

In Association With The Smith College
Department of Music, Presents

Quartetto di Cremona with David Shifrin



Sunday, October 26, 2025, at 3:00 PM
Sweeney Concert Hall / Sage Hall
Smith College, Northampton, MA

Quartetto di Cremona

Cristiano Gualco, Paolo Andreoli, Violins
Simone Gramaglia, Viola and Giovanni Scaglione, Cello
with David Shifrin, Clarinet

Program

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)

Italian Serenade, for string quartet in G major (1887)

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

String Quartet in F Major (1903)

- I. Allegro moderato – Très doux
- II. Assez vif – Très rythmé
- III. Très lent
- IV. Vif et agité

Intermission

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

Clarinet Quintet in B minor, Op. 115 (1891)

- I. Allegro
- II. Adagio
- III. Andantino – Presto non assai, ma con sentimento
- IV. Con moto

North American Representation:
Kirshbaum Associates, Inc.
307 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10001
www.kirshbaumassociates.com

Please, no recording or photography at this performance.

About Today's Concert

John Montanari, Artistic Director

The three works on today's program, composed within the span of just sixteen years, present a summary of where music had been, where music was, and where music was going around the turn of the 20th century. Along the way, the string quartet sonority will be on display in all its myriad shades and hues, much like a New England fall landscape.

It may seem quaint now, but in musical circles of the late nineteenth century, one was strictly either a Brahms person – an upholder of absolute music and traditional musical values – or a Liszt & Wagner person – a true believer in the melding of music and literature, with Liszt's tone poems and Wagner's operas as the ideal. Hugo Wolf, in both his composition and voluminous musical criticism, was a Liszt & Wagner guy all the way. Accordingly, Brahms was target number one of his acidulous pen. Of the Piano Concerto No. 1, Wolf wrote, "The air that blows through this composition is so icy, dank and foggy that it could easily freeze your heart and take your breath away; you could catch a cold from it. Unhealthy stuff!" After hearing the Symphony No. 4, Wolf wrote that Brahms "has mastered the art of composing without ideas."

As a composer, Wolf is almost exclusively known for his exquisite lieder (art songs), which set poetry by Mörike, Goethe, Eichendorff and others with great sensitivity and harmonic imagination. Along with his early String Quartet in D Minor (check it out on YouTube when you have 45 minutes to spare), the "Italian Serenade" of 1887 is Wolf's sole contribution to chamber music, and makes a charming, virtually Rossinian overture to today's festivities.

About Today's Concert (cont.)

In a mature creative life of about 35 years, Maurice Ravel produced only about twelve hours of music. Today's Quartet, completed in 1903 at the age of 28 while finishing his studies at the Paris Conservatoire, was an early breakthrough for Ravel, who had failed to win the prestigious Prix de Rome on three occasions. (The winners on those occasions were André Caplet, Aymé Kunc and Raoul Laparra. Heard any of their works lately?)

Obviously modeled on the Quartet from ten years earlier by Claude Debussy, who approved of the younger composer's work, Ravel's Quartet, with all its colorful sonorité and touches of exoticism, is also a work of classical poise, revealing Ravel's admiration of the quartets of Haydn.

Imagine attaining sufficient skill on the violin to join one of Europe's finest orchestras, only to switch to clarinet three years later – and to become so compelling a player as to entice the most famous composer of the day to come out of retirement to compose four great works for you. This was the story of Richard Mühlfeld (1856-1907), principal clarinetist of the Meiningen Court Orchestra, which was celebrated for its performances of works by Brahms, who also occasionally conducted the ensemble.

After hearing Mühlfeld, nicknamed “Fräulein Klarinette” and “Meine Prima Donna” by Brahms, play the Mozart Clarinet Quintet and other works, the composer, who had called it quits after his String Quintet No. 2, was inspired to compose the Clarinet Trio, Op. 114, the two Clarinet Sonatas, Op. 120, and of course, today's Clarinet Quintet, Op. 115. Not to offer any spoilers, but if, after the conclusion of the Brahms Quintet, you clap really hard, you might bring forth not Tinkerbell but Wolfgang Amadeus himself.

