

Saturday, May 3, 2014, 8pm
First Congregational Church

David Finckel, *cello*
Wu Han, *piano*

PROGRAM

The Unfolding of Music

- Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) Sonata for Viola da Gamba in G major,
BWV 1027 (ca. 1736–1741)
- I. Adagio
 - II. Allegro ma non tanto
 - III. Andante
 - IV. Allegro moderato
- Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 4 in C major,
Op. 102, No. 1 (1815)
- I. Andante — Allegro vivace
 - II. Adagio — Tempo d'andante — Allegro vivace
- Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847) Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 2 in D major,
Op. 58 (1843)
- I. Allegro assai vivace
 - II. Allegretto scherzando
 - III. Adagio
 - IV. Molto allegro e vivace

INTERMISSION

PROGRAM

Claude Debussy (1862–1918) Sonata for Cello and Piano (1915)

- I. Prologue
- II. Sérénade
- III. Finale

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976) Sonata for Cello and Piano in C major, Op. 65
(1960–1961)

- I. Dialogo
- II. Scherzo-pizzicato
- III. Elegia
- IV. Marcia
- V. Moto Perpetuo

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THE UNFOLDING OF MUSIC

Through cello and piano duos spanning nearly a quarter of a millennium, David Finckel and Wu Han take listeners through the extraordinary evolution of classical music. Beginning with Bach's vibrant sonata for the viola da gamba and harpsichord—the ancestors of the cello and piano—the program transitions seamlessly to Beethoven's experimental sonata from the twilight of the Classical period, whose opening recalls the music of Bach. Mendelssohn, who paved the way for full-blown Romanticism, is featured in his second sonata, an ebullient, virtuosic work that pushed the capabilities of the instruments to their limits at the time. Debussy, universally regarded as the inspiration for musical modernism, composed his only cello sonata late in his life, the short work becoming the most important work for the cello in the Impressionist style. The program concludes with the extraordinary sonata by the renowned Englishman Benjamin Britten, a composer who ranks with the greatest of the 20th century and who stands shoulder-to-shoulder with England's most celebrated composers, Henry Purcell and Edward Elgar. Britten's sonata, the first of five masterworks he composed for Rostropovich, employs innovative ideas in each of its five short movements, and is a true delight to hear from beginning to end. David Finckel was privileged to study the work with Rostropovich, gaining priceless insight into the sonata's conception through the intimate knowledge of its dedicatee.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)
Sonata for Viola da Gamba in G major,
BWV 1027 (ca. 1736–1741)

On two occasions in 1723, the rich musical life of Leipzig got magnificently richer. On May 22, the famous musician Johann Sebastian Bach arrived to assume the post of cantor and music director at St. Thomas's Church, one of the city's musical epicenters. Bach, now 36 years old, had achieved enough celebrity throughout Germany for his elite musical

skill, that not only his appointment, but his family's very arrival in Leipzig was reported in newspapers as far away as Hamburg, 180 miles away ("He himself arrived with his family on two carriages at two o'clock and moved into the newly renovated apartment in the St. Thomas School.").

The other great development to occur that year was the partnership between Gottfried Zimmermann's coffeehouse, Leipzig's most prominent such establishment, and the Collegium Musicum. The Collegium was a performing collective of singers and instrumentalists (largely comprising students) founded in 1701 by Georg Philipp Telemann, and had since then played a vital role in Leipzig's musical culture. Zimmermann's coffeehouse included a concert hall that could accommodate large ensembles and audiences of 150 (the neighborhood Starbucks it most certainly was not). A series of weekly concerts—always free of charge—sprung from this partnership, and would eventually fall under Bach's supervision when he became the Collegium's music director in 1729.

Though overseeing this series undoubtedly added a substantial commitment to Bach's already demanding church duties, he nevertheless thrived in his dual position as cantor at St. Thomas's and concert presenter at Zimmermann's coffeehouse. In fact, in addition to offering works by Handel, Locatelli, Scarlatti, and others, Bach moreover took advantage of the Collegium series as an opportunity to compose a good deal of nonliturgical music himself: primarily instrumental music, as well as a number of cantatas known as "moral cantatas," light-hearted musical dramas dealing with themes of moral virtue (including the famous "Coffee Cantata," which passes tongue-in-cheek judgment on the vice of caffeine addiction).

