

FESTIVAL
MOZAIC



SOPHIE
SHAO

CELLO
RECITAL

WITH PIANIST
QING JIANG

April 6, 2025
2:00 PM

Harold J. Miossi CPAC,
Cuesta College



Mercedes-Benz
OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
OFFICIAL AUTO

PROGRAM

JOSEPH HAYDN

Divertimento in D major (c. 1773)
(arr. Ruysen, c. 1920; arr. Piatigorsky, 1944)

Adagio (from Baryton Trio in D major, Hob. XI:113)
Menuet (from Baryton Trio in D major, Hob. XI:95)
Allegro di Molto (from Baryton Trio in D major, Hob. XI:113)

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Cello Sonata No. 4 in C major, op. 102, no. 1 (1815)

Andante—Allegro vivace
Adagio—Tempo d'Andante—Allegro vivace

JENNIFER HIGDON (B. 1962)

Nocturne (from *String Poetic*; arr. for cello) (2006)

DANIEL TEMKIN

Rise (2024)

I. Descent
II. Rise

INTERMISSION

ZOLTÁN KODÁLY

"No. 3" from Nine Pieces for Solo Piano, op. 3 (1905–1909)

Lento—Andante—Agitato—Tempo I

KODÁLY

Sonata for Solo Cello in B minor, op. 8 (1915)

Allegro maestoso ma appassionato
Adagio
Allegro molto vivace

NADIA BOULANGER

Trois pièces (Three Pieces) (1914)

Modéré
Sans vitesse et à l'aise
Vite et nerveusement rythmé

Festival Mozaic's Artist-in-Residence is generously underwritten by
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PROGRAM NOTES

JOSEPH HAYDN (1732–1809)

Divertimento in D major (c. 1773)



It is likely that if it were not for Pierre Ruysen, we would not be listening to the Divertimento by Haydn that opens today's program. Haydn had written a great many divertimentos as "baryton trios" for his patron Prince Nicolas Esterházy. Since the baryton (a challenging string instrument that is both plucked and bowed) became

largely obsolete after the eighteenth century, the pieces went unplayed for many years. Ruysen, however, arranged selections from the trios as duos for cello and piano in the early twentieth century. These seem to have inspired Gregor Piatigorsky to create his own much more fanciful adaptations—thus allowing us to hear Haydn's long-forgotten pieces in a new guise.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)

Cello Sonata No. 4 in C major, op. 102, no. 1 (1815)



Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven are the three most prominent composers of what posterity calls "The First Viennese School." Although Beethoven, the youngest of the three, started by writing music resembling that of his elders—symphonies! string quartets!—he also began to branch out into genres the older men had never produced.

One significant area of Beethoven's innovation was that of the cello sonata. He turned to this new genre five times during his lifetime, and his fourth sonata was written when he could hear very little of what he was creating. Beethoven was not limited by this challenge, however, and Cello Sonata No. 4 explores contrasting moods of serenity, storminess, and even humor.

JENNIFER HIGDON (b. 1962)

Nocturne (from *String Poetic*; arr. for cello) (2006)



One good idea often leads to another, and that process resulted in Jennifer Higdon's Nocturne for cello. The Nocturne began its existence as the second movement of a five-movement violin set titled *String Poetic*, created for violinist Jennifer Koh. In Higdon's unusual program notes for *String Poetic*, she used poetry to describe each

movement; for the Nocturne, she wrote, "that piece of night—night of peace." This lovely interlude is a welcome break from the world's turmoil, so it is small wonder that it has been extracted to serve as a stand-alone work. Higdon has created versions for flute and for cello, and the singing melody of the cello scoring achieves a remarkable poignance.

NADIA BOULANGER (1887–1979)

Trois pièces (Three Pieces) (1914)



Nadia Boulanger was a composer, performer, conductor, and perhaps the twentieth century's greatest composition teacher—yet, as a child, she could not bear hearing music. She later ruefully recalled that her screaming "drew crowds," which was a challenge for her musically active family. Fortunately, she lost her fear at age five, and from that point, she said, "They couldn't make me leave the piano." Although she felt her compositional skills did not measure up to those of her younger sister Lili, she did craft a number of works, including three pieces for organ. She then reworked two of her organ compositions for cello and piano, adding a lively third number to the set to create *Trois Pièces*.

