

COLBURN CHAMBER PLAYERS

From Fugue to Fantasia: Debussy, Mozart, and More

February 8, 2026
Thayer Hall, 4 pm
Blake Pouliot, Violin

Adagio und Fugue in C Minor for Two Violins, Viola, and Bass, K. 546 (1788)

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
1756–1791

Ethan Mayer, Violin I
Hayeon Suh, Violin II
Jonathan Brown, Viola
Tessa Nysetvold, Cello
Bryan Bailey, Bass

Quintet in F Minor for Piano, Two Violins, Viola, and Cello (1879)

CÉSAR FRANCK
1822–1890

Molto moderato quasi lento
Lento, con molto sentimento
Allegro non troppo ma con fuoco

Blake Pouliot, Violin I
Rachel Gardner, Violin II
SeungHyeok Baek, Viola
Serge Kalinovsky, Cello
Ray Ushikubo, Piano

Intermission

***Bryce* for Flute, Two Harps, Marimba,
and Percussion (1976)**

TŌRU TAKEMITSU
1930–1996

Calvin Mayman, Flute
Joshua Ho, Harp
Kaitlin Miller, Harp *
Matthew Howard, Marimba
Peyton Esraelian, Percussion

**Quartet in G Minor for Two Violins,
Viola, and Cello, Op. 10 (1893)**

CLAUDE DEBUSSY
1862–1918

Animé et très décidé
Assez vif et bien rythmé
Andantino, doucement expressif
Très modéré

Blake Pouliot, Violin I
Steven Lu, Violin II
Rang Tae, Viola
Nathaniel Yue, Cello

*Guest artist

This musical performance is approximately 1 hour and 50 minutes, including intermission.

This performance is generously supported by Rosanne Ziering.

Featured Artists

Blake Pouliot, Violin

Described as “immaculate, at once refined and impassioned” (*ArtsAtlanta*), violinist Blake Pouliot has anchored himself among the ranks of classical phenoms. A tenacious young artist with a passion that enraptures his audience in every performance, Mr. Pouliot has established himself as “one of those special talents that comes along once in a lifetime” (*Toronto Star*).



As a soloist, Mr. Pouliot’s 2025–26 concerto highlights include a return to the National Arts Centre Orchestra to open its season with Music Director Alexander Shelley, performing Shostakovich Violin Concerto No. 1. He will make debuts with the Illinois Symphony, performing Rózsa’s Violin Concerto with Music Director Taichi Fukumura, and with the Columbus Symphony. Additional concerto appearances include Rochester Philharmonic, as well as a tour with the Prague Philharmonia in Spain and the United States, culminating with a performance at Carnegie Hall, marking Mr. Pouliot’s Stern Auditorium debut. He continues to expand his presence abroad, performing with the Enescu Philharmonic in Romania and Symphony Nova Scotia. Recital appearances this season include Newport Classical, Vancouver Chamber Music Society, *Artist Series* of Sarasota, and *Portland Ovarions* with his long-time collaborator and pianist, Henry Kramer. As a chamber musician, Mr. Pouliot will perform at Bay Chamber Concerts, Spoleto, Cleveland Chamberfest, SummerFest in La Jolla, and Moab Music Festival.

Recent performance highlights include debuts with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl, San Diego Symphony, as well as the Houston Symphony, Grand Rapids Symphony, Rhode Island Philharmonic, and the San Antonio Symphony. In Europe, Mr. Pouliot performed with the London Philharmonic and Alevtina Ioffe, Chamber Orchestra of Europe with conductor Mattias Pintscher and cellist Alisa Weilerstein, KYMI Sinfonietta, and Orchestre National des Pays de la Loire. Recital performance highlights from last season included debuts at Carnegie Hall and La Jolla Music Society.

During his time as Soloist-in-residence of Orchestre Métropolitain in 2020–21, Mr. Pouliot and Yannick Nézet-Séguin performed Mozart’s Violin Concerto No. 5 and Piazzolla’s *The Four Seasons*, which led to Mr. Pouliot’s 2022 debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra at the Kimmel Center, performing John Corigliano’s *The Red Violin* (Chaconne for Violin and Orchestra) with

Mr. Nézet-Séguin. Highlights elsewhere include Beethoven's Triple Concerto with Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal in 2022–23, with Angela Hewitt and Bryan Cheng, as well as performances of the Paganini, Mendelssohn, Saint-Saëns concertos, and Bruch's *Scottish Fantasy* in subscription series across North America.