The instrumental works Bach produced for this series include numerous important works, among them this first of three Sonatas for Viola da Gamba, BWV 1027–29. Bach's Collegium works for Zimmermann's coffeehouse also include the six Sonatas for Violin and Keyboard Obligato, BWV 1014–19; the Violin Concerto in A minor, BWV 1065; and the famous Double Concerto in D minor, BWV 1043.

The G major Sonata for Viola da Gamba also exists as a trio sonata for two flutes and basso continuo, BWV 1039, which is almost certainly the earlier version (probably from Bach's days as *Cappellmeister* at Cöthen). By the late 1730s (around the time of Bach's arrangement for viola da gamba of his trio sonata), the viola da gamba had already begun to fall out of favor as a solo instrument. Marin Marais, the instrument's greatest virtuoso, had died in 1728. Bach remained a champion of the instrument, however, as evidenced by his use of it in numerous concerti, cantatas, and the St. John and St. Matthew Passions, in addition to these sonatas. They remain today as standard repertoire for both viola and cello; the latter's more burnished tone, compared to the delicacy of the gamba, demands a heightened sensitivity of the player to the nuances of Bach's writing. The early Bach biographer Philipp Spitta—who ranked the G major among the three gamba sonatas “the loveliest, the purest idyll conceivable”—also noted that the viola da gamba “afforded a great variety in the production of tone, but its fundamental character was tender and expressive rather than full and vigorous. Thus Bach could rearrange a trio originally written for two flutes and bass, for viol da gamba, with harpsichord obbligato, without destroying its dominant character.”

The sonata does indeed demonstrate trio sonata-style writing. Instead of a sparse basso continuo accompaniment to the through-composed gamba part, Bach provides a complete keyboard accompaniment, which moves in melodic and contrapuntal dialogue with the soloist. In the opening movement, a dignified yet dance-like *Adagio*, the keyboard and gamba bear equal melodic responsibility, often following each other in canon. The movement's latter half features an intricately involved dialogue between the two, colored gracefully in turn by florid countermelodies and ornamental trills.

The work follows the four-movement structure of the Italian *sonata da chiesa* (“church sonata”) from the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Following a slow introduction, Bach launches into the fugal *Allegro ma non tanto*, whose rollicking, perfectly shaped subject

inches its way upwards before quickly laughing its way back down to its starting point. The third movement is a languishing *Andante* in the relative minor, which the finale answers with another jovial fugue.

In the great wealth of solo and chamber instrumental works throughout Bach's *œuvre*, the Sonatas for Viola da Gamba are among those gems that have, though certainly not ignored, somewhat taken a back seat to the Cello Suites, the Sonatas and Partitas for Violin, *Die Kunst der Fuge*, and other such works. Even 200 years ago, Johann Nikolaus Forkel, Bach's first biographer, only quaintly made note of “Several Sonatas for Harpsichord and Violin, Harpsichord and Flute, Harpsichord and Viol da Gamba. They are admirably written and most of them are pleasant to listen to even today.” These sonatas are far from second-tier pieces, however, and demonstrate Bach's genius in the mature years of his career as fully as any other works.

Patrick Castillo

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)
Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 4 in C major,
Op. 102, No. 1 (1815)

Beyond the heroic struggles of his middle period, and by this time almost completely deaf, Beethoven looked to the future in his last two cello sonatas. As in the A major sonata, the cello begins alone, but in an entirely new world. Whereas the A major theme is solid and firmly grounded in the cello's lower register, this one breathes an unearthly air, and the entire *Andante* seems to float somewhere beyond reality. The writing is contrapuntal, with independent voices of equal importance moving gently against each other. The thematic material is once again more complex: the decorative elements Beethoven once applied in his early period are now fused seamlessly into the larger structure. Long trills function not merely as ornaments but as orchestration, adding inner intensity to the sound.

