



Laureate Gala

Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall



Monday November 21, 2022 @ 8:00pm



James Welch
Progressive Musicians



Anna Ouspenskaya
Sound Espresso & Virtual Concert Halls

Welcome to the very first Laureate Gala hosted by Progressive Musicians, Sound Espresso, Virtual Concert Halls, & The New York Chamber Players Orchestra. Today's program will feature musicians from numerous countries who have won our 2022 Laureate's Auditions.

Progressive Musicians' and Sound Espresso's 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 enhances 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 to offer the James Adler Audience Favorite Award, as well as to present additional awards from iClassical Academy.

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!

[Watch Steve Robinson interview our Laureates, streamed earlier this afternoon](#)
[Click Here](#)

**Progressive Musicians
Sound Espressivo
Virtual Concert Halls &
The New York Chamber Players**

proudly presents its

LAUREATE GALA

*Weill Recital Hall at
Carnegie Hall*

November 21, 2022

Hosted by Steve Robinson

Program

Opening Remarks by Steve Robinson, Host

Violin Partita No. 3 in E Major, BWV 1006
I. Preludio

Johann Sebastian Bach

Luke Eggert, Violin

December from "The Seasons", Op. 37b

Pyotr Tchaikovsky

Jeffrey Zhang, piano

Violin Partita in E Major, BWV 1006
Gavotte en Rondeau and Gigue

Johann Sebastian Bach

Louisa Valentina Schewe, violin

Old Adam

William Bolcom

Richard Long, piano

Violin Concerto, Op. 14
I. Allegro

Samuel Barber

Ronald Deng, violin
James Welch, piano

Dolly Suite, Op. 56
I. Berceuse
II. Mi-a-ou

Gabriel Fauré

Jean-Baptiste Gleize & Ève-Marie Boileau, piano

A Prayer for Peace (2022)

Evelyn Stroobach

Ralitsa Tcholakova, viola

Orage (Storm) from Book I Années de Pèlerinage: Suisse

Franz Liszt

Daniel Kuzuhara, piano

Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op.26
III. Finale: Allegro energico

Max Bruch

Anthea Dias, violin
James Welch, piano

Danse Macabre, Op. 40, in g minor

Camille Saint-Saëns

Themes from Schindler's List

John Williams

The Bow Lightlys Cello Ensemble of The Kaboff Cello School

John Kaboff, Director, Lourdes de la Peña, Michael Klucker, Joseph Gallacher, Alex Kirby, Shinjini Ray, Jonathan Lee, Alette McNeill, Susannah DeMarco, Evangeline Gallacher, Pavine McNeill, Jorge Laboy-Balancea, Mary Gallacher, & Joseph Xu

Remarks

James Adler, The Adler Oaks Foundation
Anna Ouspenskaya, Virtual Concert Halls

The New York Chamber Players

Maestro Giacomo Franci, conductor

Concerto in F Minor, BWV 1056 (<i>I. Moderato, II. Largo, III. Presto</i>) <i>Giacomo Franci, piano</i>	Johann Sebastian Bach
Concertstuck, Op. 39 <i>Subin Lee, harp</i>	Gabriel Pierne
Concerto in D Major, Hob. XVIII:11 (<i>III. Rondo all'Ungarese. Allegro assai</i>) <i>Lucia Tang, piano</i>	Joseph Haydn
Concerto No. 7 in G Major, G. 480 (<i>III. Allegro</i>) <i>Alexander Kirby, cello</i>	Luigi Boccherini
Concertino in A minor <i>Kate Lee, piano</i>	Yuri Polunin
Piano Concerto No.12 in A Major K. 414 (<i>I. Allegro</i>) <i>Zikai Andy Wang, piano</i>	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Concerto in F Minor, Op. 8, No. 4 (Winter) (<i>I. Allegro non molto; II. Largo</i>) <i>Annabelle Wei, violin</i>	Antonio Vivaldi
Concerto No.2 in E Major, BWV 1053 (<i>I. Allegro</i>) <i>Susanna Kolker, piano</i>	Johann Sebastian Bach
Concerto No. 1 in A Major, Op. 30 (<i>II. Siciliana</i>) <i>Rachel Ginebra, guitar</i>	Mauro Giuliani
Concerto in D Major, Hob. XVIII:11 (<i>I. Vivace</i>) <i>Matthew Brand, piano</i>	Joseph Haydn
Piano Concerto (<i>III. Allegro vivo - US Premiere</i>) <i>Marcela Gonyea, piano</i>	Sergey Zubkovsky (orchestrated by Igor Zubkovsky)
Hungarian Dances, No. 4 & 5 <i>Teresa Laiz, castanets</i>	Johannes Brahms

