

New Year's Concert 2018

Celltonica and the Mosel String Quartet

English



Program

Felix Mendelssohn String Quartet No. 6 Op. 80 in F minor
I. Allegro vivace assai – Presto
II. Allegro assai
III. Adagio
IV. Finale: Allegro molto

Mosel String quartet

violin I: *Yu-Shan Lee* violin II: *Siyao Song*
viola: *Tsai- Lan Maier* cello: *Chenni Chen*

Pause

Dmitry Shostakovich Prelude from Five Pieces for Two Violins and Piano
Maurice Ravel Pavane pour une infante défunte
Astor Piazzola Oblivion
Antonio Vivaldi Concerto for 2 Cellos in G minor, RV 531
I. Allegro
II. Largo
III. Allegro

Cellotonica and Friends

Chenni Chen *Nao Sasaki* *Charlotte Veit*
Sabrina Kratzer *Lilia Held* *Xu ke*
Simon Peschen *Jessica Gnäs* *Sooyeon Chun*
Charlotte Heinz



Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy: String Quartet in F minor, op. 80

In May 1847, Fanny Hensel, the musically gifted sister of Felix Mendelssohn, died. At that time she was 41 and Felix was 38 years old. After her death Felix bitterly announced: “So far, I cannot think of work, even music, without feeling the biggest emptiness and desert in my head and my heart.” The music which you will hear tonight can undoubtedly be interpreted as a reaction to the sister’s death. It is a piece of the unquestioning intensity of expression that Mendelssohn wrote only once. When he finished it in September 1847, he had only two months left to live. He died on November 6th 1847.

The *Allegro vivace assai* captivates from the beginning with two elements: the tremolos and the imitative inserts of the voices at unpredictable intervals. As the sound breaks into ever new tremolo surfaces and billowing chords, the melody is dominated by pathetic gestures in punctuated rhythm. As is otherwise known only from Tchaikovsky, Mendelssohn has here once subjected the classical sonata form entirely to the domination of the freely unfolding, expressive gesture, culminating in a coda that seems to burst all fetters.

The *Scherzo* is already admirable in that it is able to hold the excitement of the first movement and at the same time raises it to the level of the romantic-dubious character piece. The punctuated rhythms of the *Allegro vivace* are first compounded via syncopation into a formidable climax, then transitioned in an elegant waltz gesture. The trio develops in a Schubertian style as a quasi-chaconne over a ghostly basso ostinato of viola and cello.

With the *Adagio*, Mendelssohn finally seems to have regained the “attitude” of speaking his own language. The harmonic yet rather strange introduction to the movement is followed by one of those songs without words, which the composer often used as stylization, in order to be able to remain intimate even in the most pathetic setting. When, however, in the middle section a great mourning song of all four instruments is raised, the music unmistakably pays tribute to the composer Fanny. Heated discussions about her overly free, romantic style had almost sundered brother and sister years before. It seems that Mendelssohn wanted to reconcile his own style and the Fanny’s posthumously in his A flat major adagio.

Finale allegro tropo, that both siblings loved: the fairy and elven piece, which here does not float with virtuosity, but weighs heavily, is torn by syncopation, and finally returns in thumping triplets to the effect of the first movement.

source: <https://www.kammermusikfuehrer.de/werke/1160>



Dmitry Shostakovich: Prelude from Five Pieces for Two Violins and Piano

The Five Pieces for Two Violins and Piano by Dmitri Shostakovich is not an original composition, but a suite of arrangements of parts of his acting music by musicologist Levon Atovmian, who is a friend of the composer. The prelude comes from the music for the film “The Horsepower” by Aleksandr Fainzimmer (op. 97), the Gavotte and the Elegy of Music for the play “Human Comedy” by Pawel Suchotin after Honoré de Balzac (op. 37). The waltz is taken from the music for the animated film “The fairy tale of Popen and his servant Balda” (op. 36), the polka which functions as a closing polka to the three-act ballet “Der helle Bach”, op. 39. Shostakovich, which premiered in Leningrad in 1935 “Cheerful, easy, playful and - most importantly - good for dancing.”