The demonic and anguished *Allegro vivace* shatters the hypnotic serenity, Beethoven using every possible device to contrast with

the previous music. Not only dynamics, rhythm and texture are changed but also tonality: the rest of the movement is no longer in the sonata's main key of C major but in the relative A minor. (In the Op. 5 sonatas, both introductions and subsequent movements were in the same key). This movement is written in a style new to Beethoven's cello works. In his late period, Beethoven drastically varied the length of his movements. Some of his shorter movements, while having all the structural requirements, are devoid of transitions—Beethoven simply stops writing one kind of music and begins writing another, as if manners and civility had ceased to matter. This happens near the outset of the *Allegro* where Beethoven uses a surprise F-sharp to stop the motion dead in its tracks.

Out of nowhere the second subject appears—soothing, quiet, but only for a moment. Turmoil returns and the feisty movement is at the double bar before one realizes it. A very brief development section contains two ideas: a contrapuntal one followed by a brief chorale, leading to the stormy recapitulation. An abrupt “get out and stay out!” ending concludes the movement. (An interesting comparison is the first movement of the Op. 95 “Serioso” Quartet.)

Beethoven was fascinated by the stars and is reported to have composed in his head while contemplating the mysteries of the universe. Certainly the slow-motion *Adagio* evokes an otherworldly atmosphere. The movement's timeless feeling is gently punctuated by fleeting scales, as distant as comets. The mystery soon turns to brooding, with a turbulent modulation moving through several keys before coming to an inconclusive halt. At this moment, a different kind of music emerges, deeply tender in a way that is unique to Beethoven. He then proceeds to create something unexpected and of inspired beauty: the sonata's opening theme reappears, but this time so warmly that its first incarnation seems only a dream. Phrases repeat over and over, as if asking for something in prayer. After this deeply confessional episode, the *Allegro vivace* begins in a humorous way, and we are off on a frisky and sometimes funny adventure, full

of fantasy and invention. There are inexplicable starts and stops which must have sounded very strange to listeners in Beethoven's time (as indeed they still do). There is a fugato passage and, at the end, a brilliant coda that shows he had not lost interest in using virtuosic feats to create excitement. After a brief unwinding, a surprise finish recalls the end of the F major sonata.

David Finckel and Michael Feldman

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)
Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 2 in D major,
Op. 58 (1843)

The turn of the 19th century emancipated the cello from its traditional supporting role, as Beethoven, followed by his heirs in the Romantic period, increasingly contributed sonatas, concerti, and other solo works to the cello literature. Mendelssohn's Cello Sonata in D major, Op. 58, may rightly be counted among the most significant of these, and equally as a quintessential statement of the aesthetic that defined its era.

Mendelssohn penned the Op. 58 Sonata in 1843, a year of considerable personal upheaval. Having at last concluded an unhappy residency in Berlin, Mendelssohn and his family returned to Leipzig, where they had previously spent the years 1835–1840, during which time, Mendelssohn scholar R. Larry Todd notes, the composer, still in his twenties, “stood at the forefront of German music.” Hence in 1840, as part of a sweeping attempt to install Berlin among Europe's major cultural capitals, the recently ascendant Friedrich Wilhelm IV had lured Mendelssohn from Leipzig. Though compensated handsomely in both payment and prestige, however, Mendelssohn would not find personal satisfaction in Berlin over the coming three years. His professional responsibilities remained frustratingly undefined—besides which, he regarded that city as “one of the most sour apples into which a man can bite”—and, in 1843, Mendelssohn resumed his conducting duties at the Leipzig Gewandhaus. Moreover, with his beloved mother's death on December 12,

1842, Felix shared the realization with his younger brother, Paul, that “we are children no longer.” This sentiment may have partly impelled the 34-year-old composer to act upon his longtime ambition of founding a conservatory (now the Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy University of Music and Theater), whose charter faculty would include himself, Robert and Clara Schumann, and others of Germany’s musical élite.

Despite the turbulence surrounding this time, 1843 nevertheless represented a solidly productive year. In addition to the Op. 58 Sonata, Mendelssohn completed his incidental music to *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, the Capriccio for string quartet (later published as Op. 81, No. 3), five *Lieder ohne worte* for piano, and numerous choral pieces, among other works.

