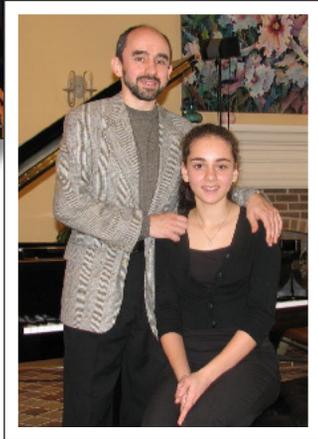



BIRMINGHAM
Chamber Music
SOCIETY
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present

New York Chamber Soloists



With Yakov &
Aleksandra Kasman



Brock Hall, Samford University
November 20, 2011
www.bcmsal.org

New York Chamber Soloists

Tomoya Aomori, double bass & xylophone • Allen Blustine, clarinet
Emily Popham Gillins, violin • Adam Grabois, cello • Jennifer Grim, flute
Melvin Kaplan, oboe • Ynez Lynch, viola • Curtis Macomber – violin

Acclaimed as an outstanding ensemble of distinguished virtuosi, performing widely diverse repertoire in creatively programmed concerts, the New York Chamber Soloists have maintained a unique niche in the chamber music world for over five decades. This twelve-member ensemble of strings, winds, and keyboard can increase to as many as twenty with the addition of guest artists, giving it the flexibility to offer many works that are seldom heard due to the unusual instrumental combinations for which they were written.

With more than 250 works in their repertoire, the Chamber Soloists have made a valuable contribution to the musical life of this country, and have helped to expand the audience for chamber music. Their programming innovations have included Bach's complete *Brandenburg Concerti* in a single concert; "Paris in the '20s"; an American Classics program; the complete Mozart horn concerti; and song cycles, cantatas, and operas from Monteverdi to Aitken.

They have added substantially to the catalog of 20th century chamber works, with the more than 25 compositions written for them by such significant composers as Gunther Schuller, Mario Davidovsky, Ezra Laderman, and Mel Powell. The group has also commissioned works for children, including *Ferdinand the Bull* from noted American composer Hugh Aitken, and compositions based on *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Gerald Fried and Tania French.

The ensemble has compiled an impressive record of repeat engagements in North America and abroad, including eleven European tours, six Latin American tours, and numerous tours of the Far East and South Pacific.

In the United States, the Chamber Soloists have appeared frequently in New York City at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Lincoln Center, in Washington at the Library of Congress, the National Academy of Sciences, the Kennedy Center, and the National Gallery of Art, at major universities across the country from Boston to Berkeley, and at the Mostly Mozart, Sun Valley, and Caramoor Festivals. Recent performances include two at the Casals Festival, as well as the debut of the Chamber Soloists' new initiative, a large-scale orchestral program featuring luminaries such as Richard Stoltzman, Menahem Pressler, and Anton Kuerti. These programs have been huge successes at venues including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Kravis Center, UCLA, and the University of Arizona. The New York Chamber Soloists were in residence at the Vermont Mozart Festival every summer from its inception in 1974 through its last year in 2010.

Curtis Macomber (violin) is one of the most versatile soloists/chamber musicians before the public today, equally at home in repertoire from Bach to Babbitt. As member of the New World String Quartet from 1982-93, he performed in

virtually all the important concert series in this country, as well as touring abroad. He is the violinist of *Speculum Musicae* and *Da Capo*, and a founding member of the *Apollo Trio*. His most recent recordings include a solo recording (“Casting Ecstatic”) on *CRI*, the complete Grieg Sonatas on *Arabesque*, an all-Steve Mackey record (“Interior Design”) on *Bridge*, and the complete Brahms Sonatas, also for *Bridge*. Mr. Macomber is presently a member of the chamber music faculty of the *Juilliard School*, where he earned B.M., M.M., and D.M.A. degrees as a student of Joseph Fuchs. He is also on the violin faculty of the *Manhattan School of Music*, and has taught at the *Tanglewood*, *Taos*, and *Yellow Barn Music Festivals*.

