



CLEVELAND
INSTITUTE OF MUSIC

2026-27
SEASON

CONCERT SERIES



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The Cleveland Institute of Music empowers the world's most talented classical music students to fulfill their dreams and potential. Its alumni command hallowed stages across the globe as soloists, opera leads, chamber musicians, and ensemble members; compose meaningful, award-winning music; produce Grammy Award-winning recordings; and are highly sought-after teaching artists, administrators, and thought leaders. CIM's faculty likewise hail from around the country and across the world, giving students "The CIM Advantage" as they embark on professional careers. The school's increasingly diverse collegiate and pre-college student bodies benefit from access to world-renowned visiting artists and abundant performance and outreach opportunities, and from 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. Explore cim.edu to learn more.



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CLEVELAND
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INSIDERS

Sunday, September 13, 2026

4pm | Mixon Hall

Honoring Immortal and Living Female Composers

Ralitsa Georgieva (PS '06), piano

Carolyn Gadiel Warner, piano

Katherine Bormann, violin

Olga Dubossarskaya Kaler, violin

Lisa Boyko (BM '85), viola

Si-Yan Darren Li, cello

Eleanor Pompa, cello, student artist

Jake McQuaid, flute, student artist

Gabriela Montero, piano

Daria Rabotkina, piano

Ruben Shonik, vibraphone, student artist

Ro Alia, soprano, student artist

Fanny Mendelssohn

Hensel

(1805–1847)

Das Jahr

IX. September – Am Flusse

Daria Rabotkina, piano

Gabriela Montero

(b. 1970)

Sur le lac du Bourget

Si-Yan Darren Li, cello

Gabriela Montero, piano

Jennifer Conner
(MM '87, DMA '92)
(b. 1962)

This Moment
New Life
Endings, Beginnings
In a Moment
The Path
At Journey's End

Ro Alia, soprano
Ralitsa Georgieva, piano

Dora Pejačević
(1885–1923)

Sonata for Violin and Piano in D Major,
Op. 26
I. Allegro

Olga Dubossarskaya Kaler, violin
Carolyn Gadiel Warner, piano

Lilyanne Leccima
(b. 2002)

Film Noir
I. Shadows in Streetlight

Katherine Bormann, violin
Lisa Boyko, viola
Eleanor Pompa, cello
Ralitsa Georgieva, piano

Brief Pause

Stanislava Stoytcheva
(b. 1975)

Sereniphoria

Ralitsa Georgieva, piano
Daria Rabotkina, piano
Ruben Shonik, vibraphone

Amy Beach
(1867–1944)

Sonata for Flute and Piano
II. Scherzo: Molto vivace

Jake McQuaid, flute
Carolyn Gadiel Warner, piano

Andrea Casarrubios
(b. 1988)

SEVEN

Eleanor Pompa, cello

Clara Schumann
(1819–1896)

Piano Trio in G minor, Op. 17
IV. Allegretto

Olga Dubossarskaya Kaler, violin
Si-Yan Darren Li, cello
Carolyn Gadiel Warner, piano

ABOUT THE MUSIC & COMPOSERS

Das Jahr, IX. September – Am Flusse

Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel

Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel's substantial piano cycle *Das Jahr* (*The Year*) serves as a vivid musical diary of her year-long journey through Italy, capturing distinct moods, landscapes, and seasonal shifts. This piece marks an expressive transition into autumn. In Hensel's original handwritten manuscript of *Das Jahr*, she introduced the month of September by writing a direct line from Goethe's poem *Am Flusse* (*At the River*) at the top of the page: "Flow, flow, dear river, never will I be happy." A continuous torrent of surging 16th-note arpeggios sweeps across the keyboard, simulating the relentless movement of water. Within these complex textures, a lyrical, pleading melody emerges—shared between the hands and floating just above the waves of sound. *September* holds a unique place in Hensel's legacy; it was the only movement of this massive, 12-part masterpiece published during her lifetime, appearing in 1846 under her Opus 2.

