

M Manhattan
School of Music

MSM CAMERATA NOVA

George Manahan (BM '73, MM '76), Conductor

JT Kane, Dean of Instrumental Studies and Orchestral Performance

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2024 | 7:30 PM
GORDON K. AND HARRIET GREENFIELD HALL

This year's performance season has been inspired by a unifying theme: ***Humanity in Harmony: Rituals, Resistance, and Resilience***. We hope during this election year, the biggest in human history with over half the world's population having the opportunity to vote in 72 countries, that this theme reflects the power of the arts to unite us even in moments of discord and differences. The collective experience of collaboration – creating together – reminds us that even in our differences we can find common ground, stand up to tyranny and oppression, and elevate our work as artists to fulfill the hope and promise of a better tomorrow.

James Gandre, President

Joyce Griggs, Executive Vice President and Provost

Faculty and Administration of the Artistic Planning Committee



Manhattan School of Music's public programs are made possible in part by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.



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MSM CAMERATA NOVA

GEORGE MANAHAN, CONDUCTOR

VIOLIN 1

Muriel Oberhofer,
concertmaster
Schaffhausen, Switzerland

Sohyun Ko
Atlanta, Georgia

Koshiro Takeuchi
Setagaya, Japan

Faith Borkowski
Niskayuna, New York

Seoyeon Lee
Seoul, South Korea

Thierry Neves
Goiania, Brazil

VIOLIN 2

Wenqi Ke, principal
Nanjing, China

Te-hsuan Bu
Keelung, Taiwan

Mina Kim
New York, New York

Alix Auclair
Paris, France

Alina Hernandez
Temecula, California

VIOLA

Owne Xayboury,
principal
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Hayley Lau
Sydney, Australia

Sage Small
Phoenix, Arizona

Nicholas Lopez
San Juan, Texas

CELLO

Haeun Chung, principal
Jinju, South Korea

Aidan Pan
Ithaca, New York

Chase Park
*Englewood Cliffs,
New Jersey*

DOUBLE BASS

Jielin Lei, principal
Xiamen, China

Peter Wiseman
Austin, Texas

OBOE

Hsiao-ling Ting,*
Kaohsiung, Taiwan

Lizzy Felando
Decatur, Georgia

BASSOON

Anna Zhang,*
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

HORN

Noelle Carlson*
Des Moines, Iowa

Hui-an Wen
Taoyuan City, Taiwan

BRASS AND WIND PRINCIPALS

* HAYDN

Symphony No. 45 in F-sharp Minor ("Farewell")

PROGRAM NOTES

Strum

Jessie Montgomery

Jessie Montgomery is a Grammy-winning, acclaimed composer, violinist, and educator whose music interweaves classical music with elements of vernacular music, improvisation, poetry, and social consciousness, making her an acute interpreter of twenty-first century American sound and experience. Her profoundly felt works have been described as “turbulent, wildly colorful and exploding with life” (*Washington Post*) and are performed regularly by leading orchestras and ensembles around the world. In June 2024 she concluded a three-year appointment as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s Mead Composer-in-Residence.

– *Biography provided by MKI Artists*

Strum is the culminating result of several versions of a string quintet I wrote in 2006. It was originally written for the Providence String Quartet and guests of Community MusicWorks Players, then arranged for string quartet in 2008 with several small revisions. In 2012 the piece underwent its final revisions with a rewrite of both the introduction and the ending for the Catalyst Quartet in a performance celebrating the 15th annual Sphinx Competition.

Originally conceived for the formation of a cello quintet, the voicing is often spread wide over the ensemble, giving the music an expansive quality of sound. Within *Strum* I utilized texture motives, layers of rhythmic or harmonic ostinatos that string together to form a bed of sound for melodies to weave in and out. The strumming pizzicato serves as a texture motive and the primary driving rhythmic underpinning of the piece. Drawing on American folk idioms and the spirit of dance and movement, the piece has a kind of narrative that begins with fleeting nostalgia and transforms into ecstatic celebration.

–*Jessie Montgomery*

Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G Major, BWV 1048 **Johann Sebastian Bach**

In March 1719 Bach traveled to Berlin to collect the new harpsichord made by court instrument maker Michael Mietke for Cöthen, and during that visit Bach had occasion to play for Margrave Christian Ludwig of Brandenburg. The meeting spurred an invitation from the Margrave for Bach to send him some compositions.

The works that he sent probably originated in Weimar even before Bach's move to Cöthen in 1717, but it took yet another two years for him to complete, compile, and submit his *Six concerts avec plusieurs instruments* (Six concertos with several instruments). He dedicated the 1721 manuscript to the Margrave, saying:

As I had a couple of years ago the pleasure of appearing before Your Royal Highness . . . and as I noticed then that Your Highness took some pleasure in the small talents that Heaven has given me for Music, and as in taking leave of Your Royal Highness, Your Highness deigned to honor me with the command to send Your Highness some pieces of my composition: I have then in accordance with Your Highness's most gracious orders taken the liberty of rendering my most humble duty to Your Royal Highness with the present Concertos, which I have adapted to several instruments.