Artist Information

Quartetto di Cremona

Quartetto di Cremona is celebrated as one of the world's preeminent string quartets, renowned for its lustrous sound, refined musicianship, and stylistic versatility across a vast repertoire.

Founded in 2000 at the Accademia Walter Stauffer in Cremona, Italy—the historical home of master luthiers like Stradivari, Amati, and Guarneri—the quartet carries the immense weight of this Italian musical heritage. The ensemble, whose members have played together since 2002, was granted honorary citizenship by the city of Cremona in 2015, formalizing their deep connection. Their artistry is frequently amplified by extraordinary instruments, having performed and recorded on the legendary Paganini Quartet of Stradivari instruments. In their regular performances, the musicians are supported by the Kulturfond Peter Eckes with superb Italian instruments, which often include a Nicola Amati violin and a Dom Nicola Amati cello.

The past three years have been marked by significant milestones in the quartet's international touring and recording projects. The quartet made its highly-anticipated Carnegie Hall debut in New York in October 2023, following its acclaimed Lincoln Center debut in 2022. The latter was praised by *The Strad* for its "splendid balance, abundant colour and a relaxed mastery of all the musical elements." They released an ambitious and innovative new recording of J.S. Bach's *The Art of the Fugue* on Orchid Classics, an ensemble-arranged version performed with a total of seven instruments. This recording project was developed to celebrate their 25th Career Anniversary (2025).

The ensemble also celebrated its 25th anniversary with an extensive World Tour throughout the 2024/2025 season, featuring

Artist Information (cont.)

performances across Europe, North America, and Asia.

Quartetto di Cremona maintains an expansive repertoire, masterfully moving between the classical canon and contemporary works. They are particularly acclaimed for their deep engagement with the Austro-German masters, with their complete cycle of Beethoven's String Quartets receiving high praise and winning prestigious awards like the ECHO Klassik and ICMA honors. Critics frequently cite their ability to deliver performances that possess "exemplary technique and intonational purity" while avoiding "19th-century rhetoric."

Beyond Beethoven, the quartet champions the music of their home country, with notable recordings dedicated to Italian composers such as Verdi, Respighi, and Boccherini.

The quartet is passionately dedicated to education, serving as Professors at the Walter Stauffer Academy in Cremona, where they guide the next generation of professional string quartets. Awarded the prestigious Franco Buitoni Award in 2019, the Quartetto di Cremona is a major force in promoting and encouraging chamber music worldwide.

David Shifrin

Clarinetist David Shifrin is one of the world's most distinguished soloists, recitalists, and chamber music collaborators. A winner of both the Avery Fisher Career Grant and the prestigious Avery Fisher Prize (2000), Mr. Shifrin is celebrated for his profound musicianship and commitment to expanding the repertoire for his instrument.

His career includes appearances as a soloist with major orchestras across the United States and abroad, as well as holding

Principal Clarinet positions with renowned ensembles like the Cleveland Orchestra and the American Symphony Orchestra (under Leopold Stokowski).

A preeminent figure in chamber music, Mr. Shifrin served as Artistic Director of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center from 1992 to 2004 and Chamber Music Northwest from 1981 through 2020. He continues his deep dedication to the genre as the Artistic Director of the Phoenix Chamber Music Festival and Yale's Oneppo Chamber Music Society.

An influential educator, Mr. Shifrin is the Samuel S. Sanford Professor in the Practice of Clarinet at the Yale School of Music, where he has taught since 1987. He has been instrumental in commissioning and championing over 100 works by 20th and 21st-century American composers.

Be a Valley Classical Concerts Volunteer

Valley Classical Concerts (VCC) is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to bringing the very highest quality chamber music to the Pioneer Valley. Being a volunteer organization helps keep ticket prices affordable and provides access to many who would otherwise not be able to attend our performances.

We invite you to join our passionate team and help bring world-class music to our community. We seek volunteers to assist with bookkeeping, managing correspondence, editing concert programs, and designing promotional materials. As a volunteer, you'll enjoy access to concerts and gain an insider's view of our behind-the-scenes operations.