source: www.naxosmusiclibrary.com Walter Dobner



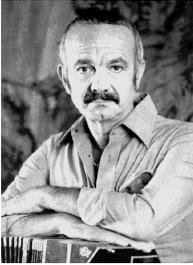
Maurice Ravel: Pavane pour une infante défunte

From his father, a Swiss engineer, Ravel inherited a delight in precision and mechanical toys, while from his Basque mother he acquired a familiarity with something of Spanish culture. Born in the village of Ciboure in the Basque region of France in 1875, he spent his childhood and adolescence in Paris, starting piano lessons at the age of seven and from the age of fourteen studying piano in the preparatory piano class of the Conservatoire. He left the Conservatoire in 1895, after failing to win the necessary prizes, but resumed studies there three years later under Gabriel Faure. He repeatedly failed to win the Prix de Rome, even having well established reputation as a composer. After his fifth attempt in 1905 Ravel was disqualified. Ravel's career continued successfully in the years before 1914 with a series of works of originality, including important additions to the piano repertoire, to the repertoire of French song and, with commissions from Dyagilev, to ballet. During the war he enlisted in 1915 as a driver and the war years left relatively little time and will for composition, particularly with the death of his mother in 1917. By 1920, however, he had begun to recover his spirits and resumed work, although now spasmodically, with a series of compositions, including an orchestration of La valse, and a number of engagements as a pianist and conductor in concerts of his own works at home and abroad. All this was brought to an end by his protracted final illness, attributed initially to a taxi accident in 1932, which led to his eventual death in 1937.

The Pavane pour une infante defunte (eng. Dance for a Dead Prince), its title chosen for euphony rather than for any other purpose, was written in 1899 and later

orchestrated. Although a relatively minor work, it is among the most evocative of Ravel's compositions, in its nostalgic evocation of some remoter past, suggested by the rhythm of the old dance and the poignancy of its melodic line.

source: www.naxosmusiclibrary.com 1994 Cris Posslac



Astor Piazzolla: Oblivion

Astor Piazzolla was an Argentinian composer, born in Mar del Plata on 11th March 1921 and died in Buenos Aires on 4th July 1992. He enjoyed a lengthy and increasingly high profile as a tango composer, as well as bandoneon player and arranger. His output transformed the traditional tango into a new style termed 'nuevo tango'; one incorporating elements drawn from jazz and classical music. As a virtuoso bandoneon player, he regularly performed his own compositions with a variety of ensembles,

notably the Quinteto Nuevo Tango which he led from 1979 to 1991. Piazzolla's prolific number of original compositions (some 750 in all) incorporate diverse influences, while retaining at their core an essential and unmistakable Argentinian identity. His output includes an opera, music for the theatre, film scores, concertos, chamber music and songs – as well as many instrumental pieces available in a variety of solo arrangements for piano, bandoneon and guitar. The two works on this recording demonstrate the expressive range and depth of his compositions in the tango idiom. The history of the tango extends back to the nineteenth century, having strong associations with both the Andalusian tango and the Cuban habanera. It found a fertile home among the slums of Buenos Aires in the early twentieth century. Later, owing to the influence of tango masters such as Carlos Gardel, the dance became esteemed throughout the world though it was sometimes considered risqué or even immoral by the authorities. Piazzolla's concept of the tango saw a progression beyond its initial dance form toward a more developed medium such as conveys subtle elements of pathos and passion, longing and sensibility. In 1982 he recorded the album *Oblivion* for the film *Enrico IV*, directed by Marco Bellocchio, and the title-track soon became established among his most popular and enduring tango creations. It opens hesitantly on lower strings, the soloist stealing in with a haunting melody that draws a greater emotional response from the strings as their dialogue unfolds in a restrained though inwardly intense manner before the piece finally concludes on a note of pensive uncertainty.

