Cellist **Charles Curtis** has been Professor of Music at UCSD since Fall 2000. Previously he was Principal Cello of the Symphony Orchestra of the North German Radio in Hamburg, a faculty member at Princeton, the cellist of the Ridge String Quartet, and a sought-after chamber musician and soloist in the classical repertoire. A student of Harvey Shapiro and Leonard Rose at Juilliard, on graduation Curtis received the Piatigorsky Prize of the New York Cello Society. He has appeared as soloist with the San Francisco, National and Baltimore Symphonies, the Symphony Orchestra of Berlin, the NDR Symphony, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the BBC Scottish Symphony, the Janacek Philharmonic, as well as orchestras in Italy, Brazil and Chile. He is internationally recognized as a leading performer of unique solo works created expressly for him by composers such as La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela, Éliane Radigue, Alvin Lucier, Christian Wolff, Alison Knowles and Tashi Wada. Time Out New York called his recent New York performances "the stuff of contemporary music legend," and the New York Times noted that Curtis' "playing unfailingly combined lucidity and poise... lyricism and intensity." Recent seasons have included solo concerts at New York's Issue Project Room and Roulette, the Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, the Sub Tropics Festival in Miami, the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, the Angelica Festival in Bologna as well as solo performances in Brussels, Metz, Paris, Mexico City, and Athens. Last summer Curtis led four performances of the music of La Monte Young at the Dia Art Foundation's Dia:Chelsea space in New York.

Artistic Director – Charles Curtis
Recording Engineer – Andrew Munsey
Program Notes – Charles Cross
Program Associate – Rachel Beetz
Promotions Design – Jennifer Bewerse
Production Manager – Jessica Flores

Special thanks to the Del Mar Inn Hotel

Upcoming Camera Lucida performances:
January 9, 2017
February 20, 2017
April 17, 2017
May 15, 2017

Pianist **Reiko Uchida** enjoys an active career as a soloist and chamber musician. She performs regularly throughout the United States, Asia, and Europe, in venues including Suntory Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, Alice Tully Hall, the 92nd Street Y, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Kennedy Center, and the White House. First prize winner of the Joanna Hodges Piano Competition and Zinetti International Competition, she has appeared as a soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Santa Fe Symphony, Greenwich Symphony, and the Princeton Symphony, among others. She made her New York solo debut in 2001 at Weill Hall under the auspices of the Abby Whiteside Foundation. As a chamber musician she has performed at the Marlboro, Santa Fe, Tanglewood, and Spoleto Music Festivals; as guest artist with Camera Lucida, American Chamber Players, and the Borromeo, Talich, Daedalus, St. Lawrence, and Tokyo String Quartets; and in recital with Jennifer Koh, Thomas Meglioranza, Anne Akiko Meyers, Sharon Robinson, and Jaime Laredo. Her recording with Jennifer Koh, "String Poetic" was nominated for a Grammy Award. She is a past member of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center Two. As a youngster, she performed on Johnny Carson's Tonight Show. Ms. Uchida holds a Bachelor's degree from the Curtis Institute of Music, a Master's degree from the Mannes College of Music, and an Artist Diploma from the Juilliard School. She studied with Claude Frank, Leon Fleisher, Edward Aldwell, Margo Garrett, and Sophia Rosoff. She has taught at the Brevard Music Center, and is currently an associate faculty member at Columbia University.

Violinist **Jeff Thayer** is currently the concertmaster of the San Diego Symphony. Previous positions include assistant concertmaster of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, associate concertmaster of the North Carolina Symphony, concertmaster and faculty member of the Music Academy of the West (Santa Barbara), 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. He attended Keshet Eilon (Israel), Ernen Musikdorf (Switzerland), Music Academy of the West, Aspen, New York String Orchestra Seminar, the Quartet Program, and as the 1992 Pennsylvania Governor Scholar, Interlochen Arts Camp. Through a generous loan from Irwin and Joan Jacobs and the Jacobs' Family Trust, Mr. Thayer plays on the 1708 "Sir Bagshawe" Stradivarius.

camera lucida

chamber music concerts at UC San Diego
December 5, 2016 – 7:30 p.m.
Conrad Prebys Concert Hall

With thanks to Sam Ersan, founding sponsor of Camera Lucida

Phantasiestücke for piano trio, Opus 88 — Robert Schumann
Romance: Not fast, with inner expression
Humoresque: Lively
Duet: Slow, and with expression
Finale: March-Tempo

Sonata No. 4 for Violin and Piano — Charles E. Ives
"Children's Day at the Camp Meeting"
Allegro
Largo; Allegro (conslugarocko); Andante con sprito; Adagio cantabile
Allegro

intermission

Piano Trio in d minor, Opus 63 — Robert Schumann
With energy and passion
Lively, but not too fast
Slow, with inner emotion
With fire

