

Wednesday May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
8:00PM EDT



THIRD CULTURE  
ENSEMBLE

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Montgomery, Golijov, and  
Tchaikovsky

The Maltz Performing Arts Center  
"LIVE! Streamed @ Silver Hall"

Third Culture Ensemble is an artist-led organization committed to connecting with a wide range of audiences through music. By bringing together professional musicians, students, and local artists to engage with our Northeast Ohio communities, we inspire one another through shared creative experiences. This mission, and tonight's program are made possible through the generous support from our **partners** and **sponsors**.



Maltz Performing Arts Center



Disciples Christian Church

# CONCERT PROGRAM

Strum [2012 version]

Jessie Montgomery  
(b. 1981)

Tenebrae

Oswaldo Golijov  
(b. 1960)

Serenade for Strings, Op. 48  
I. Pezzo in forma di Sonatina  
II. Walzer  
III. Élégie  
IV. Finale (Tema Russo)

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky  
(1840-1893)

# NOTES



**Jessie Montgomery** is a New York based violinist, composer, and music educator who grew up in Manhattan's Lower East Side to a father who was a jazz musician, and a mother who was in the theatre. She was also a member of the Catalyst Quartet who premiered many of her compositions, and as a seasoned string quartet player, she deeply understands and writes idiomatically for strings. **Strum**, originally written for the Providence String Quartet and Community MusicWorks Players, went through several revisions between 2006 and 2012 before culminating in the orchestral version which we are presenting on this program. As foreshadowed in the piece's title, a boisterous pizzicato strings figure "strums" throughout the work, driving and unifying the various sections of music. In her own words, the composer states that the piece is inspired by "American folk idioms and the spirit of dance and movement [...] that begins with fleeting nostalgia, and transforms into ecstatic celebration."



**Osvaldo Golijov**, born in Argentina to an Eastern European Jewish family in a musical home, possesses a distinctive compositional voice that marries together the various influences of Western classical, Jewish liturgical, klezmer, and tango music. Golijov's **Tenebrae**, presented on tonight's program, was originally written for string quartet, clarinet, and soprano. In the composer's own words, the piece is "a consequence of witnessing two contrasting realities in a short period of time in September 2000." The piece explores and expresses seemingly contrasting realities, and thus the dualities of life. He elaborates: "I was in Israel at the start of the new wave of violence that is still continuing today, and a week later I took my son to the new planetarium in New York, where we could see the Earth as a beautiful blue dot in space. I wanted to write a piece that could be listened to from different perspectives. That is, if one chooses to listen to it 'from afar,' the music would probably offer a 'beautiful' surface but, from a metaphorically closer distance, one could hear that, beneath the surface, the music is full of pain." The hauntingly beautiful melodies are accompanied by varying textures—sometimes by gently undulating figures in the low strings, and at other times punctuated by jarring rhythmic gestures. The ever-evolving harmonies and melodies transport a listener through moments of looming darkness, of abandon, prayerful repose, and ethereal beauty. The piece additionally takes inspiration—and its title—from Couperin's *Troisième Leçon de Tenebrae*: music written for the Christian church service 'tenebrae' in which candles are extinguished one by one over three days prior to the Easter holiday, until the congregation is left in complete darkness. Upon hearing this music, a listener undoubtedly can experience familiar sensations brought about by the circumstances of the past year: firstly, a sense of uncertainty and anxiety with no end in sight; but secondly, a renewed sense of appreciation of what once was, and an emerging sense of hope, resilience, and possibility.



"Among Tchaikovsky's finest works, *Serenade for Strings* was composed in the autumn of 1880 – at the same time he was writing his thunderous *1812 Overture*. Although Tchaikovsky questioned the artistic merit of his *Overture*, commissioned for the unveiling of a Pushkin memorial in Moscow, he was deeply captivated by his *Serenade*. 'It's a heartfelt piece and so, I dare to think, is not lacking in real qualities,' he wrote to patron and confidante Nadezhda von Meck. Over the preceding summer, the composer had rediscovered Mozart's *The magic Flute* and, Tchaikovsky admitted, the *Serenade*'s first movement 'is my homage to Mozart. It is intended to be an imitation of his style, and I should be delighted if I thought I had in any way approached my model.' The fourth movement begins with muted strings – a slow and restrained section that's based on a Russian folk song – before erupting into a lively finale. After the work was premiered during a private concert for faculty and students at the Moscow Conservatory, Anton Rubenstein, Tchaikovsky's former teacher, declared *Serenade for Strings* to be the young composer's best piece."

