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# TAEГУK MUN

Cello Recital with

JI YUNG LEE

Piano

Saturday  
7:30 PM

June 22

Williams Hall  
New England Conservatory  
290 Huntington Ave  
Boston, MA

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**Taeguk Mun, *cello***  
**Ji Yung Lee, *piano***

Saturday, June 22, 7:30pm  
Williams Hall  
New England Conservatory

**Sonata for Cello and Piano No.1 in D Minor, Op. 109      Gabriel Fauré**

Allegro  
Andante  
Finale: Allegro comodo

**Fantasiestücke, Op. 73      Robert Schumann**

Zart und mit Ausdruck  
Lebhaft, leicht  
Rasch und mit Feuer

*Intermission*

**Nore      Isang Yun**

**Sonata for Cello and Piano No.2 in D Major, Op. 58      Felix Mendelssohn**

Allegro assai vivace  
Allegretto scherzando  
Adagio  
Molto allegro e vivace

**PROGRAM NOTES**

**Gabriel Fauré – Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 1 in D minor, Op. 109 (1917)**

Composed and premiered alongside the Violin Sonata No. 2 in E minor, Fauré's first cello sonata came during a later period when the composer's chamber music output was especially prolific. The work was dedicated to cellist and conductor Louis Hasselmans, who gave the second performance of the sonata at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in 1918. Written almost 40 years after his *Elegie*, Op. 24, which was originally intended to be a cello sonata, the Sonata for Cello No. 1 in D minor marks Fauré's completion of a long-held aspiration for writing such a work for the cello.

The Allegro's opening theme is said to have been based on Fauré's unpublished 1884 Symphony in D minor (Roger Nichols, 2012). Here, the piano is characterized by syncopated and angular rhythms, which are mirrored by the leaping, similarly angular melodies of the cello. There are occasionally more lyrical and whimsical melodies, but these are relatively short-lived, quickly reverting to the angst of the initial opening. In stark contrast, the Andante offers a sparse piano accompaniment, comprised of shimmering harmonies and chords that are almost bell-like. Meanwhile, the cello plays a somewhat simple, lyrical melody with expressive, drawn-out ascents that create a sense of striving. Finally, the Finale: Allegro comodo begins in D Major and is strikingly more graceful and light. There are more back-and-forth dialogues between the cello and piano, where they exchange the initial theme across through various harmonic shifts. As Roger Nichols notes, this essentially turns the whole movement into one long development section. Given this long sense of development, the finale feels as though it is riding a continuous wave of harmonic changes that do not settle until the last few bars of the piece.

**Robert Schumann – Fantasiestücke, Op. 73 (1849)**

Originally written for clarinet and piano over the span of two days, Schumann's *Fantasiestücke* is more frequently performed on cello (or even violin). The work was initially titled "*Soiréestücke*" (Night Pieces), but Schumann later changed this to indicate the improvisational, free expressivity associated with the Romantic *fantasie*. This was a genre that he was particularly fond of, and it characterizes the many changes in mood and affect across the three pieces in *Fantasiestücke*. Each of these three pieces has an A-B-A miniature form, and they are meant to be played *attacca*, implying that they should be understood as a unified, cohesive whole.

Zart und mit Ausdruck (tender and with expression) begins in A minor and possesses a lyrical, but forward-moving energy. This energy is created by the triplets within the piano accompaniment, which provides an undulating momentum beneath the singing cello line. In the last few bars, there is a sudden shift to A Major that sets the scene for the following piece, Lebhaft, leicht (lively, light). Here, the piano continues its triplets, and the cello melody is more energetic, creating a greater sense of cohesion between the two instruments, especially as they often join together in unison. The middle section of this piece, written in F Major, is where the improvisatory nature of the fantasy comes out clearly, as the cello and piano exchange flighty, chromatic, ascending lines. The piece ends with a coda, where Schumann indicates “Nach und Nach ruhiger,” or little by little calmer. This sense of calm is short-lived, however, as Rasch und mit Feuer (Quick and with fire) begins with a frenzy exuberance that propels forward towards a coda—marked twice with “schneller” (faster)—that gives way to a fiery ending.

### **Isang Yun – Nore (1964)**

Though unperformed at the time, Nore was composed in honor of then-South Korean President Park Chung-hee’s visit to West Germany. For Yun, who particularly favored the cello, this was his first composition featuring the cello as the main instrument. “Nore,” when translated into English, refers to a song or the act of singing, and this can especially be heard in the cello’s melodies. Born in Tongyeong, South Korea, Yun (1917-1995) sought to combine Western musical styles with Korean musical and compositional techniques (e.g., the practice of plucking instruments, various styles of glissandi and vibrato, and Korean music theory of court music). Yun studied composition in Paris and Berlin, attending courses at Darmstadt and learning serialist techniques and twelve-tone style. According to Alan Westby, “Using western notation, Yun adapted and personalized traditional Korean instrumental techniques, resulting in an idiosyncratic use of trills, vibrati, glissandi, changes in dynamics and timbre, flutter-tonguing, portamenti, quarter-tones, leaping grace notes, grace note clusters, etc.” For some, these unique techniques have made the performance of his music on Western instruments rather challenging.

