

# PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

a life more beautiful

**Johannes Moser, *cello***

**Anna Polonsky, *piano***

**Tuesday, March 7 – 7:30 PM**

*Perelman Theater, Kimmel Center*

**PREVIEW  
NOTES**

## **PROGRAM**

**Cello Sonata in C Major, Op. 102, No. 1**

**Cello Sonata in D Major, Op. 102, No. 2**

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

*Born: December 1770, Bonn, Germany*

*Died: March 26, 1827, Vienna, Austria*

*Composed: 1815*

*Duration: 15 minutes and 19 minutes*

Eight years after the Op. 69 cello sonata and nearly 20 after the Op. 5 pair, Beethoven returned to the idiom to write a pair of sonatas that appeared as Op. 102. They developed during the period of Beethoven's withdrawal from society, perhaps explaining the intimacy of the works. His self-imposed distance from his fellow Viennese was probably in large part due to an increasing deterioration in his hearing. The overall construction of each sonata reveals Beethoven's continuing quest to create an elusive "total sonata". In his autograph score, Beethoven referred to Opus 102, No. 2 as a "free" sonata, and it is easy to understand why he used such a term. The work is in two fast movements, each with a slow, introductory segment. As in the "Waldstein" Piano Sonata, the slow introduction to the finale acts somewhat like an intermezzo, replacing a proper slow movement.

**Three Little Pieces, Op. 11**

**Anton Webern**

*Composed: 1914*

*Duration: 5 minutes*

Best known as the devoted disciple and torchbearer of Arnold Schoenberg's 12-tone method, Webern in fact underwent numerous artistic transformations over the course of his career. His early works bear the hallmarks of late Romanticism. This music is marked by its extreme brevity. It is obsessed with softness and silence. Webern places unprecedented import on sonic gesture: movements as short as 20 seconds magnify instrumental effects into musical events in themselves.

**Cello Sonata in C Major, Op. 119**

**Sergei Prokofiev**

*Born: Apr. 23, 1891 in Russia*

*Died: Mar. 5, 1953 in Moscow, Russia*

*Composed: 1949*

*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.

**Cello Sonata in D Minor**

**Claude Debussy**

*Born: August 22, 1862, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France*

*Died: March 25, 1918, Paris, France*

*Composed: 1915*

*Duration: 12 minutes*

Regarded as one of the finest masterpieces written for the cello, Debussy's sonata was the first of an envisioned six sonatas composed for different instruments (Debussy would complete but three before his death). The work is infused with an adventurous, 20<sup>th</sup> century harmonic language that often ventures into exotic modes and the dreamy, time-altering magic of the pentatonic and whole tone scales. Yet under the surface lies a nostalgic classicism. In a letter to Jacques Durand, Debussy wrote, "I like [the Cello Sonata's] proportions and form, which are almost classical in the best sense of the word."