Mr. Pouliot released his debut album of 20th-century French music on Analekta Records in 2019. Featuring Ravel's *Tzigane* and Violin Sonata in G, Debussy's Violin Sonata in G Minor, and *Beau Soir*, the recording received critical acclaim including a five-star rating from *BBC Music Magazine* and a 2019 Juno Award nomination for Best Classical Album.

Since his orchestral debut at age 11, Mr. Pouliot has performed with the orchestras of Aspen, Atlanta, Detroit, Dallas, Madison, Montreal, Toronto, San Francisco, and Seattle, among many others. Internationally, he has performed as soloist with the Sofia Philharmonic in Bulgaria, Orchestras of the Americas on its South American tour, and was the featured soloist for the first-ever joint tour of the European Union Youth Orchestra and National Youth Orchestra of Canada. He has collaborated with many musical luminaries including conductors Sir Neville Marriner, David Afkham, Pablo Heras-Casado, David Danzmayr, JoAnn Falletta, Marcelo Lehninger, Nicholas McGegan, Alexander Prior, Vasily Petrenko, and Thomas Søndergård.

Mr. Pouliot has been featured twice on Rob Kapilow's *What Makes It Great?* series and has been NPR's *Performance Today* Artist-in-Residence in Minnesota (2017–18), Hawaii (2018–19), and across Europe (2021–22). Prior to that, he won the grand prize at the 2016 Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal Manulife Competition and was named First Laureate of both the 2018 and 2015 Canada Council for the Arts Musical Instrument Bank.

Mr. Pouliot performs on the 1729 Guarneri del Gesù on generous loan from an anonymous donor.

Jonathan Brown, Viola

From 2002–24, Jonathan Brown was the violist of the Cuarteto Casals, with which he performed in all of the major concert halls in Europe, North America, and Asia, as well as making numerous recordings on the Harmonia Mundi label including repertoire ranging from Bach through Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven to Bartók, Ligeti, and Shostakovich. Highlights included performing Beethoven cycles in Berlin, Vienna, London, Tokyo, Stockholm,



Madrid, and Barcelona in addition to a residency at the Royal Palace in Madrid, where the quartet played on Stradivarius's only dedicated quartet of instruments. As a guest violist, Mr. Brown has performed with the Tokyo, Jerusalem, Kuss, Marmen, Miró, Zemlinsky, Quiroga, and Armida quartets, and has been on the jury of international quartet competitions in London, Salzburg, Prague, and Katowice. Mr. Brown has also been an artistic director of the Da Camara Chamber Orchestra, the contemporary ensemble FUNKTION, and Musethica Spain.

Mr. Brown is currently Professor of Chamber Music at the Colburn Conservatory of Music in Los Angeles and previously taught viola and chamber music at ESMUC in Barcelona and Escuela Reina Sofia in Madrid. He has given master classes in Köln, London, Aix-en-Provence, Den Haag, Weikersheim, Fiesole, Linz, Lübeck, Essen, Rotterdam, Cleveland, and Chicago among many other cities. Originally from Chicago, Mr. Brown's principal viola teachers were Martha Strongin Katz, Karen Tuttle, Heidi Castleman, Thomas Riebl, and Veronika Hagen, and he was deeply influenced by Ferenc Rados and György Kurtág.

Matthew Howard, Marimba

Matthew Howard is the principal percussionist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He earned his Master of Music degree from the New England Conservatory, where he studied with Will Hudgins of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and his Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Southern California, studying with Joseph Pereira and Jim Babor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Mr. Howard has performed with leading ensembles including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Kansas City Symphony, New World Symphony, Santa Barbara Symphony, and Boston Ballet. He has also been a fellow at the National Repertory Orchestra, Verbier Festival Orchestra, and Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra.

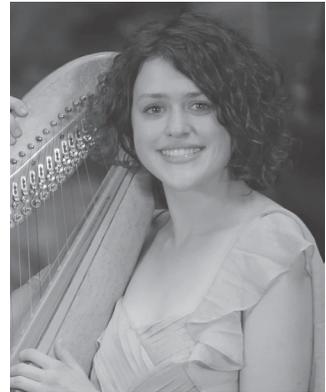
In addition to his orchestral career, Mr. Howard is an active studio musician and has recorded music for major motion pictures, including *Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny*, *Hocus Pocus 2*, and numerous other film and television projects. His career highlights include onstage performances at the Academy Awards, recording the soundtrack for *West Side Story*, performing



the national anthem for Vin Scully's final home game at Dodger Stadium under the baton of John Williams, and performing at Coachella 2025. He has also collaborated and performed with a wide range of artists across genres, including Snarky Puppy, Katy Perry, Chris Martin, Herbie Hancock, Jacob Collier, Laufey, Alex Acuña, Vinnie Colaiuta, Chic and Nile Rodgers, The Go-Go's, and Kobe Bryant.

