

## upcoming concerts

### Monday, January 6

Myriad Trio Concert

### Monday, February 3

Mozart - Piano Trio in E major, K. 542

Rebecca Clarke - Viola Sonata

Brahms - Clarinet Trio Opus 114

### Monday, March 17

Kodaly - Serenade for two violins and viola

Beethoven - Cello Sonata in D Op. 102 No. 2

Fauré - G minor Piano Quartet

### Monday, April 14

Beethoven - Grosse Fuge

Haydn - String Quartet Op. 20 No. 2

Beethoven - String Quartet Op. 130

### Monday, June 2

Mendelssohn - Piano Quartet in b minor, Op. 3

Dvorak - F-minor Piano Trio, Opus 65

Sibelius - String Quartet "Voces intimae"

### Monday, June 10

Myriad Trio and Camera Lucida

Subscriptions (at a considerable savings from the already-reasonable single-concert price) are a wonderful way to take advantage of the best discounts and seating.

For more information, contact the

San Diego Symphony ticket office at 619.235.0804 or via the web at: <http://www.sandiegosymphony.org/concertcalendar/cameralucida.aspx>

Artistic Director - Charles Curtis

Executive Coordinator - Colin McAllister

Program notes - Lukas Schulze

Recording engineer - Tom Erbe

Production manager - Jessica Flores

Tonight's concert will be broadcast Saturday, December 14th at 9 pm on kpbs-fm 89.5 or streaming at [kpbs.org](http://kpbs.org)

For more information:

<http://www.cameralucidachambermusic.org>

we now have an official camera lucida kpbs email address for listener questions or comments! [cameralucida@kpbs.org](mailto:cameralucida@kpbs.org)

Taiwanese-American violist **Che-Yen Chen** has established himself as an active performer and educator. He is a founding member of the Formosa Quartet, recipient of the First-Prize and the Amadeus Prize winner of the 10th London International String Quartet Competition. Since winning the First-Prize in Primrose Competition and the "President Prize" in the Tertis Competition, Chen has been described by the Strad Magazine as a musician whose "tonal distinction and essential musicality produced an auspicious impression" and by San Diego Union Tribune as an artist whose "most impressive aspect of his playing was his ability to find not just the subtle emotion, but the humanity hidden in the music." Having served as principal violist of the San Diego Symphony for eight seasons, he is principal violist of the Mainly Mozart Festival Orchestra and has appeared as guest principal violist with Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra. A former member of Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society Two and participant of the Marlboro Music Festival, he is a member of Camera Lucida, Concertante Chamber Players and The Myriad Trio. Chen is currently on faculty at USC Thornton School of Music and California State University, Fullerton and has given master-classes in major conservatories and universities across North America and Asia. In August 2013, the Formosa Quartet inaugurated the annual Formosa Chamber Music Festival in Hualien, Taiwan. Modeled after American summer festivals such as Marlboro, Ravinia, the Taos School of Music, and Kneisel Hall, FCMF is the product of long-held aspirations and years of planning, and represents one of the quartet's more important missions: to bring high-level chamber music training to talented young musicians in Taiwan and first-rate music to Taiwanese audiences.

Violist **Che-Hung Chen** has been a member of The Philadelphia Orchestra since the spring of 2001, when he was hired by then-Music Director Wolfgang Sawallisch, becoming the first Taiwanese citizen ever to join the Orchestra. He has also served as acting associate principal viola under former Music Director Christoph Eschenbach. A three-time top-prize winner at the Taiwan National Instrumental Competition, Mr. Chen began his studies at the age of six with Ben Lin in his native Taipei, and he later entered the Curtis Institute of Music at age 14, where he studied with Joseph de Pasquale, retired Philadelphia Orchestra principal viola. As a vivid chamber musician, Mr. Chen was a participant at the Marlboro Music Festival from 1998 to 2000, performed on its 50th anniversary concerts in Boston and New York's Carnegie Hall in 2000, and toured with Musicians from Marlboro from 2001 to 2003. He has collaborated in chamber music settings with members of the Guarneri, Orion, Mendelssohn, and Tokyo string quartets, and artists such as Martha Argerich, Yefim Bronfman, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Lang Lang, Leonidas Kavakos, and Hilary Hahn. Performing annually at the Kingston Chamber Music Festival in Rhode Island, Mr. Chen has also participated in such festivals as the Ravinia, Caramoor, Saratoga, and Bridgehampton chamber music festivals and Music from Angel Fire. Mr. Chen currently serves on the faculty of Temple University's Esther Boyer College of Music and its Preparatory Division. He performs on a viola made by Carlo Antonio Testore in Milan, Italy, c. 1756.

