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ZLATOMIR FUNG, CELLO & BENJAMIN HOCHMAN, PIANO

Thursday 2 February, 7.30pm
Djanogly Recital Hall

PROGRAMME

6 Pieces

- I. Russian Song*
- II. Valse*
- III. Volcalise*
- IV. Elegia*
- V. Valse*
- VI. Romance*

Yuri Shaporin (1887-1966)
arr. Victor Kubatsky

Romance Op.19 for Cello and Piano

Nikolay Sokolov
(1859-1922)

6 Preludes for Cello and Piano

Leo Ornstein
(1895-2002)

Interval

'Entracte' from Raymonda, arr. for Cello and Piano

Alexander Glazunov
(1865-1936)

Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op.40

- 1. Allegro non troppo*
- 2. Allegro*
- 3. Largo*
- 4. Allegro*

Dmitri Shostakovich
(1906-75)

There is a Sennheiser Infrared enhanced hearing system in the Djanogly Recital Hall; please request a headset from our front-of-house staff to enhance your enjoyment of this evening's concert.

6 Pieces

**Yuri Shaporin (1887-1966)
arr. Victor Kubatsky**

Movements

Movements

Movements

The figure of Mstislav Rostropovich so dominates our perception of the Russian cello school that it can be easy to overlook the many other great musicians who have shaped that tradition. It is a tradition that goes back at least to Karl Kavydov (1838-89), whom Tchaikovsky called "the tsar of cellists." As was so often the case at the time, many of nineteenth-century Russia's leading musicians came from abroad, and it was to the German-born Wilhelm Fitzenhagen (1848-90) that we owe Pyotr Tchaikovsky's Variations on a Rococo Theme (1877).

One of Fitzenhagen's pupils at the Moscow Conservatory was Anatoly Brandukov (1858-1930), to whom Tchaikovsky dedicated his Pezzo capriccioso in 1887. Brandukov was best man at Sergei Rachmaninoff's wedding in 1902, and Rachmaninoff's Cello Sonata honours their personal and creative friendship. This evening's concert traces that story through into the twentieth century, examining the legacy of the Imperial period for the development of Russian music in the Soviet era.

Born in the Ukrainian town of Hlukhiv in 1887, Yury Shaporin first studied philology in Kyiv and then law in St Petersburg. He enrolled in the St Petersburg Conservatory in 1913 and went on to become a prominent member of the city's artistic world after the October Revolution. He took up a professorship at the Moscow Conservatory in 1939, where he remained until his death in 1966. The Six Pieces heard this evening were arranged by Viktor Kubatsky (1891-1970), a former student of Brandukov. Kubatsky led the cello section of the Bolshoi Theatre orchestra for many years and was active in chamber music circles in the Soviet capital.

Romance Op.19 for Cello and Piano

**Nikolay Sokolov
(1859-1922)**

One of Shaporin's teachers at the St Petersburg Conservatory was Nikolay Sokolov (1859-

1922). Sokolov was a member of the so-called Belyayev Circle, a group of nationalist composers who gathered around the merchant patron, Mitrofan Belyayev. One of Belyayev's aims was to support the development of a native tradition of Russian chamber music. Sokolov's *Romance* dates from 1894 and forms part of an extensive body of agreeable turn-of-the-century instrumental music that is now little known, but which enjoyed great popularity with performers and audiences at the time.

6 Preludes for Cello and Piano

**Leo Ornstein
(1895-2002)**

Leo Ornstein was born in the Ukrainian town of Kremenchuk in 1895 and at the age of nine, entered the St Petersburg Conservatory. Shortly afterwards, his family followed the route undertaken by so many other Jews in the Russian Empire and emigrated to the United States. He continued his studies in New York, gaining a reputation as one of the most radical and experimental voices of the early twentieth century. After a concert in London in 1914, one reviewer declared him to be "the sum of Schoenberg and Scriabin squared." His style mellowed in the 1920s, and the 6 Preludes from 1931, whilst containing a good deal of dissonance, also attest to a fertile gift for expressive melody.