The New York Chamber Players

Violin 1

Garry Ianco (Concert Master)
Yuning Lai, Sooyeon Jun

Viola

Jin Park (Principal)
Devon Faith English

Bass

Pedro Giraudo

Clarinet

Fred Rosenberg

Violin 2

Brunilda Myftaraj (Principal)
Alexander Calabro, Pearl Fuentes

Cello

Jacob Nordlinger (Principal)
Katsura Mori, Peri Mauer

Flute

Philippe Delage, Leanne Friedman

French Horns

Allie Harnold, Daniel Zumbrunnen

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,[14] Charles Dodge,[15] 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 "Chicagoan 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 southeast and the earthquake in Haiti. Each campaign raised over \$3 million. Robinson received two Wesbury Award 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



The New York Chamber Players is a Professional Chamber Orchestra of 42 players . It is dedicated to producing performances of mostly classical music. About 2/3 of the Orchestra is core and the remaining 1/3 is new at every production chosen through regular auditions: in NYC there is a wealth of talented musicians and we want to give the opportunity to all deserving professionals . The Artistic Director welcomes professionals from all nationalities and races as a reflection of the true spirit of New York City . Our main mission is to promote live classical music through presentations of classical music to contemporary audiences, using different formats to enliven and inspire musical experiences. The formats include spontaneous communication with the audiences, unusual in most concert settings, as well as full awareness of proper alternative visual effects such as alternative lightings (inserted sometimes during the performance of contemporary or modern music) and / or insertion of dancers that can enrich the communication especially during the performance of contemporary music. The organization will fulfill its mission by :

- enhancing the career and musical activity of its artists, mostly young professionals who have graduated from colleges, universities and conservatories.
- promoting classical music to contemporary audiences .
- expanding beyond traditional presentation (musicians in tuxedos, on a stage,silent except while playing music)
- giving particular attention to contemporary music and lesser known but great composers.

The Maestro



Giacomo

Franci



Italy

Maestro 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 Direccion 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 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.

Maestro 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, Italy. He was awarded his Master’s Scholarship from the Scuola di Alto Perfezionamento Musicale in Saluzzo, Italy, 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. These radio programs feature the most legendary pianists of today and of all times. He has also appeared on radio and television aired 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.

Feature Pianist



Susanna

Kolker



Russia

Susanna Kolker received her BM and MM at the Piano Performance from Gnessin Music Institute in Moscow, where she studied with the acclaimed professor Theodor Gutman, who in turn was a pupil and assistant of the great Heinrich Neuhaus.

Ms. Kolker has collaborated with many prominent musicians in Russia and has participated in a number of music festivals in Russia, Bulgaria, Poland and the former Yugoslavia. She has a few Diplomas to her credit, including a special diploma as Best Accompanist at the International Competition in Poland.

Since moving to the United States Ms. Kolker made multiple appearances at both the Concert Hall and Terrace Theater of the John F. Kennedy Center for the performing arts in Washington, DC, and also performed in New York, Boston, Texas and South Carolina.

The Performers



Luke Eggert
Violinist

USA 🇺🇸

Luke Aden Eggert's passion for music began at the age of four. Luke loves to express his feelings with his music while playing both classical and fiddle music.

Luke received the Gold Prize in the Global Genius Music Competition 2022 Spring Season. Luke also won 1st place during the OPUS Music Competition 2021 at the State level. Luke placed 1st in his division at the Progressive Musicians Online Classics Competition 2020, and currently performs with the Waco Symphony Youth Orchestra. Luke was chosen three years running to perform the National Anthem for Round Rock Express Baseball at Dell Diamond stadium.



Jeffrey Zhang
Pianist

Canada 🇨🇦

Jeffrey Zhang (age 10), started to study piano performance with Dr. Olga Chichova at age 6. He has participated in many competitions, music festivals, piano recitals. In the recent years, he has played and won numerous First Places and various winner's trophies/medals/certificates in the Peel Music Festival, the OMFA Provincial Festival, the Steinway Piano Competition, the North York Music Festival, the Unionville Music Competition, the New York Open Music Festival and Sound Espresso Competition. Jeffrey also passed the RCM Level 8 Piano Practical Examination in December 2020 with an outstanding mark. He enjoys performing and sharing his passion for music.