# camera lucida

chamber music concerts at UC San Diego

2013-2014 season

sponsored by the Sam B. Eersan chamber music fund

Monday, December 2nd  
Two Thousand and Thirteen  
7:30pm

Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 in B-flat Major, BWV 1051      Johann Sebastian Bach  
(1685-1750)

*Ohne Satzbezeichnung (without tempo indication)*  
*Adagio ma non tanto*  
*Allegro*

Sonata for Piano and Violin No. 10 in G Major, op. 96      Ludwig van Beethoven  
(1770-1827)

*Allegro Moderato*  
*Adagio espressivo*  
*Scherzo-Allegro*  
*Poco Allegretto*

intermission

String Quintet in F Major, op. 88      Johannes Brahms  
(1833-97)

*Allegro non troppo ma con brio*  
*Grave ed appassionato--Allegretto vivace*  
*Allegro energico*

Jeff Thayer, violin  
Sheh Yen, violin  
Che-Yen Chen, viola  
Che-Hung Chen, viola  
Charles Curtis, cello  
Yao Zhao, cello  
Marcia Bookstein, cello  
Reiko Uchida, piano & harpsichord



 UC San Diego | Department of Music



### Johann Sebastian Bach—Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 in B-flat Major BWV 1051

The Brandenburg Concertos, a group of six *Concerts avec plusieurs instruments*, or “Concertos with several instruments,” were presented by Bach as a tribute to Christian Ludwig, the margrave of Brandenburg-Schwedt in 1721. While Bach’s admiration for the prince—expressed in the most fawning language on the dedication page—seems to have been acute, there is no sign that the respect was mutual; these works, that to us represent the summit of the Baroque concerto repertoire, apparently went unplayed until well after Bach’s death. The Brandenburgs show, through an instrumental diversity that exhausts almost every possible combination of instruments common in Bach’s day, the encyclopedic approach to compositional design we associate with his other large-scale works such as the *Well-Tempered Clavier* or *A Musical Offering*.

The Sixth Brandenburg is conspicuous in one aspect of its scoring in particular: written for two *Violas de Braccia*, two *Violas da Gamba*, *Cello*, and *Violone* with harpsichord, the piece features no violins. The violas are respectively named for the *Braccia* (Italian for arm), played like a modern viola, to distinguish them from the violas named for the *Gamba* (leg), played vertically, like a modern cello. String instruments were changing in Bach’s day, and the large, older family of viols: fretted instruments with flat backs and sloping shoulders, bowed underhand, was being replaced by the violin family: fretless, with rounded backs, bowed overhand and capable of much greater sound projection.

The first movement appears *Ohne Satzbezeichnung*—or “without tempo indication,” a detail which brings about great variety in performance tempi. Numerous aspects of this movement help to accentuate the monochromatic timbre of these lower strings. Tight canonic loops move above gently undulating harmonic blocks, which break subtly into group episodes—the contrast between soloists and ripieno wiped away by the similarity of register, motivic material, as well as by the harmony, blurred by quasi-minimalist imitation.

The violas and cello appear to score a victory in the second movement, marked *Adagio ma non tanto*, which features only these “modern” soloists in a pared-down sonata texture. Representative of Bach’s ingenious ability to use instrumental layout as a rich sub-plot, this tender and singing movement is designed as a cooperative duet for the two violas with an obbligato cello accompaniment, while all three of these instruments are themselves supported by a slowly-moving continuo bass line.

