

THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE, AND DANCE PRESENTS

VIRTUOSO SERIES CONCERT



CSU MUSIC FACULTY

# LA SOIRÉE DES SONATES DE DEBUSSY

ZO MANFREDI, Violin | STEVEN PHILLIPS, Viola | MEREDITH BLECHA-WELLS, Cello  
KATHRYN HARMS, Harp | YSMAEL REYES, Flute | HSIN-HSUAN LIN and JOOYEON CHANG, Piano

October 23, 2024 | 7:30 p.m. | Organ Recital Hall



COLORADO STATE  
UNIVERSITY



***La Soirée des Sonates de Debussy (1862-1918)***

**Sonata for Cello and Piano in D minor, L. 135 (1915)**

- I. Prologue: Lent, sostenuto e molto risoluto
- II. Sérénade: Modérément animé
- III. Finale: Animé, léger et nerveux

Meredith Blecha-Wells, Cello  
Jooyeon Chang, Piano

**Sonata for Violin and Piano in G minor, L. 140 (1917)**

- I. Allegro vivo
- II. Intermède: Fantasque et léger
- III. Finale: Très animé

Zo Manfredi, Violin  
Hsin-Hsuan Lin, Piano

**Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp, L. 137 (1915)**

- I. Pastorale: Lento, dolce rubato
- II. Interlude: Tempo di Minuetto
- III. Finale: Allegro moderato ma risoluto

Ysmael Reyes, Flute  
Phillip Stevens, Viola  
Kathryn Harms, Harp

## PROGRAM NOTES BY JOOYEON CHANG

Claude Debussy (1862-1918), one of the most innovative composers of the 20th century, revolutionized music with his groundbreaking approach to harmony, texture, and form. Despite the turmoil of World War I and his battle with terminal illness, Debussy embarked on a series of six sonatas during the final years of his life. Although he completed only three before his passing, these works, composed between 1915 and 1917, encapsulate his mature style, blending classical traditions with a fresh, personal voice.

Tonight, we explore these final three sonatas, each presenting a unique sonic world.

### **Sonata for Cello and Piano in D minor, L. 135 (1915)**

Duration: 12 minutes

The *Sonata for Cello and Piano in D minor, L. 135*, composed in 1915, is both introspective and playful, showcasing Debussy's ability to merge lyricism with dramatic flair. The first movement, Prologue: Lent, sostenuto e molto risoluto, begins with a solemn and expansive cello melody, establishing a serious tone. The dialogue between the cello and piano is almost conversational, creating tension that resolves into moments of lyrical beauty. The Sérénade: Modérément animé follows with a surprising contrast, featuring pizzicato cello that evokes a whimsical, guitar-like texture. Debussy's playful side emerges as the movement dances with unexpected rhythms and light-hearted gestures. The Finale: Animé bursts with energy, offering a fast-paced dialogue between the cello and piano filled with rhythmic drive and wit, concluding the sonata with a lively, exuberant spirit.

### **Sonata for Violin and Piano in G minor, L. 140 (1915)**

Duration: 14 minutes

The *Sonata for Violin and Piano in G minor*, Debussy's last composition, was written in 1917 during the final years of his life. Despite the shadow of illness, this sonata pulses with life, warmth, and emotional depth. It unfolds in three distinct movements, each highlighting different facets of Debussy's expressive range. The first movement, Allegro vivo, features a spirited dialogue between the violin and piano, marked by intense contrasts and tender moments. The second movement, Intermède: Fantasque et léger, introduces a lighter, more playful character with whimsical and delicate interactions between the instruments. The third movement, Finale: Très animé, bursts with energy and rhythmic excitement, propelling the music toward a thrilling and vibrant conclusion that reflects Debussy's innovative spirit and departure from classical conventions.

## **Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp, L. 137 (1915)**

Duration: 19 minutes

The *Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp* is perhaps the most experimental of the three, creating a magical soundscape through its unusual combination of instruments. The first movement, *Pastorale: Lento, dolce rubato*, evokes an idyllic, pastoral setting where the flute's gentle melody floats over the warm harmonies of the viola and the shimmering tones of the harp, crafting a tranquil, otherworldly atmosphere. The second movement, *Interlude: Tempo di minuetto*, presents a playful and graceful dance with moments of tension; the intricate interplay among the instruments showcases Debussy's mastery of texture and his ability to blend classical charm with modern sensibilities. The *Finale: Allegro moderato ma risoluto* is assertive and resolute, with each instrument contributing to a rich tapestry of sound. The music builds momentum and contrast, moving toward a serene but confident conclusion.