Kaitlin Miller, Guest Harp

Kaitlin Miller is currently an active musician in the Los Angeles area performing in orchestral, chamber, and solo settings. She particularly enjoys collaborating with composers and is passionate about exploring the expansive sound palette of the harp. In her orchestral career, Ms. Miller has performed with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Pacific Symphony, Pasadena Symphony, and Boise Philharmonic. Ms. Miller's achievements include winning the 2019 American Harp Society Scholarship Competition in Dallas and the 2020 Anne Adams Awards Competition. She was also honored with fellowships at the Music Academy of the West in 2022 and 2023. Distinguished as the Young Professional Division winner of the American Harp Society National Competition, Ms. Miller was named the AHS Concert Artist from 2023–25. In this role, she performed 23 recitals and presented numerous master classes and workshops nationwide. When not performing, you can find Ms. Miller connecting with nature or spending time with loved ones at a local coffee shop.



Student Biographies

SeungHyeok Baek, Viola

SeungHyeok Baek is currently pursuing an Artist Diploma at the Colburn Conservatory of Music in Los Angeles, studying with Tatiana Masurenko. He holds dual bachelor's degrees in Viola Performance and Entrepreneurship from Hanyang University, where he served as principal viola of the Hanyang Philharmonic Orchestra and the Hanyang University String Ensemble. In Korea, Mr. Baek studied with Han Na Lee, Jui Kang, Chan-Joo We, Soo-Min Lee, and Min-Kyung Sung, and has performed with ensembles including the Philharmonia Orchestra and Mahlerian Orchestra. A prizewinner of the KCO National Music Competition, Mr. Baek has participated in the Zurich Music Camp and master classes with Rudolf Koelman and C.J. Chang.

Bryan Bailey, Double Bass

Bassist Bryan Bailey is from Kansas City, and a graduate of Indiana University where he studied with former principal bass of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Bruce Bransby, and then Jeff Turner during graduate studies before spending two years as a fellow of the New World Symphony. Summers have been happily spent at Aspen, Spoleto, Taipei, and Brevard festivals along with the New York String Orchestra Seminar. Mr. Bailey continues to work with the Omaha and Kansas City symphonies, as well as Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra in New York. Recently he made it to the semifinal and final round auditions for the Houston Symphony and London Symphony orchestras.

Peyton Esraelian, Percussion

Peyton Esraelian is a Los Angeles–based percussionist currently pursuing a Professional Studies Certificate at the Colburn Conservatory of Music where she earned her Master of Music in Percussion Performance in 2025. Ms. Esraelian holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education from California State University, Fresno, where she studied with Dr. Matthew Darling. Ms. Esraelian joined the Santa Rosa Symphony as a section percussionist in 2025 and has served as principal percussionist of the Bear Valley Music Festival since 2023. She has performed with numerous orchestras throughout California, including the Fresno Philharmonic, Modesto Symphony, and Sacramento Philharmonic.

Rachel Gardner, Violin

Violinist Rachel Gardner is a second-year student in the Colburn Conservatory of Music Bachelor of Music program, studying with Robert Lipsett. Beginning violin at the age of three, Ms. Gardner's music has taken her around the globe with various types of performances in Thailand, Singapore, China, Russia, Guatemala, and the United States. She has been named winner of the Singapore Music Competition, Musicfest Competition, Phoenix Concerto Competition, and a finalist in the Music Teachers' National Association Competition and *From the Top* radio program. Outside of music, Ms. Gardner enjoys nature, swimming, and spending time with her six siblings and dog in sunny Gilbert, Arizona.

Joshua Ho, Harp

Joshua Ho was born and raised in Los Angeles where started his harp studies at the age of eight with Hee Jin Yoon and shortly after with JoAnn Turovsky. He is now in his first year of the Bachelor of Music program at the Colburn Conservatory of Music where he continues to study with Ms. Turovsky. Mr. Ho is an avid chamber musician and his group, the Lusingando Trio, was a semifinalist at the 2025 Fischhoff Chamber Music Competition, Junior Division. In 2025, he received an honorable mention at the Music Center's Spotlight and was a finalist in the American Harp Society Competition. Mr. Ho was the principal harpist of the Colburn Youth Orchestra and Colburn Youth Sinfonietta from 2021–25. In the summers, he has studied with notable harpists such as Franziska Huhn, June Han, and Yolanda Kondonassis. Outside of music, he enjoys following his favorite baseball team, the Los Angeles Dodgers. He also enjoys trying out new restaurants across Los Angeles.