~ ~ ~

Sur le lac du Bourget

Gabriela Montero

Commissioned by the San Francisco Symphony and Gautier Capuçon

In writing this miniature for my dear friend and colleague Gautier Capuçon, I wanted to evoke the "old world charm" and romanticism that Gautier has in spades. I sought to honor the lake he grew up next to in this little homage to his beloved Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region in eastern France. It is a short and sweet conversation between the cello and the piano, giving a nod to 1960s French Cinema.

~ ~ ~

This Moment

Jennifer Conner

An active Cleveland area composer, Dr. Jennifer Conner completed early studies as a Regents scholar at the University of California Irvine. She did her graduate work at CIM studying with Donald Erb. Her orchestra music has been performed by The Cleveland Orchestra and the Oregon, Akron, Canton, and Grand Rapids symphonies. Performances by many vocal ensembles and chamber groups over the

years include the Cleveland Chamber Choir, Quire Cleveland, Panaramicos, Solaris, Cleveland Chamber Collective, Cleveland Baroque Ensemble, and Myriad. Numerous renowned artists have performed her solo works in Cleveland and beyond. Conner teaches theory and composition at CIM.

The song cycle, *This Moment*, written during and inspired by the experience of the pandemic, is a reflection on being fully present and celebrating each moment of our existence.

Texts by Jennifer Conner

New Life

Expectation, fear, hope...and then...wonder, awe, joy.

Endings, Beginnings

An end, a beginning, a circle in time.
Achievement and promise combined.
A pathway completed. The journey begins.
And all we have been and shall be
contained in this moment, yet touching eternity.

In a Moment

We wander through each day
Tied to phone and mindless task
In a moment
The world changes
We are fearful and alone,
Isolated behind mask and wall.

We live our daily life
In trivial celebration,
A false veneer of well-being.
In a moment,
Health fails,
Circumstances change.
Life as we know it comes to a halt.

Life changes forever
In just a moment's time
And nothing is the same.
Perhaps these sudden moments

catch us up short
Because we spend so many precious hours
Oblivious to the moment we are in.

The Path

The path behind,
a jumble of idyllic memory
and lost or broken hopes,
exerts a pull on me,
but I have traveled there before.
I cannot go back.

The path ahead,
a promise of glorious achievement,
or perhaps, sorrow hidden round the bend
Beckons me.
I will travel that path in due time,
But for now, it is illusive dreaming.

Where I have been, and where I might go
are bookends that frame the only moment of true import.
That moment is now.

At Journey's End

The small child, like a budding rose,
Is filled with latent possibilities,
And, like the lively bee,
flits gleefully amidst life's bounteous feast.

As a young adult, the flower fully blooms.
Arrival.

Each vibrant moment fraught
with purpose and import.

In the latter years,
As at the last, blossoms fade,
Am I, too, naught but a reflection of days gone by?
No, this is the time of culmination,
A rich fusing of youth's wonderous joy,
Midlife's hard-won success,
And the wisdom and patience gained through time,
Into a life's perfect conclusion.

~ ~ ~

**Sonata for Violin and Piano in D Major,
Op. 26, I. Allegro**

Dora Pejačević

Born in Hungary to an aristocratic family, Dora Pejačević is considered a major Croatian composer. From a very young age Pejačević formed strong left-wing political opinions, expressing her disdain for her fellow aristocrats who did not work. She travelled widely, read voraciously, and spoke multiple languages. Well-connected in European cultural and political circles, she counted people like poet Rainer Maria Rilke among her friends.

She left behind a considerable catalogue of 58 opuses (106 compositions), mostly in late Romantic style, including songs, piano works, chamber music, and several compositions for large orchestra. In 1913, Pejačević composed a piano concerto, her first orchestral work, marking her as the first Croatian composer to write a concerto. Pejačević's earlier compositions mostly consisted of piano pieces, sonatas, and songs and were considered elite in their nature. She later replaced the romantic music of her youth with new musical expressions that corresponded to the time in which she lived—the turbulent war years and the revolutionary changes of the 1920s.