source: www.naxosmusiclibrary.com Richard Whitehouse



Antonio Vivaldi: Concerto for 2 Cellos in G minor, RV 531

Vivaldi left so many double concertos is connected with the special conditions at the Ospedale della Pieta, the Venetian institution for foundlings that he served in various capacities between 1703 and 1740. Of the four ospedali grandi (great hospitals) of Venice, the Pieta paid the most attention to instrumental music, priding itself not only on the general proficiency of its all-female orchestra but also on the number of star performers it could muster and the variety of instruments they played. Consequently, compositions in which two or more *figlie di coro* took solos acted as a good advertisement for the orchestra as a whole, as well as providing a welcome element of variety. Vivaldi's approximately 45 surviving double concertos can be divided into a minority (11) for two unlike instruments- for example, oboe and bassoon- and a majority (34) for like instruments-two violins, cellos, mandolins, flutes, oboes, trumpets or horns. Fully 25 of the latter kind are for Vivaldi's own instrument, the violin. The form employed in these concertos, discounting the special case of op. 3, is essentially the same as in Vivaldi's solo concertos. There are normally three movements in the sequence fast-slow-fast. The outer movements are cast in so-called *ritornello* form; that is, the full ensemble plays a series of sections presented in various keys and based mainly on common material (*ritornellos*), into which sections employing new material and featuring the soloist(*episodes*) are inserted.

However, the introduction of a second solo instrument introduces a complication. How is the co-soloist to share the material with the first soloist? Vivaldi skilfully rings the changes between four basic types of solution. The simplest is to present the two solo instruments in parallel thirds (or, by inversion, parallel sixths). These chains can produce an agreeably sweet sound but, taken to excess, easily seem facile and unimaginative; they are therefore carefully "rationed". Another simple device is to relate the pair of instruments in statement-and-answer fashion, presenting each in turn with the minimum overlap. This has the advantage of showing off each instrument individually and enabling the listener to compare the way in which the two players tackle identical material but gives one no chance to hear both together and thus subverts the central idea of a "double" concerto. The third solution is to present the two instruments simultaneously in counterpoint, which normally means in imitation. This is indeed one of the more satisfying types of texture employed by Vivaldi-and one for which history books, which like to think of the composer as a prime mover in the "flight from counterpoint", have given him too little credit. But perhaps the most interesting and most characteristically Vivaldian method of relating the two instruments is where one "accompanies" the other with figures such as broken chords or scales. Examples of this kind of texture are present already in a few concertos of op. 3 and become more common later.

source: www.naxosmusiclibrary.com 1992 Michael Talbot



Chenni Chen is a native Taiwanese. She began her cello studies at the age of 13 with Mrs Sharon Francis, when her family lived in Belize, Central America. At age of 14, she became the principal cellist of the Belize Chamber Music Orchestra. At age 18, she continued her cello studies in the US. While she discovered the wonders of cello music, her teachers included Benjamin Karp, Alan Herral, Bryan Dumm, and Anne Williams. Mrs Chen was a member of Mansfield Symphony orchestra and the Jeunesses Musicales World Orchestra. She attended music festival such as

the Nice Conservatory Summer festival, the Manchester Music Festival (USA), and Texas Music Festival. Mrs Chen is also very passionate about chamber music, she received chamber music coaching with Peter Salaff, Cavani Quartet, Ysaÿe Quartet and Shanghai String Quartet. She was a guest cellist with the Black River String Quartet. While she stayed in Zurich for three years, she met Professor Claude Starck, who is a retired solo cellist from Tonhalle Orchester Zurich. She continued her private studies with Mr. Starck and learning the essentials of cello pedagogy. Now, Mrs Chen is the cello teacher at the Dommusik in Trier. She is an active member of Schöneck Ensemble from Koblenz and Cellotonica. She plays a Peter Staszcel Cello, Chicago.



Nao Sasaki was born in Japan and began playing cello at the age of 9 years old. She attended the Tokiwagi-Gakuen Highschool, which specialized in music. After obtaining her Abitur, she studied Cello at the “Tokyo University of the Arts” with Professor Fumiaki Kono and graduated with a bachelor degree in music. As a student, Ms Sasaki paid special attention to chamber music, which later brought her the Excellent prize at the International Chamber Music Competition in Salzburg (Mozart). Ms Sasaki attended many master classes for cello and chamber music in

Germany and Austria with Professor Wolfgang Boettcher, Professor Wen Sinnyang, Professor Julius Berger, and Professor Danjuro Ishizaka. During her time at the university, Nao Sasaki took part in the public master classes with a Leipzig string quartet and played with musicians from the Berlin Philharmonic. In 2012 she won a promotional prize of a student competition in Japan. As a soloist, in 2012 and 2013, Nao Sasaki performed Robert Schumann’s Cello Concerto and Tchaikovsky’s Variations on a Rococo Theme with the Sendai Philharmonic Orchestra. She continued to perform various concerts as a cellist with orchestras and chamber music after completing her studies. Since 2016, Nao Sasaki has been working as a cello teacher in the House of Music and also an active member of Cellotonica.