In Nore, the influence of Yun’s studies in serialism can be heard in the chromaticism of the piano accompaniment. Meanwhile, traditional Korean court music techniques can be heard in trills meant to mimic wide vibrato. Glissandi and grace notes parallel sliding and note-bending that can be done on traditional Korean instruments like the ajaeng or haegeum. About halfway through the piece, the score indicates “Un poco più mosso” (a little faster), and the music becomes more angular, with wide leaps in the piano and pizzicato in the cello. The cello then restates the initial theme, but with

longer, sustained notes and some surrounding ornamentation, which demonstrates Yun’s Hauptton (single tone) technique. After a slight pause, the cello plays ghostly tones echoed by the piano, offering a quiet stillness to end the piece.

### **F. Mendelssohn – Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 2 in D Major, Op. 58 (1843)**

While the Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 2 was dedicated to Russian cellist Count Mateusz Wielhorski, Mendelssohn had initially composed the piece in 1843 for his brother Paul, who was a cellist. Though it draws on classical forms, the sonata is significantly more Romantic in style than the first cello sonata (1838). The piano is rather virtuosic throughout the piece, at times perhaps overshadowing the cello, but this demonstrates Mendelssohn’s proficiency in writing for the instrument and makes clear that both the cello and piano are equally significant in this sonata.

The energetic first movement, Allegro assai vivace, is based on themes from Mendelssohn’s unfinished Piano Sonata in G Major. Its grandeur has led some to comment on the movement’s similarity to the opening of Mendelssohn’s Italian Symphony. The Allegretto scherzando, meanwhile, is mischievous yet graceful, with its slower tempo marking making it slightly more elegant than a traditional humorous scherzo. The piano’s staccato is answered by the cello’s pizzicato, and this lightness is later contrasted by a more lyrical second theme. This movement in particular seems reminiscent of A Midsummer Night’s Dream, which Mendelssohn composed during the same time as he was working on the sonata. The Adagio is perhaps one of the most remarked upon movements, with its clear invocation of J.S. Bach’s chorales in the rolled chords of the piano, which is then juxtaposed with cello’s passionate, melismatic, recitative-esque lines. Lastly, the Molto allegro e vivace is a fast-paced conversation between the cello and piano, which puts on full display their virtuosity and interwoven lines that grow into a frenetic and triumphant conclusion.

— Annie Kim

Annie Kim is a Ph.D. candidate in the Musicology & Ethnomusicology program at Brown University. Her dissertation focuses on musical utopias and politics, and she is interested in questions of race, gender, sexuality, technological mediation, and timbre.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS



A recipient of the 2016 Janos Starker Award, laureates of the 2nd Queen Elisabeth Cello Competition and 16th International Tchaikovsky Competition, as well as the first prizewinner of Pablo Casals International Cello Competition and the 3rd Andre Navarra International Cello Competition, South Korean cellist **Taeguk Mun** enjoys an international career as a soloist, chamber musician, and an educator.

Mr. Mun has appeared with various major orchestras worldwide including Bremen Philharmonic, Hungarian Radio Symphony,

Orchestre national du Capitole de Toulouse, Taipei Philharmonic Orchestra, Prague Symphony Orchestra, and Korean Symphony Orchestra. As a chamber music enthusiast, Mr. Mun has made regular appearances at various chamber music series, including the Seoul Arts Center Summer Music Festival, Lotte Concert Hall Classic Revolution, and Seoul Spring Festival in Korea, Chamber Music International in Dallas, TX, and Salon de Musique in La Jolla, CA. Mr. Mun has collaborated with distinguished artists such as Jonathan Biss, Paul Biss, Jinjoo Cho, Kyungwha Chung, Miriam Fried, Stefan Jackiw, Clara-Jumi Kang, Dong-Suk Kang, Kirill Karabits, Kim Kashkashian, Bomsori Kim, Julius Jeongwon Kim, Sunwook Kim, Julien Labro, Marko Letonja, Dong Hyek Lim, Joseph Lin, Richard Lin, Mischa Maisky, Ryan McCullough, Richard O'Neill, Noreen Polera, Christoph Poppen, Cynthia Raim, Yekwon Sunwoo, Arman Tigranyan, Inmo Yang, Nikolaj Znaider, and Carmit Zori.

Mr. Mun recently completed the Artist Diploma program at the Juilliard School, where he studied with Joel Krosnick and Minhye Clara Kim – the latter of whom he previously studied with at the Juilliard School Pre-College division. Prior to this, Mr. Mun was a full scholarship student at the University of Southern California, where he finished a Master of Music degree in 2020 and Graduate Certificate program in 2022 with Marcy Rosen, Hannah Roberts, and Ralph Kirshbaum. He additionally holds a Bachelor of Music degree from New England Conservatory, where he studied with Laurence Lesser with full scholarship from 2012 to 2016.