The First World War, in which she herself participated as a paramedic, left numerous traces on her and her musical expression. She isolated herself and sought new compositional paths. The result of these efforts were cycles of solo compositions and vocal and orchestral compositions written to the verses of Karl Kraus, Rainer Maria Rilke, and Friedrich Nietzsche.

The Sonata for Violin and Piano in D Major, Op. 26, written in 1909 and otherwise known as “the Spring,” is a soaring work of considerable difficulty for both instruments and demonstrates her influences from the late Romantic period such as Sergei Rachmaninoff, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, César Franck, and the nationalist composers from Czechoslovakia such as Antonín Dvořák and Bedřich Smetana.

~ ~ ~

Film Noir, I. Shadows in Streetlight

Lilyanne Leccima

Lilyanne Leccima is a violinist and composer based in Boston, Massachusetts. She is a 2024 graduate of Case Western Reserve

University (CWRU), earning bachelor's degrees in cognitive science and music. She was the first concerto competition winner in the school's history to compose, perform, and premiere a concerto with the CWRU Symphony Orchestra in 2024.

Blending all three of her musical influences (African diasporic, European classical, and instrumental rock), Leccima's piece *Black Amber* had East and West Coast premieres by Dale Tsang and Chelsea Randall in February and March 2025. During the 2025-26 season, Leccima thoroughly enjoyed chamber music commissions and partnerships with ProjectSTEP, ZUMIX, and Castle Of Our Skins.

Leccima is a passionate advocate for expanding classical music pedagogy and repertoire. In addition to violin and composition, she enjoys speaking Mandarin and writing her historical fiction novel.

My piano quartet *Film Noir* was heavily inspired by the alluring soundtrack of French Netflix mystery drama *Lupin*. The twists and turns are excellently translated through Mathieu Lamboley's music, and I wanted to imbue my piece with the same melodrama of the film noir movie and TV genre. This first movement *Shadows in Streetlight* has a dark, tense character juxtaposing the heaviness of the lower piano range against the lightness of string harmonics and rolled chords. The viola plays a unique and versatile role in introducing the second theme and playing in its middle and high range for much of the piece, while blending seamlessly with the rest of the string section when assuming a supportive role. With their textural or melodic role, each instrument oscillates between casting an obscure shadow or shining a radiant beam of light in the image that this movement paints.

This piece helped me expand the bounds of a symmetrical phrase structure and my own harmonic language to create a more colorful sonic experience. I wanted to combine my typically dense writing with striking mood changes that transport the listener to a world full of intrigue and riveting mystery. The lyricism of this movement is the thread that joins every expression of yearning, warmth, and unpredictability provided by each instrument. Just as it is profoundly cathartic to watch a mystery unfold or hear an unfamiliar piece of music, this piece brings out the fascination for telling the stories of what occurs in the shadows, no matter how dark they may be.

~ ~ ~

Sereniphoria

Stanislava Stoytcheva

Stanislava Stoytcheva is a Bulgarian composer, pianist, and singer based in Munich. A prizewinner at several international composition competitions, she gained early recognition with the Grand Prix for Composition in Nagoya, Japan. She studied piano, composition, and jazz voice at the National Academy of Music “Prof. Pancho Vladigerov” in Sofia, then concert and opera singing at the University of Music and Performing Arts Munich. While still a student, she was engaged as a young soloist at the Bavarian State Opera, singing under conductors including Zubin Mehta, Fabio Luisi, and Adam Fischer.

Her work moves freely across genres and disciplines, drawing together classical music, composition, improvisation, jazz, and vocal artistry. Her orchestral music has been recorded at Abbey Road Studios in London under Andrew Cottee, and she has collaborated with artists including Grammy-winning composer and arranger Jorge Calandrelli. Her piece *A Birthday*, recorded by Singer Pur, appears on the album that won the OPUS KLASSIK in 2022. Her music has been performed internationally and broadcast by BBC, BR, and NDR.