Louisa Valentina
Schewe
Violinist

Germany 🇩🇪

Louisa Valentina has been playing the violin since the age of 6 years. She was a student of Ralf Kröger and is now a student of Stephanie Lichtmess in Hannover, Germany. She won several first prizes in national and international competitions and had master classes with Prof. Luz Leskowitz (Salzburg), Prof. Maria Egelhof (Lübeck) and Christin Blumenstein (Weimar). Louisa Valentina holds a scholarship at the Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien in Hannover.



Richard Long
Pianist

Canada 

Richard Long is an 11 year-old pianist. At five he began his passion as a pianist driven by nature. He is now studying piano at the Canada Academy of Music & Arts (CAMA) with his teacher Olga Chichova. He loves 70's music and Jazz. He also has his very own band named "Remedy of Music".

Richard earned many awards in competitions, he got first place in the Kiwanis festival in Guelph, a Distinction in Instrumental Music award at school, and a provincial music festival award. He recently passed level 10 on RCM with a distinction recognition. He also plays Alto Sax in his school band and does sports like Basketball and swimming.

Richard hopes to be a band leader in the future to bring back nostalgia from 70's music and change people's lives with music.



Ronald Deng
Violinist

USA 

My name is Ronald Deng. I am currently a junior at Hunter College High School in New York City. I have been playing violin for about thirteen years. I've played violin in multiple ensembles throughout the years, including multiple school orchestras and chambers, the Manhattan School of Music Performance Orchestra, and currently, the New York Youth Symphony Orchestra. In my spare time, I enjoy fiddling around with other musical instruments, mainly the electric guitar and the electric bass.



Jean-Baptiste
Gleize &
Ève-Marie Boileau
Piano Duo

Canada 

Duolce Piano is a piano duo formed by Jean-Baptiste Gleize and Ève-Marie Boileau. It was in 2011, in Yves Davignon's piano studio at Cégep de Saint-Laurent, that Jean-Baptiste and Ève-Marie met, quickly developing a pianistic and friendly complicity. They then went on their separate paths during their musical studies at the University of Montreal and McGill University. Despite this, they continued to play duets together whenever they had the chance. Formed in 2020, Duolce Piano focuses on music written for 4-hand piano duets, mainly from the classical repertoire.



Anthea Dias
Violinist

India 

Anthea Dias, age 16, from Goa, India, had set her eyes on the violin ever since she was a little girl of two years. She is the student of Winston Collaço since she was 6 yrs old. Among her many performances all over India, she has played along with the India National Youth orchestra, and the Bangalore City Chamber Orchestra. Her recitals include one in Delhi accompanied on the piano by World renowned Pianist and conductor Mattheus Fletzberger and also at the NCPA Mumbai. An inspirational TED speaker at TEDxICT-MUMBAI, she has made her debut as a soloist for the Bach A minor concerto back home in Goa.



Ralitsa Tcholakova
Violist

Canada 🇨🇦

Ralitsa Tcholakova is an internationally known, Ottawa-based violin/viola player. She has performed as soloist with orchestras, at chamber music series and festivals in over 25 countries. She is the recipient of bursaries, scholarships, awards and grants from Ottawa City Arts Funding, FACTOR, SOCAN Foundation, Canada Arts Council, Department of Foreign Affairs of Canada, Europe 2000 and many others. In 2017 she was nominated for the GG's Persons Case award. In 2018 she was nominated for the Premiere's Award for Excellence in the Arts. Ralitsa has recorded numerous highly acclaimed CDs, including "Ballad of the North," consisting of music by Canadian women composers and distributed by SOCAN to 135 radio stations worldwide. Her latest CD "Aboriginal Inspirations" features Grammy winner flautist Ron Korb. [Read more...](#)



Evelyn Stroobach
Composer

Canada 🇨🇦

Evelyn Stroobach is a professional musician and an award-winning, published composer. Presently, Stroobach is a PhD researcher/candidate in Music Composition at the University of Sheffield in the UK. She has won regional, national and international awards for her works. Stroobach was honoured in the Senate and the House of Commons at the Houses of Parliament in Ottawa, Canada for her participation as composer on the "Aboriginal Inspirations" CD (<https://cmccanada.org/shop/cd-ai6209/>). Stroobach's compositions have been performed in Canada, the United States, South America, Europe (Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Moldova, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Switzerland and Ukraine) and Asia.



