



The third concert of the 41st USCB Chamber Music season will be performed on Sunday, January 31, 5:00 pm. Socially distanced in-house attendees and a virtual audience will be dazzled by vibrant, life-affirming music. Artistic Director Andrew Armstrong has selected three extraordinary, new-to-this-series artists to join him, two of whom were contacted on short notice due to coronavirus-related personnel changes.

USCB Chamber Music audiences have come to expect exceptional concerts as a matter of course. Having Artistic Directors with deep connections within and beyond the chamber music fraternity has sustained a level of performance excellence equal to that of New York, London, or Paris. It is a tribute to Charles Wadsworth, Edward Arron, and Andrew Armstrong, as well as the knowledgeable, supportive low-country audience that players of international caliber choose to perform in Beaufort.

The concert begins with two widely separated works by Claude Debussy. First is *Sonata for Cello and Piano*, a late-period work written while suffering from cancer during World War I. Concentrated and austere, its beauty lies in concise reasoning and rapid alternations between lyric, frantic, or ironic moods. On the other hand, *Petite Suite for Piano Four Hands*, written 26 years earlier, was intended for wide audience appeal and good sales. It was successful in this quest and remains one of Debussy's most charming and popular pieces. Each of the four movements is suggestive of motion: a rocking boat, striding steps, elegant or energized dancing. The first half closes with three virtuosic violin show-stoppers: William Kroll's

brilliant

*Banjo and Fiddle,*

George Gershwin's heart-tugging, Charleston-conceived

*"Bess, You Is My Woman Now,"*

and

*"It Ain't necessarily So."*

William Grant Still is represented by *Three Visions for Piano* from 1936. Still had rigorous academic



training and a long career during which he broke, on merit, many barriers large and small: he was the first African-American to conduct a major U.S. orchestra, have an opera performed by a major U.S. opera company, and conduct all-white studio orchestras. The strongly contrasting movements of *Three Visions* convey moods of horror, mid-nineteenth century Spiritualism, and aspirations about what lies beyond life's veil. A favorite barn-burner concludes the concert: Felix Mendelssohn's *Piano Trio No 2 in c minor*. Mendelssohn is one of western art music's most prodigiously talented composers; the equal of Mozart in sheer raw talent. All of his gifts are on display in the trio. Its four movements surge with fire and energy, soothe with elegant cooing, flit with elfin grace, and conclude with an ecstatic conquering of darkness.

The artists who will bring this music to life are violinist and South Carolina native David Kim, Concertmaster of the Philadelphia Orchestra since 1999. Mr. Kim began playing the violin in Columbia at age three and went on to receive degrees from the Juilliard School. He was founder and twenty-year Artistic Director of the Kingston Chamber Music Festival at the University of Rhode Island, has been awarded several honorary doctorates, regularly solos with the Philadelphia Orchestra, conducts master classes worldwide, and is widely respected for his artistry and sincerity. Cellist Ani Aznavoorian also received both of her degrees at