Emily Popham Gillins (violin) has traveled throughout the United States, Europe, Korea, and Israel as a soloist and collaborative chamber musician. As first violinist of the *Degas String Quartet* and a member of the *International Sejong Soloists*, she has performed at the *Library of Congress* and the *Kennedy Center*. Other collaborations include concerts at the *Prussia Cove International Musicians Seminar* and the *Aspen, Ravinia and Taos Music Festivals*. Emily completed degrees from *Indiana University*, the *Juilliard School* and *Manhattan School of Music* studying with Miriam Fried, Robert Mann, and Sylvia Rosenberg. She has served as assistant concertmaster of the *Sarasota Opera Orchestra* and as a faculty member of the *Summertrios Music Festival* in Pennsylvania. She is currently a member of *Ensemble ACJW* and performs regularly at *Carnegie’s Weill Hall*. Emily joined the *New York Chamber Soloists* in 2008.

Ynez Lynch (viola), an original member of the *New York Chamber Soloists*, has been viola soloist with the *Musica Aeterna Orchestra* and the *Festival Orchestra* of New York at the *Metropolitan Museum of Art*, *Carnegie Hall* and *Lincoln Center*. She has also performed with the *Festival Winds* and appeared as guest artist with the *American and Emerson String Quartets* and the *Paris Piano Trio*. She has performed in the chamber orchestra and as viola soloist at the *Casals Festival* in Prades, France, and in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Ms Lynch toured the United States and Europe as a member of the original cast of *New York Pro Musica’s* production of *The Play of Daniel*, which was recorded by *Decca*. She has also recorded for *CRI* and *Nonesuch*, and has made many radio and television appearances in North America and Europe.

Adam Grabois (cello) has a varied career as chamber musician, soloist, teacher, and recording artist, and is the founder of the record label *Reflex Editions*. About his first recording *The Philadelphia Inquirer* wrote, “Sometimes, the way he plays with the sound of a single note has enough emotional sustenance in it to launch a half-dozen distinct feelings in quick succession.” A second disc, *DUOS: Martinu, Ravel, Kodaly*, was released to critical acclaim in 2008. Recent appearances include the *Metropolitan Museum of Art* and the *Morgan Library* in New York City, the *National Gallery* in Washington, and the *Getty Center* in Los Angeles. He is also the cellist of the *Lile Piano Trio* and a member of the *Finckel Cello Quartet*. Past collaborations have included performances with *Menahem Pressler* and *Mikhail Baryshnikov*. Educated at *Swarthmore College*, he studied with *David Finckel* and has taught as his assistant. He is on the faculty of the *Kinhaven Music School* in Vermont and the *Weston Music Center* in Connecticut. His cello was made by

Samuel Zygmuntowicz in Brooklyn in 1998 and his bows were made by Ole Kanestrøm in 2004 and 2008.

Tomoya Aomori (double bass) A Juilliard graduate, bassist Tomoya Aomori plays both classical and jazz bass. Aomori was a finalist of the 2001 New York Philharmonic Young Artists Competition and the first-prize winner in the International Society of Bassists' Young Bassist Competition in 2003. He has performed concertos with the Juilliard Orchestra, the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra, and the Children's Orchestra Society. He has played in jazz clubs such as the Blue Note and Birdland. Aomori is currently a faculty member at the Children's Orchestra Society in Long Island and is the Percussion Ensemble Director at the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra.

Jennifer Grim (flute) Hailed by The New York Times as "a deft, smooth flute soloist," Jennifer Grim has performed across the United States as an active solo and chamber musician of both the classic literature and contemporary music. She is also a member of the Zephyros Winds and the Proteus Ensemble. She has also performed with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, Speculum Musicae, and ensemble 21. As a soloist, she has performed all of the flute concerti of Mozart with the Vermont Mozart Festival. Currently principal flute of the Vermont Mozart Festival, Ms. Grim has performed at the Aspen Music Festival and the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival. A native of California, Ms. Grim received her bachelor's degree from Stanford University, and her Masters and Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Yale School of Music. Ms. Grim is currently Assistant Professor at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Melvin Kaplan (oboe), founder/artistic director of the New York Chamber Soloists and the Festival Winds, has been for more than 40 years one of America's most influential forces in chamber music, both as a renowned performer and as manager, teacher, lecturer and writer. As a soloist, he has premiered works by Vaughan Williams, Ezra Laderman, Hugh Aitken, Gunther Schuller, Mel Powell, Heitor Villa-Lobos and Jean Francaix. On the faculty of the Juilliard School for 30 years, Mr. Kaplan was also for many years featured regularly as a lecturer/performer at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He founded and was Artistic Director of the Vermont Mozart Festival.

