

## **Boston Chamber Music Society**



Saturday, October 10, 2026, 3:00 PM  
Chapin Auditorium, Mount Holyoke College  
South Hadley, MA

# Boston Chamber Music Society

**Jennifer Frautschi, Alyssa Wang, violins**  
**Marcus Thompson, Cara Pogossian, violas**  
**Raman Ramakrishnan, cello**  
**Thomas van Dyck double bass, \*Max Levinson, piano**

*This concert is sponsored by Pam and John Hanold to  
honor Western Massachusetts music lovers.*

## Program

### **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)**

Piano Quartet No. 2 in E-flat Major, K. 493

- I. Allegro
- II. Larghetto
- III. Allegretto

### **Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)**

String Quintet No. 2 in B-flat Major, Op. 87

- I. Allegro vivace
- II. Andante scherzando
- III. Adagio e lento
- IV. Allegro molto vivace

## Intermission

### **Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)**

Piano Quintet in C Minor

- I. Allegro con fuoco
- II. Andante
- III. Fantasia (quasi variazioni): Moderato

The Boston Chamber Music Society is self-managed. For further information about the organization and performances click [www.bostonchambermusicsociety.org/about-bcms/](http://www.bostonchambermusicsociety.org/about-bcms/)

\*Max Levinson is a Steinway Artist  
Today's Steinway Piano is provided by Falcetti Piano

**Please, no audio or video recording of this concert is allowed.**

## About Today's Concert

John Montanari, VCC Artistic Director

Greetings, music lovers! One of the cool things about groups like the Boston Chamber Music Society is the flexibility that permits them to present works that don't fit conveniently into more standard programs. We have three such works for you today. The Piano Quartet genre, emerging in mid-18th century out of accompanied keyboard sonatas and divertimenti, enjoyed a flowering in Vienna in the 1780's. In 1785, Mozart accepted a commission from the music publisher Franz Anton Hoffmeister for three piano quartets, leading to the composition of the Piano Quartet in G Minor, K. 478. Experimenting within a relatively new genre was risky business. When it proved too difficult for the amateur market he was serving, Hoffmeister released Mozart from the remainder of the commission. But Mozart persevered and in 1786, completed the second piano quartet, to be published by Artaria. Contemporaneous with the Piano Concertos Nos. 20-25, these works contain several concerto-like features, including the three-movement layout and the dialogue between the piano and the string ensemble, the latter often taking the form of a mini-orchestra.

There are three kinds of String Quintet, differing in the instrument added to the standard string quartet. The most common String Quintet, with two violas, became one of the most popular genres of chamber music by the end of the 18th century, exemplified by Mozart's eloquent and resourceful masterworks for this combination. Felix Mendelssohn's second String Quintet of 1845, one of his last chamber works, displeased its composer to the point where he consigned it to his pile of works never to be printed. Luckily, it was published posthumously. What was Mendelssohn's problem with the Quintet? Notably, he was not satisfied with the finale. But certainly, we trust, he cannot have disliked the third movement, Adagio e lento, one of its

# About Today's Concert (cont.)

composer's most impassioned utterances.

Ralph Vaughan Williams's name is inextricably bound to pronouncements of a clear "English" nationalist style in the twentieth century. Though already 31 years old when he composed his Piano Quintet, he was still a few years away from finding his unique voice in such breathtaking works as his 1910 "Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis." Such was the stylistic gap between the Quintet and Vaughan Williams's mature style that he included it among several works that he purged from his catalogue after World War I. Fortunately for us, his widow Ursula presented autographed manuscripts of some of these unpublished early works to the British Library. She finally permitted the Quintet to be performed in a 1999 concert marking the 40th anniversary of the composer's death. Scored for the same combination of instruments as Schubert's "Trout" Quintet – piano, violin, viola, cello and double bass – the Quintet looks backward to Brahms more than forward to RVW's later style, though he did keep it in mind well enough to use the theme of its finale in his Violin Sonata of 1954 – fifty years later.