Sereniphoria was originally conceived for four double basses and piano. Years later, I was asked by Ralitsa to arrange the piece for two pianos. As I began working on the arrangement, however, I found myself hearing different music in many places. Rather than trying to remain faithful to the original version, I followed what I was hearing, and the piece gradually took on a new form of its own. The vibraphone entered the sound world later, completing the present version for two pianos and vibraphone. The title *Sereniphoria* brings together two states: serenity and euphoria.

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Sonata for Flute and Piano, II. Scherzo: Molto vivace

Amy Beach

Amy Beach (née Cheney) was an American composer and pianist who became acclaimed as one of the most successful composers of her era, particularly without the exposure in her formative years to the European training and compositional traditions. As a young person, she demonstrated every sign of being a child prodigy with perfect pitch and an uncanny ability to play music by ear as well as to compose without the use of a piano. At age 6 she began to study the piano with her mother and gave her first of many public appearances at age 7.

After she married Boston surgeon Henry Harris Aubrey Beach, she experienced societal limits, common to many women of the time and of that class of wealth and social status, to an active pursuit of a performance career. She therefore devoted herself to a rather self-guided education in all things related to composition. Her European counterpart, Fanny Mendelssohn, experienced the same type of limitations in exposure and career pursuit. Nevertheless her first symphony, entitled *Gaelic Symphony*, performed by the Boston Symphony in 1896, catapulted her into national and later international recognition as a major American composer, and not least of all, the first woman composer to be in that realm. After the death of her husband in 1910, Amy Beach, as she came to be known, traveled to Europe and established herself in many major centers, primarily in Germany, where she received great critical acclaim as a pianist and composer. The remainder of her life was spent enjoying international recognition of her talents. She died in New York City in 1944.

The Sonata in A minor, Op. 34 (1896), is an epic romantic piece in the style of Brahms and Chopin. Originally for violin, this transcription for flute and piano by Dr. Alexa Still is similar in stature and difficulty to the sonata by César Franck. The scherzo movement is jocular and charming with a solemn middle section giving it the standard A-B-A format of formal compositional structure.

~ ~ ~

SEVEN

Andrea Casarrubios

SEVEN (2020), by Andrea Casarrubios, is a tribute to the essential workers during the global pandemic. This piece was written in New York, and it ends with seven bell-like sounds alluding to the 7pm tribute in appreciation of those on the frontlines.

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Piano Trio in G minor, Op. 17, IV. Allegretto

Clara Schumann

Composed in 1846 at the age of 25, the Piano Trio in G minor, Op. 17, by Clara Schumann, is considered her greatest, most mature four-movement work and her only piano trio. During that time she was living in Dresden with her husband who was being treated for his illness. It was also during that period that she had extensive training in

fugue writing (exemplified in the trio's fourth movement which has a sophisticated fugal section) and the publication of her Three Preludes and Fugues for Piano, Op. 16 in 1845. The trio was premiered by the composer in Vienna on January 15, 1847.

Schumann was first and foremost a superb pianist, considered for many decades to be one of the finest in all of Europe. Known for her masterful technique and a sensitive, artistic gift for interpretation, Schumann sustained a successful performance career for over 60 years with a vast repertoire including the masterworks of J.S. Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven, and the classics preceding her, to the repertoire of Robert Schumann, Felix Mendelssohn, Johannes Brahms, Frédéric Chopin and other mainstream composers of her time.

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Ralitsa Georgieva received her Bachelor of Music and Master of Music in piano performance from the State Conservatory of Music – Sofia, Bulgaria, a second Master of Music in piano performance from University of South Florida where she studied with Dr. Svetozar Ivanov, and a Professional Studies diploma in collaborative piano from CIM under Anita Pontremoli. Upon graduation from CIM, the Bulgarian born pianist joined the collaborative piano department at CIM.