Daniel Kuzuhara
Pianist

USA 🇺🇸

Daniel Kuzuhara is a pianist born in Madison, Wisconsin who graduated with a master's degree in Piano Performance from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, studying under Dr. Karen Shaw. Prior to his studies in Indiana, he studied under Professor Anthony Padilla at Lawrence University, Julie Chang, and Karen Hill. He currently studies under Mastero Sebastiaan Bijlsma of Tiziano Rosetti's International Music Academy.



Bow Lightlys

USA 🇺🇸

The Bow Lightlys, were featured guest artists at the World Cello Congress III (2000), where they were featured in an internationally broadcast cello ensemble workshop with world famous cellist, Yo-Yo Ma which then resulted in a cello choir concert at the Sixth American Cello Congress (2001) as part of Mr. Kaboff's appearance as a guest lecturer. They performed at the 2014 Tennessee Cello Workshop. The Bow Lightlys have been featured in concert on live radio broadcast in Washington, DC. They have also performed cello ensemble concerts at the Embassy of France, Almas Shriner's Temple as well as many local religious centers. They often perform at charity events for the American Diabetes Association. [Read more...](#)



John Kaboff
Cellist
Director of
Bow Lightlys

USA 

John Kaboff, B.M., M.M., studied with Janos Starker at Indiana University and William Pleeth, at the Holland Music Sessions in the Netherlands and in England. He has performed as soloist at The Kennedy Center, Strathmore Hall, The United States Department of State, and the Embassies of France, Germany and New Zealand. Mr. Kaboff is a highly successful teacher and whose students have received numerous awards and prizes. They have performed at the World Cello Congress III and were featured in an internationally broadcast workshop with Yo-Yo Ma. His students have earned top prizes at the Washington Performing Arts Society competition and at the American Protégé Competition, resulting in Carnegie Hall and National Gallery of Art debut recitals. His students have also been featured in the Classical Spotlight Showcase for Maryland Public Television. [Read more...](#)



Lourdes de la Peña
Cellist

USA 

Lourdes de la Peña was born in Chile and raised in Northern Virginia and studies with National Symphony Orchestra Principal Cellist, David Hardy. At Oberlin Conservatory, she studied with Darrett Adkins. She has performed with her string quartet, the Kulas Quartet, at the Embassy of Colombia, Embassy of Argentina, Inter-American Defense Board, Art Enables Gallery and Vocational Program, Central Union Mission, DC Library, Terra Centre Elementary School, Sunrise Assisted Living, and the Children's Inn of the National Institute of Health. Their last performance premiered a new work by Brazilian Composer Guto Brinholi at the Brazilian Ambassador's Residence. Lourdes was a National Symphony Orchestra Youth Fellow where she performed solo and chamber works on the Millennium Stage at the Kennedy Center and was a principal cellist of the American Youth Philharmonic Orchestra. [Read more...](#)



Michael Klucker
Cellist

USA 

Michael Klucker is a recent graduate of The Pennsylvania State University with a Bachelor's in Music Education and a recipient of the Performer's Recognition and Creative Achievement Awards for his cello performing abilities. Mike has received the "Outstanding New Teacher of the Year Award" for his work at Rolling Valley Elementary School, and was nominated to be "Outstanding New Orchestra Teacher of the Year" for all of Fairfax County Public Schools two years in a row. Mike has been asked to be a clinician, adjudicator, and sectional coach for schools within the DMV area. He has also taught at summer camps including Vienna Summer Strings. He is currently the director of orchestras at Luther Jackson Middle School in Falls Church, VA.



Pavine McNeill
Cellist

USA 

Pavine McNeill, 13, is an 8th grader and has played the cello since the age of 7. Over the years, Pavine has placed 1st and 2nd in several of the Northern Virginia Music Teachers Association (NVMTA) competitions. In 2022, Pavine won 2nd place in the Junior Division of the Tennessee Cello Competition at the University of Tennessee. Pavine performs with The American Youth Philharmonic Orchestra, the Luther Jackson Middle School Chamber Orchestra, the Kaboff Cello School cello choir, and the 2022 Virginia Junior District 10 Orchestra, in which she placed principal cello. In 2017, Pavine participated in a master class at the University of Maryland with Kacy Clopton, and in 2022, was invited to perform in a master class with Astrid Schween. Pavine has been a student of John Kaboff since 2019.