DANIEL TEMKIN (b. 1986)

Rise (2024)



Rise was composed for cellist Annie Jacobs-Perkins and pianist Katelyn Vahala with support from the Austin Chamber Music Center & the Pro Musicis Foundation. I composed *Rise* during 2022–2023 thinking about time I'd spent hiking in California's mountain forests, and amongst its Redwood and Sequoia trees. Immersed in

those vast terrains, I've often sensed the physical landscape rising – trails carving upwards, trees stretching into the sky. "I. Descent" explores the tranquility and loneliness one feels perched atop a mountain, and the scale one senses peering over a precipice into a forest far down below. This movement descends lower and lower in register, with final rippling piano scales evoking images of rock shale cascading down a mountainside.

"II. Rise" is an arch-form movement that represents a winding journey. The title refers to the physical act of hiking up steep trails, and also to a sense of perseverance and transformation. © 2025 by Daniel Temkin

ZOLTÁN KODÁLY (1882–1967)

"No. 3" from *Nine Pieces for Solo Piano*, op. 3 (1905–1909)



Zoltán Kodály was a musical "triple threat." As an educator, he believed that "music is for everyone," thus developing a methodology for teaching music that led to a remarkable level of national musical literacy within his Hungarian homeland. He was a pioneering ethnomusicologist who preserved thousands of the folk tunes and

dances of his country. That traditional music influenced aspects of his third career, that of composer. However, he was also alert to new trends introduced by musicians such as Debussy, and these blended approaches are evident in the *Nine Piano Pieces* that Kodály crafted over a five-year period. The third piece builds to a continuous saturation of rapid notes; these oscillate over an increasingly intense melody that eventually fades away to quiet chords.

Sonata for Solo Cello in B minor, op. 8 (1915)

Although Kodály received piano lessons from his sister, he taught himself the cello, which may account for the high degree of innovation within his *Sonata for Solo Cello*, op. 8. His countryman Béla Bartók declared, "The piece is unlike no other," adding, "The world of ideas it contains is entirely new." One of its novelties is its requirement that the two lowest strings be re-tuned downward, thus changing the cello's tone color and harmony. Kodály also sends the instrument into an extremely high register, asks for trills while two strings are played simultaneously, and requires the left hand to pluck the strings at times. Cellists regard this sonata as an "Everest" of their repertory—with very good reason.

SOPHIE SHAO | Cello

Generously underwritten by Libbie Agran

Winner of the Avery Fisher Career Grant and top prizes at the Rostropovich and Tchaikovsky competitions, cellist Sophie Shao is a versatile and passionate artist. Praised by the *New York Times* as “eloquent, powerful,” the *LA Times* as “impressive,” and the *Washington Post* as “deeply satisfying,” she has performed as a soloist to critical acclaim across the United States, Europe, and Asia. She has appeared with the Houston Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan, National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine, and Pacific Symphony. Shao has also premiered notable works, including Howard Shore’s *Mythic Gardens* and Shih-Hui Chen’s multimedia concerto *Our Son is Not Coming Home to Dinner*.

Shao has given recitals at Suntory Hall in Tokyo, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Middlebury College, the Phillips Collection, and Lincoln Center. Dedicated to chamber music, she founded “Sophie Shao and Friends” and regularly performs at festivals such as Chamber Music Northwest, Santa Fe, and Festival Mozaic. She has attended the Marlboro Music Festival, the Ravinia Steans Institute, and was a member of Chamber Music Society Two at Lincoln Center.