Serge Kalinovsky, Cello

Serge Kalinovsky is a Bachelor of Music candidate at the Colburn Conservatory of Music, studying with Clive Greensmith. Hailing from Bloomington, Indiana, he was a long-time student of Susan Moses at Indiana University String Academy and studied with Richard Aaron and Brandon Vamos during his senior year of high school. For the last three years of his pre-college studies, Mr. Kalinovsky was a merit scholarship student at the Music Institute of Chicago Academy. Notable recent performances include a series of chamber and solo performances of contemporary music by composers including György Kurtag, John Cage, and Isang Yun at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, and appearances in the *Colburn Chamber Players* concert series. In his free time, Mr. Kalinovsky is an avid chess player.

Steven Lu, Violin

Hailed by the *Dallas Morning News* as “a musician with deeply felt and warmly shaped artistry,” 19-year-old Taiwanese-American violinist Steven (Kuan-Yun) Lu is quickly gaining recognition as one of America’s most promising young musicians for his striking musical poeticism and athletic virtuosity. He began studying violin at age five and has since been the recipient of various prizes including the 2022 silver medal of the Lynn Harrell Competition. Mr. Lu has made solo appearances with orchestras in concert venues such as the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall and the Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center. Festival appearances include the Heifetz International Summer Institute, Basically Beethoven Festival, and most recently, a residency at the 62nd Taos Chamber Music Festival as the youngest of 19 young artists invited internationally to the program on a full scholarship. Mr. Lu is pursuing his Bachelor of Music degree at the Colburn Conservatory of Music, studying with Martin Beaver. He currently plays on an 1867 Vuillaume on generous loan from Dianne Rammon through the Colburn Foundation.

Ethan Mayer, Violin

Ethan Mayer is pursuing his Bachelor of Music degree at the Colburn Conservatory of Music as a student of Robert Lipsett. Mr. Mayer has been featured as a soloist with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and the St. Louis Philharmonic. Alongside various chamber groups, he has competed and won top prizes in competitions across the country. Mr. Mayer has spent many summers as a fellow at the Aspen Music Festival and School and as a student at Kneisel Hall.

Calvin Mayman, Flute

Calvin Mayman is a flutist from Ann Arbor, Michigan, currently pursuing an Artist Diploma at the Colburn Conservatory of Music with Demarre McGill. He earned his master’s degree at Rice University in 2024, studying with Leone Buyse and Marianne Gedigian. As an undergraduate, Mr. Mayman studied with Jeffrey Khaner at the Curtis Institute of Music. Mr. Mayman has performed as a guest with multiple orchestras including the Philadelphia Orchestra and Detroit Symphony, and has attended the Tanglewood Music Center and Music Academy of the West. In 2025, Mr. Mayman won the special prize at the 11th Kobe International Flute Competition.

Tessa Nysetvold, Cello

Canadian cellist Tessa Nysetvold is in her third year of the Bachelor of Music program at the Colburn Conservatory of Music, studying with Clive Greensmith. She made her solo debut at the Jack Singer Concert Hall as a winner of the Rotary Calgary Concerto Competition and has been a frequent recipient of awards at the national level, including three-time winner of the Canadian Music Competition. Ms. Nysetvold has performed at the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, Meadowmount School of Music as a student of Hans Jørgen Jensen, and the Orford Musique Academy. Ms. Nysetvold has worked with esteemed artists including Johannes Moser, Laurence Lesser, and members of the Brentano, Shanghai, Calidore, and New Orford string quartets. A graduate of the Advanced Performance Program at Mount Royal Conservatory, she began her musical studies under Beth Root Sandvoss and has worked extensively with John Kadz.

Hayeon Suh, Violin

Hayeon Suh is a violinist pursuing her Bachelor of Music degree at the Colburn Conservatory of Music where she studies with Martin Beaver. She began playing the violin at the age of three and debuted as a soloist at age eight. She has received prizes in multiple national competitions, including the Ewha, Yewon, and KCO competitions. She graduated as valedictorian from Yewon School and continued her studies at Seoul Arts High School and Seoul National University. As a chamber musician, Ms. Suh received the silver medal at the Seoul Youth Chamber Competition and performed at the Winners' Concert in Sejong Arts Center and the Kukje Arts Hall, among others.

Rang Tae, Viola

Korean violist Rang Tae made her debut at the age of 14, performing with Richard Yongjae O'Neill at the Seoul Arts Center. She has since appeared in recital at venues across Korea and the United States, including The House Concert and Kukje Art Hall in Seoul, and the Union City Museum in New Jersey. She earned a bachelor's degree from Seoul National University under Ensik Choi and is currently pursuing her Master of Music degree at the Colburn Conservatory of Music with Tatjana Masurenko. Ms. Tae is the first prize winner of the 2022 Dong-A Music Competition, one of Korea's leading national competitions and has also received awards from the World Ilbo, *Music Journal*, and Hudson International competitions. Most recently, she was invited as a soloist to the 2025 Verbier Festival Academy in Switzerland.