Through these sonatas, Debussy crafts a musical journey that reflects his lifelong quest to push boundaries, explore new colors, and express profound emotion. Even in his final years, his creativity shone brightly, leaving us with works that continue to inspire and captivate. We hope tonight's performance allows you to connect with the enduring beauty of Debussy's final masterpieces.



Praised for her “beautifully full and lyrically strong tone” by *Gramophone Magazine*, **MEREDITH BLECHA-WELLS** is a sought-after performer and instructor. She has played throughout much of the United States, as well as Europe, Australia, South America, and Asia. Currently based in Colorado, Dr. Blecha-Wells recently joined the faculty at Colorado State University.

As a recording artist, Dr. Blecha-Wells has released several CDs spanning the solo, chamber music, and orchestral space. Her solo album was described as “technically dazzling” (*the Whole Note*) and she was praised for her “lyrical warmth and her powerful athleticism” (*Classical Music Discoveries*). Dr. Blecha-Wells recordings can be found on labels including Naxos, Navona, and Onyx Lane Productions and broadcast on numerous radio stations such as WFMT (Chicago, IL), WMBR (Cambridge, MA), KALX (Berkeley, CA), WRUV (Burlington, VT), WCNY (Syracuse, NY), KUCO (Edmond, OK), among others.

Dr. Blecha-Wells previously served as the Professor of Cello at Oklahoma State University where she was awarded the College of Arts and Sciences Junior Faculty Award for Scholarly Excellence as well as the First Lady of OSU Distinguished Music Professor award. A passionate pedagogue, Dr. Blecha-Wells is committed to raising the efficiency and joy in learning. Her students have gone on to remarkable programs including the Juilliard School, the New England Conservatory, the Eastman School of Music, Rice University, the University of Michigan, the Manhattan School of Music, the San Francisco Conservatory, Northwestern University, Indiana University, the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, the University of Southern California, DePaul University, and the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. Additionally, her students have won several competitions including the Classics Alive Artists, Enkor International Competition, American Protégé Competition, Ad Astra String Competition, MTNA, Hyeckka String Competition, among others. Dr. Blecha-Wells students have also been selected to participate in prestigious festivals including the National Youth Orchestra and the National Youth Orchestra 2, Aspen Music Festival, Brevard Music Festival, Eastern Music Festival, Green Mountain Music Festival, and several others.

Dr. Blecha-Wells received a bachelor's and master's degree in Cello Performance from Indiana University, studying under Janos Starker and Helga Winold. She also holds a Doctor of Musical Arts in Performance and Literature from the Eastman School of Music, where she served as the teaching assistant to Distinguished Professor Alan Harris. Additional studies include festival participation at the Taos School of Music, the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, Spoleto Festival USA, the National Repertory Orchestra, and the Bowdoin International Music Festival.



**DR. JOOYEON CHANG** is an accomplished and passionate collaborative pianist whose career has taken her across Korea, France, the United Kingdom, Austria, Italy, Luxembourg, and the USA. Her rich international experience has broadened her repertoire and deepened her artistry, allowing her to collaborate with and coach a diverse range of soloists, chamber musicians, and ensembles.

She has performed alongside world-renowned brass musicians, including tuba virtuosos Øystein Baadsvik and Roland Szentpali, as well as euphonium legend Steven Mead. Dr. Chang has also worked with distinguished clarinetist Mark Nuccio and horn player Katy Woolley, bringing her expertise to numerous performances at universities throughout the U.S., including the University of Arkansas, University of Central Arkansas, Duquesne University, Sam Houston State University, and Texas A&M International University.

Dr. Chang's festival experience is extensive and international in scope. She serves as the official pianist for the Jeju International Wind Ensemble Festival, Chœur de l'Orchestre de Paris, and has been a guest accompanist for Musique de l'Armée de l'Air de Paris. Her notable appearances include performances at the 2012 International Tuba Euphonium Conference (ITEC) in Linz, Austria, and ClarinetFest 2023 in Colorado, USA. She is also a frequent performer at prestigious events such as the International Horn Symposium (IHS 56), the International Keyboard Odysiad® & Festival (IKOF), and the Colorado Kodály Institute.

