

Jihyeuk Choi  
*cello*

Recital in partial fulfillment of the  
Master of Music degree, 2025  
Student of Luís Claret

with  
Geonwoo Yi and Seongwoo Moon, piano

Friday, April 18, 2025  
8:30 p.m.  
Burnes Hall

PROGRAM

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**Felix Mendelssohn**  
(1809–1847)

*Variations Concertantes for Piano and Cello  
in D Major, op. 17*

Theme: Andante con moto

Variation I

Variation II

Variation III: Più vivace

Variation IV: Allegro con fuoco

Variation V: L'istesso tempo

Variation VI: L'istesso tempo e tranquillo

Variation VII: Presto ed agitato

Variation VIII: Tempo primo – Più animato

**Richard Strauss**  
(1864–1949)

**Sonata for Cello and Piano in F Major, op. 6  
TrV 115 (rev. 1883)**

Allegro con brio

Andante ma non troppo

Finale: Allegro vivo

Geonwoo Yi, piano

*Intermission*

**Sergei Rachmaninoff**  
(1873–1943)

**Sonata for Piano and Cello in G Minor, op. 19**

Lento – Allegro moderato

Allegro scherzando

Andante

Allegro mosso

Seongwoo Moon, piano

*I share and express my heartfelt gratitude to my cherished colleagues,  
family, and, above all, my beloved teacher and mentor, Mr. Claret.  
The guidance and support I received from Mr. Claret  
have enriched my artistic integrity and identity.  
The gift will undoubtedly enlighten my journey forward.*

*Jihyeuk Choi is the recipient of the Donald and Alice Noble Scholarship.*

**Mendelssohn** *Variations Concertantes für Pianoforte und Violoncello  
in D-Dur, op. 17*

Felix Mendelssohn's relationship with his siblings is widely known, not only because of his devotion toward Fanny Mendelssohn but also because of his youngest sibling Paul Mendelssohn, a banker and an amateur cellist. The Variations Concertantes, composed in 1829, was dedicated to Paul. Felix Mendelssohn portrayed Paul's personality and musicality across the theme and variations; lyricism over the continuous dialogue between the piano and cello convey witty and delightful characters of both Felix himself and Paul. Despite the formality of 'theme and variations' influenced by Mozart's and Beethoven's sets of variations— the theme followed by eight variations— Mendelssohn saturates his romanticism by avoiding the formal structure and musical deviation between variations, in favor of more subtle dialogue between cello and piano.

**Strauss** *Sonate für Violoncello und Pianoforte in F-Dur, op. 6 TrV 115*

Richard Strauss, a prominent composer known for bridging the late-Romantic and early-Modern eras, was pivotal in flowering late German Romanticism. The Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 6, composed in 1881 and revised in 1883 (with the original finale replaced by a completely new movement), marks a significant moment in Strauss' early career, just prior to the onset of his conducting profession. In alignment with the beliefs of his father, Franz Strauss, his early works exhibit a well-grounded traditional classical style, with notable influences from Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Brahms: use of techniques such as the repetition of sequential melodies and four-part fugues. While his music evokes the styles of Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Brahms, Richard Strauss establishes his musical identity and his unique style characterized by distinctive rhythmic characters, lyrical intensity, and surprising modulations— a testament to his innovative spirit and his ability to push the boundaries of classical music.

## **Rachmaninoff Sonata pour Piano et Violoncelle en G mineur, op. 19**

Sergei Rachmaninoff's suffering of depression following the traumatic premiere of his Symphony No. 1 in 1897 led to a hiatus of over three years, during which he was unable to compose. Rachmaninoff's triumphant return to composition with his Piano Concerto No. 2 marked a renewed focus on chamber music, culminating in his final chamber work, the Sonata for Piano and Cello, op. 19. The piece was premiered in December 1901, one month after the Piano Concerto No. 2, with the Russian cellist Anatoliy Brandukov, to whom the work was dedicated, performing alongside Rachmaninoff on the piano. As per Rachmaninoff's belief in the equal roles of both instruments, he was reluctant to call the work a 'Cello Sonata'; the piano introduces thematic material, while the cello expands upon and enriches it. The influences of Russian Orthodox Church music, an essential part of his life, are evident throughout the piece, such as close intervals, repetition of single notes, and bell-like sonorities. The work spans a vast emotional range, depicting the depth of his soul, and highlights the beginning and the ending of a significant phase in Rachmaninoff's career.

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