

Stella Haekyung Ju  
*violin*

Recital in partial fulfillment of the  
Master of Music degree, 2025  
Student of Soovin Kim and Donald Weilerstein

with  
Hyunjin Roh, piano  
Evan Johanson, violin

Sunday, May 4, 2025  
8:00 p.m.  
Williams Hall

## PROGRAM

---

**Johannes Brahms**  
(1833–1897)

**Violin Sonata No. 2 in A Major, op. 100 “Thun”**  
Allegro amabile  
Andante tranquillo – Vivace  
Allegretto grazioso, quasi andante

**Camille Saint-Saëns**  
(1835–1921)  
arr. Eugène Ysaÿe

***Caprice d’après l’étude en forme de Valse,***  
**op. 52 no. 6**

*Intermission*

**Richard Strauss**  
(1864–1949)

**Violin Sonata in E-flat Major, op. 18**  
Allegro, ma non troppo  
Improvisation: Andante cantabile  
Finale: Andante – Allegro

**Pablo de Sarasate**  
(1844–1908)

***Navarra, op. 33***

Evan Johanson, violin

*Stella Haekyung Ju is the recipient of the Tan Family Foundation Scholarship.*

### **Brahms Violin Sonata No. 2 in A Major, op. 100 ("Thun")**

Composed during the summer of 1886 in the picturesque Swiss town of Thun, Brahms' Violin Sonata No. 2 reflects a sense of serenity, warmth, and lyrical intimacy. Often called the "Thun" Sonata, it stands out for its graceful flow and chamber-like balance between the violin and piano. Unlike many Romantic sonatas that spotlight virtuosic display, this work prioritizes conversation and tenderness.

The first movement (*Allegro amabile*) opens with a gentle and flowing theme, characterized by its affectionate tone and melodic charm. The second movement (*Andante tranquillo – Vivace*) blends a slow, expressive section with a playful and whimsical interlude, showcasing Brahms' skillful contrasts in mood. The finale (*Allegretto grazioso*) is elegant and songful, bringing the sonata to a calm and satisfying close.

This sonata, the shortest and perhaps most understated of Brahms' three violin sonatas, speaks with emotional depth and poetic simplicity. It reveals the composer at a mature point in his life, writing with clarity, confidence, and a deep sense of musical partnership.

### **Saint-Saëns Caprice d'après l'étude en forme de Valse, op. 52 no. 6**

(arr. Eugène Ysaÿe)

Originally composed for solo piano in 1877, Saint-Saëns's *Étude en forme de Valse*, op. 52 no. 6, is a dazzling showpiece that combines the elegance of a Viennese waltz with the fiery brilliance of a virtuosic étude. The piece quickly became one of his most popular keyboard works, admired for its sparkling textures and graceful charm. Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe, himself a towering virtuoso, transcribed the piece for violin and piano, transforming it into a thrilling caprice. His arrangement preserves the effervescent waltz rhythms and graceful phrasing of the original while adding layers of violinistic flair: rapid arpeggios, flying harmonics, sweeping runs, and daring leaps that showcase the full expressive and technical range of the instrument. Under Ysaÿe's hand, the Caprice becomes a brilliant fusion of Romantic lyricism and dazzling virtuosity—light, stylish, and irresistibly playful. It's a joyous celebration of both Saint-Saëns's melodic ingenuity and the violin's capacity to sing, sparkle, and dance.

### **Strauss Violin Sonata in E-flat Major, op. 18**

Strauss's Violin Sonata, composed in 1887, captures the voice of a young composer at the cusp of transformation. Though Strauss is best known for his sweeping orchestral tone poems and operas, this sonata which is one of his last ventures into chamber music reveals the rich emotional and lyrical world that would later blossom in his large-scale works.

The first movement opens with confidence and clarity, full of youthful energy and radiant themes. The interplay between violin and piano is conversational and dramatic, with bursts of passion balanced by graceful lyricism. It feels both noble and personal, like a glimpse into Strauss's inner optimism.

The second movement, marked *Andante cantabile*, is a moment of introspection

and tenderness. Labeled as an “Impromptu,” it has a dreamy, almost improvisational quality. The violin sings with heartfelt emotion over lush harmonic textures, offering one of the sonata’s most expressive and touching moments.

The final movement begins with a gentle Andante introduction that leads into a brilliant and spirited Allegro. Here, Strauss lets loose with charm, humor, and virtuosic flair—ending the sonata on a jubilant note that brims with sparkle and confidence.

While it may not carry the operatic weight of Strauss’s later works, the Violin Sonata in E-flat is a vibrant and lyrical statement, offering insight into the Romantic soul of a composer soon to take on the grand stage of musical history.

### **de Sarasate**    *Navarra, op. 33*

Composed in 1889, *Navarra* is one of Pablo de Sarasate’s most electrifying showpieces for two violins and orchestra or piano. A proud native of Pamplona in the Navarra region of Spain, Sarasate infuses this work with the fiery spirit and rhythmic flair of Spanish folk dance, capturing the essence of his homeland with dazzling virtuosity. Originally written for two violins, *Navarra* features rapid-fire exchanges, sparkling harmonies, and playful dialogue between the parts, all set against the backdrop of traditional Spanish dance rhythms. The piece is filled with brilliance: flying spiccato, intricate double stops, and sizzling runs that demand both precision and flair. The music alternates between lyricism and explosive energy, evoking the passion and pride of the Navarrese culture.

*Navarra* stands as a brilliant display of Sarasate’s unique style—combining elegance, charm, and technical wizardry. Whether performed in its original duet form or adapted for solo violin, it remains a favorite encore piece and a celebration of violinistic artistry at its most joyful and spirited.

Food and drink are not allowed in the concert hall,  
and photography and audio or video recording are prohibited.

Assistive listening devices are available for all Jordan Hall concerts;  
contact the head usher or house manager on duty or inquire at the Coat Room.

Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of management.

Stay connected



[necmusic.edu/tonight](https://necmusic.edu/tonight)