**Jorge
Laboy-Bulancea
Cellist**

USA 

Jorge Laboy-Bulancea, 13, has been studying the classical guitar since age 3. In 4th grade, he discovered the cello at school and in the following year started taking private cello lessons with John Kaboff and joined the Capital Symphonic Youth Orchestra. In the spring of 2021, he won 1st place in the Northern Virginia Music Teachers Association Strings Achievement Awards Competition, elementary division, and in the spring of 2022, he won 1st place in the intermediate division for the same competition. He is an 8th grade student at Luther Jackson Middle School, where he is a member of the chamber orchestra directed by Michael Klucker.



**Mary Gallacher
Cellist**

USA 

Mary Gallacher, 13, began learning the cello five years ago. She is in her second year in the Chamber Orchestra at Luther Jackson Middle School (Fairfax County, Virginia). Her favorite part of being a student in the Kaboff Cello School is learning a classical repertoire of music, her favorite of which is The Dvorak Cello Concerto. A highlight experience as a Bow Lightly cellist was performing at the Tennessee Cello Workshop and then attending a Masters Class for a critique of her individual performance. Mary also enjoys swimming, rock climbing, and traveling with her family.



**Joseph Xu
Cellist**

USA 

Joseph Xu, 13, began playing cello in 4th grade and joined the school orchestra and later Chamber Strings. Subsequently, Joseph began private lessons with John Kaboff in 2019. Since Joseph began playing in orchestra and other ensembles, he has enjoyed playing and listening to classical music. In 2020, Joseph began participating in Potomac Valley Youth Orchestra and competed twice in the National Federation of Music Clubs Festival where he received Superior ratings both times. Currently, he is attending Georgetown Day School in DC and plans to play cello as a hobby throughout his life.



**Shinjini Ray
Cellist**

USA 

Shinjini Ray, 15, is an 11th grader at Langley High School and has been playing cello since the 4th grade. She began studying cello with John Kaboff shortly thereafter. She participates in her school orchestra and The Capital Symphony Youth Orchestra (TCSYO). She received second place in the Senior Lower Strings division in the 2022 Northern Virginia Music Teacher's Association competition. She hopes to continue playing cello throughout her life and incorporate it into hospitals and a medical career.



Jonathan Lee
Cellist

USA 

Jonathan Lee, 15, began his musical journey with the piano at the age of four and took piano lessons for ten years. In fourth grade, he started playing the cello through his elementary school's strings class and continued playing the cello in his middle school's orchestra. In eighth grade, he decided to focus exclusively on the cello and play in the orchestra when he reached high school. He began private cello lessons at The Kaboff Cello School with Mr. John Kaboff, who has nurtured Jonathan's passion for the cello. Outside of music, Jonathan enjoys spending time with his family, friends, and his dog Sunflower, playing basketball, skiing, and volunteering in his community.



Alette McNeill
Cellist

USA 

Alette McNeill, 15, is a high-school sophomore. After starting with piano lessons at the age of 6, she began with her violin studies with Maribeth Frank at the age of 9. Alette has performed with The Capital Symphonic Youth Orchestra as concertmaster and currently performs with the American Youth Philharmonic Orchestra as principal second violin. She also plays with the James Madison High School Chamber Orchestra, The Kaboff Cello School cello choir, a violin trio, and charity events. Over the years, she was placed in the Virginia Junior District 10 Orchestra, Senior District 12 Orchestra, and just recently, was selected to participate in the Northern Virginia 2022 Senior Regional Orchestra. Alette has been a student of Krista Smith since 2020.



Susannah DeMarco
Cellist

USA 

Susannah DeMarco, 15, began her musical journey on the piano at the age of six and then fell in love with the sound of the cello in elementary school orchestra. Susannah began her private studies at the age of ten with Mr. Kaboff, and this is her fourth year participating in the Bow Lightlys Cello Choir. When not practicing cello, Susannah enjoys participating in high school theater and coxing for the high school crew team.



Evangeline Gallacher
Cellist

USA 

Evangeline Gallacher, 15, has played cello for only 18 months. Before the cello, she played piano, violin, and percussion. Her favorite piece is The Rhapsodie Hebraique, "Schelomo", by Ernest Bloch because of the different dynamics and rhymlcal values. Evie plays in the Chamber Orchestra at Falls Church High School (Fairfax County, Virginia) but her true love is the Bow Lightlys cello choir group. Besides music, she enjoys cheerleading, swimming, and reading.



