



CLEVELAND  
INSTITUTE OF MUSIC

# CONCERT SERIES

2023-24 Season



## About the Cleveland Institute of Music

The Cleveland Institute of Music empowers the world's most talented classical music students to fulfill their dreams and potential. Its graduates command the most celebrated and revered stages in the world as soloists, leading roles, chamber musicians, and ensemble members; compose meaningful, award-winning new repertoire; produce Grammy Award-winning recordings; and are highly sought-after teaching artists, administrators, and thought leaders. A testament to the excellence of a CIM education, more than half of the members of The Cleveland Orchestra are connected to CIM as members of the faculty, alumni, or both, and CIM alumni occupy hundreds of chairs in major orchestras worldwide. The school's increasingly diverse collegiate and pre-college student bodies benefit from access to world-renowned visiting artists, intensive study with CIM's stellar faculty, and the rich curriculum offered by CIM's partner, Case Western Reserve University. A leader among its peers, CIM is the largest presenter of free performances, masterclasses, and community concerts in the Midwest, hosting hundreds of events each year on campus and at locations regionwide, including Severance Music Center. Explore [cim.edu](http://cim.edu) to learn more.



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CLEVELAND  
INSTITUTE OF MUSIC

## A POCKETFUL OF OPERAS *In Concert*

Friday, April 5, 2024 | 7:30pm

Sunday, April 7, 2024 | 3pm

Mixon Hall

### **New Music Ensemble**

**Keith Fitch**, director

### **CIM Opera Theater**

**François Germain**, program director and vocal coach

**John Simmons**, vocal coach

*New Music Ensemble is generously supported by the Roy Minoff Family Fund.*

*CIM Opera Theater is supported by a grant from the John P. Murphy Foundation.*

### **Witch (2024)**

Alexander Moiseev

(b. 2004)

libretto by Alexander Moiseev  
after a story by Alexander Lygin

Witch: Julie-Michelle Manohar

Man: Heedo Park

Daniel Lopez, flute/piccolo

Tao Ke, clarinet

Kayla Bryan, violin

Carina Yee, violin

Christopher Gokelman, viola

Christopher Kim, cello

Anna Loegering, harp

Jake Taniguchi, conductor

## **Winnie-the-Pooh (2024)**

Noah Hertzman  
(b. 2002)  
libretto by Noah Hertzman  
after the book by A.A. Milne

Winnie the Pooh: AJ Gauger#, Ella Sobkowicz\*  
Christopher Robin: Lexy Jensen\*, Ruby Pine#  
Narrator: Colin DeMatteo

Stephanie Hile, oboe/English horn  
Lauren Jensen, horn  
Carina Yee, violin  
Christopher Kim, cello  
Jack Naglick, piano  
Albert Mackey, percussion  
Jake Taniguchi, conductor

### ***Intermission***

## **Sylvia (2024)**

Gabriel Stossel  
(b. 2001)  
libretto by Molly McLaughlin

Virginia: Savanna Butcher\*, Alyson Culbertson#  
James: Colin DeMatteo

Daniel Lopez, flute/piccolo  
Kayla Bryan, violin  
Christopher Kim, cello  
Christopher Baechtel, double bass  
Anna Loegering, harp  
Jack Naglick, piano  
Jack Fischer, percussion  
Jake Taniguchi, conductor

# Performing on April 5

\* Performing on April 7

## **Saint Agony (2023)**

Tristan Wilson  
(b. 2002)

### Scene One

libretto by Alex Calderwood

Aria: "Oh, that I could away from here"

### Scene Two

Aria: "Oh, providence and glee"

Duet: "You surprised me!"

### Scene Three

Love Duet: "It can only be clear now"

Aria: "This is what started it all"

### Scene Four

Aria: "Oh sister, oh hunting dog?"

Duet: "Does your criminal idiocy never cease?"