No record exists of the Margrave of Brandenburg ever using the scores, ever sending Bach a fee, or ever thanking him. Legend has it that the lack of acknowledgment, if that was the case, may have stemmed from the Margrave's instrumental resources not matching those of Cöthen or Weimar, thus rendering the pieces unperformable at his establishment. It certainly is true that Bach used unprecedented and different scoring in each of the individual works, treating the collection like an "Art of the Concerto Grosso" and thus was not aiming to match any specific establishment's resources. The manuscript eventually became the property of the state library in Berlin, remaining unpublished until the Bach revival in the nineteenth century. In 1880 Philipp Spitta, Bach's famous biographer, coined the term "Brandenburg Concertos," which has been used ever since for the beloved works.

Bach employed the simple yet flexible plan for the concerto grosso developed by Torelli and Corelli, and standardized by Vivaldi—a small solo group (*concertino*) alternating with the full ensemble (*ripieno* or *tutti*), typically in three movements: fast, slow, fast. The Brandenburg Concertos offer a wide spectrum of innovative instrumental schemes and combinations and a great variety in treatment of form. Nos. 1, 3, and 6 use instrumental forces that are fairly balanced in number, with No. 1 containing some violino piccolo solos and No. 6 featuring two violas. Nos. 2, 4, and 5 contrast a small concertino with a large ripieno throughout, with different instruments featured in each case.

Though the Third Brandenburg Concerto is scored only for strings and continuo (bass instrument and keyboard), the texture is kaleidoscopic, with constant shifts between combinations of instruments. Bach's love of symmetry is apparent in his balancing of the three groups of strings—violins, violas, and cellos—and the three

instrumental parts within each group. His further interest in threes shows in the first movement's opening three-note gesture, which provides motivic material for much of the remainder of the movement.

It is highly unusual that Bach did not provide a slow movement for this Concerto, instead separating his two fast movements with a one-measure Adagio consisting of two cadential chords. This served and still serves performers the opportunity to improvise anything from an elaborate flourish to an entire slow movement.

Bach's lively finale adopts the form of a gigue, a traditional dance movement in two-part form—here with the second section of the gigue three times as long as the first. Fast notes in perpetual motion, first presented with one instrumental part imitating the other, drive the movement irresistibly forward.

Symphony No. 45 in F-sharp Minor, Hob. I:45, “Farewell”

Joseph Haydn

How wonderful, when one of the delightful anecdotes connected with the history of a composition turns out to be true! Such is the case with the well-known story behind the *Farewell* Symphony. Prince Esterházy, Haydn's employer, usually spent six months of the year at his beloved palace at Esterháza. The prince housed the musicians of his private orchestra there, but there was insufficient room for the families of the married musicians, and they had to stay about thirty miles away in Eisenstadt. In 1772, the prince made it known that he did not want to see the wives and children at Esterháza even for twenty-four hours; moreover, they were not even to visit in his absence. The musicians' salaries were raised with this understanding.

The prince, however, stayed longer than ever that year, and the frustrated musicians asked Haydn to plead their case. He obliged ingeniously with his *Farewell* Symphony. Prince Esterházy heard the fast finale change abruptly to a long Adagio, during which one player after another got up, blew out his candle, and left. Finally, only two violinists were left, Haydn and Tomasini, a favorite with the prince. As they were about to leave too, the prince acknowledged the unique request, and the court left the next day.

The often-told story has overshadowed the artistic significance of the Farewell Symphony. The work is remarkable for its key schemes and experiments in form. Haydn chose one of the most unusual of keys—F sharp minor—and, according to the great scholar Robbins Landon, it is the only eighteenth-century symphony in that key. Special crooks (pieces of tubing) in that key had to be made for the horns of that period. Haydn also employed a quite original key scheme for his four

movements: F-sharp minor, A major, F-sharp major, and for the last movement a clever review of all three keys.

The novel design of the first movement barely acknowledges traditional sonata form. The exposition is without a second subject; what appears to be the second subject occurs in the development and never reappears (unless the repeat is taken). This lyrical interlude serves as a wonderful foil to the preceding agitation. It is followed by what sounds like a false recapitulation, but which in “hindhearing” turns out to have been the real recapitulation, even though Haydn keeps developing the main theme.

The sonata-form slow movement is characterized by a hushed quality of muted violins, a sound Haydn employed frequently in this period. The predominant string texture is occasionally embellished by oboe and horn passages.

The graceful minuet offers a bit of harmonic surprise when the lower strings enter. Its trio section is said to be based on the Gregorian chant for the Lamentations of Jeremiah, which Haydn liked enough to use in several compositions.

The famous finale is perhaps the boldest experiment in form and tonality. The “farewell” plot explains why the instruments stop playing one by one, but it does not explain the original overall structure. The Presto, in the minor home key, provides a brief but complete sonata form. The famous lengthy Adagio, almost a movement in itself, unfolds in an ingenious binary form, beginning in A major. The “farewells” start midway through the first section at what sounds like the closing of an exposition. Oboe I and horn II, bassoon, oboe II, horn I, and basses depart in that order. In the second section—beginning with the main theme now in the home key’s major mode—cellos, violins III and IV, and violas leave, until finally just the first and second solo violins are left to finish the piece.