Tsai-Lan Maier (née Peng) was born in Taoyuan, Taiwan and received her first piano lessons at the age of five. The first violin lesson she received at the age of nine. From 2006 to 2010 she studied violin at the National Taiwan University of Arts in New Taipei City, Taiwan. In her native country, the artist pursued an intensive concert activity as a chamber musician and orchestral musician. After that she started her bachelor-studies at the Musikhochschule Münster with Professor Hartmut Lindemann.

In 2014 she completed her studies in the subjects “Music Creativity” and “Music Education” for viola. She also played in the Symphony Orchestra of Münster and taught at the Westphalian School of Music (2014). She also completed her master’s degree in viola in Münster in 2016. Since October 2017 she works as a teacher for piano in the primary school at the cathedral. In addition to her activity in the Moselle Quartet, Ms Maier regularly performs orchestral concerts with the Schöneck-Ensemble.



Yu-Shan Lee was born in Japan in 1990 and raised in Taiwan. Ms Lee received her first piano lessons at the age of six and the following year, she started to learn the violin. During her early academic year in Taiwan, she worked intensively with both piano and violin, which she achieved both instrument to equal level. At the age of 18, she decided to move to Germany to further her Violin studies. Ms Lee went to Dresden, before her bachelor studies began she was trained by Professor John Holloway, Professor Jörg Faßmann, and Ms Annette Baumann. Eventually, she was

selected for the violin studio of Hans-Peter Hoffmann in 2010 at the University of Music Saar. Ms Lee completed her Bachelor degree in 2014, then she continued her Master of Music and graduated in 2017. Ms Lee actively participated in several symphony orchestra such as the “Junge Deutsche Philharmonie” in season 2014-2015. In 2016, she earned her position as the first tutti violin in the “Pfalztheater Kaiserslautern”, first as an intern, then in the context of two subsequent time contracts. In 2017 Ms Lee also works as a violin teacher at the “Musikwerkstatt Zweibrücken” and gives private violin and piano lessons in the Saarbrücken area.



Siyao Song was born in 1990 in China. At age six, her musical talent was discovered, and she began to learn the violin. In 2006, Mrs Song was inducted into “The Affiliated High School of Chinese Conservatory of Music” in Beijing. Her professor was the renowned Chinese violinist Yuan Fang. In 2009, Mrs Song was successfully recorded by “China Conservatory” and at the same time she became a member of the “China Youth Philharmonic”. In 2011, she participated in “China Youth Philharmonic Quartet” and won an excellent prize in the eighth “Golden Bell String Quartet Competition” of China. Mrs Song gained her practical stage experience through internships in “China NCPA Orchestra” and “The Central Ballet Symphony Orchestra of China”, as well as numerous solo concerts. In 2012, Mrs Song travelled to Germany to deepen her musical expertise. She participated in “Mainzer Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra” and was supervised by Professor Anne Shih and Professor Taras Gabora. Since 2013, Mrs Song studies at the “ Hochschule für Musik Saar “ in Saarbrücken, supervised by Professor Hans-Peter Hoffmann. In July 2017 she debuted her first solo violin concert in Jilin, China. The positive responses from the audience were overwhelming and she was praised as “one of China’s most talented violinists born in 90’s”.



Sabrina Kratzer grew up in a musician’s family. Her parents provided a natural musical environment for her to learn the flute, piano and the organ. But Ms Kratzer is especially fond of the interplay with others, so she decided to start with Cello at the age of nine. Since then Ms Kratzer has been playing in different orchestras. Later she decided to continue playing the cello as a beloved hobby and not as a profession. Today she is a teacher of Latin and English at the Cusanus-Gymnasium in Wittlich and she enjoys making music with other music enthusiasts.