VCC is a virtual organization, so there is no office to commute to. Just bring your own computer! If you are interested in volunteering, write us at office@valleyclassicalconcerts.org or leave a message at (413) 239-0417.

From the Valley Classical Concerts Board of Directors

On behalf of the Board of Valley Classical Concerts, I would like to welcome you to the second concert of the 2025-26 season. We are thrilled to present to you clarinetist David Shifrin and Quartetto di Cremona from Italy.

Thank you for all the generous donations from individuals, Board members, Smith College and corporate sponsors. Check out the ads in the program and please thank those businesses when you go shopping. We appreciate your monetary assistance, which enables us to bring internationally known musicians to perform for you here in the Valley. Furthermore, your financial support allows us to give free tickets to young students and Card to Culture patrons.

Our expenses over the last two years have gone up by 33% and over the last decade have exceeded inflation. Yet, our ticket prices have remained the same for almost a decade, as has the high caliber of our musicians. Without continued financial support from our loyal patrons and lovers of chamber music, Valley Classical Concerts would not exist. Again, thank you to all who have contributed.

Enjoy Quartetto di Cremona and David Shifrin! I am looking forward to a wonderful afternoon of Wolf, Ravel and Brahms.

Laurel Rogers, Vice-President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laurel Rogers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Laurel" and last name "Rogers" clearly distinguishable.

"Music is the divine way to tell beautiful, poetic things to the heart." — Pablo Casals

The Valley Classical Concerts 2025-2026 Season

Sunday, October 12, 2025, 3:00 PM

The Harlem Quartet

Sunday, October 26, 2025, 3:00 PM

Quartetto di Cremona, with David Shifrin, clarinet

Sunday, November 16, 2025, 3:00 PM

Winds of the Boston Symphony Orchestra with
Jiayan Sun, piano

Sunday, February 1, 2026, 3:00 PM

The Isidore String Quartet

Saturday, March 7, 3:00 PM

Camille Thomas, cello, with Julien Brocal, piano

Saturday, March 21, 3:00 PM

"A Far Cry" Chamber Orchestra

Keep Valley Classical Concerts Going

Please consider making a donation to help prevent price increases and to broaden our audience. Go to the VCC donations page any time to give online, or you can mail checks to P.O. Box 60424, Florence, MA 01062.

We thank you for helping us share the joys of chamber music. We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Our Tax ID, 22-247-4932, may be used to donate through a charitable fund or foundation. Contact us (office@valleyclassicalconcerts.org or (413) 239-0417) to discuss equity and estate contributions.

Valley Classical Concerts Board of Directors

William Harbison, President
Laurel Rogers, Vice President
Richard Teller, Clerk & Publicist
John Montanari, Artistic Director
Jeffrey Saltzman, Treasurer & Office Manager
Andrea Bonsignore, Concert Manager
Pam Coe
Ian Fraser
David Gang
George Luke Goodridge
Kylie Johnson
Richard Ranti
Michael Sorrell
Gary Turku
Peter Van Pelt

Valley Classical Concerts Contact Information

Telephone

Box Office - (413) 586-0458
Office - (413) 239-0417

E-Mail

Box Office - boxoffice@valleyclassicalconcerts.org
Office - office@valleyclassicalconcerts.org

Address

Valley Classical Concerts, Inc.
P.O. Box 60424
Florence, MA 01062

Website: <https://valleyclassicalconcerts.org>

Thank You for Your Support!

**These businesses have made contributions to
Valley Classical Concerts' 2025-26 season.**

- **\$1,000 and above**

Easthampton Savings Bank
Greenfield Cooperative Bank
NFP Private Capital Group LLC
Florence Bank
Lathrop Community
St. Germain Investments
West Branch Capital, LLC

- **\$500 to \$999**

Curtiss, Carey, Gates & Goodridge, LLP*
Kari Leeper, Certified Public Accountant, LLC*
Finck and Perras Insurance
Johnson Woodworks
River Valley Market
Stamell Stringed Instruments, Inc.