Ray Ushikubo, Piano

Ray Ushikubo is a Japanese-American pianist and violinist who has soloed with major orchestras across the nation, performed on the stages of Carnegie Hall and Walt Disney Concert Hall, and appeared on NBC's *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*. Mr. Ushikubo made his orchestral debut at age 10 with the Young Musicians Foundation Orchestra alongside conductor Teddy Abrams. A recipient of the prestigious Davidson Fellow Laureate Award in 2014, Mr. Ushikubo won the 2017 Hilton Head International Piano Competition. Recent and upcoming engagements include performances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as the Winston-Salem, Portland, and Pensacola Symphony orchestras, where Mr. Ushikubo will perform works by Gershwin, Mendelssohn, Piazzolla, and Saint-Saëns. Additionally, Mr. Ushikubo has soloed with the Hilton Head, Kansas City, Modesto, Pasadena, and San Diego Symphony orchestras, as well as the Buffalo, Los Angeles, and Reno Philharmonic orchestras on both piano and violin—often in the same concert.

Nathaniel Yue, Cello

Nathaniel Yue is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Music degree at the Colburn Conservatory of Music where he studies with Clive Greensmith. Mr. Yue has also studied with Ronald Leonard. As a soloist, he is the 2023 Music Center's Spotlight grand prize finalist and is a 2024 and 2023 YoungArts Award recipient. Mr. Yue has been awarded first prize in numerous competitions including the Stillman Kelley Award, Gustav Mahler Prize Cello Competition, California Music Teachers' National Association State, and Southwest Region Competition. In 2023, his chamber group, the Nth Trio, won the inaugural Horszowski Trio Prize at the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition, Junior Division, as well as first place in the Music Teachers' Association of California VOCE, State Finals. For the 2022–23 season, he was the Anne Warsaw Cello Chair of the American Youth Symphony. Mr. Yue has also played in master classes for esteemed artists and teachers including Steven Isserlis, Laurence Lesser, Gautier Capuçon, Johannes Moser, Ralph Kirschbaum, Jessie Montgomery, and Jean-Yves Thibaudet. He plays on a 1790 Thomas Dodd cello from Georg Eittinger of Hans Weisshaar Violin Makers and Restorers in San Marino, California.

About the Music

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791)

Adagio und Fugue in C Minor for Two Violins, Viola, and Bass, K. 546 (1788)

Duration: approximately 8 minutes

by Isabella Drumm, double bassist in the Bachelor of Music program of the Colburn Conservatory of Music

Why Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart decided to compose his *Adagio und Fugue* for Two Violins, Viola, and Bass is unclear, but there is evidence to support that his intention could have been that of an academic exercise. The fugue was originally penned in 1783 as the short, standalone Fugue in C Minor for Two Pianos (K. 426). Five years later, he returned to the fugue with new inspiration, setting it for string quartet and adding the opening adagio. Written in just one day in Vienna, on June 26, 1788, the same day he completed his renowned Symphony No. 39, Mozart catalogued this work as a “Short Adagio for two violins, viola, and bass, for a Fugue which I wrote some time ago for two pianos.” The summer of 1788 was incredibly productive for Mozart, not only did he write the *Adagio und Fugue*, but he also completed his last three symphonies. Musicologists conjecture that Mozart’s string arrangement of the *Adagio und Fugue* could have been an exercise in counterpoint to prepare for his large-scale writing during this time.

Mozart’s admiration of Johann Sebastian Bach’s contrapuntal writing is manifest in the *Adagio und Fugue*. Mozart’s studies of Bach’s music in the 1780s had influenced him deeply, sparking new, creative ideas during his time in Vienna. Unlike Mozart’s string arrangements—including his 5 Fugues for Strings (K. 405) taken from Bach’s *Well-Tempered Klavier*, where Bach’s signature polyphonic melodies guide the listener from start to finish—the *Adagio und Fugue* is an exercise in harmonic character development. Mozart’s adagio is akin to a French overture, characterized by dotted rhythmic gestures, as found in a more traditional Baroque opening movement, establishing the inspiration from the period. Drawn with tension from the opening chords, the ominous movement is not rhythmically complex but instead brings feelings of apprehension through outbursts of harmonic stress.

