

ensemble $\frac{132}{}$

Masques and Marionettes

Petrushka, Two Poems of Balmont,
Three Romances, and Carnival

Igor Stravinsky



Robert Schumann



Clara Schumann



STEINWAY & SONS

“Great music transcends the confines of instrumentation”

This guiding principle shaped my work in the early days of ensemble132's founding in Fall 2019, as I excitedly sketched out the first drafts of my very first chamber music arrangements for ensemble132: Schumann's *Carnaval* and Stravinsky's *Petrushka*. During those unpredictable early days of the pandemic, our close-knit musical family, then based in Boston, used our music-making as a means of connecting with one another, channeling our collective emotions and anxieties of a world in flux.

The music featured on this album is a truly collaborative creation through and through. By design, ensemble132 is a fluid collective; every rehearsal and performance is a fresh inquiry into a composer's intent, our own evolving sonic landscape, and the nature of musical inevitability. My hope is that these virtuosic arrangements not only expand the chamber repertoire but push both the players and the listener to rethink the relationship between the artist and their instrument.

I would like to thank Steinway & Sons and Chamber Music America for making this entire album possible. Without the ongoing support of both institutions, the creation of this album would not have been possible.

– *Sahun Hong*

IGOR STRAVINSKY *Two Poems of Konstantin Balmont* (arr. Sahun Hong)

Konstantin Balmont's poetry is steeped in the sensory, the fleeting, and the ethereal qualities that translate naturally into the intimate textures of a piano quintet. In these two arrangements, the ensemble becomes a storyteller, with the original vocal lines of the two songs given to the violin and cello, respectively. We included these on the album for their distinctive storytelling qualities, reflecting Stravinsky's vision of storytelling in 1911 when he composed both these songs and *Petrushka*.

In *Nezabudochka-tsvetochek* ("Forget-me-not blossom"), the violin takes the lead with its wandering, questioning lyrical line capturing the delicate and botanical tenderness of the verse. It serves as a gentle invocation, calling out to the listener with the faint, persistent voice of the flower itself. In contrast, *Golub* ("The Dove") is rendered through the denser, vocal resonance of the cello - here, the murmuring syncopations of the accompanying parts highlight the second poem's shift from playful courtship to a pulsing, melancholic sense of longing and abandonment.

– *Sahun Hong*

English translations by Robert Burness

1. FORGET-ME-NOT BLOSSOM

Blue forget-me-not, sweet blossom,
Turns on thee its gentle look,
Pluck it, dearest, for thy bosom
On the margin of the brook.

O'er the springs and pools of water
Lifts that little head of blue
To the morning star that sought her
Whispering, "I love thee true".

Blue forget-me-not, my dearest,
Wilt thou mark its tender glance?
If its voice call till thou hearest,
Wilt thou heed that voice perchance?

2. THE DOVE

Flew once where he saw a tower
A dove, as white as could be,
What it held he fain would see,
Nought it held but crimson flower.

Little dove began to coo,
Perched upon the crimson flower,
Charmed her with a magic power,
When she loved him off he flew.

Little dove as white as snow,
Oh, come back for half an hour,
Hast forgot that crimson flower?
Didst thou love so long ago?

IGOR STRAVINSKY *Petrushka for Piano Quintet* (arr. Sahun Hong)

Originally performed as a large-scale ballet, Igor Stravinsky's *Petrushka* tells the story of a puppet magically brought to life by a mysterious sorcerer at the Shrovetide Fair in 1830s St. Petersburg. Stravinsky wrote it on the heels of his immensely successful *Firebird*, also for Diaghilev's *Ballet Russe*, and like in his earlier masterwork, *Petrushka* revels in Russian folk melodies and stories. (Petrushka was a popular Russian hand puppet character deriving from the Commedia dell'arte's Pulcinella.) However, this piece is anything but retrospective, strongly signaling the experimental direction that Stravinsky was headed. After all, just the next year he would write his riot-provoking *Rite of Spring*.