Allen Blustine (clarinet) is a member of the New York Chamber Soloists and the award-winning new music ensemble Speculum Musicae (of which he is currently the President and Director). An active proponent of new music for the clarinet, he has premiered over 100 solo and chamber works including Milton Babbitt's "My Ends are My Beginnings," Donald Martino's "Triple Concerto," Elliott Carter's "GRA (New York premiere)," Pulitzer Prize-winner Wayne Peterson's "Peregrinations" for solo clarinet and, most recently, Pulitzer Prize-winner Mario Davidovsky's "Synchronisms No. 12 for clarinet and electronic sounds." He was principal clarinetist of the Japan Philharmonic in the early 1970s and the Musica Aeterna Orchestra at the Metropolitan Museum and has frequently performed with the New York Philharmonic. He is currently on the faculty of Columbia University and is a founding member of the North Country Chamber Players in New Hampshire and the associate director of the Institute and Festival for Contemporary Performance at Mannes College of Music in New York.

Yakov & Aleksandra Kasman

Yakov Kasman (piano) debuted in America in 1997 as Silver Medalist in the Tenth Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in Fort Worth was the culmination of several competition triumphs and tours in Europe and the Middle East, including prizes at the 1991 Valentino Bucchi Competition in Rome, the 1991 London World Piano Competition, the 1992 Artur Rubinstein International Competition in Tel Aviv, and the 1995 International Prokofiev Competition at St. Petersburg. Since then he has given concerts in the United States, South America, Europe, Russia and Asia. He has appeared as soloist with more than fifty orchestras in the U. S. as well as France, Singapore, Taiwan, Spain, South Korea, and Moscow. He is Professor of Piano and Artist-in-Residence at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Aleksandra (Sasha) Kasman (piano) was born in 1995 in Moscow, Russia and moved to the United States with her family at the age of three. She started piano lessons at age six with her mother Tatiana Kasman. For the past five years she has been studying with her father, internationally renowned pianist and teacher Yakov Kasman. Since 2008 Sasha has been a regular participant of the International Summer Music Academy in Kiev, Ukraine. In October 2008 she won the Silver Medal and the Special Prize for Best Performance of Works by Prokofiev in Kiev, Ukraine. She will perform with two other Horowitz International Piano Competition winners in three recitals in Japan in March of 2012. Sasha made her European solo debut recital in 2009 in the Salle Cortot, Paris, France. As the Grand Prize winner of the Lois Pickard Music Scholarship Competition Sasha became a soloist with the Alabama Symphony Orchestra in its 2008-09 season. For the past two years she has won awards in the MTNA junior and senior divisions, the 2010 Eunice Hoffmeister Young Artist Competition, and winner of the 2010 and 2011 Alabama Federation of Music Clubs State Competitions. As National winner of the NFMC Stillman-Kelley Award, Sasha gave a recital at NFMC National Conference in Washington, D.C. in June of 2011. She is a junior at Vestavia Hills High School where she serves as vice-president of the French Club.

 <p>BIRMINGHAM Chamber Music SOCIETY</p>	<h2>Upcoming Concerts for 2012</h2>
<p>Augustin Hadelich & Justin Brown Wednesday, February 29, 2012 • 7:30 p.m. Reynolds-Kirschbaum Recital Hall</p>	
<p>Old City String Quartet Tuesday, April 3, 2012 • 7:30 p.m. Reynolds-Kirschbaum Recital Hall</p>	

Program

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

Divertimento in D Major for two violins, viola, cello, and double bass, K. 136

Allegro
Andante
Presto

GEORG PHILIPP TELEMANN (1681-1767)

Sonata in G major for flute and oboe

Vivace
Allegretto
Spiritoso

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

Quintet in A Major for clarinet and strings, K. 581 – “Stadler's Quintet”

Allegro
Larghetto
Menuetto
Allegretto con Variazione

• *Intermission* •

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

Fantasia in F minor, for piano, four hands, D. 940

Yakov Kasman, piano • Aleksandra Kasman, piano

Allegro molto moderato
Largo
Allegro vivace – Tempo primo

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS (1835-1921)

Carnival of the Animals:

A Zoological Fantasy for Two Pianos and Chamber Ensemble

Introduction and Royal March of the Lion
Cocks and Hens
Wild Asses
Tortoises
Elephants
Kangaroos
Aquarium
People with Long Ears
Cuckoo in the Heart of the Woods
Aviary
Pianists
Fossils
The Swan
Finale

