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INSTITUTE OF MUSIC

2026-27
SEASON

CONCERT SERIES



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 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. 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 nationwide. Explore cim.edu to learn more.



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At CIM, students don't just prepare for performances—they prepare for careers. Through world-class training, mentorship, and real-world performance opportunities, they develop the artistry, leadership, and 21st-century skills to thrive in today's evolving musical landscape.

This is the **CIM Advantage**: transforming talent, dedication, and ambition into lifelong success on stage, in the community, and beyond. Your support helps make that journey possible.

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CLEVELAND
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CIM ORCHESTRA

Friday, September 25, 2026

7:30pm | Kulas Hall

CIM Orchestra

Tito Muñoz, conductor

Brennen Taggart, double bass, student artist

Valerie Coleman
(b. 1970)

Fanfare for Uncommon Times (2021)

Eduard Tubin
(1905–1982)

Double Bass Concerto (1948)

Brennen Taggart, double bass

Intermission

Pyotr Ilyich
Tchaikovsky
(1840–1893)

Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74,
“Pathétique”

Adagio — Allegro non troppo

Allegro con grazia

Allegro molto vivace

Adagio lamentoso

CIM ORCHESTRA

FIRST VIOLIN

Roni Oved, concertmaster

Be'er Sheva, Israel

Eivissa Pla Sorolla, assistant

concertmaster

Valencia, Spain

Yu-Chen Chou

Cleveland, OH

Christian Baumgardner

Virginia Beach, VA

Jingliu Sun

Shenzhen, China

Boris Tomov

Sofia, Bulgaria

Kaiwen Xu

Shanghai, China

Marlie Colness

Sycamore, IL

Evita Harrison Fiorentino

Brescia, Italy

Asher Milman

Tigard, OR

Yu-Chen Julia Lai

New Taipei City, Taiwan

Yadan Zheng

Urumqi, China

Qiye Charlie Li

Cleveland, OH

Dao Hui Chen

Montreal, Canada

SECOND VIOLIN

Tsung Han Hsieh, principal

Taipei, Taiwan

Brooke Lafontant, assistant

principal

Ardmore, TN

Olivia Gill

Holladay, UT

Tzu-Chi Lan

Taipei, Taiwan

Peirong Lin

Hangzhou, China

Michael Shapiro

Jerusalem, Israel

Yahli Anter

Tel Aviv, Israel

Ronnie Arbitman

Kiryat Mozkin, Israel

John-Paul Hernandez

Farmville, NC

Chuanliang Cai

Jinshi City, China

Meiyu Wu

Beijing, China

Harry Li

Oslo, Norway

VIOLA

Kathleen Stevens, principal

Wernersville, PA

Nana Wang, assistant principal

Taichung, Taiwan

Karlis Graufelds

Lansdale, PA

Mingkun Wang

Chengdu, China

Jae Mo Ahn

Gyeonggi-Do, South Korea

Ian Hall

Columbia, SC

Juan Manuel Brenes Mendez

Cartago, Costa Rica

Alejandro Mendez
Miami, FL
Quinn Wilson
Cleveland, OH
Wyatt Fox
Naples, FL

CELLO

Xiao Ma, principal
Luoyang, China
Yifei Duan, assistant principal
Cleveland, OH
Eleanor Pompa
Cleveland Heights, OH
Dongqin Xu
Hangzhou, China
Yi Jing Lim
Bukit Mertajam, Malaysia
Aiden Deir
Virginia Beach, VA
Indya Reed
Bedford, OH
Zack Geller
Katonah, NY
Xian Sun
Yangquan, China
Yu-Hui Yang
Taichung, Taiwan
Yincheng Song
Aliso Viejo, CA
Seth Grayson
Powell, OH

DOUBLE BASS

Halden Aistrup, principal
Sudbury, MA
Ben Hornacek, assistant principal
Cleveland Heights, OH

Yuming Zhu
Hefei City, China
Yusef Henry
Smyrna, GA
Ryan Fleming
Coon Rapids, MN
Andrew Bowles
Roeland Park, KS
Chaoren Zheng
Beijing, China

FLUTE

Kyuwon Baek
Seoul, South Korea
Hana Flood *
Glasgow, Scotland
Bomi Johnson ^
Brooklyn, NY
Madelyn Zoller
Hamilton, OH

