



PCMS
CONCERTS.ORG

PREVIEW
NOTES

Hai-Ye Ni, cello — Cecile Licad, piano
Tuesday, March 22 • 8:00 PM — American Philosophical Society

Background

Hai-Ye Ni is the principal cellist of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Born in Shanghai, China in 1972, she began cello studies at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music and, after moving to the US, studied with Irene Sharp at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Joel Krosnick at the Juilliard School of Music and William Pleeth in London. Ms. Ni first came into prominence via her critically praised New York debut at Alice Tully Hall in 1991, a performance that came as a result of Ms. Ni capturing first prize at the Naumburg International Cello Competition the preceding year. She is also the first prize winner of the International Paulo Cello Competition and a recipient of the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant.

Program

Cello Sonata in D Major, Op. 58

Felix Mendelssohn

Born: Feb. 3, 1809 in Hamburg, Germany

Died: Nov. 4, 1847 in Leipzig, Germany

Composed: 1843

Last PCMS performance: Mark Kosower in 2007

Duration: 26 minutes

Mendelssohn wrote this piece for his brother Paul, a cellist. The adagio has been interpreted as a programmatic representation of the competing religious forces that coexisted in Mendelssohn's mind—the "Lutheran" piano part overlapping and ultimately embracing the cello's "cantorial chant."

Cello Sonata in C Major, Op. 65

Benjamin Britten

Born: Nov. 22, 1913, in Lowestoft, England

Died: Dec. 4, 1976, in Aldeburgh, England

Composed: 1961

Last PCMS performance: PCMS premiere

Duration: 20 minutes

Britten's friendship with Mstislav Rostropovich compelled him to re-enter the realm of instrumental composition with a series of works written especially for the Soviet cellist. This sonata is the first of several works Britten wrote with him in mind. In its five short movements, Britten for the first time finds a way to join the tradition of Classical form and his own naturally narrative voice.

Cello Sonata in C Major, Op. 119

Sergei Prokofiev

Born: Apr. 23, 1891 in Russia

Died: Mar. 5, 1953 in Moscow, Russia

Composed: 1949

Last PCMS performance: Peter Stumpf in 2009

Duration: 24 minutes

Richter and Rostropovich premiered this work—one of Prokofiev's last truly remarkable instrumental pieces. It reveals a composer who has learned subtler, more patient and clearer ways to fully speak his mind.

Populaire Espagnole

Manuel de Falla

Born: Nov. 23, 1876 in Cádiz, Spain

Died: Nov. 14, 1946 in Alta Gracia, Argentina

Composed: 1914

Last PCMS performance: PCMS premiere

Duration: 12 minutes

De Falla originally wrote these songs for voice and piano, but they have since been transcribed for many instruments. The suite begins with *El paño moruno* (*The Moorish Cloth*) followed by *Nana* (a lullaby) and *Canción*, both based on popular tunes. *Jota* is in the style of folk dance music from Aragon. The most famous of the songs by far is *Asturiana*, a lament from northern Spain, played on muted strings. The final *Polo* is another original Falla piece in the style of a folk dance, sometimes described as gypsy- or flamenco-like.