Currently on the faculty at Colorado State University, Dr. Chang teaches piano classes and coaches chamber music. She collaborates regularly with her duo partners Sarah Hetrick (Duo Oenomel) and Hsin-Hsuan Lin (The Piano Duo Lin and Chang), presenting diverse programs to wide-ranging audiences. Dedicated to fostering musical growth, she works closely with students, faculty, and guest artists, creating a vibrant and supportive environment for musical exploration.

Beyond her teaching and performing roles, Dr. Chang actively engages with the broader community, organizing and performing in various concerts and events. Her dedication to music education and outreach is evident in her tireless efforts to bring high-quality musical experiences to students and audiences alike.



Harpist **KATHRYN HARMS** is in demand as an orchestral musician, chamber collaborator, and pedagogue throughout the western region of the US. Based in Boulder, she maintains a thriving private harp studio with a focus on collaborative learning opportunities for youth harpists. In addition to teaching harp at Colorado State University, she is the director of the newly created Colorado Harp Seminar—a week-intensive summer program for high school and undergraduate pedal harpists with a focus on wellness.

Recent performance highlights include playing principal harp for the 2024 Central City Opera season and various performances as second harp or substitute principal with the Colorado Symphony. She holds the principal harp position of the Colorado Mahlerfest Orchestra and has previously held an acting principal position with the New Mexico Philharmonic. For more information about Kathryn Harms, visit [www.KathrynHarms.com](http://www.KathrynHarms.com).



**DR. HSIN-HSUAN LIN**, a native of Taiwan, is a versatile pianist with a rich background in chamber music and large ensemble performance. Her diverse repertoire spans winds, strings, opera, choirs, bands, and symphonies, reflecting her deep commitment to collaborative music-making.

Lin's journey as a collaborative pianist began at the age of twelve, when she worked with the choir at Pace Institute in Taiwan. This early experience sparked her passion for making music with others. During her undergraduate and graduate studies, she frequently performed with her colleagues and served as the choir pianist and rehearsal pianist for Verdi's *Falstaff* at TungHai University, working closely with the voice faculty.

Her artistry has been featured at numerous festivals and competitions, including the Castleman Quartet Program, Texas String Camp and Festival, Longhorn Music Camp, and the Austin University Interscholastic League Contests, as well as many regional competitions. Recent performances include two piano duo recitals, concerts with the Fort Collins Symphony, and collaborations with renowned clarinetists Alan Kay and Wenzel Fuchs.

Dr. Lin's international presence has continued to grow through her participation in major events such as ClarinetFest 2023 in Colorado, the 2024 International Horn Symposium (IHS 56), and the International Keyboard Odyssiad® & Festival (IKOF). She also actively contributes to her local community through service to local churches and other outreach initiatives.

Lin regularly performs as The Piano Duo Lin and Chang alongside her duo partner, Dr. Jooyeon Chang. Together, they offer captivating and versatile performances that highlight their shared artistry and deep musical connection.

Dr. Lin holds degrees in piano performance and collaborative piano from TungHai University in Taichung, Taiwan, and the University of Texas at Austin, where she studied with Min-Hwa Chen, Gregory Allen, Anne Epperson, and Colette Valentine. A full scholarship recipient and former teaching assistant during her time in Austin, she now serves as an instructor of collaborative piano at Colorado State University, inspiring students and fostering collaboration with faculty and guest artists.



**ZO MANFREDI** is a performer and teacher in Northern Colorado. Dr. Manfredi has served as Instructor of Violin and Chamber Music at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, and has formerly held the positions of Teaching Artist of Violin and Viola at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, and Assistant Music Associate of Violin at Grinnell College. Dr. Manfredi currently runs her private violin and viola studio, ZHM Violin Studio in Loveland, Colorado and enjoys playing with Greeley Philharmonic Orchestra, Fort Collins Symphony, Quartet Con Brio, and a variety of chamber ensembles along the Front Range. She has also held positions within the violin sections of the Quad Cities Symphony Orchestra, the Abilene Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Des Moines Symphony.

During the summers, Dr. Manfredi directs the Just Chamber Music Festival in Fort Collins, Colorado and has served on the faculties of the Red Lodge Music Festival, the David Adler Center for the Arts Chamber Music Camp and as guest artist with the Cedar Valley Chamber Music Festival.