PICCOLO

Madelyn Zoller
Hamilton, OH

OBOE

Hudson Hackley
Pittsburgh, PA
Gavin Joyner
Cumming, GA
Jiahao Rao *
Xiamen, China
Junyang Zhu ^
Auckland, New Zealand

ENGLISH HORN

Hudson Hackley
Pittsburgh, PA

CLARINET

Jisu Kang *

Frisco, TX

Robin Seo

New York, NY

Victor Velez

Commerce, TX

Shenrui Yin ^

Taiyuan, China

BASS CLARINET

Victor Velez

Commerce, TX

BASSOON

Jiaming Liu

Cleveland, OH

Enoch Shu *

Shanghai, China

Tyler Tan ^

Lakeland, FL

CONTRABASSOON

Jiaming Liu

Cleveland, OH

HORN

Jack Berendt

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TUBA

Dylan Arner # ^

Vandergrift, PA

Ethan Rumbaugh *

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HARP

Madeline Arney

Cincinnati, OH

TIMPANI

Ruben Shonik *

Sea Cliff, NY

Tristan Toma # ^

Kailua, HI

principal on Coleman

^ principal on Tubin

* principal on Tchaikovsky

PERCUSSION

Mitchell Beckmann

Wildwood, MO

Seb Sheldrick

Faro, Portugal

Ruben Shonik

Sea Cliff, NY

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Praised for his versatility, technical clarity, and keen musical insight, **Tito Muñoz** is internationally recognized as one of the most gifted conductors of his generation. Following his 10-year tenure as the Virginia G. Piper Music Director of The Phoenix Symphony, which concluded in the 2023-24 season, he continues his association with the orchestra as Artistic Partner. In the 2025-26 season, he also took up the role of Interim Principal Conductor at CIM, and now serves as Director & Principal Conductor of the CIM Orchestra and Visiting Professor of Orchestra Studies.

Muñoz previously served as music director of the Opéra National de Lorraine in France, and earlier held assistant conductor positions with The Cleveland Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, and Aspen Music Festival.

He has appeared with many of North America's leading orchestras, including those of Atlanta, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Minnesota, New York, and Utah, as well as the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, and Orchestra of St. Luke's – making his Carnegie Hall debut with the latter in a sold-out performance of Orff's *Carmina Burana* in February 2024. Maintaining a strong international conducting presence, Muñoz has also worked with the Frankfurt Radio Symphony, SWR Symphonieorchester, Deutsche Radio Philharmonie Saarbrücken, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Orchestre National d'Île de France, Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra, Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg, BBC Symphony

Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony, Royal Philharmonic (London), Ulster Orchestra, Danish National Chamber Orchestra, Luxembourg Philharmonic, Orchestra of the Music Makers Singapore, Auckland Philharmonia, Sydney Symphony, Adelaide Symphony, São Paulo State Symphony, Opéra Orchestre National Montpellier, and Opéra de Rennes. The 2025-26 season included debuts with the New Jersey Symphony, Nashville Symphony, Antwerp Symphony, Jena Philharmonie, Nürnberger Symphoniker, and Komische Oper Berlin, alongside return appearances with SWR Symphonieorchester and the New York Philharmonic.

A committed advocate for contemporary music, Muñoz has championed composers of our time through commissions, premieres, and recordings. He has conducted important premieres of works by Christopher Cerrone, Kenneth Fuchs, Dai Fujikura, Michael Hersch, Adam Schoenberg, Mauricio Sotelo, and Francisco Coll. His close collaboration with Hersch has included world premieres of *On the Threshold of Winter* (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 2014), the *Violin Concerto* with Patricia Kopatchinskaja and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra (2015), *I hope we get a chance to visit soon* (Ojai and Aldeburgh Festivals), *the script of storms* (BBC Symphony Orchestra, London), and *And We, each* (2024). In March 2025, Muñoz led the American Composers Orchestra in premieres by Tomàs Peire Serrate, Clarice Assad, and Edmar Castañeda at Carnegie Hall, receiving glowing reviews: “Brilliantly led by conductor Tito Muñoz, the concert felt like the center of a social triangle of concerts, parties, and going to church” (Boyd, 2025).