- **\$250 to \$499**

Downtown Sounds
Ostberg & Associates
Wohl Family Dentistry, LLC

- **Up to \$249**

Alber Hearing
Blackmer Insurance
Broadside Books
Ernie's Garage

*In-kind donation

Thank You for Your Support!

**These individuals have made contributions to
Valley Classical Concerts' 2025-26 season.**

Pace-Setters • \$3,000 and above

Marguerite S. Bedell
Pamela Coe
John & Pamela Hanold
William & Marsha Harbison
Gail Markley

Partners • \$1,000 to \$2,999

Anonymous (2)
David Gang & Roberta Hillenberg-Gang
Ruth Kjaer
Richard Ranti & Andrea Bonsignore
Laurel Rogers & Jeffrey Saltzman
Michael Sorrell
Eleanor B. Rothman
Karen Tarlow & John Montanari
Richard Teller
Peter Van Pelt
Lewis & Sally Popper

Sustainers • \$500 to \$999

Ann Errichetti and Mark Keroack
Ian Fraser & Pamela Bartlett
Craig Felton & Richard Trousdell
Kylie & Bill Johnson
George Luke Goodridge
Mark & Judith Pohlman
Kit Sang Boos
Gary Turku & Romina Kostare

Patrons • \$250 to \$499

Stephen Ellenburg
James Mceathron
Catherine Nagel

Supporters • \$100 to \$249

Katharine Baker
Jeffrey Birth
Therese and Peter Eiff
Kent & Lorena Faerber
Patricia Farrington
Ken & Karen Furst
Douglas Gnepp
Peter Haas
Sara (Sally) Perreten
Dale Peterson

Harriet Pollatsek
Carol Pope
Clifford Ridley
Joanna Rosenthal
Donald Wheelock

Friends • Up to \$100

Albert & Janet Chevan
Ian Clements
Rafael Coelho Lopes de Sa
Teresa Herrneckar
Carol Jolly
Edith M. Kliman
Jonathan Lash
Jennifer Lewis
Nancy Logan
Jane Record
Elissa Rubinstein
Cathy Schoen
Serena Smith
Norman Spier
Gennifer Sussman
Thomas Wartenberg
Katherine Wyatt

Apple Hill String Quartet | Sunday November 23, 4pm

CHAMBER @ THE DRAKE

An eight part series of classical music

chamberatthedrake.com

\$20 advanced, \$25 at the door, \$5 student tickets



44 N Pleasant St, Amherst, MA

PIONEER VALLEY SYMPHONY CREATIVE RESILIENCE

87TH SEASON | 2025 - 2026



TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW

PVSOC.ORG/TICKETS



new england
public media



Mass
Cultural
Council

LATHROP
A KENDAL AFFILIATE



GREENFIELD
Cooperative Bank



river valley co-op
wild about local



Arcadia Players

Andrus Madsen
Artistic Director
2025-26 Season

Vicente Lusitano and his Circle

Saturday, Nov. 15, 2pm in the Music Room, Wistariahurst Museum, Holyoke
A German Holiday: Works for Advent and Christmas by Bach and Zelenka

Saturday, Dec. 20, 3pm at Grace Episcopal Church, Amherst

Music for Good Friday for viols and voices

Saturday, Mar. 28, 2026 3pm at Abbey Chapel, Mt. Holyoke College, South Hadley

Making Overtures

Saturday May 2, 2026 2:30pm at Wesley Methodist Church, Hadley

Tickets are \$40 and can be ordered online at arcadiaplayers.org,
by phone at 413-586-8742, or purchased at the door.
Season tickets are available



SPRINGFIELD
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

2025-26 SEASON

*TICKETS AND
SUBSCRIPTIONS*
AVAILABLE NOW!

THANK YOU TO OUR
SEASON SPONSORS

.. MassMutual



SPRINGFIELDSYMPHONY.ORG

Music can be timeless.
It's the way it nurtures our souls.
It's a salve that reduces the
calamitous anxiety of our times.
It's how Valley Classical Concerts lifts
and reminds us that we can be better.



www.stgermaininvestments.com



WEST BRANCH CAPITAL

Investments, Financial & Retirement Planning

West Branch Capital and its division Singer Potito Associates. FEE ONLY, SEC Registered Investment Advisers. Investment Managers, Retirement & Financial Planners.