In the second half of the work, we can see Bach’s influence on Mozart in full display. The fugue is a demonstration of his mastery of Bach’s compositional style, yet Mozart’s signature melodic



genius still shines brightly. Strongly rhythmic, the charming theme is introduced by the bass and followed by the other voices, the harmonic progression providing a sense of uplifting relief in striking contrast to the achingly tense adagio. A demonstration of compositional skill, Mozart turns his studies on Bach's fugues into an exercise in contrapuntal writing, a creative show of character, and exploration of musical colors through his updated orchestration in this delightful fugue.

The *Adagio und Fugue* is most commonly performed as a string quartet today, but the notation of the bassline as "violoncelli" and "contra basso" suggests Mozart may have had a larger string ensemble in mind, or simply the doubling of the bass line for cello and double bass as is being performed today. In the original piano duet, an arrangement of the adagio for strings is often read along with the Fugue for Two Pianos, as yet another form of performing the work. Whether Mozart's original purpose was an exercise in counterpoint or an homage to Bach, the *Adagio und Fugue* demonstrates his incredible musicianship and compositional prowess, while also shining as a delightful and unusual side of his chamber music catalog.

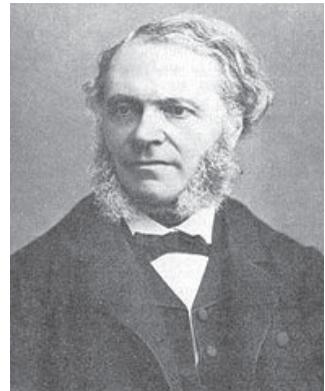
CÉSAR FRANCK (1822–1890)

**Quintet in F Minor for Piano, Two Violins,
Viola, and Cello (1879)**

Duration: approximately 38 minutes

by Jason Moon, violinist in the Artist Diploma Program of the
Colburn Conservatory of Music

Though we now consider César Franck to be one of the preeminent composers of the late 19th century, he was better known during his lifetime as a master organist and composition pedagogue. Franck studied piano and composition for several years at the Paris Conservatoire as a child prodigy, yet his career as a pianist-composer never really took off the way one might expect from someone of his talent, in part due to his strained relationship with his controlling father. His appointment as organist at the Notre-Dame-de-Lorette in 1847 marked a turning point in Franck's life—as a result of the six-year appointment, his compositions largely revolved around the organ and sacred music. It was there that Franck discovered his unparalleled knack for improvisation, which directly contributed to his compositional style of constant modulation.



Following his appointment as professor of organ at the Paris Conservatoire in 1872, Franck was able to spend more time composing works for other instruments and ensembles. It was during these last years of his life that he wrote his most profound and enduring works including the Violin Sonata for Eugène Ysaÿe, the Symphony in D Minor, and the Piano Quintet in F Minor.

The highly charged and emotionally turbulent piano quintet was quite unlike anything else that Franck had composed and caused quite a controversy at its premiere. Camille Saint-Saëns, to whom Franck dedicated the work, sight-read the piano part at the premiere and—apparently disgusted by the romantic excesses of the piece—stormed off the stage immediately after finishing the performance, ignoring both the audience applause and Franck's offering of the manuscript. Félicité Saillot Desmousseaux, Franck's wife, privately and publicly expressed her disdain for the piece as well. These reactions may have been partially due to Franck's alleged infatuation with his student, Augusta Holmès, with whom Saint-Saëns was also enamored. Upon listening to the piece, it is easy to see why one might think the quintet reflects Franck's tumultuous emotional state regarding Holmès.

The quintet begins with a slow, yet passionate introduction that juxtaposes fatalistic descending lines in the string quartet against dreamy interludes in the piano. A fiery mini-cadenza in the piano then leads into the main body of the movement, a surging and tempestuous stream of consciousness that is classical in structure but exceedingly romantic in content. Like in many of his other works, Franck makes heavy use of cyclic form in his piano quintet. He treats the second theme of the first movement as a sort of central motive that appears throughout the other movements several times and binds the entire work together in a form of thematic unity.

The second movement, marked *Lento*, takes on a very different aesthetic from the outer movements, more mellow in texture and character and imbued with an ethereal quality. Gently pulsating eighth notes in the piano and lower strings provide a blanket of sound, atop which the first violin floats with a dreamy and yearning melody. The movement ends by fading into the distance, from which the stormy finale emerges and sweeps the listener along on an ominously buoyant and explosive journey, as Franck masterfully ties together themes from all three movements for an ultimately abrupt but cathartic conclusion. Despite its initial controversial reception, the piano quintet is undeniably Franck at his most honest and unfiltered, and it is plain to see why this work stands tall today among the great Romantic piano quintets.