# THE MUSICIANS



Violinist **Stephen Tavani** joined The Cleveland Orchestra as Assistant Concertmaster in 2018. He has appeared as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral musician around the world. **The New York Times commented about his playing that "...Tavani sometimes cooled his tone to the smoothness of frosted glass, adding a soft-focus filter to the chiseled melodies..."** Mr. Tavani has appeared as guest concertmaster with the Houston Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, Jacksonville Symphony, and Louisiana Philharmonic, and before joining the Cleveland Orchestra, he was concertmaster of the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia.

A recent solo performance highlight was a concerto performance at the MasterWorks Festival in Spartanburg, SC, where he will be returning to perform again. An avid chamber musician, Mr. Tavani has collaborated with many great musicians, and has appeared at many music festivals and chamber music series, including the Marlboro Music Festival, Dresden Music Festival, Music From Angel Fire, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Colburn Chamber Music Society, Curtis Recital Series, and with Curtis On Tour. Mr. Tavani is happily married to his wife Amanda, a double bassist and music educator. They live in Cleveland Heights with their baby, Gabriel. Mr. Tavani grew up in Northern Virginia in a musical family where both his parents and five brothers played music. Learn more about Mr. Tavani at his website: [stephentavani.com](http://stephentavani.com), and visit his youtube page at [youtube.com/stavani1](https://youtube.com/stavani1)

Violinist **James Thompson** is forging a promising career as a versatile chamber musician, soloist, and music educator. A native of Cleveland, Ohio, he is currently on faculty at Music@Menlo and will be joining the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's Bowers Program in 2021. In 2014, James made his solo debut with the Cleveland Orchestra at Severance Hall. He was recently invited to perform in Budapest as part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Bartok World Competition and in Sendai for the 7<sup>th</sup> Sendai International Violin Competition.

He has collaborated in concert with a multitude of established artists including David Finckel, Soovin Kim, Jaime Laredo, Peter Salaff, Roger Tapping, and a variety of musicians from both the Cleveland Orchestra and the Cleveland Institute of Music. James holds Artist Diploma, Masters, and Bachelor of Music degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he has studied with Jaime Laredo, William Preucil, and Paul Kantor.





**Jeanelle Brierley**, an Arizona native and current resident of Cleveland, Ohio, is a violinist with a passion for orchestral performance, chamber music, and pedagogy. Jeanelle completed her undergraduate degree in 2016 at the Cleveland Institute of Music, where she studied with William Preucil and was awarded the Dr. Jerome Gross prize in violin. She made her solo debut with the Phoenix Symphony and has served as the concertmaster of the Lexington Bach Festival, the Cleveland Institute of Music Orchestra, the

Youngstown Symphony, the Bangor Symphony Orchestra and the orchestras of the Brevard Music Center. Jeanelle has performed as a substitute with the Minnesota Orchestra, as a guest artist at the Bermuda Piano Festival and as a member of the Canton Symphony, the Steamboat Springs' Strings Festival, the Verbier Festival Orchestra and the Perlman Music Program's Chamber Music Workshop. She runs a private violin studio and is on faculty at the Cleveland Institute of Music where she coaches chamber ensembles in the preparatory department. Jeanelle has been a regular substitute violinist with The Cleveland Orchestra since 2017 and has performed regularly with the ensemble in Cleveland as well as on tours throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia.

**Third Culture Ensemble founder**, violinist, and violist **Minju Kim** leads a diverse musical life as a teacher, chamber and orchestral musician, and performs throughout North America and abroad. She has made appearances at festivals such as the Artosphere, Festival de Febrero, Strings Music, Britt, IMS Prussia Cove, and Caroga Lake Festivals. Dr. Kim's innovation has also taken her to perform extensively with ensembles such as the Jankovic Ensemble for strings and guitar, and the Khemia Ensemble. Her performances have been broadcast on American Public Media's Performance Today, and WCLV. Dr. Kim serves as the principal second violin of CityMusic Cleveland, and has also served as concertmistress of the Evansville Philharmonic as a substitute with the Cleveland Orchestra. With a music minor in music education, Dr. Kim is passionate about making a positive impact in her community as an educator. She is on faculty at the Cleveland Institute of Music Preparatory Program, and is the chair of strings and assistant professor of violin and viola at the University of Akron School of Music. She has also taught at Encore Chamber Music, Festival del Lago, IU Summer String Academy, Community Music School at Oberlin College, and Habitat4Music. Dr. Kim holds her Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music, and her Doctorate from the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University where she served as an assistant instructor. She studied with Paul Kantor, Grigory Kalinovsky, Mauricio Fuks, and Ik-Hwan Bae, and her other mentors also include Alex Kerr, Nam-yun Kim, and Henry Gronnier.