Joseph Gallacher

Cellist

USA 

Joseph Gallacher, 17, has studied the cello for nine years. His favorite piece is the Lalo Cello Concerto in D Minor. He has been the Principal Cellist in the Falls Church High School Chamber Orchestra (Fairfax County, Virginia) for the last three years. Joseph has been an enthusiastic part of the Bow Lightlys Cello Choir for four years and has made great memories in the Kaboff Cello School cello camps, recitals, and activities. When he is not playing cello, Joseph swims, golfs, plays basketball, tennis, and “coaches” the Philadelphia Eagles from his couch at home.



Alexander Kirby

Cellist

USA 

Alex Kirby is a high school junior enrolled in a STEM curriculum. His ongoing passion with cello began with lessons at age 3 ½. He has performed with The Capital Symphonic Youth Orchestra, McLean Youth Orchestra, class recitals, charity events, cello choirs, and church functions. He has been invited to return to the U. of Tennessee, to perform in a master class and perform at the 2023 cello competition. Alex enjoys playing the Euphonium with his school band and was selected for the Fairfax County 12th All District Band. Alex also plays on the varsity lacrosse team.



Rachel Ginebra

Guitarist

USA 

Rachel Ginebra is an active classical guitarist currently based in Rochester, NY. She is originally from Pinar del Río, Cuba where she began her musical studies. Rachel continued her career at the Frost School of Music, University of Miami, obtaining her Bachelor, Master and Artist Diploma under Rafael Padron studio. There she got the second place at the Miami Youth Guitar Competition in 2011 and participated in various master classes with world-renown guitarists such as: Alvaro Pierri, Aniello Desiderio, Berta Rojas, Ana Vidović, Miloš Karadaglić, Jason Vieux, Denis Azabagić, among others.

Following her passion for guitar, she decided to pursue her Doctoral degree under Dr. Nicholas Goluses studio at the Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, serving also as his Teacher Assistant at both institutions. She also received a Performer Certificate from the ESM in 2021 PC. Rachel is also teaching at the Penfield Guitar School. Aside from teaching, one of her goals as an artist is to be able to perform and share the beauty of the classical guitar with a wide range of audiences.

[Read more...](#)



Lucia Tang
Pianist

USA 

Lucia Tang is 10 years old. She has been playing piano under the guidance of Dr. Anna Ouspenskaya since 2020. Her favorite way of enjoying music is to let her pieces guide her to peacefulness. Lucia also likes to compose the music for the songs she enjoys singing and sing along while she plays her composed music. She incorporates her rhythm and artistry into her other favorite activities, ballet and rhythmic gymnastics. Recently, she made it to rhythmic gymnastics Nationals, winning 3rd place all around at Level 6. Lucia also loves creative writing. She was the 1st place winner of Kay Snow Awards 2021 with her story "The Coins' Escape". Lucia is passionate in all her activities, and piano is becoming one of her top three activities.



Kate Lee
Pianist

USA 

Kate Lee, 9 years old girl, has been studying piano at the age of 4 under the direction of Dr. Anna Ouspenskaya & Frane Rusinovic and music theory under Fedor Ouspensky. Recently, Kate got Honorable mention & iClassical Academy Excellence Award from Global Sound Espresso Competition & won the first place from American Fine Arts Festival Concerto Competition in 2022. She also got Honorable Mention from 2022 William Knabe International Piano Competition. She won the first place from 2020 Forte Int. Music Competition & Festivals. She had the honor of performing at Weill Recital Hall & Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall as an American Protégé Judges' Distinction Award (Plaque Trophies) winner of the American Protégé Int. Concerto Competition 2019 & as a First-place winner in American Protégé Int. Competition of Romantic Music 2019. [Read more...](#)



Zikai Andy Wang
Pianist

Canada 

Zikai Andy Wang, 9-year-old, started learning piano at the age of 6 with Dr. Olga Chichova. He is self-disciplined, dedicated, and hardworking on practicing piano and won numerous awards in international competitions and local music festivals, including the OMFA Ontario Provincial, Little Mozarts International Music Competition, Rocky Mountain Piano Competition, Peel Music Festival, etc. Andy is also an award winner of Steinway's Canadian Young Artist Standards of Excellence Awards in 2021. In addition to music, Andy is also passionate for painting, language math and swimming.



Matthew Brand
Pianist

USA 

Matthew Brand was born in New York City in 2008. He is a student of Donna Weng Friedman at the Mannes School Of Music Prep Division, and is part of the Clara Mannes Scholars Program. He is in the 9th grade at Horace Mann School in the Bronx, and has been working on composition, jazz, and song-writing projects in the past few years. He studies composition with Dr. Steven Sacco at Mannes Prep, and is part of his school's Jazz Combo.