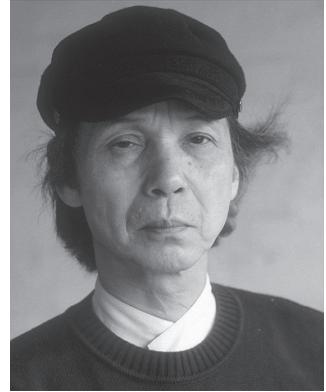
TŌRU TAKEMITSU (1930–1996)
***Bryce for Flute, Two Harps, Marimba,
and Percussion (1976)***

Duration: approximately 10 minutes

by Ellen Zhou, violinist in the Bachelor of Music program
of the Colburn Conservatory of Music

Tōru Takemitsu is one of the most distinctive composers of the 20th century, known for a unique compositional style that blends Western avant-garde idioms with Japanese aesthetics of sound and silence. Born in Tokyo, Takemitsu grew up during World War II. Initially, he rejected traditional Japanese music, turning instead to the Western music he heard through American radio broadcasts after the war. Early influences such as Debussy, Messiaen, and John Cage encouraged Takemitsu to explore music as a spatial and sensory experience rather than a purely structural one. Over time, he reconciled with Japanese musical traditions, integrating its concepts of impermanence, natural flow, and “ma”—the space between sounds—into his works. *Bryce*, composed in 1976, is part of Takemitsu’s mature compositional period when he was fascinated by delicate instrumental colors and the interplay of silence and resonance. Scored for flute, two harps, marimba, and percussion, *Bryce* exemplifies Takemitsu’s sensitivity to timbre and his capacity to transform sound into an atmosphere of meditative stillness and suspended time.

Bryce begins with airy, florid gestures in the flute—sometimes articulated with flutter tonguing or whisper tones—that seem to materialize out of silence. These are answered by rippling harp sonorities and soft marimba rolls suggestive of light reflected on water. The textures unfold fluidly rather than metrically, following a natural sense of pacing and decay. The extended techniques in the opening—such as the use of harmonics on harp, soft mallet tremolos, and delicate metallic percussion—blur the line between pitched tone and resonance. Listeners might perceive this first section as an exploration of sound and space, where each note or shimmer lingers as a visual and almost tangible entity rather than part of a harmonic progression. The effect is both intimate and spacious, as if the listener were invited to become one with the musical atmosphere.



As *Bryce* progresses, Takemitsu introduces more animated and rhythmically charged sections. The flute line adopts a more agile role, with wide leaps and breath-inflected attacks that evoke sounds similar to birdsongs and gusts of wind. The percussion—often featuring suspended cymbals, temple blocks, or subtle wood tones—adds flashes of brightness that punctuate the harp and marimba textures. Here, Takemitsu’s writing reflects an organic sense of momentum: rather than building toward a climax, the music seems to ripple outward, creating overlapping waves of energy that emerge and withdraw. The dialogue between flute and harp grows increasingly intricate, and the marimba introduces a gentle pulse that momentarily anchors the music within a structured tempo before it dissipates again. In the closing section, *Bryce* returns to the stillness of its opening; the texture thins as the flute’s gestures dissolve into whispered tones and breath sounds. The harps’ and the marimba’s lingering resonance are like a distant horizon as the music gradually evaporates into silence, completing the winding journey.

CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862–1918)

Quartet in G Minor for Two Violins, Viola, and Cello, Op. 10 (1893)

Duration: approximately 25 minutes

by Duncan McDougall, violinist in the Artist Diploma program of the Colburn Conservatory of Music

Claude Debussy was born on August 22, 1862, into a humble family on the outskirts of Paris where his mother was a seamstress and his father ran an unsuccessful china shop. Nonetheless, Debussy was fortunate enough to receive piano lessons and was admitted to the Paris Conservatoire when he was 10 years old. The young Debussy showed signs of pianistic talent, but was notoriously sporadic in his studies as he was clearly drawn to composing. Much to the chagrin of his professors, Debussy became a student of composition at the age of 19. The prevailing Germanic approach to composition at the time was too conservative, too structured, and too intellectual in Debussy’s opinion. He longed to compose in a distinctly French style and rebelled against the Germanic approach in order to craft a personal voice free of the constraints of strict formal rules.