—*Program notes* ©Jane Vial Jaffe

ABOUT THE CONDUCTOR

George Manahan (BM '73, MM '76), Conductor

George Manahan is in his 14th season as Director of Orchestral Activities at Manhattan School of Music, as well as Music Director Emeritus of the American Composers Orchestra. He served as Music Director of the New York City Opera for 14 seasons and was hailed for his leadership of the orchestra. He was also Music Director of the Richmond Symphony (VA) for 12 seasons. Recipient of Columbia University's Ditson Conductor's Award, Mr. Manahan was also honored by the American Society of Composers and Publishers (ASCAP) for his "career-long advocacy for American composers and the music of our time." His Carnegie Hall performance of Samuel Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra* was hailed by audiences and critics alike. "The fervent and sensitive performance that Mr. Manahan presided over made the best case for this opera that I have ever encountered," said the *New York Times*.

Mr. Manahan's guest appearances include the Orchestra of St. Luke's as well as the symphonies of Atlanta, San Francisco, Hollywood Bowl, and New Jersey, where he served as acting Music Director for four seasons. He has been a regular guest with the Curtis Institute and the Aspen Music Festival and has appeared with the opera companies of Seattle, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Chicago, Santa Fe, Paris, Sydney, Bologna, St. Louis, the Bergen Festival (Norway), and the Casals Festival (Puerto Rico). His many appearances on television include productions of *La bohème*, *Lizzie Borden*, and *Tosca* on PBS. The *Live from Lincoln Center* telecast of New York City Opera's production of *Madama Butterfly*, under his direction, won a 2007 Emmy Award.

George Manahan's wide-ranging recording activities include the premiere recording of Steve Reich's *Tebillim* for ECM; recordings of Edward Thomas's *Desire Under the Elms*, which was nominated for a Grammy; Joe Jackson's *Will Power*; and Tobias Picker's *Emmeline*. He has conducted numerous world premieres, including Charles Wuorinen's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, David Lang's *Modern Painters*, Hans Werner Henze's *The English Cat*, Tobias Picker's *Dolores Claiborne*, and Terence Blanchard's *Champion*.

He received his formal musical training at Manhattan School of Music, studying conducting with Anton Coppola and George Schick, and was appointed to the faculty of the school upon his graduation, at which time the Juilliard School awarded him a fellowship as Assistant Conductor with the American Opera Center. Mr. Manahan was chosen as the Exxon Arts Endowment Conductor of the New Jersey Symphony the same year he made his opera debut with the Santa Fe Opera, conducting the American premiere of Arnold Schoenberg's *Von Heute auf Morgen*.

ABOUT THE ORCHESTRAL STUDIES PROGRAM

In the tradition of the classical music conservatory, the orchestral studies program at MSM forms the heart of the performing experience for classical instrumentalists. All students, placed by competitive audition, participate in a variety of orchestral projects under the guidance of George Manahan, Director of Orchestral Activities, and JT Kane, Dean of Instrumental Studies and Orchestral Performance.

Students play in a variety of orchestral formats, giving them ample opportunity to develop their audition and ensemble technique, broaden their knowledge of orchestral repertoire, and perform at New York City venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, St. Patrick's Cathedral, and Merkin Concert Hall. Winners of the School's annual Eisenberg–Fried Concerto Competition perform with the orchestras as soloists.

In addition to Maestro Manahan, the orchestras work regularly with Leonard Slatkin, Distinguished Visiting Artist in Conducting and Orchestral Studies, and guest conductors such as Joshua Gersen, Mei-Ann Chen, and JoAnn Falletta.

George Manahan, Director of Orchestral Activities

JT Kane, Dean of Instrumental Studies and Orchestral Performance

ABOUT MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Founded as a community music school by Janet Daniels Schenck in 1918, today MSM is recognized for its 1,025 superbly talented undergraduate and graduate students who come from 54 countries and nearly all 50 states; its innovative curricula and world-renowned artist-teacher faculty that includes musicians from the New York Philharmonic, the Met Orchestra, and the top ranks of the jazz and Broadway communities; and a distinguished community of accomplished, award-winning alumni working at the highest levels of the musical, educational, cultural, and professional worlds.

The School is dedicated to the personal, artistic, and intellectual development of aspiring musicians, from its Precollege students through those pursuing doctoral studies. Offering classical, jazz, and musical theatre training, MSM grants a range of undergraduate and graduate degrees. True to MSM's origins as a music school for children, the Precollege Division is a professionally oriented Saturday music program dedicated to the musical and personal growth of talented young musicians ages 5 to 18. The School also serves some 2,000 New York City schoolchildren through its Arts-in-Education Program, and another 2,000 students through its critically acclaimed Distance Learning Program.

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Contact the Philanthropy Office at 917-493-4434 or to make an online gift, scan this code or visit giving.msmnyc.edu.



Land Acknowledgment

We want to acknowledge that we gather as Manhattan School of Music on the traditional land of the Lenape and Wappinger past and present, and honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations. This calls us to commit to continuing to learn how to be better stewards of the land we inhabit as well.



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