State University), Keith Stevens (James Madison University), Christopher Berg (University of South Carolina), Thomas Patterson (Arizona State University), Martha Masters (Loyola and President of the Guitar Foundation of America), Eden and Stell Duo (UK) and Anthony Glise, Pulitzer Prize nominee for composition. Gregory's musical interests move beyond the borders of the US, across Europe and into Asia; Greg cites such diverse influences as Beethoven, Eddie Van Halen, Paganini, and the countless composers of traditional Spanish Flamenco music.



Vee Brown
Mezzo-Soprano

Singer-songwriter Vee Brown is best known for soulful melodies and vocal variations that deepen the emotional expression in music. A mezzo-soprano in Elon University's a cappella group, Twisted Measure, Vee is pursuing a Music Production Major with a Theatre Arts Minor.

When she's not arranging and writing music, Vee is also honing her skills on the piano, guitar and ukulele. She draws inspiration from her experiences, living life to the fullest so she can transform those moments into meaningful songs.



Sara Elaine Lim
Pianist

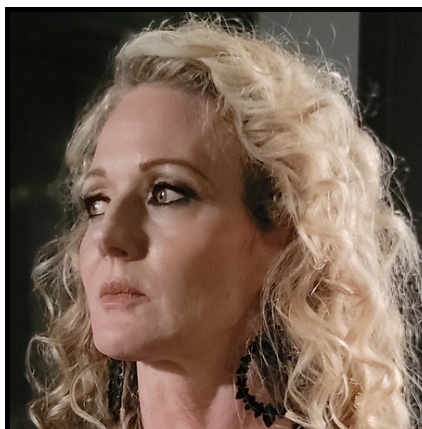
A storyteller through music, pianist Elaine Sara Lim creates thematic programming that speaks directly to audiences. Praised for the range of colors in her playing, Elaine's repertoire includes works by Brahms, Ravel, Haydn, and women composers such as Bauer, Howe, and Zaimont. With elegant immediacy and technical command, she captures the essential characters of the works she presents.

Credits include solo and collaborative performances at the Governor's Residence in Denver, Colorado, the Dukes Hall Gallery of Fine Arts in Harrisonburg, Virginia, and the Amro Music Piano Gallery in Memphis for their "Steinway Series." International credits include performances at Chateau d'Aix in Port du Quercy, France, Priesterseminar in Graz, Austria, and Chiesa della Santissima Trinità in Cremona, Italy.

As a concerto soloist, Elaine has performed with the Manila Symphony Orchestra and members of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra. As a chamber musician, she has performed piano quintets at Grace College in Indiana and Converse College in South Carolina, and premiered chamber works by contemporary composers Sarah Perske, Matthew Huston, and Brian Goetzinger.

Her deep interest in literature and the visual arts is reflected in past projects "Visions and Tales," a multimedia recital of piano works accompanying paintings and stories, and "The Lake at Evening" featuring American Impressionist pieces inspired by the poems of Poe, Yeats, Sharp, and Fletcher.

Elaine holds a doctoral degree from James Madison University, and has studied at the University of Santo Tomas (Philippines), University of Memphis, and University of Denver.



Sara Mahn
Flutist

Sara discovered her passion for the flute at age ten — inspired by the craft and the endless possibilities of storytelling through music.

Of all the songs Sara has played throughout the years, Danny Boy still remains her favorite. It is the song she'd play for her late Uncle on Saturday mornings when she was a child. One of her first audience members, he spurred on Sara's devotion to the craft by purchasing her flutes.

Today, Sara is a true storyteller, exuding mastery of the flute through her capacity to channel and express the raw emotion of the music.

At age 12, Sara knew on a deeper level that the flute was more than a hobby. Between recognition from her band director, and a growing passion for the craft, she began studying privately.

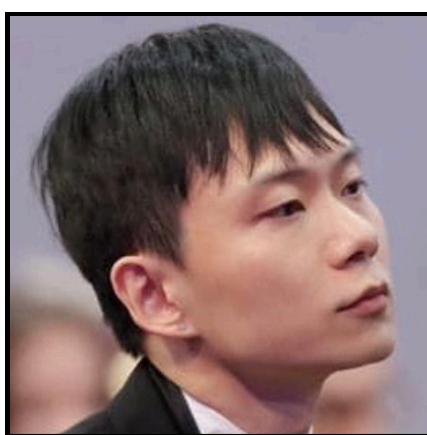
Sara went on to serve as first chair flute in both her high school orchestra and band as well as serving as first chair flute in the regional youth symphony throughout her entire high school experience. In her junior year, she won the regional youth symphony's Concerto Competition, capturing the opportunity to perform as a soloist with the orchestra.