Aria and Finale: "Again he has been taken away from me"

Agony: Lexy Jensen

Eustace: Ku Liang

Sam: Connor Vrooman

Tao Ke, clarinet

Jamie Walton, trumpet

Christopher Gokelman, viola

Christopher Kim, cello

Christopher Baechtel, double bass

Jack Fischer, percussion

Albert Mackey, percussion

Jake Taniguchi, conductor



**Scan the QR code to access the libretti  
and follow along.**

## SYNOPSIS

### **Witch**

The concept of infatuation has always been interesting to me. It is perhaps one of the most illogical senses of emotional attraction, yet the most altering towards your state of mind. It is a kind of love where you become fascinated with the ambiguity of someone's character, and your brain fills in the blanks in such a way that creates an untrue, idolized version of them. This chamber opera is a metaphor for this concept. Amidst the landscape of a semi-stormy beach, a surreal romance unfolds between a man full of miraculous bravado and a witch who is convinced that he has refuted her damnation.

### **Winnie-the-Pooh**

One night before bedtime, Christopher Robin's parent tells him the story of how he and his friend Winnie-the-Pooh once tried to take honey from a beehive high up in a tree. First Winnie-the-Pooh tried climbing, but when that idea landed him in a gorse bush, he enlisted Christopher Robin's help. With a balloon, an umbrella, a cap-gun, and some ingenuity and magic, the two planned a daring heist.

### **Sylvia**

Sylvia is a short story about how two parents (Virginia and James) cope with the loss of their child Sylvia while blaming one another. Neither of them was directly responsible for the loss of Sylvia, yet they both blame one another for the loss of their child. Scene one opens up with the couple moving into their new apartment in the city. Scene two features Virginia and how she thinks James is responsible for the death of Sylvia. Scene three is sung by James and is his interpretation on how Virginia is responsible for the loss of their child. Scene four opens on both James and Virginia coming to the realization that it was their fighting with one another that was the primary reason that Sylvia left.

### **Saint Agony**

Scene One: We learn of Agony's plight as she recounts her torment.

Scene Two: Eustace enters, presenting his side of the story. They quarrel, leaving Agony alone with his new hunting dog, Sam.

Scene Three: Agony, sinking into delusion, envisions Sam as the reincarnation of a former love.

Scene Four: Eustace discovers this in horror. He takes Sam away, leaving Agony with even less than she began with.

We would like to make known that this presentation of *Saint Agony* does not match our original conception of the piece. Changes to the end of the libretto were requested, as our original conclusion was considered, by some, to be too controversial and offensive if left intact. We look forward to an opportunity in the future when *Saint Agony* can be presented as we originally intended it.

## ABOUT THE COMPOSERS

Starting from solo piano and making his way to writing for full orchestra, **Alexander Moiseev** has explored the realm of music from a very young age. He was first introduced to the piano around the age of 4 by his grandmother and her colleagues, who were acclaimed music teachers and professionals. When Moiseev was around 11 years old, he first started to extend his reach from solo piano into composing. Now, Moiseev is continuing his education as a sophomore at CIM studying with Keith Fitch. Since then, he has won several awards including the Marvin Hamlisch International Music Award for Classical Composition. Moiseev looks forward to continuing his studies at CIM!

**Noah Hertzman** is pursuing his undergraduate degrees in history at Case Western Reserve University and composition at CIM in the studio of Keith Fitch. His works have been premiered at CIM, French Woods Festival of the Performing Arts, Mostly Modern Festival, and Atlantic Music Festival. When he isn't studying history or composing, he enjoys playing the cello, baking, and riding his unicycle.

**Gabriel Stossel** is a young composer currently attending CIM, studying composition and piano with Keith Fitch and Derek Nishimura, respectively. As a composer, Stossel likes to explore relationships between broad overarching musical shapes, making connections between a myriad of arts. His works are often inspired by visual arts, architecture, and literature. Stossel has previously studied with Nicholas Landrum, Jennifer Merkowitz, and Paul Coleman.

**Tristan Wilson** is a composer and violist from Detroit, Michigan. Following the premiere of his Sinfonietta for string orchestra in 2014,

his works have been performed regularly across the continental United States. He has enjoyed collaborations with the Grammy-nominated Neave Trio, the Julius Quartet, as well as members of the American Modern Ensemble and Akron Symphony Orchestra. He was awarded first prize in the 2023 Cleveland Composers Guild collegiate competition for his work *Five Songs*, and his works are also featured on Petrichor Records' series *New Music by Living Composers*, released in 2021. Wilson has most recently spent summers at the Mostly Modern Festival (Saratoga Springs, NY) and Center Stage Strings (Ann Arbor, MI). He is currently pursuing studies in viola performance and composition at CIM in the studios of Mark Jackobs and Keith Fitch, respectively.

## ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

**Savanna Butcher** (soprano) from Jane Lew, West Virginia, is a second-year Master of Music student at CIM, studying with Mary Schiller. Butcher graduated from West Virginia University (2021) where she received a bachelor's degree in music education and music composition. She is an active teacher in the local community at The Music Settlement, Tri-C, and CSA. Butcher has written and premiered 10 original compositions, premiered other composers' works as a vocalist, and has been featured in various concerts and opera productions with CIM, Hawaii Performing Arts Festival, and WVU.

**Alyson Culbertson** (soprano) is a first-year Master of Music student at CIM studying with Dina Kuznetsova. She was most recently seen onstage in CIM's production of *Die Fledermaus*. Her previous operatic roles include Golden Fox in Janaček's *The Cunning Little Vixen*, the Sorceress in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, and Cinderella in Sondheim's *Into the Woods* in collaboration with Stetson University Opera Theater. Additional concert appearances include a chamber quartet performance in Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, and internationally at the Beaumaris Festival Young Artist concert in Wales. She received her undergraduate degree in vocal performance from Stetson University.

**Colin DeMatteo** (baritone) is a second-year undergraduate student at CIM studying with Dina Kuznetsova. He has performed with CIM Opera Theater and Delphic Forge Inc. His stage credits include

Marcus/Ghost cover (*Gracchus*), Papageno/Leporello (CIM Spring Scenes 2023), Thierry/2nd Commissaire (*Dialogues des Carmélites*), and chorus/Premier Ministre (*Cendrillon*).

**AJ Gauger** (soprano) is a fourth-year undergraduate student studying with Dina Kuznetsova. Gauger's recent performance credits include Oberto in Handel's *Alcina*, Soeur Mathilde in Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, and Spirit I in Massenet's *Cinderella*. Gauger has studied in programs in Arona, Italy, and Salzburg, Austria, and is a current fellowship member of the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus.

**Lexy Jensen** (soprano) is a fourth-year undergraduate student studying with Mary Schiller. A pioneer of new music, she has performed new works at CIM in student-composed micro operas and has premiered several pieces in her time as a student, including the award-winning song cycle *Five Songs* by Tristan Wilson. Previous credits include Mère Marie in Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmélites* at CIM and the soprano solo in Hailstork's *Four Spirituals* and Rossini's *Stabat Mater*. This summer, she will be performing the role of Dido in The New Voice Festival's production of *Dido & Aeneas & Aeterna*.

**Ku Liang** (bass) is a first-year Master of Music student at CIM, studying with Dean Southern. Liang has participated in various competitions during his undergraduate studies, including the Guangxi Arts University "Yiyuan Cup" Vocal Competition and the Preliminary Competition of Opera Group of Vocal Singing. He completed his undergraduate music education with vocal emphasis at Guangxi Arts University. Liang is also interested in Chinese folk music and opera, and has performed in several concerts and events.

**Julie-Michelle Manohar** (soprano) is continuing her education at CIM as a first-year Graduate Diploma student, with Dina Kuznetsova. She completed her Bachelor of Music in vocal performance and music theory, with a eurhythmics minor. Manohar sang Alma in Emma Cardon's *A Storm We Call Progress*, and premiered *The Maligned* and Steven Mark Kohn's *Will We No Longer Recognize this Place?* alongside Yolanda Kondonassis. Manohar frequently sings baroque music and recently performed in masterclasses led by Dame Emma Kirkby and James Taylor. She was named the 2024 Emmanuel Music soprano fellow, and performed at their Bach Institute, directed by Ryan Turner and Pamela Dellal.

**Heedo Park** (tenor) is a first-year Master of Music student at CIM, studying with Dean Southern. He completed his undergraduate vocal degree at Yonsei University.

**Ruby Pine** (soprano) is a senior undergraduate student at CIM, studying with Mary Schiller. Pine has performed the roles of Older Alyce in Cipullo's *Glory Denied*, Dorothee in Massenet's *Cendrillon*, Madame Lidoine in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Emilia in Verdi's *Otello*, and Young Blind Woman in the world premiere of *The Blind*. Pine performed in the ensemble of The Cleveland Opera's *Manon Lescaut*. Pine studied at the Frost School of Music's summer program in Salzburg, Austria, performing the role of Susanna in scenes from Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*. Pine is from New York City, and studied violin for 15 years at the School for Strings and orchestras in New York City.

