



# PROGRAM: ALISA WEILERSTEIN AND INON BARNATAN APRIL 26 / 7:30 PM BING CONCERT HALL

## ARTISTS

Alisa Weilerstein, *cello*  
Inon Barnatan, *piano*

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This program is generously supported by Trine Sorensen and Michael Jacobson.

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Opus 3 Artists, 470 Park Avenue South  
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## PROGRAM

**Ludwig van Beethoven: Cello Sonata No. 4 in C Major, op. 102, no. 1 (1815)**

*Andante – Allegro vivace*  
*Adagio – Tempo d'andante – Allegro vivace*

**Samuel Barber: Sonata for Cello, op. 6 (1932)**

*Allegro ma non troppo*  
*Adagio*  
*Allegro appassionato*

## INTERMISSION

**Ludwig van Beethoven: Cello Sonata No. 5 in D Major, op. 102, no. 2 (1815)**

*Allegro con brio*  
*Adagio con molto sentimento d'affetto*  
*Allegro – Allegro fugato*

**Frédéric Chopin: Sonata in G Minor for Cello and Piano, op. 65 (1845–1846)**

*Allegro moderato*  
*Scherzo – Allegro con brio*  
*Largo*  
*Finale – Allegro*

**PROGRAM SUBJECT TO CHANGE.** Please be considerate of others and turn off all phones, pagers, and watch alarms. Photography and recording of any kind are not permitted. Thank you.

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**LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN  
(1770–1827)****CELLO SONATA NO. 4 IN C MAJOR,  
OP. 102, NO. 1 (1815)****CELLO SONATA NO. 5 IN D MAJOR,  
OP. 102, NO. 2 (1815)**

Ludwig van Beethoven wrote 10 sonatas for violin and 32 for piano. By comparison, he wrote just five cello sonatas. But they remain cornerstones of the cello repertoire. He wrote them throughout his life: two in his early period (Op. 5), one in his middle period (Op. 69), and two more in his late period (Op. 102). He was a key player in the development of the cello sonata—the first composer to write duo sonatas for cello and piano, in which, for the most part, the instruments strive to be equal partners. All five cello sonatas were written when advances were being made in both string and keyboard technique and design.

The cello has the first word in the Fourth Sonata, which Beethoven wrote in the summer of 1815. Here, the give and take between piano and cello is infinitely more subtle than in his three earlier sonatas. In both movements, a slow introduction precedes a sonata-form *Allegro*, and the theme of the quicker movements seems to evolve out of the introductory material. The musical argument between the two instruments is more concentrated than before. The unity of the whole is reinforced as the music of the opening measures is revisited immediately before the final *Allegro*. Beethoven recognized that the structure of this sonata—generally viewed as the first work of his final period—was somewhat experimental, and he described the work in the manuscript score as a “free sonata.” Like the earlier Op. 27 piano sonatas, *Quasi una fantasia*, Beethoven shifts the weight of the sonata from the traditional opening movement to the finale.

The sonata in D major is the more ambitious of the two Op. 102 sonatas. It opens dramatically, even explosively, and the *Allegro con brio* continues with terse, affirmative exchanges, full of melodic and harmonic

interest. The heart of the sonata lies in its beautiful, sonorous slow movement, the only full-length slow movement in the five sonatas. It is based on a richly ornamented theme introduced jointly by the two instruments. At the end, the music gradually and mysteriously unwinds until the cello offers a simple rising scale as a new idea. The keyboard takes up the cause, and together they launch into a rigorous fugue. This challenging, intellectually focused fugue makes few concessions to the medium. The sketches show that its composition cost Beethoven much effort. Indeed, the struggle to emerge triumphant despite—as much as through—the instruments themselves is part of the character of the music. In this, the fugue points directly to the finale of the *Hammerklavier* Sonata and, eventually, to the *Grosse Fuge*. Its effect is powerful and pure Beethoven.

The inspiration for writing the two Op. 102 sonatas came from Beethoven’s friend Josef Linke—cellist in the Razumovsky and later the Schuppanzigh Quartets, two string quartets with which Beethoven worked. The element of fantasy in both sonatas puzzled early audiences. After hearing Linke perform one of them with the pianist Carl Czerny, Michael Frey, a leading Mannheim musician, wrote in his diary, “It is so original that no one can understand it on first hearing.” The two sonatas are the crowning point of Beethoven’s chamber music with piano and the last duo sonatas he was to write.