Stravinsky initially imagined *Petrushka* as a quasi-concerto for piano and orchestra, which he intended to build out of images of a puppet frolicking along the keyboard of a piano, “exasperating the patience of the orchestra with diabolical cascades of arpeggios,” in Stravinsky's own words. This concept would soon evolve into the ballet we now know, with its protagonist plunged into the intensely human experiences of love, rejection, and fury as he falls in love – and into brawls – with the sorcerer's other puppets. It would also usher in the beginning of Stravinsky's now iconic exploration of what we call bitonality.

The combination of two seemingly incompatible chords – C Major and F-sharp major – to create the “Petrushka Chord” is a central structural and expressive force throughout this work. We can hear this bitonality at the

opening of the Second Tableau when we are transported to Petrushka's Room. The clarinets (or in our case, the violins) arpeggiate both F# and C chords simultaneously, signaling the moment when Petrushka starts to truly go down his emotional rabbit hole, while we in the audience are plunged deeper into Stravinsky's strange and fascinating world. The resulting harmonic tension may have mirrored Stravinsky's own conflicts at the time: his dual penchant for folk-inspired lyricism and tonal experimentation, his swiftly growing renown as a great writer of ballet music rubbing up against his urge to push the boundaries in provocative ways. Like its bitonal chords, *Petrushka* is filled with wonderful contrasts – its complex rhythms, beautifully simple tunes, enchanting textures, jarring distortions – making it a uniquely evocative piece that easily grips listeners even without a full cast of dancers or symphony orchestra.

– Zachary Mowitz

ROBERT SCHUMANN *Carnaval, Op. 9 for Piano Quartet* (arr. Sahun Hong)

Robert Schuman composed *Carnaval Op. 9*, one of the most well-loved piano pieces in the canon, when he was twenty-four years old. Already building his reputation for colorful and imaginative short character pieces, the young Schumann manifested a unique vision: a musical exhibition of scenes depicting both real-life and imaginary characters, transformed as revelers at the Carnival festivities before Lent. With an extremely clever wordplay,

Carnaval - Scènes mignonnes sur quatre notes (Little Scenes on Four Notes) draws from the *Leitmotif* of the notes A-S-C-H (A-Eb-C-B), which both spells the hometown Asch of his then-fiancee Ernestine von Fricken and is the German word for Ash, as in Ash Wednesday during Lent.

In these colorful and animated short pieces, Schumann features musical representations of himself and his closest friends and colleagues – such as Clara (Chiarina), Ernestine (Estrella), Chopin, Paganini – as well as trope characters from the Italian *comedia del'arte*: the clown Pierrot, Arlecchino (Harlequin), the flirtatious Coquette, and the wealthy Pantalon and his servant-mistress Colombine. The concluding scene of the work is a boisterous group dance, entitled *Marche des Davidsbündler contre les Philistins* (*March of the League of David against the Philistines*), depicting Schumann's imaginary music society of the Davidsbündler, led by his extroverted and introverted alter-egos Florestan and Eusebius. This League of David, the righteous musicians' family, joins together in a triumphant and celebratory dance to celebrate their victory over the music critics of Schumann's time, represented as the Philistines.

In this new chamber music arrangement of Schumann's masterwork, the original piano solo part has been expanded to the ensemble of piano quartet. With the support of three string instruments, the piece gains a newfound humor, sparkle, and by the nature of having multiple performers, a literal personification of the various characters in these quickly changing musical snapshots. Sad, love-forlorn characters become even more mournful with the resonance and texturing of the strings, while the fiery emotions of jealousy and passion are emboldened by the possibilities of

sustaining lines and vibrato. The larger movements such as *Preambule*, *Promenade*, and *Marche des Davidsbündler contre les Philistins* take on the richness of orchestral scope, and the emotional peaks and valleys reach a completely new scale of intensity with the energetic and expressive power of an ensemble of four.

