

# Lamont School of Music

## Faculty Recital Series:

### *Chamber Music with Friends*

**Basil Vendryes**, viola

### *Featuring:*

**Igor Pikayzen**, violin

**Kate Arndt**, violin

**Ezgi Pikayzen**, viola

**Dakota Cotugno**, cello

Saturday, April 4, 2026

7:30 p.m.

Frederic C. Hamilton Family Recital Hall



Robert & Judi Newman Center  
for the Performing Arts

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# Program

## **Duo in G Major, K. 423**

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

(1756–1791)

Allegro

Adagio

Rondeau; Allegro

Igor Pikayzen, violin

Basil Vendryes, viola

INTERMISSION

## **String Quintet No. 2 in B-Flat Major, Op. 87**

**Felix Mendelssohn**

(1809–1847)

Allegro vivace

Andante scherzando

Adagio e lento

Allegro molto vivace

Igor Pikayzen, violin

Kate Arndt, violin

Basil Vendryes, viola

Ezgi Pikayzen, viola

Dakota Cotugno, cello

Please join us in the Spencer Artists Room  
immediately after the performance for a reception,  
generously provided by La Belle Rosette.

# Biographies

**Basil Vendryes** is the Principal Violist of the Colorado Symphony, and is a former member of the San Francisco Symphony, the New York Philharmonic and Rochester Philharmonic orchestras. He currently serves on the faculty of the Lamont School of Music of the University of Denver. As a member of the Aurora String Quartet (1986-95) Mr. Vendryes performed recitals in New York, London and Tokyo and gave west coast premieres of works by John Harbison, George Perle, Richard Danielpour, Benjamin Lees and many others. From 2000-2018 Basil directed the Colorado Young Sinfonia (which he also founded), comprised of some of the best young talent in the Denver area.

Basil Vendryes was born in 1961 to West Indian parents, and began his musical training in the public schools of New York City at the age of eleven. He received scholarships to the Manhattan School of Music and the Eastman School of Music, where he studied with Sally O'Reilly, Francis Tursi and Heidi Castleman. Basil joined the San Francisco Symphony in 1982 at the age of 21 and the New York Philharmonic two years later. Basil joined the Colorado Symphony as Principal Viola in 1993. He has also served as guest principal violist for the Western Australia Symphony Orchestra and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.

Basil Vendryes has recorded for the Albany, Ariel, Cadenza Music, Centaur, CRI, Naxos and Toccata labels in addition to his contributions as an orchestral violist for RCA, Decca, Nonesuch, Phillips, Telarc, Columbia, BIS and Hyperion. His solo recordings of Russian sonatas, American Sonatas and music of Paul Juon with William David have received positive reviews from Fanfare and Strad magazines, as well as the Journal of the American Viola Society. Mr. Vendryes plays on a fine viola made in 2023 by Alexander Tzankow.

Award-winning Russian-American violinist **Igor Pikayzen** is confidently establishing himself as one of the most prodigious and in-demand soloists of his generation. Praised on four continents by critics and audiences alike for his "astounding technical ability and a majestically lush tone...the stylish Igor Pikayzen" (Strad) is "surely at the forefront of a major musical career" (Moscow Times).

2022 sees the release of Igor Pikayzen's recording of the Glazunov Violin Concerto with the London Philharmonic Orchestra for Warner Music, as well as a CD of violin-piano fantasies with longtime collaborator, Tatyana Pikayzen. Upcoming and recent appearances include debuts and re-engagements with Sinfonia Toronto, Filarmonica de Boca del Rio, Orquesta Sinfonica del Estado de Mexico, Istanbul Symphony, Sinfonica Nacional de Chile, Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfonica de Xalapa, National Symphony of Georgia, Zhejiang Symphony Orchestra, La Crosse Symphony amongst others. An avid recitalist, Mr. Pikayzen's season includes debut recitals at the Dame Myra Hess series in Chicago, the Gina Bachauer series in Salt Lake City, recitals in Denver and Washington D.C. as well as a return to New York's prestigious Bargemusic series.