'Entracte' from *Raymonda*, arr. for Cello and Piano

**Alexander Glazunov
(1865-1936)**

Ornstein's piano teacher at the St Petersburg was Anna Yesipova, who also taught Sergei Prokofiev, and there are certainly affinities in their percussive treatment of the piano. Ornstein's composition teacher was Alexander Glazunov, another leading member of the Belyayev circle. Glazunov's ballet, *Raymonda*, opened at St Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre in January 1898, with choreography by Marius Petipa, who had also staged Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty* and *The Nutcracker*. The *Entr'acte* is a characteristic example of late nineteenth-century Russian lyricism and has been adapted for a number of instrumental combinations by performers over the years.

Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op.40

Dmitri Shostakovich

(1906-75)

1. *Allegro non troppo*
2. *Allegro*
3. *Largo*
4. *Allegro*

The story of this evening's recital comes full circle in the Cello Sonata by Dmitry Shostakovich. Born in St Petersburg in 1906, he was admitted to the city's conservatory by Glazunov, who kept a close watch over the young prodigy's progress. Shostakovich's teacher for counterpoint was none other than Sokolov. To begin with, Shostakovich was something of a radical, associating with leading member of the Russian avant-garde and positioning himself as the great hope of Soviet music. He wrote scores for experimental theatre productions, as well as acerbic piano pieces for himself to perform, and his early symphonies tested the limits of classical form.

By the mid-1930s, however, his style had begun to develop, showing a greater respect for the legacy of the past and seemingly addressing the call for Soviet artists to conform to the expectations of Socialist Realism. It was at this time that he turned to chamber music in earnest, composing his Cello Sonata for Kubatsky in 1934. The sonata was certainly inspired by Kubatsky's playing, yet it may have another inspiration too. In the summer of 1934, Shostakovich had fallen in love with a young student. He divorced his wife, Nina Vazar, only for the couple to remarry the next year when she became pregnant with their first child. Whether we can detect any of this turmoil in the sonata is open to question. When it was premiered on 25 December 1934, critics were struck by its many moments of neo-classical simplicity and lyrical sincerity, although there is still plenty of Shostakovich's characteristic wit and sarcasm.

The sonata's four movements show just how closely Shostakovich had studied the legacy of the pre-revolutionary era – not just the sonata of Rachmaninoff, of course, but particularly those of Beethoven, whose centenary had been celebrated throughout the Soviet Union in 1827 and whose works were now held up as a model for Soviet composers to emulate. It was on a concert tour to the arctic city of Archangel with Kubatsky in January 1936 that Shostakovich opened a copy of *Pravda* to read a vicious denunciation of his opera, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, which had gripped audiences in Leningrad and Moscow for two years. Shostakovich never returned to opera again, other than to revise *Lady Macbeth* as *Katerina Izmailova* in 1962. By contrast, he turned ever more to chamber music to give voice to some of his most profound emotions.

ZLATOMIR FUNG

The first American in four decades and youngest musician ever to win First Prize at the International Tchaikovsky Competition Cello Division, Zlatomir Fung is poised to become one of the preeminent cellists of our time. Astounding audiences with his boundless virtuosity and exquisite sensitivity, the 23-year-old has already proven himself to be a star among the next generation of world-class musicians. A recipient of the Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship 2022 and a 2020 Avery Fisher Career Grant, Fung's impeccable technique demonstrates mastery of the canon and exceptional insight into the depths of contemporary repertoire.

In the 2022-2023 season, Fung performs with orchestras and gives recitals in all corners of the world. Orchestral engagements include the BBC and Rochester Philharmonics, Milwaukee, Reading, Lincoln, Ridgefield and Sante Fe Symphonies, Baltimore Chamber Orchestra, Sarasota Orchestra, and APEX Ensemble. He gives the world premiere of a new cello concerto by Katherine Balch with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. He plays recitals throughout North America with pianists Benjamin Hochman, Dina Vainshtein, and Janice Carissa, including stops in New York City, Chicago, IL, San Diego and Berkeley, CA, Los Alamos, NM, Rockville, MD, Melbourne, FL, Vancouver and Sechelt, BC, Northampton, MA, Providence, RI, Burlington, VT, and Waterford, VA. Tours of Europe and Asia include a recital at Wigmore Hall and two performances at Cello Biënnale Amsterdam.