*(Source material provided by Rebecca G. Marchand)*

## About the Ensemble

Founded in 1982, the Boston Chamber Music Society (BCMS) has long stood as a cornerstone of New England's classical performance tradition. Originally formed as the Boston Conservatory Chamber Players by cellist Ronald Thomas, executive director Bruce Coppock, and a founding group of distinguished string players, the ensemble was built on a distinct structural vision. Rather than functioning as a standard, fixed quartet, BCMS was conceived from its inception as a modular, flexible collective. This organizational framework has allowed the society to maintain Boston's longest-running continuous chamber music subscription series while continually reinventing its artistic output.

At the heart of the BCMS model is its core roster of resident virtuosos who perform in shifting configurations ranging from

intimate duos and trios to expansive string octets and mixed wind ensembles. Led by violist Marcus Thompson—an Institute Professor at MIT and New England Conservatory faculty member who became Artistic Director in 2009—the resident lineup includes nationally recognized performers such as pianist Max Levinson, violinist Jennifer Frautschi, cellist Raman Ramakrishnan, and oboist Peggy Pearson. By maintaining a stable core of long-time musical collaborators rather than a single fixed group, BCMS achieves both the tight-knit intimacy of a traditional quartet and the programming breadth of a chamber orchestra.

This flexible chamber model shapes the society’s repertoire strategy. BCMS regularly pairs foundational masterworks of the German-Romantic canon—such as string quintets by Johannes Brahms and piano trios by Ludwig van Beethoven—alongside significant 20th-century literature and contemporary American compositions. Through initiatives like its Commissioning Club, the society actively expands the chamber repertoire, funding new works from contemporary composers and integrating them directly into seasonal programming alongside classic masterpieces.

Music critics consistently praise the society for its technical precision and communicative depth. The Boston Globe has characterized BCMS performances as “vivid, compelling, and first rate,” while regional classical reviewers regularly point to the long personal and professional relationships among the roster members. This shared history produces a seamless conversational style, rich string voicing, and expressive phrasing across diverse instrumental combinations. By combining the vocal transparency of small ensemble playing with an expansive repertoire vision, the Boston Chamber Music Society remains a vital fixture in American chamber performance—offering audiences a living showcase of collaborative artistry across four decades of music-making.

## About the Artists

**Jennifer Frautschi**, violin, is a two-time Grammy nominee and Avery Fisher Career Grant recipient acclaimed for her adventurous musicianship and rich sound. A graduate of Harvard, the New England Conservatory, and Juilliard, she has performed as a soloist with major orchestras worldwide,

including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, and Minnesota Orchestra. She maintains an active international career in both solo recital and chamber settings, appearing regularly at major summer festivals. Frautschi serves as an Artist-in-Residence at Stony Brook University.

**Alyssa Wang**, violin, is a multifaceted artist who excels as a violinist, conductor, and composer. A graduate of Carnegie Mellon University and the New England Conservatory, she is a recipient of a Solti Foundation Career Assistance Award and the St. Botolph Emerging Artist Award. In addition to her role as a resident violinist with the Boston Chamber Music Society, she is the Co-Founder, Artistic Director, and Principal Conductor of the Boston Festival Orchestra and serves as Music Director for the Cincinnati Ballet. Wang is also an active composer, frequently commissioning and premiering new contemporary works.

**Marcus Thompson**, viola, is a pioneer in American chamber performance and has served as Artistic Director of the Boston Chamber Music Society since 2009. The first recipient of a doctorate in viola performance from The Juilliard School, his distinguished career as a soloist and chamber musician spans premier venues across the globe. Recognized as a master of both the viola and the viola d'amore, he has premiered numerous contemporary works and recorded extensively. Thompson holds the title of Institute Professor at MIT—the institution's highest academic honor—and serves on the viola faculty at the New England Conservatory.

**Cara Pogossian**, viola, is a dynamic young artist recognized for her expressive warmth and collaborative versatility. She serves as the Principal Violist of the Portland Symphony Orchestra and is a graduate of both the Curtis Institute of Music and the New England Conservatory. An avid chamber musician, she performs regularly at premier summer festivals such as Marlboro, Yellow Barn, and Taos, and frequently tours with Musicians from Marlboro.