Reiko Uchida, piano
Jeff Thayer, violin
Charles Curtis, cello

"Very different - and very soft in nature..." are the words Schumann applied to what would become his Opus 88. Initially a sort of side-project of his famous "year of chamber music," 1842, in which the more famous Piano Quartet and Piano Quintet appeared, the *Phantasiestücke* went through repeated transformations in the following years, finally to be published eight years later. The hesitations, revisions and re-thinkings suggested in this elongated process left no traces whatsoever in the music itself. As their title suggests, the four interconnected movements seem more the involuntary emanations of fantasy, intuition and impulse than the closely-argued, sometimes tortuously discursive forms of Schumann's large-scale works.

"Very different" too would be the impulse to make a chamber music work in the form of a cycle of character pieces. Surprisingly, one seeks in vain for a precedent. Chamber music from Haydn and Mozart onwards hews overwhelmingly to the approved blueprint of Sonata Allegro, dance movement, slow movement and Rondo-Finale, and the various slight creative adjustments to that pattern. Even Beethoven's late quartets, with their divertimento-like constellations of shorter movements (Opp. 130 and 131 in particular) never quite give way to the anti-monumental, song-cycle-like necklaces of short pieces that we associate with Schumann, Chopin and the later Romantics. Schubert's *Impromptus* and *Moments musicaux*, possibly Beethoven's late *Bagatelles,* set early examples, but invariably for solo piano. With Opus 88 Schumann brilliantly transplants the cycle of character pieces to the chamber music format.

The character piece gives Schumann the freedom to make forms that are open-ended, non-binding and self-extending; the teleology, if you will, of sonata form is not in effect. Schumann follows the material itself, wherever it leads, rather than cutting it to a dressmaker's pattern. Thus we have a movement like the third, *Duet*, which spins out one single melodic idea as a meditative dialogue between cello and violin, the piano providing minimal surface ripples as backdrop; or the second, *Humoresque*, a sort of medley of one interlude after another, superficially resembling a set of variations, but one in which the theme has gone missing in the heat of the composer's exuberance. The first movement, *Romance,* anticipates the autumnal melancholy of late Brahms, rhetorically emphasizing *appoggiatura*-like downbeats heavy with regret. And the *Finale* again meanders through episodes only loosely related to each other, flowing finally into a remarkable section of off-set alternating chords, the strings and the piano separated in time by one eighth-note, these syncopations then extending in a kind of off-balance, teetering dance longer than would seem prudent; and finally giving way to a frankly Schubertian coda, *nach und nach schwächer*, gradually weaker, a drone in the cello supporting fleeting scales that gradually expire.

The time-lag in completion, from 1842 to 1850, also gives Opus 88 the curious status of an early and a late work at one and the same time. The inscrutable, enigmatic gestures of the aging Schumann peek through these youthful *Phantasiestücke* like premonitions.

* * * * *

Charles Ives completely stopped composing in 1927, nearly thirty years before his death. But he continued to revise and tinker with his considerable output for the remainder of his life. Why did he stop? The scope, the idealism, the all-loving, all-inclusive embrace of his creative project may have overwhelmed him; and the almost total absence of a public reception (not to speak of critical approval or acclaim) may finally have discouraged him. He was one of the first artists of the twentieth century to recognize and act upon the need for a merging or a blurring of the carefully-husbanded boundaries separating art from life. In this sense his music is prophetic, and as an artist far in advance of his time, it was convenient for his contemporaries to ignore him. Erroneously dismissed as an eccentric, an autodidact or an amateur, Ives was in fact scrupulously trained in music at Yale University; he was an accomplished church organist in his youth, and he led a perfectly sane, ordered, responsible life as citizen and worker. His desire to render in music the direct experience of his life in the world - through collage, quotation, heterophony, dissonance, layering, and a kind of proto-sampling of recognizable musical sources - is marked not by a need to shock or provoke, but by a truly touching sincerity. One of his last, unfinished undertakings was a "Universe" symphony to be performed by multiple orchestras situated in valleys and on hilltops and mountains - a final bursting of the confines of the concert hall, extending the musical act out into the infinite expanses of *the real.*

In the Fourth Violin Sonata, however, Ives does exactly the inverse: he brings the outdoors into the concert hall. And not the abstract, cosmic reality of "the Universe," but the very specific, personal reality of his own childhood. In notes written by hand on the backs of his music manuscripts, Ives writes of the Fourth Sonata:

The subject matter is a kind of reflection, remembrance, expression, etc. of the children's services at the out-door Summer camp meetings held around Danbury and in many of the farm towns in Connecticut, in the 70's, 80's and 90's. There was usually only one Children's Day in these Summer meetings, and the children made the most of it - often the best of it. They would at times get stirred up, excited and even boisterous, but underneath there was usually something serious, though Deacon Grey would occasionally have to "Sing a Caution."