Sara earned her degree in flute performance, where she distinguished herself as first chair in both the Orchestral Band and the Symphony Orchestra. In her senior year, she won the prestigious Concerto Competition, showcasing her talent and dedication in a highly competitive field.

Sara has since expanded her passion from her background in Classical music to performing additional genres of music including Jazz and Rock.

Sara holds the stage, capturing audiences and leaving them breathless through a perfect balance of technical aptitude and raw emotion—making her one of the most intriguing musicians playing today.

Sara recently made her debut in Vienna's Musikverein and the Palace Coburg in Vienna, Austria, in March 2025 in the Winners Recitals of Special Venue Music Awards.



Kaiwei Zhi
Pianist

Kaiwei Zhi is a pianist based in New York City, with a career spanning concertos, recitals, and chamber music performances around the world.

Kaiwei made his concerto debut at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory of Kyiv, performing Liszt's La Campanella, while studying in R. Glier Kyiv Institute of Music with Uliana Yablonskaya since 2004. He then performed Liszt's First Piano Concerto with the State Orchestra of Ukraine. From 2008 to 2012, Kaiwei performed recitals in China, introducing Chinese audiences to Slavic music. He won third prize of the 22nd young musician international competition 'Citta Di Barletta'.

After receiving his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Piano Performance, Kaiwei took a hiatus from performing. He spent several months in Paris, meeting a new group of musicians and studying with Olivier Gardon, which reignited his passion for music. In 2014, Kaiwei returned to the piano and performed the "Yellow River Piano Concerto" with the Chongqing Philharmonic under the baton of Xieyang Chen, conductor of the Shanghai Philharmonic, at the Grand Theater of Chongqing.

In 2015, Kaiwei moved to New York City and enrolled at the Manhattan School of Music, studying with the late maestro Phillip Kawin. He earned a Professional Studies Certificate and graduated in 2017. He later studied with American concert pianist Spencer Myer, receiving a Graduate Performance Diploma in Piano Performance. In 2019, Kaiwei was the opening performer at a contemporary music recital at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall and the closing performer at a similar recital at Merkin Hall in New York. 2020 marked his first solo piano recital at Weill Recital Hall.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Kaiwei decided to explore a new direction in French music. He performed Debussy's Fantaisie for Piano and Orchestra with Dr. Leon Burke and the University City Symphony in Missouri, USA. Later, he returned to Kyiv during the Ukraine-Russia war and performed Ravel's First Piano Concerto in G with the Honored Academic Symphony Orchestra of Ukrainian Radio, conducted by Maestro Volodymyr Sheiko.



Katharina Nohl
Composer

In June 2023, Katharina's composition Rave for Hackbrett and orchestra was awarded the Amadeus Composition Award (Austria) with silver. Prior to that, her commissioned orchestral composition for Hackbrett and orchestra was premiered in April 2023 in Switzerland with the Sinfonieorchester Kanton Schwyz, conducted by Urs Bamert, with Olga Mischula on Hackbrett and Cymbal.

In December 2022, her Piano Rhapsody "Spices" received the Global Music Award in Silver for creativity and composition – a perfect ending to a fruitful year!

Reflecting on her journey, Katharina sees music through the lens of a pianist, audience member, mother, mentor, publisher, and festival organizer. She has built a career that emphasizes inclusivity, performing across Europe, Russia, and the Arabian Peninsula. These experiences, shaped by both Western and non-Western cultural influences, along with classical and modern elements, have contributed to her distinct musical voice.

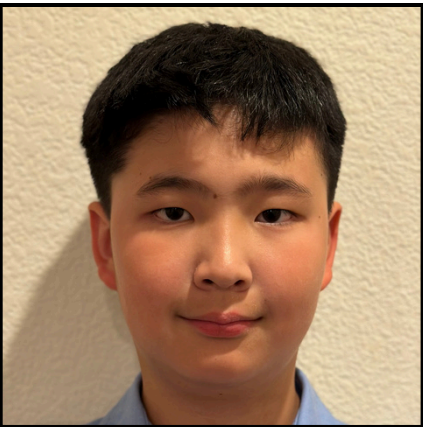
Katharina credits her first piano teacher with introducing her to Eastern music and the works of female composers. This experience inspired her to champion other composers, leading to the creation of the inaugural Swiss Female Composers Festival – a platform for networking, collaboration, and the performance of new works.