– *Sahun Hong*

CLARA SCHUMANN *Three Romances for Violin and Piano, Op. 22*

One of the most notable performing artists in the history of Western music, Clara Wieck-Schumann is usually overlooked when considering the great Romantic composers. In her time, her reputation as a magnificent concert pianist was known throughout Europe and was rivalled only by the likes of Franz Liszt. However, she also composed intermittently throughout the first half of her life, putting forth a number of works that have recently made their way into the core repertoire—and rightfully so.

Clara Schumann wrote her *Three Romances Op. 22* in 1853 in Düsseldorf, dedicating the work to her close friend, violinist Joseph Joachim. She and Joachim took it on tour shortly thereafter, meeting with great success. The following year, however, her husband would attempt suicide and eventually die of hunger in a mental hospital in 1856, essentially ending her composing career. Most of the rest of her life was spent taking care of their seven surviving children and maintaining a rich performing career – mostly as a way to make ends meet.

Each Romance offers a different shade of Clara's unique artistry, which our members inhabit in each of their interpretations. The first movement – recorded by e132 co-artistic directors Zachary Mowitz and Sahun Hong – unfolds in tender conversation between cello and piano, blooming into a freely ornamented and multi-hued song. The second moves between wistful melancholy and playful charm, closing with a gentle smile (and knowing wink from violist Luther Warren). The tempo marking of the last romance, rendered by Maria Ioudenitch and Sahun, perfectly captures its essence: *Leidenschaftlich schnell* – passionately quick. Ecstatic from the first note, the movement moves through a series of transformations, signified by textural and often virtuosic piano writing, while the violin sings throughout. The piece comes to a close as the piano takes the violin's opening melody to soaring heights, only to end with a newfound calm.

– Zachary Mowitz



Photo: Chris Lee

ensemble 132 | Sahun Sam Hong | Zachary Mowitz | Abi Fayette | Maria Ioudenitch | Luther Warren

ensemble  is an American collective of soloists and chamber musicians of the highest caliber, uniting with a shared mission to reimagine the chamber music landscape. The only group of its kind to continually create and premiere new standards in the chamber music repertoire with its artist-crafted arrangements, ensemble132 excites the imagination of audiences across the country with its uniquely genre-defying programs. Chamber ballets, transcriptions of symphonies and jazz standards, and orchestrations of solo works comprise just a few of ensemble132's programming highlights. Each member of ensemble132's dynamic roster brings their unique blend of uncompromising individuality and collaborative spirit to traditional masterworks as well as unearthed gems. The artists of ensemble132 have collaborated closely at music festivals such as Marlboro, Ravinia, Music@Menlo, Verbier, and Taos, and appear regularly with ensembles such as the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Catalyst Quartet, Borromeo Quartet, and Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. They are prizewinners at major competitions such as the Paganini, Joseph Joachim, Tibor Varga, Sibelius, Primrose, Beethoven Vienna, Vendome Prize, and American Pianists Awards. In 2025, ensemble132 became a Steinway Ensemble and was awarded an Artistic Projects Award from Chamber Music America.



Sahun Sam Hong, Co-Artistic Director, arranger, piano

Hong is a prize winner of numerous international competitions, including the Vendome Prize at Verbier, International Beethoven Competition Vienna, and Naumburg International Piano Competition. In addition to performing, Hong is a prolific arranger and orchestrator, recognized for his innovative transcriptions that are featured in the touring programs of ensemble132, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and Mount Vernon Virtuosi. Hong's primary mentors have included John Owings, Leon Fleisher, and Yong Hi Moon. He is currently based in New York City, and serves on the faculty of CUNY Queens College. He is a member of the Bowers Program (2024–27) at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Hong is a Steinway Artist.



