

— FESTIVAL —
MOZAIC



**CHAMBER
MUSIC**
WITH
**SOPHIE
SHAO**

Carmit Zori
Violin

Amy I-Lin Cheng
Piano

October 26, 2025
3:00 PM

Harold J. Miossi CPAC,
Cuesta College



Mercedes-Benz
OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
OFFICIAL AUTO

PROGRAM

ELENA RUEHR (b. 1963)

Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 2 (2024) [California Premiere]

Intense
Floating
Energetic

Sophie Shao, cello
Amy I-Lin Cheng, piano

CHARLES IVES (1874–1954)

Piano Trio, S. 86 (1909–1910; rev. 1914–1915)

Moderato
TSIAJ ["This Scherzo Is A Joke"]: *Presto*
Moderato con moto

Amy I-Lin Cheng, piano
Carmit Zori, violin
Sophie Shao, cello

INTERMISSION

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904)

Piano Trio No. 3 in F minor, op. 65, B130 (1883)

Allegro ma non troppo
Allegretto grazioso
Poco adagio
Finale: Allegro con brio

Amy I-Lin Cheng, piano
Carmit Zori, violin
Sophie Shao, cello



Festival Mozaic's
2025 Artist-in-Residence
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PROGRAM NOTES

ELENA RUEHR (b. 1963)

Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 2 (2024)



As a composer, I am interested in narrative and expressing emotion in sound. One of the things that is on my mind lately is the anxiety we feel about our changing planet. It seems to me that we are in a constant state of cognitive dissonance—we know that our use of airplanes, cars, heat, plastic, etc are endangering our future, but we have no choice but to live our lives in the way the world works. In my Second Cello Sonata,

I express that experience with the cello acting as the main character in a journey, reacting and interacting with the environment that the piano creates. Although anxiety is one of the primary emotions of the piece, it is interspersed with the joy and comfort we find in the natural world as well as hope.

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CHARLES IVES (1874–1954)

Piano Trio, S. 86 (1909–1910; rev. 1914–1915)



There are two types of cooks in the world. Some follow a recipe exactly as written every time, knowing that the result will consistently be tasty. Others look at the recipe and ask, "What would happen if I substituted X? Or doubled the amount of Y? Or used a frying pan instead of the oven?" Sometimes those experiments produce very palatable results, and sometimes the products are, well, interesting.

Musically speaking, Charles Ives and his father George were the latter types of cooks. A resident of their hometown recalled an occasion when George Ives (a bandmaster) arranged for two bands to march through Danbury at the same time, simply to hear the effect as their different tunes clashed. Understandably, young Charles grew up questioning the status quo of music, continually experimenting with various approaches to sound.

Several different strategies are illustrated in Ives's Trio for Violin, Violoncello, and Piano. In fact, although the work is labeled as a "trio," it might be better to think of the first movement as a quartet. At first, we hear only the cello and the piano's treble clef (the right hand's territory), followed by solely the violin and the piano's bass clef, or left hand. Then, the duets are both repeated, with all four layers at last coinciding. The middle movement launches Ives's trip down memory lane, revisiting the chaotic music of his college years in an often-frenzied collage that George would have appreciated. The finale is a more mystical exploration of harmony, depicting an increasingly impassioned Sunday sermon, interlaced with quotations of "Rock of Ages."

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904)

Piano Trio No. 3 in F minor, op. 65, B130 (1883)



We live in polarized times—but we are not the first to do so. Politics played a role in Dvořák's approach to his Piano Trio No. 3 in F minor. After being "discovered" by Johannes Brahms—who used his influence to ensure that the Czech composer was supported by a series of Austrian state subsidies—Dvořák had enchanted German-speaking lands with his Bohemian-flavored music. The sales of his *Slavonic Dances* of

1878 alone were enough to lift him out of poverty, and other folk-inspired pieces also made him a household name.

Still, by the early 1880s, a wave of anti-Slav sentiment was sweeping through Austria. Therefore, on his subsequent sheet music, Dvořák asked his publisher to print his name as "Ant. Dvořák," thereby avoiding the Czech "Antonín" spelling as well as the German "Anton." Moreover, the publisher urged him to write in a more Germanic (i.e., Brahmsian) style, since critics were questioning if Dvořák were capable of handling grandiose, dramatic material. And, alas, there was a third reason to turn away from his previous light-hearted approach: his mother had died in December 1882.

