

Gotham Early Music Scene (GEMS) presents



Thursday December 28, 2023 1:15 pm
St Malachy's Church – The Actors' Chapel in New York City
Live Streamed to midtownconcerts.org and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com)

The Odd Couple *Lindley & Dragonetti*

Nathan Whittaker ~ violoncello Nathaniel Chase ~ double bass

Solo V, Op. 9

[Allegro Moderato] ~ Rondo

Robert Lindley (1776–1855)

Sonata in E minor, Op. 5, No. 8

Preludio: Largo ~ Allemanda: Allegro Moderato ~
Sarabande: Largo ~ Giga: Allegro ma non troppo

Arcangelo Corelli (1653–1713)

Waltz No. 12 for Double Bass

Duetto per Violoncello e Contrabasso

Adagio ~ Allegro ma non tanto

Domenico Dragonetti (1763–1846)

Waltz No. 3 for Double Bass

Duetto in D Major (1824)

Allegro ~ Andante Molto ~ Allegro

Domenico Dragonetti
Gioachino Rossini (1792–1868)

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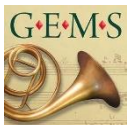
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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

For over 52 years, from 1794 until 1846, two of the most popular members of the Italian Theatre in London were not the singers, directors, or even the conductors. Instead, Robert Lindley, the dashing and dapper principal violoncellist from Yorkshire, and Domenico Dragonetti, the gaunt yet charismatic Venetian principal bassist, were the most beloved musicians in London – and to cap it all off, they were stand partners and best of friends. Lindley and Dragonetti, both renowned virtuosi in their own right, were particularly noted for their accompaniment of recitative. During their tenures at the Opera, recitative was not accompanied by keyboard as the newly fashionable fortepianos lacked the volume to accompany singers in a large space. Instead, Lindley and Dragonetti performed this task whereby Dragonetti played the principal note and Lindley realized the harmony above, sometimes with a simply arpeggiated chord, or sometimes with elaborate and extended improvisation. Lindley and Dragonetti also were famous for their performance of sonatas by Corelli arranged for violoncello and double bass.

The Odd Couple aims to depict what this duo of (unlikely) best friends might have been like by featuring music that they almost certainly would have played together. While both Lindley and Dragonetti were more respected as performers than composers during their lives, they both left delightful cello-bass duets full of witty conversation and sparkling repartee. Corelli's *Sonata in E minor*, Op. 5, No. 8 performed on violoncello and bass forges into a different sonic world, entering a deeper timbral realm than with the original instrumentation. Rossini's *Duo* (undoubtedly the most famous piece for cello-bass duo) was premiered by Dragonetti at a *soirée* in 1824 and is (unsurprisingly for this operatic master) brimming with soulful melodies, playful exchange, and unyielding fun.

This performance will feature a 19th-century three-string double bass, similar to ones played by Dragonetti. three-string basses, though rare today, were common, even standard, in Italy, England, France and elsewhere for much of the 19th century, and were highly regarded for their clear, resonant sound and crisp attack. In addition to their use in orchestral and operatic repertoire, they were the preferred solo instruments of Dragonetti and Bottesini, the preeminent double virtuosos of the 19th century.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Double bass and violone player **Nathaniel Chase** performs a wide range of music, from period performance with the Sebastians and the Trinity Baroque Orchestra, to new music with NOVUS NY, and orchestral repertoire with the Riverside and Allentown Symphonies. He performed on Broadway in the critically acclaimed production of *Farinelli and the King* with countertenor Iestyn Davies. He is a graduate of the New England Conservatory and the Yale School of Music, where he was a winner of the 2010 Woolsey Hall Concerto Competition.

Nathan Whittaker, violoncello, enjoys a unique and diverse career as a concert soloist, chamber musician, recitalist, teacher, and historical cello specialist with concert stops ranging from New York to Seattle to Dubai. He is the Artistic Director of Gallery Concerts (Seattle), a concert series of chamber music on period instruments, and regularly performs with the Trinity Baroque Orchestra, Pacific Baroque Orchestra, New York Baroque Incorporated, ARTEK, El Mundo, Fort Greene Chamber Music Society, the Sebastians, and the Pacific Northwest Ballet. Recent appearances include the Caramoor Music Festival, Arizona Early Music Festival, Vancouver Bach Festival, Pacific Baroque Festival, Helicon Society, Berkeley Early Music Festival, Ottawa ChamberFest, the Boston Early Music Festival, and as a guest lecturer at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Paris. He has served on the faculty of Cornish College of the Arts. He can be heard on recordings by ATMA Musique, Harmonia, and Centaur, as well as on live broadcasts by NPR, CBC, and KING FM. Dr. Whittaker holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts from the University of Washington and Bachelors and Masters degrees from Indiana University. He performs on a violoncello of Mario Gadda from 1957, and a Baroque violoncello of Johann Christian Ficker II from ca. 1770.

Next Week: Angelica Women's Chamber Choir
A Battle of the Sexes:
Italian Composers from 1300 to 1800