Recent summer festival appearances include Aspen Music Festival, Bravo! Vail with the New York Philharmonic and Leonard Slatkin, ChamberFest Cleveland, Chamber Music Northwest, La Jolla Chamber Music Society, Rockport Chamber Music Festival, and Verbier. As a soloist, Fung has appeared with the Detroit, Kansas City, Seattle, Utah, Greensboro, Ann Arbor, and Asheville Symphonies, among many others. Past recital highlights include his Carnegie Hall Weill Recital Hall debut with pianist Mishka Rushdie Momen and multiple tours throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. As a chamber musician, he has been presented by the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Philharmonic Society of Orange County, IMS Prussia Cove, Syrinx Concerts in Toronto, The Embassy Series & The Phillips Collection in Washington DC, and Salon de Virtuosi and Bulgarian Concert Evenings in New York City.

A winner of the 2017 Young Concert Artists International Auditions and the 2017 Astral National Auditions, Fung has taken the top prizes at the 2018 Alice & Eleonore Schoenfeld International String Competition, 2016 George Enescu International Cello Competition, 2015 Johansen International Competition for Young String Players, 2014 Stulberg International String Competition, and 2014 Irving Klein International Competition. He was selected as a 2016 U.S. Presidential Scholar for the Arts and was awarded the 2016 Landgrave von Hesse Prize at the Kronberg Academy Cello Masterclasses.

Of Bulgarian-Chinese heritage, Zlatomir Fung began playing cello at age three. Fung studied at The Juilliard School under the tutelage of Richard Aaron and Timothy Eddy. Fung has been featured on NPR's Performance Today and has appeared on From the Top six times. In addition to music, he enjoys cinema, reading, and blitz chess.

BENJAMIN HOCHMAN

In all roles, from soloist to chamber musician to conductor, Benjamin Hochman regards music as vital and essential. Composers, fellow musicians, orchestras and audiences recognize his deep commitment to insightful programming and performances of quality. Highlights of 2022-2023 include Beethoven's last three Piano Sonatas at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Schubert's Trout Quintet at the Schubertiade Festival in Austria with the Emerson String Quartet and Dominik Wagner, and performances with cellist Zlatomir Fung at Wigmore Hall, London and across North America. He will conduct Beethoven and Schumann with the Greater Bridgeport Symphony in Connecticut and Kurtág at Bard New York.

Born in Jerusalem in 1980, Hochman's musical foundation was laid in his teenage years. Frank at the Curtis Institute of Music and Goode at the Mannes School of Music proved defining influences. At the invitation of Uchida, he spent three formative summers at the Marlboro Music Festival. At 24, Hochman debuted as soloist with the Israel Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall conducted by Zukerman. Orchestral appearances followed with the New York Philharmonic, Chicago and Pittsburgh Symphonies, and Prague Philharmonia under conductors including Nosedá, Pinnock, Robertson, and Storgårds.

A winner of Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Career Grant, Hochman performs at venues and festivals across the globe, including the Philharmonie in Berlin, Vienna Konzerthaus, the Kennedy Center in Washington, Suntory Hall in Tokyo, Germany's Klavierfestival Ruhr and Lucerne and Verbier festivals in Switzerland. In 2015, Hochman developed an auto-immune condition affecting his left hand. He decided to pursue his longstanding interest in conducting, studying with Gilbert at Juilliard where he was granted the Bruno Walter Scholarship and the Charles Schiff Award. He assisted Langrée, Järvi, and De Waart and created the Roosevelt Island Orchestra, consisting of some of New York's finest orchestral and chamber musicians alongside promising young talent from top conservatories.

Invitations to conduct the orchestras of Santa Fe Pro Musica, Orlando, and The Orchestra Now at Bard New York followed. Fully recovered, Hochman re-emerged as pianist in 2018. He recorded Mozart Piano Concertos Nos. 17 and 24, playing and directing the English Chamber Orchestra (Avie Records). He presented the complete Mozart Piano Sonatas at the Israel Conservatory in Tel Aviv, performed Beethoven sonatas for Barenboim as part of a filmed workshop at the Pierre Boulez Saal in Berlin and played both Beethoven and Kurtág for Kurtág himself at the Budapest Music Centre.

Hochman is a Steinway Artist and a resident of Berlin, where he is a Lecturer at Bard College Berlin.