**Raman Ramakrishnan**, cello, is an internationally renowned cellist with a passion for chamber repertoire. A founding member of the Daedalus Quartet and member of the Horszowski Trio, he has toured extensively across North America, Europe, and Asia. Ramakrishnan holds a bachelor's degree in physics from Harvard University and a master's degree in music from The Juilliard

School. In addition to his long-standing artist membership with the Boston Chamber Music Society, he serves on the faculty at the Bard College Conservatory of Music.

**Thomas van Dyck**, double bass, is a long-time member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, joining the ensemble after years of national orchestral and chamber engagements. He holds degrees from Rice University's Shepherd School of Music and Boston University. Celebrated for his communicative energy and technical command, Van Dyck is an active chamber musician who performs regularly with the Boston Chamber Music Society and at summer festivals such as Yellow Barn.

**Max Levinson**, piano, enjoys an international career launched after winning First Prize at the Dublin International Piano Competition. A recipient of an Avery Fisher Career Grant and the Andrew Wolf Chamber Music Award, he has performed as a soloist with major orchestras including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, St. Louis Symphony, and the Boston Pops. Levinson is a graduate of Harvard University and the New England Conservatory, where he currently serves on the faculty alongside his appointment at the Boston Conservatory.

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# From the Valley Classical Concerts President

Welcome to Valley Classical Concerts' 2026-27 season. Thank you to Mount Holyoke for allowing us to use Chapin Auditorium for our first two events. Our Board of Directors is most grateful.

I also appreciate your flexibility coming here to a different location. You will not be disappointed. Today is a special treat with the Boston Chamber Music Society performing for us. I am excited to hear strings including double bass and piano.

Please note all the businesses listed in the program booklet that support our series and thank them, or better yet, patronize them! If you are able, please send us a donation to help pay for these great concerts. Monetary donations allow us to keep our concerts affordable, and offer free tickets to young students and Card to Culture patrons.

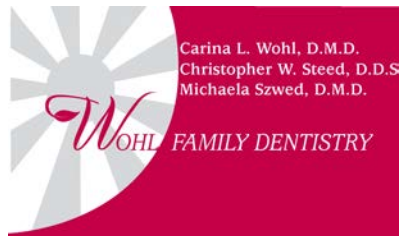
Live music brings people together and lifts our spirits. The creativity of these artists enriches our community here in the Pioneer Valley.



Laurel Rogers  
President -Valley Classical Concerts

A quote from Mendelssohn — one of today's composers:

*This is what I think art is and what I demand of it: that it pull everyone in, that it show one person another's most intimate thoughts and feelings, that it throw open the window of the soul.*



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Boston Chamber Music Society

Sunday, November 22, 2026, at Chapin Auditorium  
Musicians of the Boston Symphony Orchestra

Saturday, February 13, 2027, at Sweeney Hall  
The Verona Quartet

Saturday, March 6, 2027, at Sweeney Hall  
Richard Goode, piano

Saturday, March 20, 2027, at Sweeney Hall  
The Balourdet Quartet

Sunday, May 2, 2027, at Sweeney Hall  
The Isidore String Quartet

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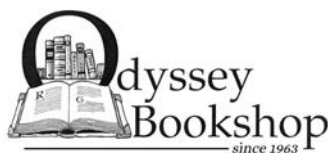
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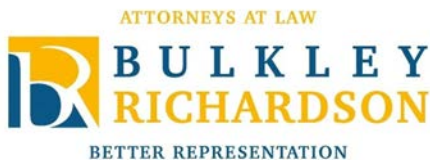


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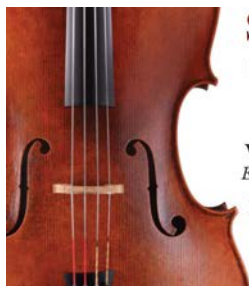


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