All of these factors seem to have impacted the piano trio. Dvořák labored over it much longer—and revised it more extensively—than was his custom. The trio clearly shows the effects of the careful craftsmanship, and despite the expansive scope of the first movement, Dvořák was able to sustain its intensity. The second movement is a bit of a whimsical respite, but the *Adagio* is gently melancholy. The finale's fiery verve includes rhythmic shifts to keep us on our toes during the build-up to the impetuous ending.

SOPHIE SHAO | Cello

2025 ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE 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. Shao holds degrees from the Curtis Institute and the Yale School of Music.

Learn more at sophieshao.com



CARMIT ZORI | Violin



Violinist Carmit Zori came to the U.S. from Israel at fifteen to study at the Curtis Institute with Ivan Galamian, Jaime Laredo and Arnold Steinhardt. Winner of the Levintritt and Pro Musicis International Awards and 1984 Naumburg Violin Competition, she has per-

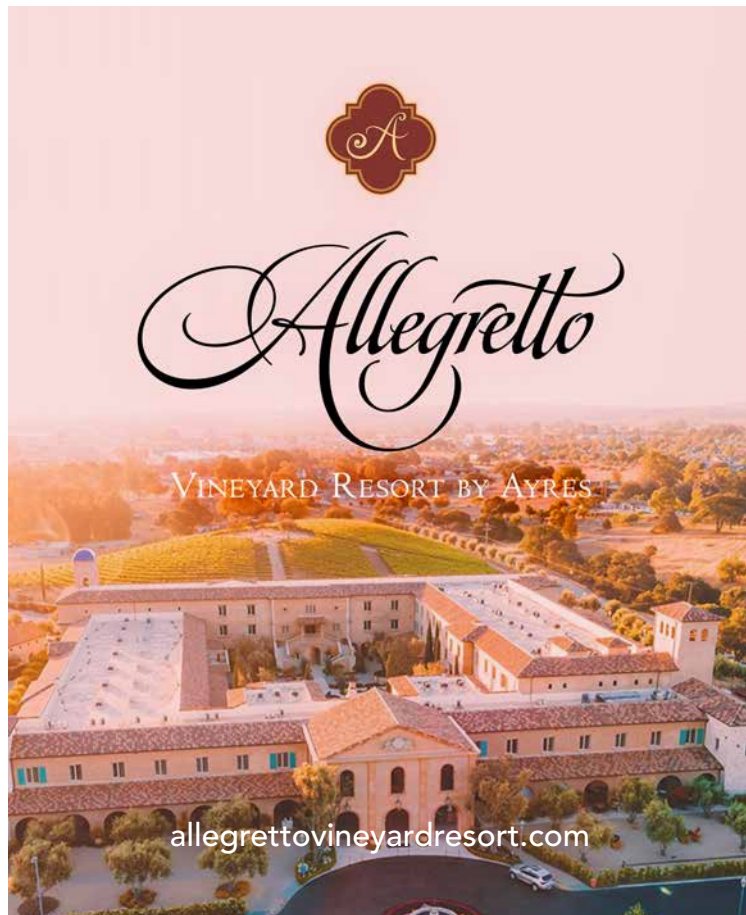
formed as soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra and the New York and Rochester Philharmonics. She has performed recitals at Lincoln Center, LACMA, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the Philips Collection, and the Jerusalem Center for the Performing Arts. As a chamber musician, she performs frequently with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and at many chamber music festivals including Marlboro, Casals, Bridgehampton, Northwest, Santa Fe, Seattle, Cape Cod, Peasmarsh, and Orcas Island. She founded and directs the Brooklyn Chamber Music Society and teaches at Bard College and Rutgers University.

AMY I-LIN CHENG | Piano



Born in Taiwan, pianist Amy I-Lin Cheng has performed in recitals and festivals across the U.S. and internationally, with broadcasts on WGBH, KUCCO, WHYY, La Radio Suisse Romande-Espace 2, and NPR Houston. She has recorded for Centaur, Albany, CDBaby, and

Naxos, including a recent release of Vítězslava Kaprálová’s Piano Concerto, which she premiered in North America at Hill Auditorium in 2015. Other premieres include Daniel Rein’s *Improvisation on Misirlou* (U.S., 2017) and Chun-Da Huang’s Double Concerto for Yang Qin and Piano (world premiere, 2019). A dedicated chamber musician, Amy is Co-Artistic Director of Brightmusic and tours with Trio Solari and the American Chamber Players. She holds degrees from the Curtis Institute, Yale, and the New England Conservatory, and is an Assistant Professor of Piano and Chamber Music at the University of Michigan.



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