Cavani String Quartet Violinist **Catherine Cosby** leads an adventurous career as both a vibrant performer and presenter of chamber music. Catherine's international performing career has taken her throughout the US and abroad. Ms Cosby has made appearances at the Honens Festival in Calgary, Alberta, Festspiele Mecklenburg-

Vorpommern in Germany, Esterhazy String Quartet Festival in Hungary, Festival de Febrero in Mexico, the Ottawa Chamber Music Festival, the Kennedy Center, and Carnegie Hall, amongst others. She has served as guest violinist with the Afiara, Attacca, Cecilia, Tokai, and Verona Quartets, and has enjoyed recent collaborations with A Far Cry, Katherine Dowling, Leopoldo Erice, Sheila Jaffe, Julian Rachlin, Sarah McElravy, and Boris Andrianov. In the 2019/20 season, the Cavani Quartet shared their passion for music with students of all ages in residencies in Honolulu, HI, Spartanburg, SC, Chicago, IL, and the University of Knoxville, amongst others. In Fall 2021 the Cavani Quartet will present Beyond Beethoven, a series celebrating the Beethoven String Quartets and the music of 8 living composers, and a residency in Cleveland Public Schools. As a founding member of the award winning Linden String Quartet, hailed as "polished, radiant and incisive" by The Strad Magazine, she has toured extensively throughout North America and Europe, and served as Fellowship Quartet at Yale University, the Apprentice Quartet Cleveland Institute of Music, and performed residencies for the Universities of Iowa and Idaho. The Linden Quartet received Gold medal and Grand prize at the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition, Coleman Barstow Prize at the 2009 Coleman National Chamber Ensemble Competition, the 2010 Hugo Kauder Competition, and the ProQuartet Prize at the 9th Borciani String Quartet Competition. Ms. Cosby is the co-Artistic Director of the Regina Chamber Music Festival in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada, and the co-Artistic Director of Bach from the Heart, a concert experience that explores the emotional journeys of Bach's Solo Sonatas and Partitas through music and poetry. As a proud member of a musical family, she often performs as part of the Cosby Piano Quintet and can be heard offstage singing raucously with her five nieces and nephews.





**Julian Maddox** is a violinist from Minneapolis, Minnesota. He began studying the violin at the age of six, and worked extensively with Prof. Sally O'Reilly. Julian received his undergraduate degree at the Cleveland Institute of Music in 2019 as a student of William Preucil and Kathleen Winkler, and he is also currently pursuing his Master's degree at CIM as a student of Jaime Laredo and Jan Sloman. Julian has been a prizewinner in numerous competitions, including the Schubert Club, Thursday Musical, MNSOTA, Dakota Valley Symphony, and MTNA Competitions. As an avid chamber musician, his ensembles have won first place in the MNSOTA Chamber Music Competition, and have worked with members of the Cleveland, Takacs, Emerson,

Danish, Jupiter, and Cavani String Quartets. Currently, he is a contract member of the Canton Symphony Orchestra, and a substitute with the Akron Symphony, Cleveland Pops, Firelands Symphony, New World Symphony, and ProMusica Chamber Orchestras. In addition to his musical studies, Julian is passionate about engaging with his local community in Cleveland. He is a founding member of the CIM Black Student Union, and serves as a mentor for the CIM Musical Pathway Fellowship program. Additionally, Julian is the assistant creative director and program manager for the **Third Culture Ensemble**. He is currently based in Shaker Heights, OH, where he lives with his wife, Charrine, and their one-year-old son, Theodore.