[Marcela Gonyea](#)

Pianist

USA 

Marcela has played classical piano since the age of 5. Her 10-year piano experience has given her a strong foundation in music and knowledge of musical performance. Over the years Marcela has placed and qualified for several piano competitions receiving 1st, 2nd place and honorable mentions in Northern Virginia Music Teachers Association (NVMTA) piano competitions. More recently she joined her high-school orchestra and was placed in the Chamber Orchestra, the most advanced of her high-school's ensembles, as a piano soloist. In addition to piano, Marcela loves playing soccer and plays for the Elite Clubs National League (ECNL), a top, league-based platform embedded with grit, collaboration and tenacity, things that both playing an instrument and a sport share.

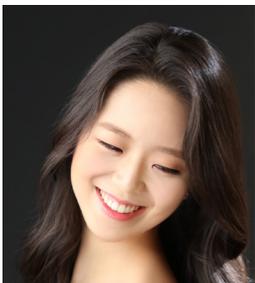


[Annabelle Wei](#)

Violinist

USA 

Annabelle Wei is a seventh-grader at the Sanford School in Hockessin, Delaware. Studying with both Laura Bossert and J Freivogel, Annabelle made her solo performance debut at Rendell Room at the Kimmel Center at age 9 and won top prizes at the Oscar Rieding (Slovenia), Vivace International, ODIN International, the Golden Classical Music Awards, and Constantine the Great International Competitions. Her precocious composing skills were also recognized for her performance and original composition, "Midnight Storm" by the Rieding International Competition. [Read more...](#)



[Subin Lee](#)
Harpist

**Republic of
Korea**



Subin Lee is the Marilyn Costello Annual Fellow at the Curtis Institute of Music, where she studies with Elizabeth Hainen, Principal Harpist of the Philadelphia Orchestra. She won first prize at the Suoni d'arpa International Harp Competition. As the youngest among all contestants, Subin was the winner of the 2017 Lyon & Healy Awards and is also a prizewinner of Szeged International Harp Competition, Germany International Harp Competition, Korea International Harp Competition, and Hudson International Concerto Competition. Subin has been selected as Kumho Prodigy sponsored by the Kumho Asiana Foundation to hold solo recitals in 2014 and 2016. [Read more...](#)



[Teresa Laiz](#)
Castanetist

Spain 

Teresa Laiz (Madrid, 1966)

Dancer, Teacher, Composer and Castanets Soloist. Director/Founder of the International Castanets Festival. Member of the International Dance Council CID - UNESCO. Orchestra and Band Conducting Studies. Degree in English Philology. Doctoral Courses in Linguistics. Master in Personnel Management. After teaching and performing as a Flamenco dancer, she began her career as a castanets soloist in 2006 composing her own Castanets scores, offering concerts, teaching and writing her own Castanets Method. [Read more...](#) Discography "Repicando el Alma" (2007).

Our Judges



Dr. Benjamin Hansen

Choral

Dr. Benjamin Hansen is the founder and Artistic Director of The Helios Ensemble, an award-winning SATB semi-professional choral group in Tucson, Arizona. Interim Co-director of the Tucson Symphony Orchestra Chorus Director of Music at Catalina United Methodist Church. Sr. Hansen received his BA from Yale, singing in the Yale Whiffenpoofs; his MM in voice from the Catholic University of America; and his MM in conducting from the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati. He received a DMA in choral conducting at the University of Arizona. [Read more...](#)



Daniel Ihasz

Voice

Lyric Baritone - Daniel Ihasz, earned a Master of Music degree in Performance and Literature from the Eastman School of Music, along with the prestigious Performer's Certificate. From 1992 to 2022, he was a member of the voice faculty at the State University of New York at Fredonia and achieved the rank of Full Professor. For the past two years he served as the Interim Director for the School of Music and previously served as the former Chair of the Voice Area. In 2013, he was awarded the State University of New York Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. An active performer he has performed with the Carolina Chamber Chorale, which debuted at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival and completed a new recording of Menotti's The Unicorn, Gorgon and Manticore (Albany Records). [Read more....](#)