Befitting Mendelssohn’s mature compositional language, the D major Sonata is firmly rooted in the tenets of Classicism inherited from Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven, but meanwhile demonstrates the pathos of the Romantic period. Each of the sonata’s four movements portrays a vital dimension of Mendelssohn’s musical identity. The opening *Allegro assai vivace* is all soaring lyricism and propulsive rhythmic energy, even at its tender second theme. The movement’s ecstatic tone dispels the misguided aphorism that music’s emotional content must correlate to biography—there is nothing in this movement, after all, to betray Mendelssohn’s grief over his mother’s passing—but, rather, its great emotive breadth reflects the *Zeitgeist* of the Romantic period at large. The second movement offers further Romantic *cantabile*, but couched in a signature Mendelssohnian scherzo. The cello complements the piano’s sly staccato figures with piquant *pizzicati* before indulging in breathless melody. The homophonic, hymn-like piano introduction to the slow movement furtively recalls Bach—one of Mendelssohn’s formative influences—but with an unmistakably 19th-century touch: Mendelssohn’s instruction *sempre arpeggiando col pedale* (arpeggiated and with pedal) imbues each chord with a distinctly more lush and immersive sound than would characterize a Baroque organ chorale. The cello answers

with a dramatic recitative, marked *appassionato ed animato*. The spirited dialogue between cello and piano continues in the finale, now returning to the effervescence of the opening movement. An increased restlessness in the piano accompaniment matches the virtuosic cello writing measure for measure until the stirring final cadence.

Though the Op. 58 Sonata bears a dedication to the Russian cellist and arts patron Count Mateusz Wielhorski, Felix truly intended the work for the aforementioned Paul, the cellist of the Mendelssohn family. It is the second of two cello sonatas Mendelssohn composed: the first, the Sonata in B-flat major, Op. 45 (1838), as well as the earlier *Variations concertantes* for cello and piano (1829), were likewise composed for Paul.

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Claude Debussy (1862–1918) Sonata for Cello and Piano (1915)

The last years of Debussy’s life were largely unhappy times. He once wrote: “Try as I may, I can’t regard the sadness of my existence with caustic detachment. Sometimes my days are dark, dull, and soundless like those of a hero from Edgar Allan Poe; and my soul is as romantic as a Chopin Ballade.” Though his marriage to the singer Emma Bardac was sufficiently content, Debussy nevertheless found domestic life increasingly stifling. His melancholy was compounded in 1909, when he was diagnosed with cancer, and the onset of war in 1914 deeply dismayed the already fragile composer. (He mused in a letter to Stravinsky: “Unless one’s directly involved in a war, it makes thought very difficult.”)

In 1915, Debussy underwent an operation to treat his cancer, which took a severe physical toll, leaving him almost unable to compose. Nevertheless, feeling that he had little time left, he continued to work as feverishly as his strength would allow, planning a set of six sonatas for various instruments. A letter from October 6 of that year to conductor Bernardo Molinari thoroughly illustrates the state of Debussy’s psyche at the time:

Mon cher ami,

Your kind letter has reached me in a little spot by the sea where I've come to try and forget the war. For the last three months I've been able to work again.

When I tell you that I spent nearly a year unable to write music... after that I've almost had to *re-learn* it. It was like a rediscovery and it's seemed to me more beautiful than ever!

Is it because I was deprived of it for so long? I don't know. What beauties there are in music 'by itself,' with no axe to grind or new inventions to amaze the so-called 'dilettanti'.... The emotional satisfaction one gets from it can't be equaled, can it, in any of the other arts? This power of 'the right chord in the right place' that strikes you.... We're still in the age of 'harmonic progressions' and people who are happy just with beauty of sound are hard to find.

...

I haven't written much orchestral music, but I have finished: *Douze Études* for piano, a Cello Sonata, and another sonata for flute, viola, and harp, in the ancient, flexible mould with none of the grandiloquence of modern sonatas. There are going to be six of them for different groups of instruments and the last one will combine all those used in the previous five. For many people that won't be as important as an *opera*.... But I thought it was of greater service to music!