Program Notes

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart • Divertimento in D Major, K. 136

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was an amazing musical prodigy. At age three, he created tunes at the piano; at age four, he could recognize any music tone; and at six he was an accomplished pianist. Recognizing the youngster's incredible talent, his father took him on lengthy tours of the courts of Europe where the young Mozart astounded everyone with his brilliant performances. In January 1769, at the age of thirteen, Mozart entered the employ of the Archbishop of Salzburg, where he remained for twelve years. If Mozart had stopped composing after he left the Archbishop's court, he would be known as a gifted composer, but not as one of the world's most remarkable geniuses. Most of his works through that time are in the prevailing Rococo style: highly ornamented yet simple melodies, delightful but ultimately frivolous and superficial.

Only after Mozart left the archbishop's service in 1781 until his death in 1791 did he fully realize his inborn musical talent, creating a series of indisputable masterpieces for chamber ensemble, orchestra, solo performer, and the operatic stage. Mozart responded to the new ideas of the Enlightenment by infusing his music with great drama, expressivity, and emotional content.

The *Divertimento in D Major*, K. 136, is considered one of Mozart's "Salzburg Symphonies," though it and the two other divertimenti written during this period in the early 1770s (including "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik") differ from the true symphonies by virtue of having been written only for strings. Additionally, the divertimenti were written in the Italian – as opposed to Germanic – style; specifically, they do not have minuets. The *Divertimento in D Major* is a typically Mozartian accomplishment, coming to a climax in the thrilling Presto.

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Georg Philipp Telemann • Sonata in G major for flute and oboe

History's most prolific composer (as attested by no less an authority than the Guinness Book of World Records!), Telemann was a good friend to the Bach family, according to C.P.E. Bach, Telemann's godson. Although he began his career as a Lutheran church musician in the Bach mold, he was drawn to other forms of music and wider audiences. He became Germany's leading composer of opera, a genre Bach never touched, and allowed a certain "operatic" verve and facility to color his church music, something Bach rarely permitted. The result was that Telemann, not Bach, was the most sought-after church musician of the day and was the first choice for Cantor of the St. Thomas Church in Leipzig (Bach was a distant third, but eventually got the job!). The same light and airy quality characterizes Telemann's instrumental music, of which he turned out an absolutely incredible amount. Telemann published some of the pieces he was proudest of in a collection he called *Tafelmusik*, or *Musique de Table* in 1733. This collection contains three groups or productions, each providing an evening's musical diversion and each consisting of a sampling of the various instrumental genres cultivated in Telemann's day: a concerto, a suite, a quartet, a trio, and a solo sonata. This particular sonata is typical of Telemann at his gallant and effervescent best. It amply validates the claim he made in his autobiography that all the parts in his chamber

compositions were so composed as to be equally gratifying and interesting to the player. This concern for the development and balancing of the texture lends the whole a glittering and kaleidoscopic brilliance that is uniquely Telemann's.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart • Quintet in A Major for clarinet and strings, K. 581, “Stadler’s Quintet”

Mozart wrote his clarinet quintet for Anton Stadler, friend, fellow Mason, and extremely gifted principal clarinetist of the court orchestra in Vienna, giving it the subtitle, “Stadler's Quintet.” From all accounts, though, Stadler was a scoundrel who lived like a parasite in the Mozart home, never repaid the money he borrowed from his host and even stole and sold some of the composer's pawn tickets! But apparently a combination of Mozart's refusal to acknowledge Stadler's failings, his admiration for him as a musician, and his great love for the clarinet was enough to inspire the superb chamber work. Mozart finished the manuscript on September 29, 1789, and gave the first performance, along with Stadler and others, at the Imperial and Royal Court Theater in Vienna on December 22, 1789.

Three distinctive motifs make up the first thematic group of the opening movement: a sedate, lovingly shaped melody for the strings, the clarinet's athletic rejoinder, and a flowing eighth-note figure combined with a derivative of the string opening. After a full stop, the first violin presents the ingratiating second theme, also built on moving eighth notes, but with a more wistful character. As though this were not enough, Mozart presents still another glorious theme, shared between the first violin and clarinet, before the end of the exposition. In the development section, each string instrument plays the clarinet's opening phrase. After a while the clarinet joins in, going in broken chords from its lowest to highest notes. While the treatment may seem mechanical to some, there is no denying the amazing sonorities Mozart achieves. All three themes, slightly modified, are returned for the recapitulation.