**Ella Sobkowicz** (soprano) is a fourth-year Bachelor of Music student at CIM, studying with Mary Schiller. She recently sang the role of Young Alyce in Tom Cipullo's *Glory Denied* with CIM Opera Theater. At CIM, she has sung the role of La Fée in Massenet's *Cendrillon* and Constance in Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites*. In the summer of 2023, Sobkowicz sang the role of Miss Wordsworth in Benjamin Britten's *Albert Herring* with the Harrower Summer Opera Program in Atlanta. In select scenes in CIM's opera scene programs, she has sung Susanna in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, Mireille in Gounod's *Mireille*, Gretel in Humperdink's *Hänsel und Gretel*, and the cover for Nannetta in Verdi's *Falstaff* (Act II, Scene II). She was a student at the Miami Frost School of Music Patti and Allan Herbert Program at Salzburg during the summer of 2022.

**Connor Vrooman** (tenor) is a lyric tenor from Colfax, California. Vrooman studied classical voice at The College of Idaho. He performed roles such as Rinnucio from *Gianni Schicchi* and Frederick from *Pirates of Penzance*. Within his professional career, Vrooman has had solo performances with the Canyon County Symphony, Opera Elect, and Gemma Arts, as well as performed multiple works through contract with local composers. His performing is inspired by his folk singing background growing up in the rural Sierra Nevada mountains. Vrooman is currently studying with Clifford Billions at CIM.

## CIM OPERA THEATER

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## CIM VOICE FACULTY

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Dean Southern

## ABOUT THE NEW MUSIC ENSEMBLE

The CIM New Music Ensemble was first formed as the CIM Contemporary Music Ensemble in 1973 by composer Donald Erb (a precursor to the ensemble was CIM's "Portfolio" Series in the early 1970s). Its first concert was given on October 10, 1973, and was devoted to the music of Bernard Heiden, with whom Erb had studied at Indiana University. Since then, the ensemble has been led by Larry Baker and Margaret Brouwer; it is currently led by Keith Fitch, Head of the CIM Composition Department. Devoted to the music of our time—as well as classics of the twentieth century—in recent years the ensemble has hosted many of today's leading composers, including Claude Baker, Chen Yi, Donald Crockett, James Mobberly, Andrew Norman, David Rakowski, Shulamit Ran, Augusta Read Thomas, Steven Stucky, and Joan Tower, among others. Members of the ensemble have gone on to establish such contemporary music ensembles and series as Classical Revolution Cleveland, FiveOne Experimental Orchestra, and Ars Futura, as well as being members of such nationally recognized groups as wild Up and the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble. Notable alumni of the ensemble include the 2014 gold medal laureate of the

International Violin Competition of Indianapolis, Jinjoo Cho. For several years, the ensemble partnered with the Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland as part of their concert series; it now appears regularly at the Cleveland Museum of Art and as part of NEOSonicFest, the Cleveland Chamber Symphony's annual celebration of contemporary music in Northeastern Ohio.

## ABOUT THE FACULTY

**Keith Fitch** currently heads the Composition Department and holds the Vincent K. and Edith H. Smith Chair in Composition at CIM, where he also directs the CIM New Music Ensemble. Called “gloriously luminous” by *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, his music has been consistently noted for its eloquence, expressivity, dramatic sense of musical narrative, and unique sense of color and sonority. Reviewing a performance of his work *Totem* by Wolfgang Sawallisch and The Philadelphia Orchestra (chosen by Maestro Sawallisch to celebrate the orchestra's centennial), *The Wall Street Journal* praised “the sheer concentration of his writing, and its power to express a complex, unseen presence shaping the course of musical events.”

His works have been performed throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia by such ensembles and soloists as The Philadelphia Orchestra, American Composers Orchestra, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, Da Capo Chamber Players, guitarist Jason Vieaux, and many others. His music has been heard at the Mostly Modern Festival, Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, June in Buffalo, Atlantic Center for the Arts, and New York's Carnegie and Merkin Halls, among others.