In addition to the Cello Sonata and the Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp, Debussy would two years later complete the third sonata of the projected six, for violin and piano. The fourth sonata was to be for oboe, horn, and harpsichord, and the fifth for trumpet, clarinet, bassoon, and piano. The Violin Sonata would prove to be his final work, however: Debussy took ill and died in Paris in 1918, at the age of 55.

The Cello Sonata utilizes a rich palette of timbres, which Debussy achieves with exquisite

subtlety in both the piano and cello. The work furthermore demonstrates an economy of language characteristic of the composer's mature style, but also offers a rare example in Debussy's works of sonata form, the predominant musical structure since the Classical era. Debussy was most explicit about his ambivalence towards such acknowledged past masters as Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, and Brahms, and their musical forms; nevertheless, he wrote to his publisher Jacques Durand, "It's not for me to judge [the Cello Sonata's] excellence, but I like its proportions and its almost classical form, in the good sense of the word."

The Prologue opens with a resolute gesture in the piano, solidly in the key of d minor, but this conventional harmony yields almost immediately to more mysterious, Impressionistic sounds, sung in the cello's upper register. The development section continues to defy Classical harmony, mixing major and minor tonalities. Debussy's musical ideas unfold with a graceful logic throughout, and are set sensitively to each instrument's acoustic strengths: in a turbulent excursion towards atonality, agitated rhythms in the lower register of both instruments create an excited murkiness, before building into the bright and sweeping reprise of the opening measures (marked *largement declamé* by the composer), soaring triumphantly at the top of the cello's range.

The bold opening measures of the animated Serenade lean even further towards atonality, giving the impression of abandoning western Classical harmony altogether. Guitar-like pizzicati in the cello, evocative of Spanish music, provide the engine for the movement's forward motion. As in the Prologue, Debussy's gestures here afford a certain degree of elasticity, but consistently remain compact and understated. Recurrent whole-tone figures lend the movement an exotic touch. The daring gestures and nuances of this Serenade illustrate Debussy the visionary: the movement sounds as fresh and modern today as the works of any present day composers.

After a static and suspenseful passage, marked by a bowed return to the opening guitar-like theme, the music launches *attacca* into the lively finale. The cello soars again in its

expressive upper register, then launches into a jaunty melody. The movement features two notably distinct interludes: in the first, the piano offers a lyrical melody in high octaves, again evoking an exotic Spanish flavor; the cello appropriately accompanies with strumming pizzicati. Later, the lively theme suddenly dissipates again into a trance-like music, this time with the stylishly lethargic swagger of *fin-de-siècle* Paris. Recalling with a vengeance the declamatory measures of the entire sonata, Debussy returns to d minor, and punctuates the work with a defiant self-assurance.

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)
Sonata for Cello and Piano in C major,
Op. 65 (1960–1961)

Benjamin Britten's Sonata in C is the first of five products—each of them bona fide masterpieces—of a rich artistic relationship with the Russian cellist Mstislav Rostropovich, whom the composer first met in 1960. In September of that year, Britten was invited to attend the première, being given in London, of the First Cello Concerto of Shostakovich, another of the myriad composers for whom Rostropovich has served as muse. Rostropovich by that time was already a great admirer of Britten's music; the admiration would quickly be reciprocated. The cellist once surmised in an interview: "He wrote the Cello Sonata, then the Cello Symphony, followed by three Unaccompanied Cello Sonatas. I take that as a personal compliment. If I had played the Cello Sonata poorly, would Britten have written his Symphony for me?"

Britten agreed to Rostropovich's request for a new sonata, which he completed in January of the following year and sent to Rostropovich. The two agree to meet for the Sonata's first rehearsal on the cellist's next trip to London two months later. By Rostropovich's account, both musicians were so nervous that they began the session with "four or five very large whiskies." With Britten at the piano, the Sonata received its première at the Aldeburgh Festival on July 7, 1961; the evening's program also included the Debussy and Schubert Sonatas, as well as the Schumann Cello Concerto, conducted by Britten.