Georgieva recently joined the masterclass audience relations team at the Verbier Music Festival in Switzerland. She is a recipient of the Steinway Top Teacher Award for 2016, 2017, and 2022 for her achievements as an educator and performer, and for her dedication to community and charity work. Her successful teaching career has brought her students to many prestigious venues to perform, including Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall. She was named a Steinway Educational Partner in 2025. Georgieva has been involved with the Cleveland International Piano Competition as member of the Audience Committee and as a performer at many community concerts around Cleveland throughout the years. She is the founder and artistic director of Music for Our Children, a concert series to benefit UNICEF – Children's Disaster and Emergency Relief Organization. Established in 2014, the concert series fulfills one of Georgieva's personal beliefs to help children and youth in need all across the world, through music, concerts, and continuously bringing awareness to the crisis circumstances sometimes children live in. A new addition to this project is her recently founded Songs of the Books program, which focuses on bringing music performances to local crisis nursery – Providence House and the Ronald McDonald Charity House.

Some of her performing engagements include performances as a guest artist at the Chautauqua Institute, Interlochen Center of the Arts, Playhouse Square, Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland Ballet, University of South Florida's Steinway Piano Series, Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival in Burlington, Vermont, "Peter the Great" Festival in the Netherlands, and Chamber Music from the Twentieth Century Festival in Perugia. Her professional collaborators include Cleveland Orchestra members Carolyn Warner, Brian Thornton, Bryan Dumm, Yasuhito Sugiyama, Michael Sachs, Scott Dixon, Charles Carleton, and Derek Zadinsky, as well as Matthew Vaughn (assistant

principal trombone, The Philadelphia Orchestra), Blair Bollinger (bass trombone, The Philadelphia Orchestra), Carol Jantsch (tuba, The Philadelphia Orchestra), Oystein Baadsvik (international tuba soloist), Haim Avitsur (trombone faculty, Manhattan School of Music), and internationally recognized pianists, educators, performers, and Steinway Artists Emanuela Friscioni and Caroline Oltmanns.

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Carolyn Gadiel Warner is a native of Winnipeg, Canada. She is a pianist and violinist, and has bachelor's and master's degrees in both instruments from the University of Toronto, as well as earning a first prize in violin and chamber music from the Paris Conservatory of Music under a Canada Council and French Government scholarship. Warner has been a member of the violin and keyboard sections of The Cleveland Orchestra since 1979, where she held the Marc Swartzbaugh endowed Assistant Keyboard Chair and served from 2021-25 as Acting Principal Keyboard. Before arriving in Cleveland, Warner served in both capacities with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. She is a founding member of The Cleveland Duo with her husband, violinist Stephen Warner, and of The Cleveland Duo and James Umble, both groups which have toured actively as concert performers and artists in education throughout the U.S. and abroad. She can be heard with both ensembles on the Cappella, Dana, Klavier, and Centaur labels. She has taught and held masterclasses at major conservatories of music throughout North America (including throughout Ontario, Quebec, and Alberta, Canada, and Mexico City), in Beijing, China, and in Sydney and Brisbane, Australia. Warner was appointed to the CIM chamber music faculty in 1987 and serves both the Conservatory and Academy divisions. Since 2004 Warner has presented an annual concert on the faculty and guest artist recital series at CIM called *Carolyn Warner & Friends* which in recent years features faculty, prominent guest artists, and CIM students. She and her husband have one son, Ari, who lives in Cleveland and is a professional artist.

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Katherine Bormann joined the first violin section of The Cleveland Orchestra in 2011. She completed degrees at Rice University and The Juilliard School, and subsequently became a member of the New

World Symphony in Miami, where she performed as soloist and concertmaster.

Bormann has participated in the Strings Music Festival, Mainly Mozart Festival, Aspen Music Festival, and Tanglewood Music Festival, where she was also a member of the contemporary music ensemble New Fromm Players. She has been a guest lecturer at Baldwin Wallace University, the University of the Pacific, and is now assistant professor at CIM, teaching violin and chamber music to Case Western Reserve University students.

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Olga Dubossarskaya Kaler has toured three continents as a soloist, chamber musician, and artist-teacher, balancing her performing and teaching careers with equal success. She joined the CIM violin faculty as professor of violin in 2017, following her 15-year tenure at DePaul University School of Music in Chicago.