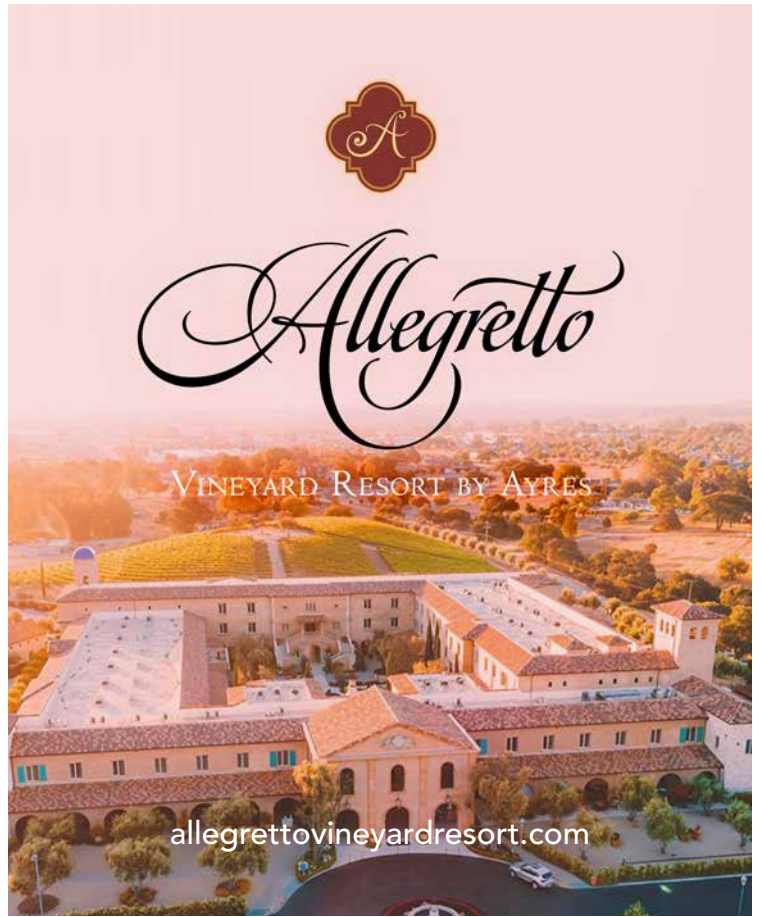
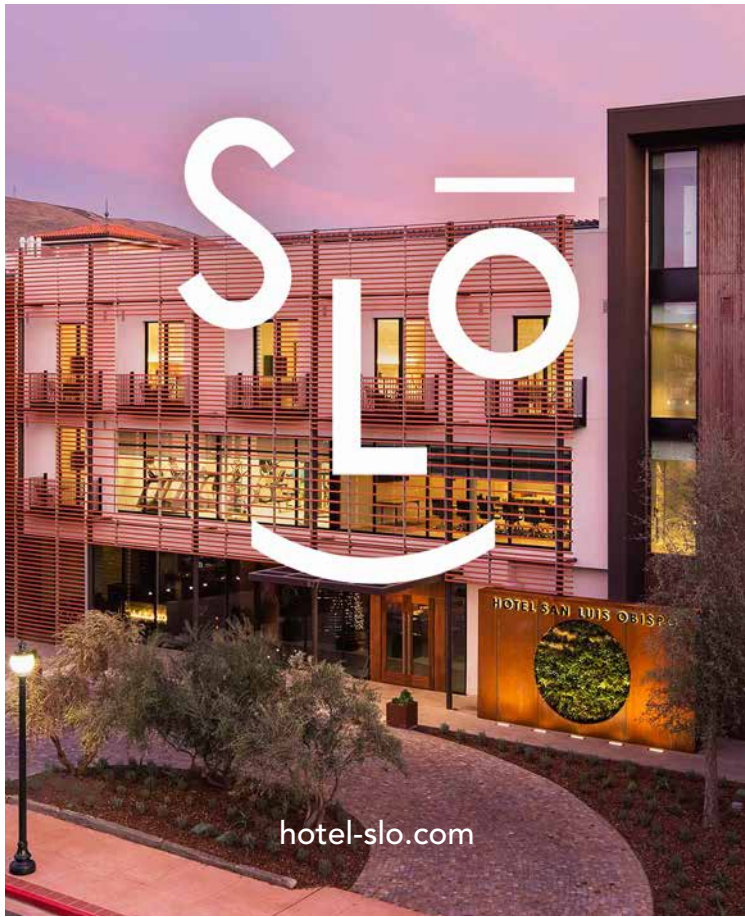
As an educator, Shao has given masterclasses at the University of Michigan, Juilliard, and Indiana University. She is on faculty at the University of Connecticut, where she teaches cello and chamber music and organizes UConn Cello Day. She has also taught at Vassar College, Princeton University, and Bard Conservatory. Sophie studied at the Curtis Institute as a teenager and later earned undergraduate and graduate degrees at Yale University. She plays on a Honore Derazey cello formerly owned by Pablo Casals.

Learn more at www.sophieshao.com



QING JIANG | Piano

Praised for “spirited” (*Boston Globe*) performances that are “vigorous and passionate” (*New York Times*), Qing Jiang has emerged as a versatile musician equally known as a performer, teacher, and contemporary music advocate. She has given concerts in Alice Tully Hall, Weill Hall, Jordan Hall, Snape Maltings Hall in the United Kingdom, and Shenzhen Poly Theater in China, and she has been a soloist with the Britten-Pears Orchestra under legendary conductor and composer Oliver Knussen, as well as with the Lanzhou Symphony under revered Chinese conductor Zushan Bian. Jiang has performed with the Shanghai, Parker, and Jasper string quartets, as well as with Itzhak Perlman, Donald Weilerstein, Anthony Marwood, Joel Krosnick, and many other leading musicians. Learn more at www.qingjiangpiano.com



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