Previous solo appearances include the Russian State Symphony Orchestra, Moscow Radio Symphony, Bucharest Philharmonic, Sinfonietta Veracruzana, Filharmonica di Bacau, Bialystok Philharmonic, Stamford Symphony, Czestochowa Philharmonic, Izmir Symphony, Ridgfield Symphony, Tbilisi Opera Orchestra, Yokohama Sinfonietta, Kielce Philharmonic and countless others under the batons of Lior Shambadal, Lukasz Borowicz, Brett Mitchell, Güler Aykal, Toshi Shimada, Jorge Mester, Daniel Huppert, Hobart Earle, Jerzy Salwarowski, Roman Revueltas, Enrique Batiz, Thomas Rösner, Vakhtang Matchavariani, Christopher Lyndon-Gee, Alexander Platt and Emil Tabakov. Mr. Pikayzen has appeared as a soloist and chamber musician in Carnegie Hall and Alice Tully Hall in New York City, Tchaikovsky Hall and Minor Hall in Moscow, Teatro Llago in Frutillar, Congreso Nacional in Santiago, Eslite Performance Hall in Taipei, President Hall in Ankara, Flagey and Le Bozar in Brussels, Gates Performing Arts Center in Denver, L'Auditori in Barcelona, Le Bourget in Montreal, Centro Nacional de las Artes in Mexico City and Cadogan Hall in London, to name just a few.

Grandson of the legendary Soviet violinist Viktor Pikayzen, Igor Pikayzen was born in Moscow, Russia. After receiving his Bachelor's Degree from Juilliard, as well as a Master's Degree and Artist Diploma from the Yale School of Music, he was the recipient of the coveted Enhanced Chancellor Fellowship while working on his DMA at the CUNY Graduate Center where he was also on the faculty of Brooklyn Conservatory. Pikayzen is the 1st prize winner of the 2015 Edition of the International Violin Competition Luis Sigall in Viña del Mar, Chile as well as the Wronski International Violin Competition in Warsaw, in addition to being a silver medalist at the Szeryng and Kloster-Schöntal international violin competitions.

A native of Moscow, Mr. Pikayzen shares his time between New York, Denver and Westport, CT, where he launched an annual summer music festival, Edelio. In 2019 he was announced as the new Professor of Violin at the Lamont School of Music at the University of Denver.

**Dakota Cotugno** began studying the cello at age 12 and has loved the instrument ever since. A Colorado native, he frequently attended Colorado Symphony concerts—a tradition that came full circle when he joined the Colorado Symphony as a tenured member in the 2023–2024 season.

He earned his Bachelor of Music in Cello Performance from the University of Colorado Boulder, studying with David Requiro, and later completed dual Master's degrees in Cello Performance and Chamber Music, as well as a Doctor of Musical Arts degree at the University of Michigan under the mentorship of Richard Aaron. During his studies, he focused on transcription and arranging other musical works such as orchestral excerpts as chamber works for cello, and various pieces for cello ensemble. Many of these editions are slated for publication in 2025-26.

*(continued.)*

Dr. Cotugno was awarded the silver medal in the 2019 Irving M. Klein International String Competition, where he also garnered the Pablo Casals Prize for Best Performance of Bach. He has performed with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Ann Arbor Symphony, Colorado Music Festival, and has served as principal cellist and orchestral fellow with the Aspen Festival Orchestra.

A dedicated educator, he has taught dozens cellists ranging in age from 7 to 76. His students have been principal cellists in the SVVSD District Honors Orchestra and have participated in the Colorado All-State and Western States Orchestras. Many of his private students have gone on to earn scholarships at institutions around the country. Dr. Cotugno will join the Lamont School of Music as an Interim Professor of Cello in 2025.

A versatile musician, equally in demand as a soloist, chamber music partner and orchestral musician, violist **Ezgi Pikayzen** regularly appears in such prestigious venues as Carnegie Hall, Vienna Musikverein, David Geffen Hall, National Center for the Performing Arts in Beijing, Liszt Hall in Budapest, Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City, Newman Center in Denver, Presidential Hall in Ankara, BBC Proms. In 2024 alone, Ezgi appeared at the Berlin Philharmonic, Santa Cecilia in Rome, Athens Megaron and Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie, Salzburg Festival as a regular member of Utopia Orchestra under the baton of groundbreaking conductor, Teodor Currentzis. As soloist, Ezgi has appeared with the Orquesta Sinfonica del Estado de México, Baskent Chamber Orchestra, Concerto Barocco Chamber Orchestra, Lomza Philharmonic Orchestra, Bellas Artes Chamber Orchestra and many others, across China, Italy, United Arab Emirates, Poland, Switzerland, Germany, Romania, Spain, Mexico and Israel.