Praised by *The Boston Globe* as having a "striking generosity of expression," violinist **Francesca Bass** performs extensively as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral player. She received her Bachelor of Music degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music as a student of Jaime Laredo, Joel Smirnoff, and Jinjoo Cho, and received her Master of Music degree from Rice University's Shepherd School of Music as a student of Paul Kantor. At the age of fifteen, Francesca appeared on the NPR program "From the Top", performing *Zigeunerweisen* by Sarasate in Boston's Jordan Hall with pianist Christopher O'Reilly. She has appeared in recital and as concerto soloist with a variety of orchestras including the Cambridge, New Philharmonia, and Nashua Chamber Orchestras.



In 2019 Francesca performed chamber music throughout Asia for Lincoln Center Stage on Holland America's *Westerdam*. As a fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center in 2018 and 2019, she coached intensively with members of the Juilliard Quartet. She also performed as section violinist and concertmaster of the TMC Orchestra under maestros Andris Nelsons, Herbert Blomstedt, Giancarlo Guerrero, and Thomas Adès. Francesca has performed chamber music with musicians of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, as well as with Joseph Silverstein at the Meadowmount School of Music. She has played in masterclasses for eminent artists such as Pinchas Zukerman, Noah Bendix-Balgley, Sharon Robinson, Ani Kavavian, and Pamela Frank. Francesca has been a recipient of multiple awards, including the Cleveland Institute of Music Anna Y. Tringas Award for Violin and the Tanglewood Music Center Jules C. Reiner Violin Prize.



Celebrated for a “tone like toasted caramel. Amazing.” (Musical Toronto), **Eric Wong** is the violist of the Cavani String Quartet. He was also a member of the JUNO-nominated Afiara Quartet and the Linden String Quartet, first prize winners of the Fischhoff, Coleman, and Concert Artist Guild competitions. In addition to his work as a performer, Mr. Wong is an accomplished educator and has been artist-in-residence at the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Royal Conservatory of Music, and Yale University and he is currently an artist-clinician for D'Addario Orchestral Strings. In addition to touring with the quartet, Mr. Wong has played in numerous venues around the United States and worldwide including Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Taipei's National Theater, Kings

Toronto, and Montreal's Place des Arts. He has collaborated and toured with greats such as Itzhak Perlman, Kim Kashkashian, Jaime Laredo, Richard Stoltzman, and with Donald Weilerstein, Peter Salaff, James Dunham, and Paul Katz of the Cleveland Quartet. He has also worked on projects with Canadian scratch DJs Skratch Bastid and Kid Koala and performed in concert with former American Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Originally from Lafayette, Louisiana, Mr. Wong received both Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from CIM, studying violin with Paul Kantor and viola with Kirsten Docter and Lynne Ramsey. He subsequently earned an artist diploma from the Yale School of Music where he worked with Kazuhide Isomura. Other influential coaches and mentors include Peter Salaff and the Cavani and Tokyo Quartets. Off the clock, Mr. Wong enjoys cooking and classic television.

Violist **Katja Yeager** is an active chamber musician, orchestral player, and dedicated teacher. She is a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music, where she earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees in Viola Performance under the mentorship of Jeffrey Irvine and Lynne Ramsey. Her extensive orchestral experience as a leader and section player includes performances with the New World Symphony, the Verbier Festival orchestra, and the Aspen Music Festival Conducting Academy. Katja made her Proms debut at Royal Albert Hall in London, as a member of the inaugural National Youth Orchestra of the United States under the baton of Valery Gergiev, where she performed on other international stages including the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Washington, D.C.), Great Hall (Moscow), and Mariinsky II (St. Petersburg). She also toured Southeast Asia in 2020 with the Lincoln Center Stage Piano Quintet aboard the MS Westerdam where she gave nightly performances comprised of Western classical, tango, jazz, and contemporary styles and genres. Previous seasons have seen Katja performing at private events, community concerts, and at American music festivals including the Castleman Quartet Program Bowdoin International Music Festival, and the Aspen Music Festival as a fellowship recipient.