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**SAMUEL BARBER (1910–1981)  
SONATA FOR CELLO, OP. 6 (1932)**

“To Orlando. Physician at the birth of this sonata. In appreciation of his help and interest. Samuel Barber. New York, seven years late.”

These words are handwritten at the top of Orlando Cole’s copy of the printed score of this, one of only a handful of cello sonatas from the first half of the 20th century to enter the repertoire. Cole was the cellist whose advice American composer Samuel Barber

sought while writing his only cello sonata. Both were students at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia in 1932, and this idea of collaborating with a performer was a pattern that Barber would pursue throughout his career. A half century later, Cole looked back on the collaboration and concluded that the sonata is “very cellistic, very singing....and it takes advantage of the best qualities of the instrument.” It also takes advantage of a good working knowledge of the two cello sonatas of Brahms. We know from his published letters that Barber played both sonatas while crossing the Atlantic a few summers earlier. His music shares intensity and a seriousness of purpose with Brahms, and the muscular opening of the first movement immediately brings to mind the impassioned opening of the Brahms F-minor sonata.

Barber started to compose the piece in the summer of 1932, while walking in the Austrian Tyrol and over the Italian border to the Menotti family villa. He was 22 at the time and still working under the guidance of Rosario Scalerò at Curtis. He returned to Curtis with the first movement completed and already tried out by a cellist from the orchestra at La Scala. After even more work on the score with Cole, however, Cole’s manuscript part emerged with cross outs, pasted-over modifications, and new passages pinned over the original. Barber works with traditional materials throughout the piece. The cello line is primarily lyrical, and both instruments are called on to display virtuoso technique. Although an early work, the cello sonata contains many of the characteristics of the later composer. There is an unabashed romanticism to the language, disciplined by a firm control of classical structure.

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**FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1810–1849)  
SONATA IN G MINOR FOR CELLO AND  
PIANO, OP. 65 (1845–1846)**

If the piano was the center of Frédéric Chopin’s universe, the cello was a significant satellite. Three of his four chamber works are

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for cello, including the Sonata in G Minor. It's a late work, and it gave him two years of trouble to get it into a shape he wished to publish. Its many sketches reveal that Chopin worked hard at finding a balance between the two instruments and that he had in mind a sonata in which the themes constantly evolve and relate back to one central idea. At its core, this idea is the interval of a falling second, heard in the opening theme. It propels the energetic *Scherzo* and haunts the melancholy beauty of the slow movement. It also drives the *Finale*, both its twisting, tarantella-like first theme and its expansion into a syncopated dance theme, first given to the cello. The same musical idea also permeates Schubert's song cycle *Winterreise* (*Winter Journey*)—a seminal work that Chopin is known to have admired—and convincing arguments have been made linking the two works.

Chopin, at the time of writing this sonata, was going through the final stages of what had been a tempestuous relationship with the novelist George Sand. She had just published a serialized novel, *Lucrezia Floriani*, in which she unleashed her frustration at her relationship with Chopin—and, in the process, provided titillation for the Parisian salons. Chopin's instinct was to retire to his room and avoid direct conflict. But he appears to have worked out some of his personal torment by turning to the great Schubert song cycle for solace and reworking some of its musical substance in Op. 65. It is also likely that he wished

this parallel between life and art to remain hidden, at least while he was alive.

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### ALISA WEILERSTEIN

"A young cellist whose emotionally resonant performances of both traditional and contemporary music have earned her international recognition....Weilerstein is a consummate performer, combining technical precision with impassioned musicianship," stated the MacArthur Foundation when awarding American cellist Alisa Weilerstein a 2011 MacArthur Fellowship.