Debussy is often regarded as one of the first Impressionist composers, but he rejected the label as applied to all music and art. He resonated more with the symbolist movement, with painters such as Turner and Whistler and the free-verse poetry of Verlaine and Rimbaud. Symbolist artists reacted against realism, objectivity, and conservatism, and favored metaphorical suggestion. The absence of defined construct allowed Debussy to delve into a sonic and textural world of exotic fantasy, and indeed, the dramatic exploration of light and atmosphere in Turner's paintings is found in much of Debussy's music. At the 1889 Exposition Universelle (Paris Exposition), Debussy was introduced to Javanese Gamelan music and was profoundly struck by its beauty. He became attracted to non-Western modes, melodies, and textures, explored whole tone and pentatonic scales, and preferred chordal melodies over functional harmonies. When discussing his musical language with his former composition teacher, Ernest Guirard, Debussy said, "there is no theory. You only have to listen. Pleasure is the law."

The Quartet in G Minor was premiered by the Ysaÿe Quartet in 1893 at the Société Nationale de Musique. Breaking with traditional form, Debussy composed the quartet using a cyclical method in which a central motif is woven throughout the entirety of the quartet and varied in each movement, creating a sense of structural cohesion and unity.

In the first movement, *Animé et très décidé* (*lively and very determined*), the main theme is proclaimed immediately with confidence in the Phrygian mode. But quickly the sense of self-assuredness melts away as a second theme brings us into a more liquid and mysterious world. Throughout the movement the main theme can be traced on its journey—shapeshifting into many different characters but ultimately finishing with explosive and fiery energy.

The contrasting second movement is lively and jaunty. The main theme assumes the role of a rhythmic ostinato, while a jazzy pizzicato theme takes the foreground. A more sensuous middle section follows, interrupted briefly by declaratory statements. This movement is an exploration in the malleability of texture; the unexpected is always around the corner.

The third movement, *Doucement espressif* (*gently expressive*), enters an ethereal, enchanting land as muted strings give a dreamlike, distant effect. Although introspective and meditative, a yearning for the "other" carries the movement onwards in currents. After a viola soliloquy, the waves intensify and a soaring climax is reached—but it is brief. Is the "other" unattainable? The movement comes to a close in quiet wonderment.

The finale begins lonely and enigmatic. Out of the dream that was the third movement, the music awakens from its slumber, unsure of itself, but once it regains its senses, it moves with determination. Interspersed among the fragments of conversation is the main theme; sometimes anxious and frenetic, sometimes lyrical, and sometimes raucous. A sparkling coda, marked *Très vif* and *léger* (*very fast* and *light*), brings the quartet to an exciting finish.

Debussy's intentions as a young composer to create a uniquely French flavor of music are clearly realized in his only string quartet. A masterful exploration of color, texture, and harmony, the Quartet in G Minor is a treat for the senses in which Debussy creates an inviting oasis of sound like no other before or since.

Conservatory of Music Scholarships

One of the most extraordinary aspects of attending the Colburn Conservatory of Music is that it provides an opportunity for our students to explore the arts without financial barriers. Thanks to the vision of Richard D. Colburn, along with generous support from our donor community, 100% of our students attend on full scholarships, covering tuition, room, and board.

Our donor community recognizes the excellence of Conservatory students through the Louise Garland Scholarship and the Richard D. Colburn Endowment. Special appreciation goes to our donors who support the School through other avenues, including the Negaunee Conducting Fellows, Conservatory instruction, endowed faculty positions, instrument donations, and additional student and alumni support such as the Frances Rosen Violin Prize and the Amron-Sutherland Piano Scholarship.

If you would like to learn more about supporting the Colburn Conservatory of Music, contact philanthropy@colburnschool.edu.



Dr. Herbert Zipper leads a concert at the 32nd Street Magnet School in Los Angeles.

Herbert Zipper, Champion of Community Music

Dr. Herbert Zipper, for whom the Colburn School's Zipper Hall is named, was a pioneer of the community music movement in the United States. Remembered as a dedicated activist, Dr. Zipper was known for his work in music education and his deep commitment to students. He believed a performing arts education should be available to everyone, a philosophy on which Colburn's mission of "access to excellence" was built.

Born in Vienna in 1904, Zipper was accepted into the Viennese Academy of Music where he studied with Richard Strauss and Maurice Ravel. Later in life, after his release from the Dachau concentration camp, he accepted a conducting position with the Manila Symphony Orchestra where he reunited with his future wife, Trudl Dubsy. The two later migrated to the U.S. where Zipper expanded his efforts in music education. On August 26, 1980, the groundwork for the Colburn School was secured after Zipper approached Richard D. Colburn with the idea of making the University of Southern California's preparatory school independent.

One of the very finest halls for chamber music in the U.S., our beloved 430-seat performance hall is named after Herbert Zipper. Colburn proudly welcomes students, faculty, staff, families, and other members of the community to Zipper Hall each year.

The image from the Herbert and Trudl Zipper Archive is reproduced with permission from Celia Pool and Gavin Perry.



READ MORE
about Zipper's life