In August 2015, Dr. Manfredi received her Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of North Texas under the direction of renowned pedagogue, Julia Bushkova, where she was awarded both a Teaching Fellowship and Teaching Assistantship. She earned her M.M. at Arizona State University and her B.M. from the University of Puget Sound. Dr. Manfredi is currently receiving her Till Method Pedagogy Certificate with Sophie Till- a pedagogical approach to playing that uses the physical logic we already use within daily activities as a foundation for healthy, career-sustaining technique. More information on the Till Approach can be found at <https://www.tillproject.com/>.

Dr. Manfredi is originally from Billings, Montana and currently resides in Loveland, Colorado with her husband Matt, their daughter Louisa, and their son Jack. She enjoys spending time outdoors and in the mountains with friends and family hiking, biking and running.



Praised for his “agility, speed...liquid phrasing and tonal sophistication” (*Fanfare Magazine*) Venezuelan flutist **YSMAEL REYES** enjoys a varied career as a soloist, orchestral player, and teacher. Mr. Reyes has performed in the United States, Russia and throughout South America.

Formed in Venezuela’s System of Youth Orchestras, Mr. Reyes has been a prize winner in the First Latin American Flute Competition, the National Flute Association Convention Performers Competition, and the Bruce Ekstrand Memorial Competition at the University of Colorado. His first album *Incanto: Venezuelan Contemporary Music* was released in 2013 by Clear Note Records.

Mr. Reyes serves as Principal Flute with the Colorado Bach Ensemble and the Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra. He also performs with the Bach Society Houston and Boulder Bach Festival. He has been featured as a soloist with orchestras in Venezuela, the U.S. and Brazil on concertos by Khachaturian, Nielsen, Rodrigo, Mozart, J.S. Bach, C.P.E. Bach, Vivaldi, Márquez, Chaminade and Chin. Mr. Reyes is frequently invited as a guest artist, clinician and adjudicator in festivals in the U.S. and abroad such as the International Flute Festival in Venezuela, Flautas Gerais in Brazil, the Brownsville Flute Festival in Texas, the Albuquerque Flute Association’s Flute Fiesta, the Colorado Mesa University Flute Day, and the Colorado Flute Association’s Flute Fair.

An exceptionally versatile flutist, Mr. Reyes is an avid performer of new music, as well as an accomplished baroque flute player, and frequently records and performs with Latin music bands and World Music ensembles. Mr. Reyes, has premiered compositions by renowned composers in the U.S. and Venezuela. In 2013 he performed the world premiere of the flute concerto “In the form of a shell” by Costa Rican composer Pablo Chin, commissioned especially for him and the Claremont Concert Orchestra in California. Mr. Reyes performs regularly on the baroque flute with the Boulder Bach Festival Ensemble and the Bach Society Houston.

Mr. Reyes currently teaches flute and chamber music at Colorado State University and was previously on the faculty at Regis University in Denver. Mr. Reyes holds degrees from the University of the Arts in Caracas, Venezuela, the University of Iowa, and the University of Colorado.



**PHILLIP STEVENS**, violist, has been a member of the Colorado Symphony since 1996 and is currently Affiliate Professor of Viola at Metropolitan State University of Denver. Phillip teaches privately, and is active in educating youth through the programs of the Colorado Symphony, Friends of Chamber Music, and Englewood Arts.

Phillip began his musical education in his hometown of Kansas City, Missouri. While completing his Bachelor's degree at the University of Michigan studying with Yizhak Schotten, he won first prize in the Viola division of the 1994 National ASTA Music Competition. He continued his formal education at Northwestern University, where he received his Master's degree studying under Peter Slowik. Phillip spent many summers attending the Aspen Music Festival and performing as a member of the Grant Park Symphony Orchestra.

Chamber music has always been an important part of Phillip's career, being a founding member of the Sheridan Chamber Players in Chicago, and more recently as a member of the Ivy Street Ensemble in Denver. In addition to the busy concert schedule, CD recordings, and radio broadcasts, he has participated in the Chintimini Chamber Music Festival in Corvallis, Oregon, and the Off the Hook Arts Summerfest in Ft. Collins, CO, including performances with the Miami String Quartet.

Phillip currently serves as an artistic director of the Chamber Music at the Mansion series at the Highlands Ranch Mansion, and performs regularly with the Lone Tree Arts Center, the Front Range Chamber Players, and the Grand Teton Music Festival. Additionally, he has been featured in recital at the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall as part of the DCINY Distinguished Concert Artist Series.

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