Emil Chudnovsky

Strings

Emil Israel Chudnovsky hearkens back to the grand romantic tradition of the golden age of violinists. His lush sound and inimitable ability to connect with audiences have garnered him accolades from listeners, presenters and critics alike. Recent seasons have been full of firsts, including his debut this season at the Seoul Arts Center in South Korea with the KammerSymphonie Berlin, and his recent inaugural recording with the St. Petersburg Symphony Orchestra. Equally notable benchmarks include Chudnovsky's debut with the Orquesta Filarmónica de Jalisco in Mexico, when he replaced an indisposed soloist for a previously unknown concerto on ten days' notice. [Read More...](#)



James Welch

Piano & Concerti

Known for his performances on three continents, JAMES WELCH maintains an active career as a piano soloist, chamber musician, conductor and instructor of piano at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Fredonia School of Music. He was a prize winner in many piano competitions including the John Pierce Langs and the Bradshaw and Buono International. He has performed solo and lecturer recitals for the SUNY at Buffalo; the SUNY at Fredonia; Morgan State University; East Carolina University; Jamestown Community College; all throughout the Portland, OR area; Lucca, Italy; and festivals throughout southern France. [Read more...](#)



Elizabeth Mann

Flute

Elizabeth Mann is a Solo, Chamber, and Orchestra musician, Principal Flute with Grammy Award winning Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, member of Pulitzer Award winning ensembles, adjudicator, guest Principal flutist with NY Phil, Boston Symphony. Elizabeth Mann has been highlighted in many concerts as principal flute of Orchestra of St. Luke's and St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble since 1983. She has toured the United States performing the Mozart Flute Concerto under the baton of André Previn; traveled throughout Spain and Japan performing the Brandenburg Concertos with violinist/conductor Jaime Laredo; and was guest artist at the Lochenhaus Festival in Austria under the direction of Gidon Kremer. [Read more...](#)



Pierre Beaudry

Guitar

Pierre Beaudry performs through the world. His extensive concert career takes him to Europe, North America, China and South East Asia, where his solo performances are acclaimed both by the public and the press. The critics have rewarded him for his interpretations of Baroque, Modern and Avant-garde music. In addition to being a laureate of the International Music Competition of Finale Ligure in Italy, he received numerous grants from the Quebec Arts Council, and is a DAAD alumni (German Academic Exchange Service). He studied in Germany at the Cologne Music Academy (Artist Diploma, with Honors), in France at the Paris Conservatory of Music (1st Prize) and at the Nice Conservatory of Music (1st Prize). [Read more...](#)



Paul Coleman

Composition

Paul Coleman enjoys a multi-faceted career as a composer, sound engineer, and teacher of composition, theory, and electronic music. He is a founding member and Sound Director for Ensemble Signal and has appeared on NPR's Tiny Desk Concerts and at venues including Carnegie Hall, Walt Disney Concert Hall, and the Kennedy Center. As a performer, Paul has worked alongside fellow composers, including Steve Reich, Julia Wolfe, Helmut Lachenmann, Kaija Saariaho, and composer/Radiohead guitarist Jonny Greenwood. Paul's music has appeared at venues around the world, ranging from large ensembles to solo and chamber works. Some recent projects include a commission for the Eastman's Musica Nova, solo concerts at The Stone NYC, and tours of historic carillons throughout Europe. [Read more...](#)



Giacomo Franci

Concerti

Maestro 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 Direccion 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. [Read more...](#)

Our Team



Anna Ouspenskaya

Co-Founder
Virtual Concert Halls
&
Sound Espresso



James Welch

Co-Founder
Progressive
Musicians



Igor Zubkovsky

Editor
Co-Found &
Director of
Productions
Virtual Concert
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Fedor Ouspensky

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Support Staff
Progressive
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Cathleen Welch

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**VIRTUAL
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HALLS**

UPCOMING EVENTS

[coORCHESTRA 2nd Tier Auditions Online](#)

December 3rd @ 9:00pm; 4th @ 8:00am, 1:00pm & 6:00pm; 5th @ 10:00am EST

[coORCHESTRA & Western New York Chamber Orchestra](#)

An all Concerto Concert

February 17th @ 7:30pm; Buffalo, NY

February 19th @ 4:00pm; SUNY Fredonia; Fredonia, NY

Scan the QR code
*to view the digital program including links to
more bios and previous audition videos*



First Tier Auditions

[*Session #1*](#)

[*Session #2*](#)

[*Session #3*](#)

Second Tier Auditions

[*Session #1*](#)

[*Session #2*](#)

[*Session #3*](#)

[*Laureate Announcements*](#)

Before the Gala

[*Live Streamed Interviews of the Laureates with Steve Robinson*](#)