Kaler's original composition for solo violin, *Recitativo and Toccata*, was published in 2020 by the Soundwave Music Company, along with her edition of the Solo Violin Sonata by Boris Dubossarsky, her father, a celebrated Moldavian composer. Both works are included in her critically acclaimed 2022 Centaur Records CD release, *Seven Ways To Say Farewell*. Four out of seven pieces are world premiere recordings.

Kaler's scale system for violin and for viola, entitled *Scale System for Reluctant Scale Enthusiasts*, and her method book, *An Effective Method for Teaching and Studying Violin Technique*, met with enthusiastic reception from string players and pedagogues worldwide. Both works are published through Amazon and in an electronic version through Ovation Press.

Kaler holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Northwestern University Bienen School of Music, and her previous degrees are from the New England Conservatory, Moscow State Conservatory, and Stolyarsky Special Music School for Gifted Children in Odessa, Ukraine. Among her violin competition awards are Diploma and the Special Prize for the best performance of the required work *Arioso and Burlesque* by Ottavio Zino at the Rodolfo Lipizer International Violin Competition, first prize at the Northwestern Competition, as well as first prize at Thaviu-Isaak Competition, USA.

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Lisa Boyko joined The Cleveland Orchestra in 1991, after serving as a member of the New Orleans Symphony, Toronto Symphony, and Minnesota Orchestra. Born in Cleveland and raised in Tucson, Arizona, Boyko studied for two years in Vienna at the Musikgymnasium and the Hochschule für Musik. She earned her Bachelor of Music degree from CIM, where she was a student of renowned violist and pedagogue Robert Vernon. Boyko has been a faculty member at CIM and Case Western Reserve University since 1997. For the past two decades she has also taught at the MasterWorks Festival, a Christian performing arts camp held every June/July. In her spare time, she enjoys gardening, reading, and traveling.

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Cellist **Si-Yan Darren Li** made his professional debut at age 9 and has since built an international career as a chamber musician and sought-after pedagogue. A prizewinner of the Tchaikovsky International Competition and the YCA International Auditions, he has appeared at Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Kennedy Center, Suntory Hall, and Taipei's National Concert Hall, as well as at festivals including Ravinia, Verbier, Kronberg, and Sun Valley. Li has collaborated with distinguished artists including Emanuel Ax, Leon Fleisher, Miriam Fried, Lang Lang, and members of the Emerson, Juilliard, Takács, Cleveland, Orion, Casals, and Ébène quartets. His recording of the Bartók string quartets with the Euclid Quartet received critical acclaim from *Gramophone* and *American Recording Guide*.

Since joining the CIM faculty in 2017, Li has served as Director of Chamber Music and a member of the cello faculty. His students have gone on to win positions in leading U.S. orchestras and top prizes and gold medals at major international chamber music competitions, including Banff, Bordeaux, Melbourne, Wigmore Hall, Fischhoff, and Coltman. He has also served as a panelist for the New World Symphony International Auditions.

A graduate of The Juilliard School and the Peabody Institute, Li was later named a fellow of the New World Symphony by Michael Tilson Thomas. His artistry has been honored with an American Masterpieces grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Li plays a 1773 cello by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini, generously loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Rin Kei-Mei.

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A Cleveland native, **Eleanor Pompa** hails from a musical family. Beginning her studies at an early age, she started piano lessons at 5 years old and has played the cello since she was 8. Currently, she is a fourth-year undergraduate student at CIM, studying cello under Si-Yan Darren Li. With an international and diverse performance career, Pompa has appeared in England, Italy, and the U.S. at Severance Music Center, the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., the Cleveland Institute of Music, Aronson Cello Festival, Todi International Music Masters, and a UNICEF benefit hosted at the Cleveland Steinway Piano Gallery. In orchestra Pompa has served as principal cellist of the National Orchestral Institute and the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra. She currently serves as principal cellist for the Cleveland Women's Orchestra. In addition to her solo and orchestral work, Pompa is an experienced chamber musician. She has appeared in groups at CIM, National Orchestral Institute, Encore String Quartet Intensive, and Bowdoin International Music Festival. Some of her notable chamber music coaches include Phillip Setzer, Stanley Konopka, Carolyn Warner, Anita Pontremoli, Todd Phillips, and Si-Yan Darren Li.