Zachary Mowitz, Co-Artistic Director, cello

An artist who wears many hats, cellist Zachary Mowitz co-founded ensemble132 and the nonprofit Nodality Music and is a member of the SAKURA Cello Quintet and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Mowitz made his solo debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra in 2018 and continues to perform internationally at venues like the Marlboro Music Festival, Caramoor, Carnegie Hall, and Berlin Konzerthaus. Recognized for his artistry as a chamber musician, he has collaborated with artists such as Jonathan Biss, Joseph Lin, Hsin-Yun Huang, and Ida Kavafian, and regularly plays with the Bach Gamut Ensemble. He has premiered the works of today's leading composers, including Richard Danielpour, Gabriela Ortiz, Donald Crockett, Angélica Negrón, and Nick DiBerardino. As a teacher and guest lecturer, Mowitz has visited Yale University, the Curtis Institute of Music, Queens College, Western University, and Texas Christian University. Mowitz attended the Curtis Institute of Music, the Royal College of Music, and the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel, where he studied with mentors Peter Wiley, Carter Brey, Richard Lester, Jeroen Reuling, and Gary Hoffman.



Abi Fayette, violin

Violinist Abi Fayette, the youngest of four children in a musical family, started her violin studies at age three with her mother. She earned degrees from The Curtis Institute of Music and New England Conservatory, studying under Ida Kavafian and Soovin Kim respectively. Other principal teachers include Ann Setzer, Kyung-Wha Chung, and Joseph Silverstein. Passionate about chamber music, she has performed with renowned artists such as Jonathan Biss, Brett Dean, Kim Kashkashian, and others. As an active touring musician, Fayette's performances have taken her all over the world with appearances spanning across the United States, Europe, and Asia. She has toured with Musicians from Marlboro, The Knights, and Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. Currently, she is a member of the Grammy Nominated Catalyst Quartet and serves as Artistic Director of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra of which she is also a member musician. Ms. Fayette performs on a violin made in 1860 by Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume generously on loan from Marlboro Music.



Maria Ioudenitch, violin

American-Russian violinist Maria Ioudenitch gained international recognition in 2021 after winning first prizes at the Ysaÿe, Tibor Varga, and Joseph Joachim competitions. In 2023, she received the Opus Klassik Award for Chamber Music Recording of the Year for her Warner Classics debut album, *Songbird*. Known for her imaginative programming, Maria's repertoire ranges from Brahms, Britten, and Bernstein to Dvořák, Tailleferre, and Prokofiev.

Highlights of the 2025/26 season include debuts with the ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, Royal Danish Opera Orchestra, Cincinnati and Detroit Symphony Orchestras, and George Enescu Philharmonic. Maria also tours with the Basel Symphony Orchestra and performs recitals at Wigmore Hall and Brucknerhaus Linz with pianist Roman Borisov. A member of ensemble132, she collaborates with leading chamber musicians internationally. Maria studied at the ICM at Park University, Curtis Institute of Music, New England Conservatory, and Kronberg Academy with Pamela Frank, Shmuel Ashkenasi, Ben Sayevich, Gregory Sandomirsky, Miriam Fried, and Christian Tetzlaff.



Luther Warren, viola

Violinist and violist Luther Warren maintains an active career as a chamber musician and educator. He has appeared alongside many esteemed musicians and at numerous festivals including Ravinia, Yellow Barn, Four Seasons, Caramoor, Prussia Cove Open Chamber Music, Olympic Music Festival, Norfolk, and Taos. Luther is a founding member of ensemble132 and has been a regular collaborator with LA-based chamber orchestra Delirium Musicum and a frequent guest with the Borromeo String Quartet. As an educator, Luther is on faculty at New England Conservatory's Expanded Education division and serves as Director of Junior Division Chamber Music at the Heifetz International Music Institute. He has presented masterclasses and residencies at Queens College, University of Houston, East Carolina University, and Texas Christian University. Luther holds graduate degrees from the New England Conservatory where he has been a student of Miriam Fried, Donald Weilerstein, and Kim Kashkashian.