Lilia Held started to play the cello at the age of 12, after a musical journey through the stages of violin and piano. Starting at the age of 14 she always played in youth orchestras and chamber music ensembles and travelled with them to Russia, Poland, the Baltics, Portugal, Croatia and China. Since she started studying psychology at the University of Trier she has been playing in the Collegium Musicum and met her fellow cellist friends there.



Jessica Gnas was born in Stuttgart and started playing cello at the age of six. Since then she has played in various orchestras, such as the student symphony orchestra in Stuttgart and currently the Collegium Musicum Trier. Ms Gnas is very much inspired by Jacqueline du Pré's soulful playing. She is particularly drawn to the full and warm sound of the cello which gave much inspiration and joy through her journey of playing cello.



Charlotte Heinz was born in Jena, East Germany. When she was only four years old, she attended her first Symphony concert. After the concert her mother asked her if she would like to play one of the instruments from the orchestra. Ms Heinz had chosen Cello. Since then Charlotte played with various orchestras in Jena, Weimar and Trier.



Charlotte Veit, 17 years old and born in Trier, has been playing cello since she was 8 years old. Previously, she took lessons in piano and violin. She played in various orchestras, such as the Youth Symphony Orchestra Eifel-Ardenne and the Cello Orchestra of the Trier Theatre. Currently she plays in the school orchestra of the Angela-Merici-Gymnasium. Her musical role model is Sol Gabetta.



Sooyeon Chun was born in Daegu, South Korea. She grew up with music, thanks to her mom who was a music teacher. She learned piano and flute from her mom, and at the age of 10 she decided to learn cello to make a family trio with her mom and brother. Since then she has been playing with various orchestras in South Korea and Germany. She enjoys playing cello with others, making and listening to the harmony. Currently she plays in Collegium Musicum Trier.



Xu Ke grew up in a coastal city in southeastern China. At the age of 10, she started to learn cello and played in the youth orchestra of her city during middle school time. In recent years, she alternately played in the orchestras of the University of Trier and Xiamen. She is currently a member of the Collegium Musicum of the University of Trier. There she discovered Richard Wagner, who quickly fascinated her into his pieces.



Simon Peschen was born in Aachen Germany. He is much inspired by his musical family. His musical career began with the recorder however it was not successful and short lasting. A few years later, at the age of 11, he began his cello lessons with Mrs Ursula Schünke and later he also studied cello with Mr Walter Mengler. During his early school years, he took part in several school orchestras such as Anne-Frank Gymnasium Aachen and he was a member of the Kammermusik-Ensemble Übach-Palenberg. Mr Peschen also played a few projects with the Jugend-Sinfonieorchester Aachen. He has been a member of the Collegium Musicum Trier for the past three years.

Special thanks to

Stephanie Jackobs
Abby Jackobs
Family Schneider
Michał Stolorz

Cellotonica is proudly powered by Cello, Music and Love.

www.cellotonica.com



sources of images:

- Shostakovic Photo: Dmitri Shostakovich's portrait, in the audience at the Bach Celebration of July 28, 1950. Photo by Roger & Renate Rössing. Modifications made by J. Rizzo-Weaver. image link: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dmitri_Shostakovich_cred-it_Deutsche_Fotothek_adjusted.jpg?uselang=en# license link: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/de/legalcode>
- Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809-1847), Brustbild en face. - Lithographie von Friedrich Jentzen, gedruckt vom Königl. Lithograph. Institut Berlin nach einem Gemälde von Theodor Hildebrandt. Source: Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung, 39 (1837), Frontispiz <https://books.google.com/books?id=FuQqAAAAYAAJ&pg=PP10>
- Picture of French composer Maurice Ravel (1875-1937). Dated 1925. Source: Bibliothèque nationale de France Quelle Bibliothèque nationale de France. The image holder has not identified a photographer. Image link: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Maurice_Ravel_1925.jpg?uselang=en#
- Photograph of Astor Piazzolla with his bandoneon in 1971. Public domain. image link: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Astor_Piazzolla.jpg?uselang=en
- Pictures of members of Cellotonica and Mosel String Quartet are their own property.