While lending testament to a wondrous musical partnership, the Sonata in C carries a greater significance as well, given the political context of the 1960s. The alienation between Western and Eastern Europe was strong at the time of Rostropovich's introduction to Britten, the composer of the *War Requiem* and an outspoken pacifist. Such a sympathetic, not to mention high-profile, Anglo-Soviet collaboration was not to go unnoticed. During a visit to the Soviet Union in 1963, Britten offered the following in an interview with *Pravda*:

I must own that until my arrival in the U.S.S.R. I was assailed with doubts whether the Soviet audiences would understand and accept our musical art which had been developing along different national lines than the Russian. I am happy at having had my doubts dispelled at the very first concert. The Soviet public proved not only unusually musical—that I knew all along—but showed an enviable breadth of artistic perception. It is a wonderful public.

This interview appeared internationally and, in its transcendence of political circumstance (Britten also noted, "I disbelieve profoundly in power and violence"), can only have benefited relations between the two nations.

The opening movement, aptly subtitled *Dialogo*, shows off Britten's impeccable compositional technique. The entire movement is a meditation on the wide expressive potential of whole steps and half steps. In the conversational introduction, the piano's fragmentary scale figures underscore sighing stepwise gestures in the cello, which Britten directs to be played *lusingando* ("coaxingly"). The animated first theme emerges, extending the subdued whole step and half step figures into a turbulent ride. Following a boisterous transitional passage in which triplets are bowed across the second string (fingered) and first (open)—still a succession of major and minor seconds—a lyrical second theme appears. The ascending whole steps in the cello are interrupted by a striking slide up a minor seventh (or, more fittingly, an inverted whole step), which Rostropovich so described

to his student, and the cellist on this program, David Finckel: “It should be as if the devil comes along and grabs your cello from you” (at which point Rostropovich himself, in the devil’s absence, pulled the instrument upward from behind his student’s chair to produce the required abruptness of the melodic leap).

The second movement offers further evidence of Britten’s complete technique as a composer: though not a cellist himself, he spins a cello part ingeniously suited to the instrument. Furthermore, the *Scherzo-pizzicato*—so designated because the entire movement is played with plucked rather than bowed strings—demonstrates the most virtuosic use of this technique in the entire cello literature. Pizzicati are played by both the right and left hand, often in rapid alternation; full chords are strummed across all four strings; and in addition to conventional pizzicato technique, Britten also calls for the cellist to hammer notes out directly on the fingerboard. These liberties speak not only to the composer’s ability, but to his deep trust in the instrumental wizardry of his Sonata’s dedicatee.

The *Elegia* sets a mournful melody in the cello against morose, atmospheric chords in the piano. The accompaniment simultaneously drives the music’s harmonic motion and establishes the movement’s plaintive character. Perhaps recalling the first movement, major and minor seconds predominate throughout, and continue when the piano’s low chords yield to sparse high notes. Harsh triple- and quadruple-stops herald an impassioned variation of

the opening melody, an anguished cry in the upper register of the cello.

An energetic *Marcia* follows, evoking the sounds of a full marching band. The cello opens with a low, trombone-like quintuplet figure, answered rhythmically by drums and flutes. Over the course of the movement, the marching band seems to pass before the listener’s eyes and ears, eventually dying away in the cello’s high harmonics. The menacing tone of Britten’s march also calls to mind, whether consciously or not, the more sardonic works of Shostakovich.

In the *Moto Perpetuo*, Britten fashions a vigorous finale, full of short-tempered mood swings and fierce syncopations. A constant eighth- and 16th-note rhythm provides the rhythmic engine throughout the entire movement. The music is written in triple meter, though the listener would be challenged to clap out a waltz. This rhythmic ambiguity sits alongside Britten’s ironic designation of the entire work as a “Sonata in C” (all white keys after all, right?), given its tonal ambiguity throughout. The cello part is directed to be played *saltando* (“jumping”), a technique in which the bow is thrown against the cello and made to ricochet off the strings. Midway through the movement, Britten transforms the central *saltando* figure into a singing, *dolce* melody: a short-lived respite before a tremendous unison passage between the cello and piano hurl forward into the work’s forceful close.

Patrick Castillo



MUSICAL AMERICA's 2012 Musicians of the Year, cellist David Finckel and pianist Wu Han rank among the most esteemed and influential classical musicians in the world today. The talent, energy, imagination, and dedication they bring to their multifaceted endeavors as concert performers, recording artists, educators, artistic administrators, and cultural entrepreneurs go unmatched. Their duo performances have garnered superlatives from the press, public, and presenters alike.