Masques and Marionettes

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Mixing: Christopher Moretti

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Piano Technician: Paul Rattigan

Piano: Steinway Model D #512061

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Immersive Music Project:

Great recordings begin with enthusiasm for the acoustic space, to preserve the natural acoustics and intricate details of this performance, we utilized a curated selection of microphones from **DPA**, **Neumann**, **Schoeps**, and **Sanken**. We at Immersive Music Project aim to provide you, the listener, with the highest possible listening experience.

ensemble  is a recipient of a 2025
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ensemble ₁₃₂ Masques and Marionettes

A convergence of world-class artists from around the globe, chamber music collective ensemble132 excites the imagination of audiences with its uniquely genre-defying programs and artist-crafted arrangements. The works on ensemble132's debut album capture vivid stories and characters from the lives and minds of their authors, all unified by universal experiences of love, longing, celebration, and friendship – with a touch of mystery and humor. *Masques and Marionettes* explores these stories through this collective's original arrangements and richly characterful artistry. ensemble132 is a Steinway Ensemble.

IGOR STRAVINSKY (1882-1971)

Two Poems of Konstantin Balmont

(arr. Sahun Hong)

1. "Forget-me-nots"
(Nyezabudochka-tsvyetochech) 1:27
2. "The Dove" (Golub) 2:04

**Maria Ioudenitch, violin; Abi Fayette, violin;
Luther Warren, viola; Zachary Mowitz, cello;
Sahun Hong, piano**

IGOR STRAVINSKY

Petrushka for Piano Quintet (arr. Sahun Hong)

3. Petrushka, Scene I: The Shrovetide Fair 5:20
4. Petrushka, Scene I (The Magic Trick) 2:05
5. Petrushka, Scene I (Russian Dance) 2:49
6. Petrushka, Scene II: Petrushka's Room 4:21
7. Petrushka, Scene III: The Moor's Room 2:44
8. Petrushka, Scene III (Dance of the Ballerina) 0:45
9. Petrushka, Scene III (Waltz) 3:02
10. Petrushka, Scene IV: The Fair Towards Evening 1:12
11. Petrushka, Scene IV (Wet-Nurses' Dance) 2:24
12. Petrushka, Scene IV (Peasant with Bear) 1:42
13. Petrushka, Scene IV (Gypsies) 0:55
14. Petrushka, Scene IV (Dance of the Coachmen) 2:08
15. Petrushka, Scene IV (Masqueraders) 2:04

**Maria Ioudenitch, violin; Abi Fayette, violin; Luther Warren,
viola; Zachary Mowitz, cello; Sahun Hong, piano**

CLARA SCHUMANN (1819-1896)

Three Romances for Violin and Piano, Op. 22

16. Andante molto 3:08
17. Allegretto 3:10
18. Leidenschaftlich schnell 3:55

**Zachary Mowitz, cello; Sahun Hong, piano
Luther Warren, viola; Sahun Hong, piano
Maria Ioudenitch, violin; Sahun Hong, piano**

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

Carnaval, Op. 9 for Piano Quartet (arr. Sahun Hong)

19. Prélude 2:17
20. Pierrot 1:54
21. Arlequin 1:05
22. Valse noble 2:09
23. Eusebius 1:59
24. Florestan 1:02
25. Coquette 1:53
26. Réplique 0:50
27. Sphinxes 0:39
28. Papillons 0:46
29. A.S.C.H. - S.C.H.A. (Lettres dansantes) 0:51
30. Chiarina 1:27
31. Chopin 1:05
32. Estrella 0:34
33. Reconnaissance 1:43
34. Pantalon et Colombine 0:58
35. Valse allemande 0:56
36. Paganini – Tempo I ma piu vivo 1:23
37. Aveu 1:16
38. Promenade 2:19
39. Pause 0:18
40. Marche des Davidsbündler contre les Philistins 3:47

**Maria Ioudenitch, violin; Luther Warren, viola;
Zachary Mowitz, cello; Sahun Hong, piano**

Playing Time: 76:46



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