A native of Indiana, Fitch (b. 1966) began composing at age 7 and began formal musical training on the double bass at age 11. While still in high school (age 16), he received his first professional orchestral performance. He attended the Indiana University School of Music, where he studied composition with Frederick Fox, Eugene O'Brien, and Claude Baker; double bass with Bruce Bransby and Murray Grodner; and chamber music with Rostislav Dubinsky, founder of the Borodin Quartet. He also counts Donald Erb and Joan Tower among his compositional mentors. Among his many awards are a 2023 Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship, the 2023 Ellis-Beauregard Foundation Composer Award, the Arts and Letters Award in Music

(2024) and the Walter Hinrichsen Award (2016) from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Fromm Music Foundation Commission, three Individual Excellence Awards from the Ohio Arts Council, a Copland House Residency Award, and an Individual Artist Grant from the Indiana Arts Commission/National Endowment for the Arts. He has enjoyed multiple residencies at The MacDowell Colony and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, as well as at Yaddo, The Charles Ives Center for American Music, and the Atlantic Center for the Arts.

Highly regarded as a teacher, chamber music coach, and conductor of new music, he has taught at Indiana University, Bard College, and for eleven years served on the faculty of the Mannes College of Music in New York. From 2015-17, he served as composer-in-residence and director of the Young Artist Seminar in Composition at the Rocky Ridge Music Center.

He frequently appears as guest composer at colleges, universities, and summer festivals nationwide, and his students regularly win awards from such prestigious organizations as ASCAP, BMI, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the Fulbright Foundation, as well as attend leading summer festivals around the world.

His music is published by Non Sequitur Music and Edition Peters and appears on Azica Records and Naxos Digital. He joined the CIM faculty in 2008.

**François Germain** (program director, CIM Opera Theater, and vocal coach) has performed extensively in Europe, the United States, and Canada as soloist and accompanist. Originally from Aix-en-Provence, France, he is the recipient of many awards, including first prizes in the Radio-France Competition and the Paul and Verna Gelinias Competition. He studied at the Conservatoire Darius Milhaud and holds master's and doctoral degrees in piano performance from the University of Montreal as well as a master's degree in political science from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in France.

He is a founder and editor of the website [dictionpolice.com](http://dictionpolice.com), a leading language resource for classical singers and institutions. He has given masterclasses and workshops on French vocal repertoire in Europe and throughout the United States.

Since 2017, he has been on the music staff of the Semperoper in Dresden, Germany, as a guest vocal and language coach for new French productions. For the past 12 years, Germain has also been on

the faculty of the University of Miami Frost School of Music Summer Program in Salzburg, Austria, one of Europe's longest running and most respected programs of its kind for singers and vocal pianists. Prior to his engagement at CIM as vocal coach in 2019, Germain was an associate professor of piano and vocal coaching at the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam, where he was the head of the piano department and on the music staff of the Crane Opera Ensemble.

**John Simmons** (vocal coach and chorus master) received a Master of Music degree in piano performance from Peabody Conservatory as a student of Yoheved Kaplinsky. He also holds an Artist Diploma in piano performance from the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, Vienna, Austria, where he was a student of Paul Badura-Skoda. He was appointed to the CIM Opera faculty in 2005.

Simmons has appeared in numerous recitals in Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Italy, and in the US at Weill Recital Hall, Merkin Hall, and the Austrian Cultural Forum in New York City. He has performed with artists and ensembles including Jonas Kaufmann, Christopher Maltman, John Aler, London Symphony Chorus, Westminster Choir, Joffrey Ballet of Chicago, Spoleto Festival Orchestra, and The Cleveland Orchestra in the Beyond the Score Series. Simmons has coached, taught, and performed at AIMS, Spoleto Festival USA, Centro Studi Italiani, Amalfi Coast, Shaker Mountain, and Lincoln Center festivals. He was pianist/coach for two seasons at the Graz Oper, teaching assistant at the Hochschule für Musik in Graz, an associate coach at the Juilliard Opera Center for three years, and on the coaching faculty at the CW Post campus of Long Island University for six years. In 2004-05, he was guest professor of collaborative piano at Rutgers University.

While in New York, Simmons played in the voice studios of many well-known teachers including Doris Yarick Cross and Anna Moffo. He was music director and pianist for New York Opera Project's production of Barber's *Vanessa* in 2004 and assistant conductor for the Lincoln Center Festival and University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, productions of *The Silver River* by Bright Sheng in 2002 and 2007. Simmons is music director and conductor for Nightingale Opera Theater in Hudson.

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