In high demand year after year among chamber music audiences worldwide, the duo has appeared each season at the most prestigious venues and concert series across the United States, Mexico, Canada, the Far East, and Europe to unanimous critical acclaim. Recent highlights include performances at Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, and Aspen's Harris Concert Hall, recitals in Korea and at Germany's Mecklenburg Festival, and their presentation of the Britten Concerto at Aspen Music Festival. They have also been frequent guests on American Public Media's *Performance Today*, *Saint Paul Sunday*, and other popular classical radio programs. For 34 years, Mr. Finckel served as cellist of the Emerson String Quartet in addition to his duo work, during which he garnered eight

Grammy Awards including two honors for "Best Classical Album," three Gramophone Awards, and the prestigious Avery Fisher Prize, awarded in 2004 for the first time to a chamber ensemble.

In addition to their distinction as world-class performers, the duo has established a reputation for their dynamic and innovative approach to the recording studio. In 1997, Mr. Finckel and Ms. Wu launched ArtistLed, classical music's first musician-directed and Internet-based recording company, which has served as a model for numerous independent labels. All 16 ArtistLed recordings, including the most recent Dvořák Piano Trios, have met with critical acclaim and are available via the company's website at ArtistLed.com.

Mr. Finckel and Ms. Wu have served as Artistic Directors of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center since 2004. They are also the founders and Artistic Directors of Music@Menlo, a chamber music festival and institute in Silicon Valley now celebrating its eleventh season. In these capacities, they have overseen the establishment and design of the Chamber Music Society's CMS Studio Recordings label, as well as the Society's recording partnership with Deutsche Grammophon (which includes CMS concert downloads made

available through the Digital DG Concerts Series); and Music@Menlo LIVE, Music@Menlo's exclusive recording label, which has been praised as a "breakthrough" (*Billboard*) and "probably the most ambitious recording project of any classical music festival in the world" (*San Jose Mercury News*). In 2011, Mr. Finckel and Ms. Wu were named Artistic Directors of Chamber Music Today, an annual festival held in Korea.

The duo's repertoire spans virtually the entire literature for cello and piano, with an equal emphasis on the classics and the contemporaries. Their modern repertoire includes all the significant works, from Prokofiev and Britten to Alfred Schnittke and André Previn. Their commitment to new music has brought commissioned works by Bruce Adolphe, Lera Auerbach, Gabriela Lena Frank, Pierre Jalbert, Augusta Read Thomas, and George Tsontakis to audiences around the world. In 2010, the duo released *For David and Wu Han* (ArtistLed), an album of four contemporary works for cello and piano expressly composed for them. In 2011, Summit Records released a recording of the duo performing Gabriela Lena Frank's concerto, *Compadrazgo*, with the ProMusica Columbus Chamber Orchestra.

Mr. Finckel and Ms. Wu have achieved universal renown for their passionate commitment

to nurturing the careers of countless young artists through a wide array of education initiatives. For many years, the duo taught alongside the late Isaac Stern at Carnegie Hall and the Jerusalem Music Center. They appeared annually on the Aspen Music Festival's Distinguished Artist Master Class series and in various educational outreach programs across the country. This season, Mr. Finckel and Ms. Wu will launch a chamber music studio at Aspen Music Festival. Under the auspices of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Mr. Finckel and Ms. Wu have established the LG Chamber Music School, which provides workshops to young artists in Korea and Taiwan. Mr. Finckel was named honoree and Artistic Director of the Mendelssohn Fellowship in 2012, a program established to identify young Korean musicians and promote chamber music in South Korea. Mr. Finckel and Ms. Wu reside in New York with their 19-year-old daughter, Lilian. To learn more, visit www.davidfinckelandwuhan.com.

David Finckel and Wu Han appear by arrangement with David Rowe Artists (davidroweartists.com). Their public relations and press representative is Milina Barry PR. David Finckel and Wu Han's recordings are available exclusively on ArtistLed. Wu Han performs on the Steinway Piano.