It is the last movement, a sprightly and syncopated *Gigue*, which is likely the most familiar to listeners. Utterly optimistic and convivial, it is used often in period films and television. As winning as the dance mood is, this movement is no less impressive in its counterpoint and virtuoso solo writing, seen in the bracing episodes that erupt from the *ritornelli*, as well as in the brilliant motivic connection of the gigue’s main idea, relentlessly tied across the beat, with a similar figure buried in the concerto’s first movement.

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### Ludwig van Beethoven—Sonata for Violin and Piano in G Major, op. 96

It would have been something of a gift to historians and critics had the powerful “Kreutzer” Sonata op. 47 been Beethoven’s last sonata for violin and piano. Then the number of violin sonatas and symphonies would have matched, and his final statement in the genre would have had the weight and culmination found in the 9th Symphony. In 1812, however, ten years after the “Kreutzer,” he wrote one more, and we and the genre are better for it.

Op. 96 is a pivotal work, existing at the boundary between Beethoven’s middle and late periods. Written with Beethoven’s pupil, Archduke Rudolf—nephew of the Emperor—in mind as a dedicatee and as a pianist, the work combines the formal tautness we associate

with the middle period with an objective, relaxed quality seen in the late music. The first movement, marked *Allegro moderato* is disarmingly placid, beginning with a trill that has earned the piece the nickname “the Cock-crow.” The tempo of this movement, neither slow nor fast—an unusual middle-ground for Beethoven—disguises the economy that marks this sonata structure. Virtually all of the anomalies that appear in the music (and this is a tendency in middle-period Beethoven) have implications that are fleshed out later in the piece. The transition to the spirited, dotted second theme is pointed and quick. A jarring, deceptive cadence to B-flat foreshadows both the sighing closing theme of the exposition and various key areas encountered in the development, and echos, in the semitone from A to B-flat, the opening trill itself.

The second and third movements together make up a combined unit, unusual in Beethoven’s chamber music: not only are they to be played *attaca*—without pause from one to the next, but both movements are shortened somewhat, seemingly in consideration of their connection with each other. The *Adagio espressivo* begins with a melody of childlike innocence—almost a chorale—in the piano before the violin enters with rhapsodic and lyrical interjections. The players reverse roles as the movement progresses, ending with a half-cadence that sets up the *Scherzo*. This *Allegro*, despite an incessant and driving syncopation, appears oddly genteel—with clear formal divisions and a reassuring and gallant *Trio* section.

Beethoven was drawn to *Theme and Variations* throughout his entire life, and he made more substantial statements with variation form than any other composer one might name. Yet the choice of a set of variations for the final movement seems in this instance to have been imposed upon him. The op. 96 Sonata was to be played by the Archduke and a visiting violinist, Pierre Rode. In a letter to the Archduke, Beethoven admitted, “... I did not make great haste in the last movement for the sake of mere punctuality, the more because, in writing it, I had to consider the playing of Rode. In our finales we like rushing and resounding passages, but this does not please R and — this hinders me somewhat.” While the finale may contain no “resounding” passages, the presence of a drifting minor *fugato* toward the ending serves to point toward the variations that would be so important in Beethoven’s later music, as in the Piano Sonata in C minor, op. 111 and the “Diabelli” Variations, op. 120.

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### Johannes Brahms—String Quintet No. 1 in F Major, op. 88

There is an image we have of Brahms embodying the misunderstood, remote isolate of the Romantic era. While certain aspects of his life—certainly his unrequited love affair with Clara Schumann—support this portrait, Brahms settled in crowded Vienna and lived there happily. Yet on numerous occasions he did seek the solace of nature for quietude and inspiration. One of his beloved retreats was Bad Ischl, in Upper Austria. He returned there several times, and it was here that he wrote both of his string quintets: the F major, op. 88, and the G major, op. 111.