A passionate educator, Muñoz is a regular guest at many of North America’s leading educational institutions, summer festivals, and youth orchestras. He has led performances at the Eastman School of Music, Aspen Music Festival, Boston University Tanglewood Institute, Cleveland Institute of Music, Indiana University, Kent/Blossom Music Festival, Music Academy of the West, New England Conservatory, New World Symphony, Oberlin Conservatory, Royal Conservatory of Music (Toronto), University of Texas at Austin, and National Repertory Orchestra, as well as a nine-city tour with the St. Olaf College Orchestra.

Born in Queens, New York, Muñoz began his musical training as a violinist in the city’s public schools. He later studied at the LaGuardia High School of the Performing Arts, Juilliard School’s Music Advancement Program, and the Manhattan School of Music Pre-

College Division. He continued violin studies with Daniel Phillips at Queens College (CUNY) before turning to conducting at the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen, working with David Zinman and Murry Sidlin. He won the Aspen Music Festival's 2005 Robert J. Harth Conductor Prize and 2006 Aspen Conducting Prize, serving as the festival's assistant conductor in 2007 and later returning as a guest conductor.

Muñoz made his professional conducting debut in 2006 with the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center, invited by Leonard Slatkin as a participant of the National Conducting Institute. That same year, he made his Cleveland Orchestra debut at the Blossom Music Festival. He was awarded the 2009 Mendelssohn Scholarship sponsored by Kurt Masur and the Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy Foundation in Leipzig, and was a prizewinner in the 2010 Sir Georg Solti International Conducting Competition in Frankfurt.

~ ~ ~

Hailing from Lexington, Kentucky, **Brennen Taggart** is in his final undergraduate year at CIM where he studies double bass and composition with Charles Paul and Keith Fitch, respectively.

Taggart began his musical journey on the guitar at age 6 by listening, imitating, and improvising with the music of Stevie Ray Vaughan, BB King, and other great blues artists. Inspired by his father's encouragement and partnership in music-making, he continually sought new creative horizons and freedom of expression through music. Eventually, Taggart taught himself piano, composition, and double bass.

As a composer, Taggart seeks to reach his audiences in unique and heartfelt ways, blending his blues roots with jazz, folk, and contemporary music traditions. He recently premiered his *Bass Concerto No. 1* with a chamber orchestra on his senior recital, and is currently completing a collection of piano miniatures and a symphonic song cycle for soprano and orchestra. His music has been performed in venues such as the Berlin Konzerthaus, Chautauqua Amphitheatre, and Kilbourn Hall at the Eastman School of Music, among others.

Taggart is proud to be the first double bassist to win CIM's concerto competition, founded in 1964. He first encountered Eduard Tubin's *Concerto for the Double Bass* (1948) in his sophomore year of college, after looking for a work that felt both musically substantial and artistically complete. He was immediately struck by the unusual

combination of darkness and turmoil with the out-going, folk-like dances woven together in one continuous movement.

At first listen, he was left with more questions than answers, however, and after repeated listenings he began to discover something special contained within the fire of the piece: a great lion, a glimmer of hope that shines bright amongst the darkness. That discovery ignited within him the courage to undertake the work and a conviction to bring it to the stage, no matter how long the journey might have taken. Taggart is deeply grateful to Tito Muñoz and the CIM Orchestra for the opportunity to share this work.

At the heart of Taggart's artistic practice is the courage to be authentically oneself: to embrace the inner child and the inner sage in harmony with one another. He continually searches for deeper ways to connect with audiences by exploring a sacred path and expressing it through mind, body, and spirit. Taggart hopes not only to engage listeners in the piece presented, but to invite them into contemplation of their own lives. Welcoming listeners to consider how they, too, can cultivate the courage to embrace their unique calling, and to love freely and authentically for a better world.

~ ~ ~

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, September 27

4pm | *Mixon Hall*

Insiders Recital

Celebrating the 60th birthday of Keith Fitch

Celebrate composer Keith Fitch's 60th birthday with an exhilarating program spanning more than two decades of his music, culminating in the world premiere of *Blue Poles: Number 11, 1952*. Featuring an exceptional ensemble of CIM faculty, students, and alumni, this concert offers an intimate and dynamic portrait of Fitch's distinctive musical voice.

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