Weilerstein's 2016–17 season includes, for the first time in her career, performances of Bach's complete suites for unaccompanied cello at Caramoor; in Washington, D.C.; and in London. In January, she embarked on a nine-city U.S. tour with longtime recital partner Inon Barnatan and clarinetist Anthony McGill, including a concert in New York's Alice Tully Hall and performances of a Joseph Hallman premiere composed for this trio. She tours Europe with Barnatan later in the spring, with stops in Salzburg and at London's Wigmore Hall. Her busy international concert schedule this season features performances around the globe: She performs Britten's Cello Symphony with the New World Symphony; Shostakovich's First Cello Concerto with the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, the Netherlands Philharmonic, and the National Symphony in both Washington, D.C., and Moscow; Prokofiev's *Sinfonia concertante* with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic and the Dallas

Symphony; Schumann with the San Francisco Symphony and at Carnegie Hall in the company of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, with which she then tours the same program in Italy and Spain; Elgar with the Staatskapelle Weimar; Walton with Amsterdam's Residentie Orkest; and Dvořák with the Minnesota Orchestra, Sydney Symphony, and Tokyo Symphony on a three-stop tour of Japan, where she will also play four solo recitals. The cellist performs Henri Dutilleux's *Tout un monde lointain* with Lisbon's Gulbenkian Orchestra and gives the world premiere of Matthias Pintscher's Cello Concerto with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which cocommissioned the piece for her.

As an exclusive Decca Classics recording artist, Weilerstein released her fifth album in September, playing Shostakovich's two cello concertos with the Bavarian Radio Symphony under Pablo Heras-Casado in performances recorded live last season. Her discography also includes Dvořák's Cello Concerto; *Solo*, her compilation of unaccompanied 20th-century cello music; and Elgar's and Elliott Carter's cello concertos with Daniel Barenboim and the Staatskapelle Berlin, which was named *BBC Music's* Recording of the Year in 2013.

Weilerstein's career milestones include an emotionally tumultuous account of Elgar's concerto with the Berlin Philharmonic and Barenboim in Oxford, England, and a performance at the White House for President and Mrs. Obama. An ardent champion of new music, she has worked on multiple projects with Osvaldo Golijov and Pintscher and premiered works by Lera Auerbach and Hallman. She appears at major music festivals worldwide, and regularly collaborates with Venezuela's Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra and the El Sistema education program.

Weilerstein, whose honors include Lincoln Center's 2008 Martin E. Segal Award and the 2006 Leonard Bernstein Award, is a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music and Columbia University. Diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, she is a celebrity advocate for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

## INON BARNATAN

Celebrated for his poetic sensibility, probing intellect, and consummate artistry, Israeli pianist Inon Barnatan is embarking on his third and final season as the inaugural artist-in-association of the New York Philharmonic, appearing as soloist in subscription concerts, taking part in regular chamber performances, and acting as ambassador for the orchestra.

Last summer, Barnatan made a host of high-profile festival appearances, including performances at the Seattle, Santa Fe, Delft, and Aspen Festivals, all capped by a solo recital marking his Mostly Mozart debut. In the 2016–17 season, he debuts with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra under the baton of New York Philharmonic music director Alan Gilbert, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Jesús López-Cobos, the Baltimore Symphony under Vasily Petrenko, and the Seattle Symphony under Ludovic Morlot. He returns to the New York Philharmonic under Manfred Honeck and embarks on three tours: of the U.S. with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields; of Europe with his frequent recital partner Alisa Weilerstein; and of the U.S. again performing a trio program with Weilerstein and clarinetist Anthony McGill, including a concert at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Other highlights include concerto performances in Japan, Hong Kong, and Australia; the complete Beethoven concerto cycle in Marseille; and several concerts at London's Wigmore Hall.

A recipient of both the Avery Fisher Career Grant and Lincoln Center's Martin E. Segal Award, Barnatan has performed extensively with many of the world's foremost orchestras, including those of Cleveland, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and San Francisco; Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin; the Royal Stockholm Symphony Orchestra; and the Gulbenkian Orchestra of Lisbon. He has worked with such distinguished conductors as Gustavo Dudamel, Michael Tilson Thomas, James Gaffigan, Susanna Mälkki, Matthias Pintscher, Thomas Søndergård, David Robertson, Edo de Waart, Pinchas Zukerman,

and Jaap van Zweden. Passionate about contemporary music, in recent seasons the pianist has premiered new pieces composed for him by Pintscher, Sebastian Currier, and Avner Dorman.

"A born Schubertian" (*Gramophone*), Barnatan's critically acclaimed discography

includes Avie and Bridge recordings of the Austrian composer's solo piano works as well as *Darkness Visible*, which scored a coveted place on the *New York Times*' Best of 2012 list. Last October, the pianist released *Rachmaninov and Chopin: Cello Sonatas* on Decca Classics with Weilerstein, which earned rave reviews on both sides of the Atlantic.



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