After beginning her studies in her native city of Izmir, Turkey, Mrs. Pikayzen became a student of the two most celebrated Turkish violists, Prof. Cetin Aydar and Rusen Gunes, the long-time viola Principal of the London Symphony Orchestra and the BBC Philharmonic. Mrs. Pikayzen was invited to lead the viola sections of such orchestras as the Presidential Symphony of Turkey, Borusan Philharmonic Orchestra, Tekfen Philharmonic Orchestras, Baskent Chamber Orchestra, New Manhattan Sinfonietta, Capital Symphony. She regularly performs with the Colorado Symphony, Opera Colorado and Colorado Ballet and appears as chamber musician and pedagogue at the most prestigious festivals across Europe, Asia, North & South America, including Schleswig-Holstein Festival in Germany, Soloist Academy and Rencontres Musicales de Chaon in France, Festival Edelio in the US and a slew of others.

Since completing her Doctorate of Musical Arts at the Ankara State Conservatory, Mrs. Pikayzen now lives in Denver, where she is on the chamber music faculty of the Lamont School of Music.

Colorado Symphony Principal Second Violinist **Kate Arndt**, from Boston, Massachusetts recently completed her Doctor of Musical Arts degree at Yale University under Ani Kavafian, also holding Masters degrees from Yale University in both Music and Musical Arts, and completed her undergraduate studies in Violin Performance at New England Conservatory of Music under Miriam Fried.

As a featured soloist with several orchestras, Kate has performed at venues such as Boettcher Hall, Boston's Symphony Hall, Fordham University and New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall. In recent years, Kate has also been active in Europe, including participation in the Gstaad Menuhin Festival in Switzerland, the Kronberg Masterclasses and Concerts in Germany and the IMS Prussia Cove Masterclasses in Cornwall, UK. In the US, Kate has also attended several prestigious summer programs, including Music@Menlo, Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, the Taos School of Music, the Perlman Music Program, and the Sarasota Music Festival, where she was featured in 2019 as a guest soloist with the festival orchestra. In 2021, Kate received first prize at the CSU Bakersfield Competition for her recording of Michael Friedmann's Fantasy for Solo Violin.

Kate has performed extensively with prominent orchestras throughout the US, including the Colorado Music Festival Orchestra in Boulder, Colorado as the Assistant Concertmaster, with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra as a guest musician, Symphony in C as Principal Second Violin, and as a member of the New York Classical Players.

A passionate chamber musician, Kate has performed with a number of ensembles at venues such as Carnegie Hall, New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, as well as the Curtis Institute of Music and the University of New Orleans with her former group, the Vera Quartet, and as a recurring artist in the Mellon Music Festival in Davis, CA. Kate also attended the Four Seasons Winter Workshop at East Carolina University, where she collaborated with artists such as Robert McDonald, Ida Kavafian, Colin Carr, Misha Amory, Hye- Jin Kim and Ara Gregorian. Her former group, the Isolde Quartet, received an honorable mention at the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition. Kate has collaborated with several existing chamber ensembles, including the Calidore, Callisto and Kodak String Quartets, and as winner of chamber competitions, she was selected to perform as a guest artist with the Borromeo String Quartet and with the Boston Trio.

Kate's academic interests particularly focus on the contributions of women in classical music, an area she hopes to expand through featuring works by female composers in future performances.

# Upcoming Events

Tuesday, April 7, 7:30 p.m.

## **Trombone Studio Recital**

Hamilton Recital Hall

Free admission, no ticket required

Friday, April 10, 7:30 p.m.

## **Faculty Recital Series: Richard Harris, trombone**

Hamilton Recital Hall

\$12, free for students & faculty

Sunday, April 12, 5:00 p.m.

## **Guest Recital: Lynnli Wang, carillon**

Williams Carillon, Ritchie Center Lawn

Free admission, no ticket required

Friday, April 17, 7:30 p.m.

## **Faculty Recital Series:**

### **Brian Neal, trumpet & Cindy Lindeen-Martin, organ**

Hamilton Recital Hall

\$12, free for students & faculty

**Full events list:** [liberalarts.du.edu/lamont/performances-events](http://liberalarts.du.edu/lamont/performances-events)



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**Lamont School of Music**  
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