... Even in the quiet services, some of the deacon-enthusiasts would get up and sing, roar, pray and shout but always fervently, seriously, reverently - perhaps not "artistically" - (perhaps the better for it). - "We're men of the fields and rocks, not artists," Farmer John would say. At times these "confurorants" would give the boys a chance to run out and throw stones down on the rocks in the brook! (Allegro conslugarocko!) -- but this was only momentary and the quiet Children's Hymn is sung again, perhaps some of the evening sounds are with it...

We sense that Ives is writing to himself, recording his memories and re-visiting their distant sources. The music too seems involved in a private process of re-living, re-experiencing, lingering over something deeply personal. Here is another side to Ives that is radical and uncompromising: a music made for himself, not aimed at a public, and therefore not reducible to public taste and expectations. As listeners, we are listening in, almost eaves-dropping, to something taking place in its own sphere: not sealed off from us, but just there, in tandem with our presence and our realities.

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Schumann's First Piano Trio reveals another Schumann: ambitious, outward-looking, results-oriented; vying with Beethoven and Schubert in the mastery and subjugation of long-form sonata structure. The d-minor Trio is not only a "masterpiece" as we understand that term -- exciting, daring, full of contrast and conflict, ingenious in its maneuverings through those conflicts, somehow spellbinding and addictive -- it is also a work that openly aspires to being a "masterpiece." In her diary Clara Schumann writes of the trio: "... so youthful-fresh and powerful, and yet so masterful in execution!" To limn the nuances of this "mastery" - whether from the standpoint of the private relationship between Robert and Clara, or from the historical standpoint of the *Vormärz* and German revolutionary nationalism, or from the then-relatively-new aesthetic notion of the work concept, to name only a few possibilities - would offer an interesting study. Listening to Opus 63 we are in the presence not only of a musical work of dazzling artifice, but also of an idea, pushed to some extreme, of what a musical work can, or ought to, be.

The Trio begins with a melody in the violin, dark and husky; this melody enters as an "upbeat," or a "pickup," sounding before the pulse of the music begins. But this "upbeat" is confusing: it is tied in to its following "downbeat," thus there is no audible "first beat." A sense of uncertainty and irregularity, the suspension of the uniform unfolding of time, pervades this long and cavernous movement. As the exposition section gives way to the elaborations of the development section, all motion stops and the cellist plays a faint, eerie tune as softly as possible and with the scratching of the bow against the bridge made audible. Something like the *Irrlicht*, the will-o'-the-wisp, seems to be intended here, out of the surrounding darkness a pinpoint light of mysterious origin. But the movement remains occulted and obscure, here and there fomenting surges of dubious energy. The second movement, by contrast, is a snappy dance, suggestive of mazurkas or polonaises, with rising dotted figures and dizzying arabesques to hypnotize and intoxicate. The third, slow movement, marked "*mit inniger Empfindung*," "with inner emotion," could be heard as a very slow *recitativo,* a lament, something approximating the mood of the scene from Goethe's *Faust* in which Gretchen prays at the city wall to the *Mater Dolorosa*. The atmosphere is utterly barren, devoid of comfort. Another kind of rhythmic uncertainty is at play in this music: partly due to the extreme slowness of the tempo, and partly to the layering of asynchronous rhythms in the two hands of the pianist, harmony and sonority seem liberated from their usual assignments within the concept of *measure,* or *Takt*. The grid has been abolished. We feel, with a mixture of awe and foreboding, as if we were outside of time.

But, after coming to rest on a Phrygian half-cadence, leaving a sense not of finality but of anticipation, the Finale begins, a torrent of comfort, reassurance, regularity and ardor, carrying forward a melody nearly anthemic in character. Here the trick seems to be to extend and sustain, and as the movement reaches its inevitable conclusion Schumann manages to dance around a definitive climax by modulating evasively and setting innumerable detours. This ongoing deferment offers the listeners a chance to both *want* the movement (and the piece) to finally end, and to enjoy *waiting*, and wanting it to end. *Schwärmerei* is the German for rapture or ecstasy; and in this Finale the busy overlappings of fanfares and triumphal scales do seem to swarm and clamor, nearly out of control. Clearly, Schumann is the one who does not want this movement to end. It is endings that define time's passage, and Schumann's dream of being outside of time can only be abolished with the frenetic - *Noch schneller* - faster yet - noises of creative destruction.