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Jake McQuaid is a versatile flutist and active orchestral, chamber, and solo performer based in Cleveland, Ohio. Known for his expressive sound, vibrant musicality, and engaging stage presence, he has performed with ensembles throughout the Midwest, including the Mansfield Symphony Orchestra, Jackson Symphony, Akron Symphony Orchestra, and Kaboom Collective Orchestra. He has also appeared at the National Flute Association Convention and with the CBDNA Wind Ensemble. McQuaid's performance experiences also include the prestigious Kent Blossom Music Festival, where he performed alongside The Cleveland Orchestra.

McQuaid earned his Associate and Bachelor of Music degrees in flute performance, graduating cum laude from Kent State University, where he studied with Diane Rechner. He is currently pursuing his Master of Music in flute performance at CIM, where he studies with Jessica Sindell and Hannah Hammel Maser. He currently serves as acting principal flute of the Mansfield Symphony Orchestra and teaches flute at the Akron Music Institute.

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Gabriela Montero's visionary interpretations and unique compositional gifts have garnered her critical acclaim and a devoted following on the world stage. Anthony Tommasini remarked in *The New York Times* that "Montero's playing had everything: crackling rhythmic brio, subtle shadings, steely power...soulful lyricism...unsentimental expressivity."

The 2025-26 season saw Montero as artist-in-residence at London's acclaimed Barbican Centre, which featured the UK premiere of her piano quintet *Canaima* with the Calidore String Quartet, her debut with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, and a new solo recital program, *Iberia*, showcasing Spain's rich influence on the piano repertoire through works by Albéniz, Granados, Alicia de Larrocha, Scarlatti, and others. This follows previous residencies with the Sao Paulo Symphony, Prague Radio Symphony, Bournemouth Symphony, Basel Symphony, and at the Rheingau Festival.

Montero's other recent and forthcoming highlights include debuts with Amsterdam's Concertgebouw Orchestra, Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome, Munich Philharmonic, Orchestre National de France, and Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin; extensive tours with the City of Birmingham and Prague symphonies; duo performances with Martha Argerich at Munich's Isarphilharmonie and Lisbon's Calouste Gulbenkian Museum; and performances of her own *Latin Concerto* with the San Francisco and Dallas symphonies (Marin Alsop), New World Symphony (Stéphane Denève), Vienna and Polish National radio symphonies (Marin Alsop), BBC Scottish and Antwerp symphonies (Elim Chan), Swedish Radio Symphony (Marta Gardolińska), and National Arts Centre Orchestra (Alexander Shelley), where she concluded a four-year Creative Partnership in 2025. In the same year, Montero was commissioned as a jury member by the 17th Van Cliburn International Piano Competition to compose a new work for all 30 competitors, entitled *Rachtime*, a piece that pays tribute to Van Cliburn's golden pianism and enduring place in the American cultural pantheon.

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Daria Rabotkina joined the CIM piano faculty in the fall of 2024 where she also serves as the Director of Academy Piano Studies.

Passionate about early piano education, she founded the FunKey Piano Project at Texas State in 2018, where she was an associate professor of piano (2016-24). Rabotkina's performing career includes collaborations with the San Francisco Symphony, New World Symphony, and Kirov Orchestra, and recitals at Ravinia's Rising Stars series, Kennedy Center, and Weill Recital Hall, among others. Her latest CD with humoresques by Dvořák, Reger, Rachmaninov, and Schumann was released to positive critical acclaim.