In 2002, Katharina moved to Switzerland, where she built a family and started a new chapter in her life. While her years of traveling slowed down, a new and exciting journey began. With her two daughters, family, and cats in tow, Katharina continued to perform across Europe, while also initiating interdisciplinary art projects for children, combining music and visual arts in live concerts. She finds joy in creating lasting memories, giving children the chance to experience classical music firsthand.

Katharina's interest in arrangement and composition blossomed organically. Encouraged by fellow composers and pianists, she has since composed various orchestral works, chamber pieces, arrangements, and numerous piano works. Her music has been performed in countries including Russia, Turkey, the UK, Germany, Switzerland, Albania, and more.

In January 2019, Katharina realized her long-held idea of connecting and promoting female composers through the establishment of the Swiss Female Composers Festival. In April 2023, she published the first piano book featuring works by living female composers of Switzerland through Universal Edition, with plans for a 2024 edition of violin and piano music.

"Music has been a constant companion in my life, taking many forms. As much as I love music, I know that without enjoying life, I cannot truly enjoy music. Life is the source of the music I create."



Lucas Yang
Pianist

Lucas is a fifth grader at Stratford School and began his piano journey at the age of five. During the pandemic, he honed his skills at home and gradually began participating in competitions, earning recognition at both local and regional levels. His accomplishments include first prize in the Golden Classical Music Awards, third prize in the American Virtuoso International Music Competition, third prize in the Bay Piano Festival Competition, and first prize in the Charleston Music Competition.

In addition to solo repertoire, Lucas has developed a passion for concerto performance. At just 11 years old, he made his orchestral debut at Carnegie Hall, performing the first movement of Haydn's Concerto in D major. Lucas looks forward to more opportunities to collaborate with orchestras in the future.



Laura Ansaldi
Soprano

Laura Ansaldi received her education at prestigious institutions including the Music Conservatory of Genoa and Milan, Accademia Chigiana in Siena, Music School of Fiesole, and TEMA Academy in Milan. In addition to opera, she holds degrees in piano and performing arts. Her international career began in 2001 with Tosca and has since included performances across Europe, Russia, and the United States.

Renowned for her versatility, Laura is classified as a dramatic coloratura soprano but skillfully performs lighter and baroque repertoire as well. Her roles range from Elisir d'Amore and Tosca to Lucia di Lammermoor, Norma, Madama Butterfly, Leonora (La Forza del Destino), Elisabetta (Don Carlos), Abigaille (Nabucco), Mimi (La Bohème), Adriana Lecouvreur, Maddalena (Andrea Chenier), among others. Her acting talent has also led to success in musical theatre.

Laura has collaborated with distinguished orchestras and conductors such as Claudio Abbado, Gianandrea Gavazzeni, Carlo Maria Giulini, the Boston Philharmonic, Sofia Philharmonic, and the Madrid Symphony Orchestra. She has headlined major international events, including the Roncole Giuseppe Verdi Festival, Maria Callas commemorations, the rediscovery premiere of A. Scarlatti's Stabat Mater in Zurich, and innovative projects like Soprano Solo recitals for voice and single string instrument.

Teaching is central to Laura's career. She has taught at Terre dei Fieschi Academy in Italy (where she later became president), and after relocating to Switzerland, established her own opera class, teaching at institutions including the 14youstudio Art Academy, Close Encounters Theater Academy, and Zürich International School. She also serves as jury president for the International Terre dei Fieschi Competition.

Actively involved in charitable work, she supports organizations like the Enrico Charles Foundation and Swiss Pro UKBB Foundation. In 2024, she received the platinum medal from the Académie Française des Arts, Sciences, Lettres. She resides in Zurich with her husband and two children.



Carolina Rodriguez
Conductor

Passionate about fostering creativity and collaboration, Carolina brings a unique blend of musical proficiency and artistic management to create impactful and harmonious performances. After earning a B.A. in Educational Sciences, Carolina completed piano performance degrees from Concordia and McGill University in Montreal and studied Dalcroze Eurhythmics at The Juilliard School in New York City. For over fifteen years, she performed as a piano soloist, in chambers and with orchestras. During this period, she also founded and managed the Tresonans Piano Trio.