9 Research Drive, Suite 1
Amherst, MA 01002

99 Derby Street, Suite 200
Hingham, MA 02043

29 West Road
Orleans, MA 02653

CALL 413-256-1225 - WESTBRANCHCAPITAL.COM



GREENFIELD
Cooperative Bank
NORTHAMPTON
Cooperative Bank A Division of Greenfield
Cooperative Bank

Come on over to the Co-op!

To us, providing financial services to our customers
and serving our community go hand-in-hand.

Amherst • Florence • Greenfield • Northampton Northfield
Shelburne Falls • South Hadley • Sunderland • Turners Falls

BestLocalBank.com



MEMBER FDIC
MEMBER DIF



Valley Light Opera
Presents

Gilbert & Sullivan

H.M.S. Pinafore

or The Lass That Loved A Sailor



Stage Director
Elaine Crane

Music Director
Aldo Fabrizi

Choreographer
Paige Fowler

4 Shows Only!
Don't be a Tar,
get your tickets
NOW!

Pre-show talk
by Michael Greenebaum,
a founding member
of VLO, at 1:00 p.m.
for both matinees!

To order tickets only – use www.VLO.org web site
or scan the QR code to go directly
to the AOM ticket ordering site
www.AOMtheatre.com/aom_event/hms-pinafore/



A family show, full orchestra, lavishly costumed.



November 6, 7, 8, & 9 at the Academy of Music, Northampton, MA

Be inspired... by Lathrop's passion for music and the arts!



With a commitment to enhancing the quality of life,
Lathrop fosters a vibrant sense of togetherness where you
can continue to enrich your life and the lives of others.

LATHROP
KENDAL AFFILIATE

lathrop.kendal.org
413-437-5892



A Not-for-Profit Community Serving Older Adults in the Quaker Tradition.

Always,

Florence Bank



WEALTHSPIRE ADVISORS

MUSIC TO OUR EARS

We are a proud sponsor of
Valley Classical Concerts and their mission
to bring internationally recognized
chamber ensembles to the Pioneer Valley.

WWW.WEALTHSPIRE.COM

*Wealthspire Advisors LLC is a registered investment adviser
and subsidiary company of NFP Corp.*

THE AMHERST COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC MUSIC @ AMHERST SERIES PRESENTS

December 6, 2025

TALLIS SCHOLARS

"Mother and Child"

Works by Thomas Tallis, William Byrd, Matthew
Martin, Benjamin Britten, John Taverner, &
John Nesbett

February 21, 2026

DANISH STRING QUARTET

Schnittke: String Quartet no 2
Jonny Greenwood: Suite from *There Will Be Blood*
Ravel: String Quartet

TICKETS available online 14 days ahead:
www.amherst.universitytickets.com

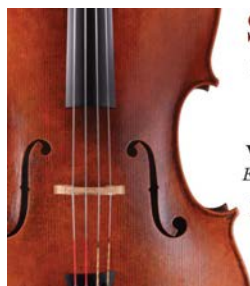
Questions? Please contact the concert office
at 413.542.2195 or concerts@amherst.edu



General Public: \$28
Senior Citizens (65+): \$22
Students with valid ID: \$12



Concerts begin at 7:30 PM
BUCKLEY RECITAL HALL, Amherst College
Arms Music Building, 53 College Street, Amherst, MA



STAMELL STRINGED INSTRUMENTS



Violin • Viola • Cello • Sales • Rentals
Experts • Dealers • Makers • Appraisers • Restorers

18 Kellogg Ave, Amherst MA 01002

www.stamellstring.com
(800) 766 0936



Johnson Woodworks

Custom Furniture, Built-ins, and Cabinetry

"Quality woodworking with an artisan's touch"

 www.johnson-woodworks.com

 jwwremodeling@gmail.com  (413) 835-1157