Mr. Mun is sponsored by SungJung Cultural Foundation, Hwangjin Scholarship Committee and was selected as a “G.rium Artist” by SK Chemicals of Korea. He was the artist-in-residence at the Lotte Concert Hall in 2022 and Kumho Art Hall in 2017 in Korea. Mr. Mun has released an album with Warner Music in 2019 as an homage to Pablo Casals. He is

expected to release his second album with complete Bach Cello Suites in October, 2024.



Hailed by Gramophone for her “beautiful playing” and “intimate internal dialogues,” 2<sup>nd</sup> prize and special award winner at Salieri-Zinetti International Chamber Music Competition in Italy, pianist and vocal coach **Ji Yung Lee** is an active performer and has made appearances at Carnegie Weill Hall, Alice Tully Hall, John F. Kennedy Center, Merkin Concert Hall, The Greene Space, and Jordan Hall. She has also captivated audiences via numerous radio broadcasts including WQXR (New York), WGBH (Boston), MPR (Minnesota), WFMT

(Chicago), WSMR (Florida). Currently, Lee is a full-time faculty member at New England Conservatory as an opera coach and a music staff member at Boston Lyric Opera.

Recent highlights include Connections Chamber Music Series at New England Conservatory with cellist Allison Eldredge; J. Bologne’s opera *Anonymous Lover* at Boston Lyric Opera (principal coach); Dame Myra Hess Concert Series with violinist Seohyun Kim; Pehlivanian Opera Academy as a conducting fellow (*La Traviata* in 8 different cities in Slovenia); concerts with violinist Chad Hoopes, Danbi Um, and violist Barry Shiffman at Rockport Chamber Music Festival; Harriman-Jewell Series with violist Jordan Bak; a video production with cellist Laurence Lesser for Tonebase; New York Classical Music Radio WQXR’s Live Christmas Concerts with tenor Stephen Costello; Minnesota Public Radio’s Performance Today. Lee’s passion for vocal music has been a significant part of her musical journey. She has worked with Boston Lyric Opera, Victory Hall Opera, Boston Arts Song Society, Korea Chamber Opera Festival, Juilliard’s Drama division, and Amelia Island Opera. Ji Yung has served Victory Hall Opera as its first official pianist-in-residence, with the title of Chief Repetiteur. She has participated as a vocal piano fellow with full scholarships in festivals including Music Academy of the West, Aspen Music Festival and School, SongFest (The Marc and Eva Stern - LA Opera Professional Fellowship), and Hawaii Performing Arts Festival.

In addition to her extensive vocal repertoire, Lee is enthusiastic about instrumental chamber music. She actively performs with internationally-acclaimed instrumentalists throughout the United States, as well as mentoring and playing for young musicians at recitals and music festivals such as Morningside Music Bridge. She has been invited to Rockport

Chamber Music Festival, Harriman-Jewell Series, Ashmont Hill Chamber Music, New York Classical Radio WQXR, Chamber Music Society of Little Rock, to name a few. She has participated in violist Jordan Bak's debut album IMPULSE. She has served as a staff pianist both at The Juilliard School and New England Conservatory.

Ji Yung obtained her Graduate Diploma in collaborative piano from The Juilliard School, completed her Master’s Degree and Graduate Diploma in collaborative piano with academic honors at New England Conservatory, and earned her Bachelor's Degree at Yonsei University in Korea, where she majored in choral conducting. Her teachers and mentors include Margo Garrett, Jonathan Feldman, Cameron Stowe, Diane Richardson, J. J. Penna, Max Levinson, Cynthia Hoffmann, Roger Tapping, Laurence Lesser, Young Hwa Yoon, Ick Hyun Cho, and Ho-Jeong Jeong.

Korean Cultural Society of Boston Upcoming Events	
September 8	<b>KCSB Benefit Dinner</b> <b>Mosesian Center for the Arts</b> 321 Arsenal St, Watertown, MA
October 6, 3:00 pm	<b>KCSB Rising Stars Concert</b> <b>Yekwon Sunwoo with New York Classical Players (Dongmin Kim, music director)</b> NEC’s Jordan Hall
November 9 - 24	<b>The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual KCSB Art Exhibition</b> Lexington Arts & Crafts Society 130 Waltham St. Lexington, MA
May, 2025	<b>KCSB Spring Concert:</b> <b>Marimba/percussion</b> Hayoung Song NEC’s Brown Hall

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Korean Cultural Society of Boston (KCSB) was founded in 2012 in order to introduce and promote Korean arts and cultural forms to a broad spectrum of New England audiences, to promote and support professional Korean-American literary, visual, and musical artists, and to enhance education of Korean culture and arts.

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