

## ANAM RECITAL: MAX WUNG (CELLO) The evolution of the cello sonata

MONDAY 11 NOVEMBER 1.30PM  
ROSINA AUDITORIUM, ABBOTSFORD CONVENT

- Johannes BRAHMS (1833-1897)** Cello Sonata No. 2 in F Major, op. 99 (1886) 26'  
*i. Allegro vivace*  
*ii. Adagio affettuoso*  
*iii. Allegro passionato*  
*iv. Allegro molto*
- Ludwig van BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)** Cello Sonata No. 4 in C Major, op. 102 no. 1 (1812-17) 15'  
*i. Andante – Allegro vivace*  
*ii. Adagio – Tempo d'Andante*
- György LIGETI (1923-2006)** Sonata for Solo Cello (1948-1953) 8'  
*i. Dialogo*  
*ii. Capriccio*

**Max Wung** (WA) cello  
**Louisa Breen** (ANAM Associate Faculty) piano

*Approximate duration: 60 minutes*

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### ABOUT MAX WUNG

Max commenced his studies at ANAM in 2024 under the tutelage of Howard Penny after graduating in 2023 with a Music Degree from the University of Western Australia. Previously, he studied with Suzanne Wijsman, Rod McGrath and Xiaole Wu. He has attained distinctions in the AMEB Associate and Licentiate Music Diploma exams. Max has a passion for both solo and chamber music and is interested in a diverse repertoire spanning Baroque to Romantic to Contemporary works. Find out more at [anam.com.au/musicians](http://anam.com.au/musicians)

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*Max is supported by ANAM Syndicate donors Janet Matton AM and Robin Rowe, the Darin-Cooper Foundation, Anonymous.*

*Max plays a Pierre Guillaume cello bow, generously on loan to ANAM from Jannie Brown.*

*Louisa Breen's Associate Faculty position is generously supported by Igor Zambelli.*



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## PROGRAM NOTES

**Johannes Brahms'** second cello sonata was composed in 1886 during a summer vacation in the town of Hofstetten near Lake Thun, Switzerland. This was during a period of Brahms' life where he felt inspired by the natural beauty of the world around him, and he completed several important works, including his second violin sonata and third piano trio. The cello sonata reflects the maturity of Brahms' later years, illustrating the depth of his musical insight and evolution. One can hear the inspiration Brahms found in the gorgeous lakes, sprawling greenery and vast mountains of Switzerland. This sonata radiates warmth as well as drama, showcasing Brahms' expertise in chamber music writing. The first movement, with broad sweeping gestures, passionate exchanges with the piano, and deeply expressive melodies, creates a sense of majestic grandeur. The second movement has a song-like quality, with lyrical and introspective themes which evoke more intimate and sweeter feelings. The third movement takes on the character of a scherzo, with its turbulent and urgent passion. The sonata ends with a vivacious finale, brimming with lively energy and dance-like rhythms. The wide range of emotions and soundscapes Brahms weaves makes this sonata so compelling to perform.

By 1815, **Ludwig van Beethoven** was entering the final period of his compositional life. His fourth cello sonata exemplifies this shift of his compositional style, displaying a bold new approach to form, harmonic language, and dialogue between instruments. Written for his friend Josef Linke, a distinguished cellist of the time, this sonata subverts the traditional sonata format into a two-movement structure. The sonata opens with an Andante introduction, where cello and piano exchange fragmented, lyrical lines. The conversation with the piano then transforms into a turbulent and energetic Allegro vivace. The second movement showcases a playful alternating between Adagio and Allegro vivace sections. The Adagio is poignant and calm which is juxtaposed with the energetic and assertive Allegro vivace.

**György Ligeti's** sonata for solo cello, composed between 1948 and 1953, is a groundbreaking work for cello that pushes the boundaries of musical expression capable on the instrument. This sonata explores new sonic soundscapes and challenges the performer with its virtuosic demands. The sonata comprises of two contrasting movements: the Dialogo and the Capriccio. In the Dialogo, the cello engages in a dialogue with itself, seamlessly shifting between two contrasting voices. The movement conveys an otherworldly, searching and yearning quality. In the second movement, Capriccio, Ligeti unleashes a whirlwind of manic energy, wildly juxtaposing the Dialogo. The lightning-fast moto perpetual passages, spiccato bowing and large leaps propel the music forward with a sense of urgency. Ligeti's full use of the cello's dynamic and note range creates a sense of controlled chaos, again pushing the boundaries of cello technique and playing.

This recital program presents a journey through three distinct eras and sound worlds. Brahms offers rich, heartfelt Romanticism, Beethoven pushes Classical boundaries, and Ligeti embraces modernist experimentation. Each of these works challenges the conventional role of the cello, and together, they showcase the instrument's full expressive range.

*Written by Max Wung*