**Marcus Stevenson** is a third-year bachelor's student at the Cleveland Institute of Music, studying with Jeffrey Irvine. Originally from Summit, NJ, Marcus previously studied at the Manhattan School of Music in the Precollege Division with Isaac Malkin, where he was principal violist of the Precollege Philharmonic Orchestra. In 2019, Marcus participated in the New York String Orchestra Seminar, led by Jaime Laredo, and performed in Carnegie Hall. Also an active chamber musician, Marcus is a member of the Cleveland Institute of Music's Elless Quartet and has participated in their Advanced String Quartet Seminar. In March 2020, the quartet won the Grand Prize in the Senior Strings and Piano Division of the Coltman Chamber Music Competition in Austin, TX. In May 2020, the quartet were semi-finalists in the 47th Annual Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition.

**Erica Snowden-Rodriguez** is a Venezuelan-American cellist, originally from Buffalo, New York. Since moving to Ohio in 2005 to study at the Cleveland Institute of Music, Erica has led a very active career as a performer and teaching artist in the regions of Northeast Ohio and Western Pennsylvania. They are the principal cellist of both the Akron Symphony Orchestra and the Erie Philharmonic. Erica also performs in a variety of chamber music and recital settings within the community and abroad. Since 2015, they have toured nationally with Sphinx Virtuosi, a chamber orchestra composed of the nations' top Latinx and Black string players. Erica has appeared as a performer and lecturer at many highly-regarded venues including Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, Cleveland Museum of Art, and many others. Snowden-Rodriguez has also competed nationally and was a semi-finalist in the senior division at the Sphinx Competition in 2008 and 2011. In addition to an active performance career, Erica is a passionate music educator and advocate for access, inclusion and equity in the classical music field. Snowden-Rodriguez is a member of the artist council for the National Alliance for Audition Support, an unprecedented national initiative to increase diversity in American orchestras, and they have served as an advisor on statements regarding racial justice for the League of American Orchestras. In addition to this work, they teach private lessons in a welcoming and inclusive environment. Erica holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in performance and Suzuki pedagogy from the Cleveland Institute of Music. They currently reside in Akron, OH with partner, Samantha and their adorable parrot, Gomez.





Cellist **Lydia Rhea** is quickly garnering international recognition as a skilled soloist and chamber musician while currently pursuing a BM in Cello Performance at the Cleveland Institute of Music studying under Dr. Melissa Kraut. Formerly a scholarship recipient Fellow at the Music Institute of Chicago Academy, Lydia studied with artist faculty member Hans Jørgen Jensen for four years. As a soloist, Lydia has performed with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra and has appeared on NPR's *From the Top* with renowned jazz pianist Fred Hersch, where she performed one of his original compositions in Boston's Jordan Hall. Most recently, she was named the Gold Medalist and received the Agnew Prize for Bach at the 2020 Cleveland Cello Society

Scholarship Competition. Lydia has performed throughout the US and Europe and won numerous international prizes, and has been the cellist in the Almas Quartet since its formation in 2019. The Almas Quartet is currently part of the selective Advanced String Quartet program at CIM under the instruction of Si-Yan Darren Li. You can find more information on her website at [www.lydia-rhea.com](http://www.lydia-rhea.com).

Cellist **James Hettinga**, age 21 from the USA, currently studies with Dr. Melissa Kraut at the Cleveland Institute of Music (CIM). An avid chamber musician, James's quartet, (the Razumovsky Quartet) of the CIM Young Artist Program took the Silver Medal in the Junior Division at the 2018 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition. James was a winner of the 2019 prestigious Klein International String Competition, 2019 Mondavi Center National Young Artist Competition, and has taken the first prize in the Cleveland Cello Society Competition both Junior and Senior divisions. He also won the 2019 Tennessee Cello Workshop Competition, and Cleveland Institute of Music Concerto Competition. In 2016, James made his concerto debut in Severance Hall. Additionally, he has performed in masterclasses for Paul Katz, Hans Jensen, Clive Greensmith, Ralph Kirshbaum, and the Jupiter and Brentano Quartets.



A native of Buffalo, NY, **Michael Zogaib** began playing the double bass at the age of 8 and was mostly self-taught until the age of 12 when he began private study. Currently, Michael is a scholarship student at the Cleveland Institute of Music where he studies under Cleveland Orchestra member Scott Dixon.



**Joel Negus** graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Music in 2011 with a BM in Double Bass Performance. Upon graduating, he fell in love with Cleveland and established deep roots in the city. He started a nonprofit called the Cleveland Music Collaborative and serves as a minister at Heights Church in Coventry Village. He lives in Cleveland Heights with his wife Allison and their daughter Daisy.



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