Op. 88, written in 1882, is a clear and often challenging example of the mature Brahms in full command of his abilities, and gives an indication of why Schoenberg viewed Brahms, rather than Wagner, as the more forward-looking composer. The first movement *Allegro non troppo ma con brio* begins its principal theme with the crowding lyricism we associate with Brahms, and then launches immediately into a series of new beginnings in new keys, and an all-consuming thematic variation. While older generations of composers used clear cadences, well-defined player roles, and textural breaks to organize musical language, this first movement is an ecstatic and ceaseless contrapuntal wash of themes and keys, with every player an important and independent melodic voice. The secondary—and tertiary—themes explore the *hemiola*, or the simultaneous division of the beat into 2 and 3, of which Brahms was so fond. We know we are in the development largely because of the increased dynamics, and the initial recapitulation turns out to be a false one.

Schoenberg’s admiration of Brahms ventured into outright imitation, and the hybridized form of the second movement *Grave ed appassionato* was used as a model for Schoenberg in numerous works. Chamber pieces usually have four movements, with the second and third usually made up of a slow movement and either a dance or scherzo. Here we combine both in a type of rondo. The first section is like a great singing animal—corporeal, unified, and fervently lyrical. The second section becomes a skipping dance; the refrain of the main idea is thickened and decorated, and a subsequent section suggests the nimble activity characteristic of a scherzo. A startling, ethereal ending anticipates Strauss’ *Zarathustra*, composed only fourteen years later.

The last movement, marked *Allegro energico*, is a *moto quasi perpetuo*, driven along and tethered together by running passage-work. Amazingly, Brahms, who normally relies so heavily on the evolution of harmonic progression to organize structure, arranges this last movement around gesture and motion. The harmonic complex built up is so subtle, and so hidden by shifting string textures, he turns to speed, register, and dance to sum up his argument to thrilling effect.

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### about the performers

Violinist **Jeff Thayer** is currently the concertmaster of the San Diego Symphony as well as concertmaster and faculty member of the Music Academy of the West (Santa Barbara). Previous positions include assistant concertmaster of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, associate concertmaster of the North Carolina Symphony, and concertmaster of the Canton (OH) Symphony Orchestra. He is a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Eastman School of Music, and the Juilliard School’s Pre-College Division. His teachers include William Preucil, Donald Weilerstein, Zvi Zeitlin, Dorothy DeLay, and James Lyon. He has appeared as soloist with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the San Diego Symphony, the Jupiter Symphony, the North Carolina Symphony, the Canton Symphony Orchestra, the Pierre Monteux School Festival Orchestra, the Spartanburg Philharmonic, the Cleveland Institute of Music Symphony Orchestra, The Music Academy of the West Festival Orchestra, the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra, the Nittany Valley Symphony Orchestra, and the Conservatory Orchestra of Cordoba, among others. Through a generous loan from Irwin and Joan Jacobs and the Jacobs’ Family Trust, Mr. Thayer plays on the 1708 “Sir Bagshawe” Stradivarius.

**Yeh Shen** became a member of the violin section of the San Diego Symphony Orchestra in 2012 after he won a national audition. Prior to that, he was both a long time extra violinist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and a tenured 1st violinist with the Houston Symphony, with which he performed in all the prestigious concert halls in Europe, Asia and North America with the most of the world’s foremost leading conductors. Born into a music family in China, Shen started studying violin seriously at the age of 9 and was soon accepted to Shanghai Conservatory at the age 11. At the age 12, he was selected by central culture ministry of China to perform publicly for visiting Issac Stern and Yehudi Menuhin and frequently featured on national TV and radio. After immigrating to the US, Shen studied violin with Fredell Lack at University of Houston, William De Pasquali at Philadelphia College for Performing Arts and Berl Senofsky at Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore. He was also a recipient of full stipend scholarship as a member of the Peabody Honors Quartet with which he had toured in Europe and performed with members of the Julliard Quartet and Amadeus Quartet. Shen is a prize winner of National Violin Competition in China and Texas International Young Artist Competition and holds college degrees from the Peabody Conservatory of Music.