The *Larghetto* is a quiet, soulful arioso for the clarinet, its prominence assured by Mozart's instruction that the strings be muted. After the extended principal theme, Mozart introduces a contrasting, slightly more agitated duet for first violin and clarinet. The remainder of the movement repeats these two sections.

Mozart goes far beyond tradition in the third movement: this minuet is much more intense and expressive than the usual dance movement, and it also has an additional trio. After the ardent, emotional *Menuetto* section, Mozart moves to minor key and strings alone for the somewhat anxious and breathless first trio. The *Menuetto*, without repeats, returns next, followed by the second trio, a rustic, peasant dance with the clarinet in the lead. The movement ends with another brief review of the *Menuetto*.

A delightful bit of insolence seeps into the folklike theme of the last movement, which is stated by the strings with afterthoughts from the clarinet. Mozart then puts the theme through six variations: Variations I, IV, and V playfully decorate or ornament the original tune, while II, III, and VI dig deeper into the melody, bringing out various aspects of its basic character. Of particular interest are Variation III, a mournful viola lament in minor key, and the slower Variation V, with its lyrical, but somber, melodic line. Good cheer, though, returns for the final variation, a sprightly close to a gentle and beautiful work.

Franz Schubert • Fantasia in F minor, D. 940, for Piano, four hands

In *The Lives of the Great Composers*, Harold Schonberg asserts that Schubert “was the first lyric poet of music.” Schubert achieved no such recognition during his lifetime. He only gave one public concert, and few important works were published during until after his death. If Schubert achieved neither fame nor fortune in his 31 years, he had fiercely loyal friends who kept his music alive until “some forty years after his death ... the world woke up to the fact that Schubert was one of the colossal creative figures of music” [Schonberg]. Schubert composed the *Fantasia in F Minor* in January 1828. He and Franz Lachner, a composer friend, premiered it on May 9, 1828 at one of that year’s few Schubertiads, musical gatherings of Schubert with and for his friends. Six months later, Schubert was dead. “Before Schubert, ‘Fantasie’ usually implied improvisatory material and structural freedom, but the *Fantasia in F Minor* is a tightly constructed work in which four movements are fused into one played without pause” [Christopher Gibbs]. The haunting motif of the opening reappears in the fourth section and the coda. Schubert dedicated this work to Countess Caroline Esterházy, a student and daughter of his former patron, with whom he may have been in love.

Notes provided by Howard Irving.

Camille Saint-Saëns • Carnival of the Animals

Camille Saint-Saëns was one of those people whose wide-ranging talents and capacity for work make more conventional people dizzy. He began studying piano at age two and a half and was composing by the age of five. When he was 13, he entered the Paris Conservatory, and at 22 was organist at one of the great churches of Paris, the Madeleine, where his playing won the admiration of celebrities such as Anton Rubenstein, Franz Liszt, and Clara Schumann. He toured widely as both a pianist and a conductor; his compositions were extremely popular, winning numerous important prizes.

Besides these substantial musical accomplishments, Saint-Saëns wrote books and essays on many subjects, studied astronomy, physics, and natural history, and learned several languages in his avocation as insatiable traveler.

The *Carnival of the Animals* is a suite of fourteen movements, each evoking a zoological image. While many are straightforward, whimsical examinations of its subject (*Kangaroos* features a hopping motif, for instance), other movements have tongue-in-cheek allusions: *Tortues* features an extremely slow rendition of the famous *Galop Infernal* from Jacques Offenbach’s opera *Orpheus in the Underworld*, and the *Personnages à longues oreilles* is widely thought to refer – in a not-so-friendly way – to music critics.

Because Saint-Saëns was concerned that the work would negatively affect his reputation, he insisted that *Carnival of the Animals*, with the exception of *Le Cygne*, not be published until after his death, thus, while the piece was written in 1886, it wasn’t publicly performed until 1922.

In 1949 the poet Ogden Nash wrote a series of verses to accompany each movement; the actor Noël Coward recited the poems on the original Columbia Masterworks recording. Today’s performance will feature the Nash poems.

Notes provided by the New York Chamber Soloists.

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