A native of Kazan, Russia, and the daughter of two pianists, Rabotkina is lauded as "...a pianist full of fire and warmth" (*The Plain Dealer*). Rabotkina holds degrees from Mannes College of Music and Eastman School of Music. Winner of the 2007 Concert Artists Guild International Competition, Rabotkina has received top prizes at international competitions and participated in Finland's Kuhmo Festival, Copenhagen's Summer Festival, and Germany's MusikFest in Kreuth. In the U.S., Rabotkina has appeared at the Rockport Chamber Music Festival, International Keyboard Institute and Festival, Music Academy of the West, PianoSummer at New Paltz, and San Francisco International Piano Festival. Rabotkina is a Steinway Artist.

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Ruben Shonik is a senior at CIM, where he studies percussion and timpani with Marc Damoulakis, Paul Yancich, and She-e Wu. A native of Sea Cliff, New York, he is a graduate of the Juilliard Pre-College division, where he studied with Pablo Rieppi. In 2026, he won first place in Division One of the Modern Snare Drum Competition and received the Bruce D. Collie Prize for outstanding achievement by a percussion student. He has performed with the Akron Symphony Orchestra.

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Ro Alia is a soprano currently studying at CIM under the guidance of Dr. Mary Schiller. She has performed roles including Papagena (*Die Zauberflöte*) and has premiered the role of Winnie the Pooh in a chamber opera adaptation of *Winnie the Pooh*. Recent performances include Serpina (*La serva padrona*) and the Dew Fairy in Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel*. She has also served as an understudy for Lauretta (*Gianni Schicchi*) and the Bird in *Blonde Eckbert*. In 2023, she received third prize in the Mirabell Competition and performed at both Schloss

Leopoldskron and the Mirabell Palace in Salzburg, Austria. She has performed portions of J.S. Bach's BWV 51, exemplifying her vocal agility and endurance. Alia has participated in the Salzburg program at the Frost School of Music.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, September 25

7:30pm | Kulas Hall

CIM Orchestra

Tito Muñoz, conductor

Brennen Taggart, double bass, student artist

COLEMAN Fanfare for Uncommon Times (2021)

TUBIN Double Bass Concerto (1948)

TCHAIKOVSKY Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74, "Pathétique"

Sunday, September 27

4pm | Mixon Hall

Celebrating the 60th birthday of Keith Fitch

Stephen Tavani (AD '18), violin

Christopher Gokelman (MM '22, DMA '26), viola

Kulas Foundation Visiting Artist

Khari Joyner, cello

Kulas Foundation Visiting Artist

Si-Yan Darren Li, cello

Scott Dixon, double bass

John Sebastian Vera, trombone

Shuai Wang (BM '03, MM '05, MM '05, AD '07, DMA '11),
piano/celeste

Sebastião Sheldrick, marimba, student artist

Daniel Kinney, percussion, student artist

Jay Walton, percussion, student artist

FITCH Come soon, come soon (2000)

FITCH Blue Poles: Number 11, 1952 (2026) *World premiere*

FITCH Manhattan Rolls (2004)

FITCH To sleep, to dream (2001, rev. 2004)

Wednesday, October 7

7:30pm | *Mixon Hall*

CIM Virtuosi

Todd Phillips, leader

Jason Vieaux (BM '95), guitar

VIVALDI Guitar Concerto in D Major, RV 93

ARNOLD Serenade for Guitar and Strings, Op. 50

MENDELSSOHN String Symphony No. 10 in B minor

BRITTEN Simple Symphony, Op. 4

Sunday, October 11

4pm | *Mixon Hall*

New Music Ensemble

Keith Fitch, director

Melinda Wagner, guest composer

Kulas Foundation Visiting Artist

Sheila Browne, viola

WAGNER Scritch (2009)

FELDMAN The Viola in My Life I (1970)

WAGNER Wood-Sprite (2025)

FELDMAN The Viola in My Life 2 (1970)

WAGNER Elegy Flywheel (2020)

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

Friday, October 16

7:30pm | *Kulas Hall*

CIM Orchestra

Sarah Ioannides, conductor

Kulas Foundation Visiting Artist

FARRENC Overture No. 2 in E-flat, Op. 24

ANDRÉE Overture in G minor

ANDRÉE Varför och därför

MENDELSSOHN Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 107,
"Reformation"

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As of July 7, 2026



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