Carolina ventured as a cultural activist in 2016 when she launched ArteSana, a multimedia project focused on showcasing women whose lives healed through creative and artistic activities. A couple of years later, she was appointed as President of Concertando México, a philanthropic association providing music instruction to disadvantaged youth based on El Sistema in her hometown of Guadalajara, Mexico. In 2021, Carolina moved to Texas, where she completed a dual master's program in Orchestra Conducting and Arts Leadership at the University of Houston. Carolina would like to serve and connect with others through music and the arts.

Thank You Judges



Giacomo Franci

The New York Chamber Players



Dickran Atamian

Price Attractions



Devin Patrick Hughes

Boulder Symphony Orchestra



David Wroe

New Jersey Festival Orchestra



Raffaele Livio Ponti

Paducah Symphony



Scott E. Woodard

West Virginia State Philharmonic



Karim Said

Amman Chamber Orchestra



Nvart Andreassian

Armenian Nation Opera



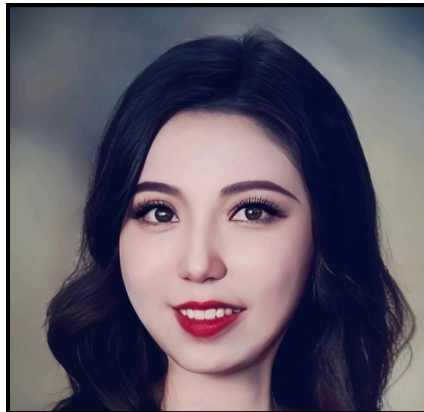
Gevorg Sargsyan

Ministry of Culture Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



James Greening-Valenzuela

Vocal Arts Management



Giovanna Yaqi Yang

Grammy Nominated Soprano



Daniel Ihasz

SUNY at Fredonia Professor Emeritus

Our Team



James Welch
Sound Espresso
Co-Founder



Anna Ouspenskaya
*Sound Espresso &
Virtual Concert Halls*
Co-Founder



Igor Zubkovsky
*Sound Espresso &
Virtual Concert Halls*
Co-Founder



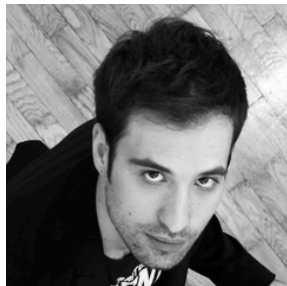
Frane Rušinović
*Sound Espresso &
Virtual Concert Halls*
Co-Founder/Tech Director



Fedor Ouspensky
*Sound Espresso &
Virtual Concert Halls*
Co-Founder



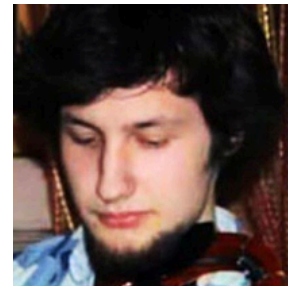
Jack Price
Price Attractions
Founder



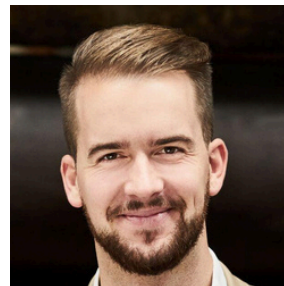
Ante Božić-Kudrić
Virtual Concert Halls
Technical Producer



Jennifer Savage
Virtual Concert Halls
Assistant Director



Marko Torre
Virtual Concert Halls
Assistant Director



Krisztian Palagyi
Virtual Concert Halls
Assistant Director



Chris Au
Virtual Concert Halls
Host



Kateryna Li Khemmett
Virtual Concert Halls
PR/Social Media



Gianriccardo Pera
Cicerone Music & Art



Irma de Jong
iClassical Academy



James Adler
AdlerOaks Library



Patrick Welch
Sound Espresso
Production Assistant



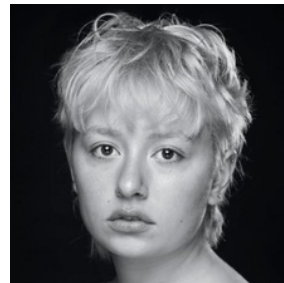
Cathleen Welch
Sound Espresso
Production Assistant



Rebecca Broadbent
Price Attractions
Executive Director



Ann Lathan Kerzner
Price Attractions
Special Projects



Annarose Atamian
Price Attractions
Talent Acquisition

