DePaul University
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Friday, November 14, 2025 • 7:00 PM

Ramida Nivasnanda

Senior Recital

Murray and Michele Allen Recital Hall
2330 North Halsted Street • Chicago

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Allen **Recital Hall**

Ramida Nivasnanda, cello

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Program

Lili Boulanger (1893-1918); arr. Paul R. van der Reijden
2 Pieces for Violin and Piano (1911)
I. Nocturne

Lleyton Choyna, piano

Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)
Quartet for the End of Time (1940-1941)
V. Louange à l'Éternité de Jésus

Lleyton Choyna, piano

György Ligeti (1923-2006)
Sonata for Solo Cello (1948-1953)
I. Dialogo
II. Capriccio

- Intermission -

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)
Sonata in G Minor for Cello and Piano, Op. 19 (1901)
I. Lento – Allegro moderato
II. Allegro scherzando
III. Andante
IV. Allegro mosso

Sun Chang, piano

Ramida Nivasnanda is from the studio of Melissa Kraut. This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the degree Bachelor of Music.

As a courtesy to those around you, please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices. Flash photography is not permitted.

Program Notes

Lili Boulanger (1893-1918); arr. Paul R. van der Reijden
2 Pieces for Violin and Piano (1911)
Duration: 3 minutes
Born into a family of highly skilled musicians, Lili Boulanger's gift for music was identified at an early age with the help of Gabriel Fauré, who later became one of her teachers. However, Boulanger's life was laden with chronic illness; bronchitis at the age of two left her severely immunocompromised, and tuberculosis tragically cut her life short at 24. Factoring this and the death of her father in 1900, much of Boulanger's music touches upon her experience with depression and solitude—"Nocturne," one of her earliest pieces, is no different. Dedicated to her friend Marie-Danielle Parenteau, "Nocturne" was originally scored for violin (or flute) and piano in 1911. It later became paired with another short piece Boulanger wrote in 1914, "Cortège." These two pieces premiered on December 17, 1915, at the Petit Palais des Champs-Élysées with violinist Émile Mendels and Boulanger on piano.

Beginning with a simplicity that perhaps captures the stillness of the night, "Nocturne" soon becomes elusive and intense before settling towards calm again. Employing harmonies and textures that are hallmarks of French Impressionism, it was clear that Fauré and Debussy had an influence on Boulanger's compositional style. Debussy aficionados may even hear her quotation of *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* towards the end of the piece.

Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)
Quartet for the End of Time (1940-1941)
Duration: 8 minutes
When France entered World War II, Olivier Messiaen was drafted as a medical auxiliary. He was captured by the German army in 1940 and was held at a prisoner-of-war camp in Görlitz, Germany (now Zgorzelec, Poland). Among his fellow prisoners were clarinetist Henri Akoka, violinist Jean le Boulaire, and cellist Étienne Pasquier. After acquiring paper and pencil from a sympathetic guard, the eight movements of Quartet for the End of Time were conceived. With Messiaen on piano, the first performance of the Quartet took place at the camp on January 15, 1941, in front of 400 prisoners and guards. As a devout Catholic, Messiaen's faith is imbued in his pieces—the Quartet's title was named after the Angel of the Apocalypse, who claimed, "There will be no more Time." Compositionally, Messiaen also emancipated time in this piece; his rhythms did not display equal divisions that are typical of traditional music.

"Louange à l'Éternité de Jésus" (Praise to the Eternity of Jesus) derives from one of Messiaen's earlier compositions: *Fête des belles eaux* (Festival of the beautiful waters), a suite from 1936. Commissioned for the 1937 Paris Exposition, the eight-movement piece was scored for six Ondes Martenots, an early electronic instrument that is characterized by an eerie, ghostly sound. The fourth movement of this suite, L'eau (The water), possesses the same melodic material that is found in the fifth movement from Messiaen's Quartet. Arranged for cello and piano, the composer writes that in this movement, "Jesus is considered as one with the Word," and that the cello's phrase—long, ever-growing, and infinitely slow—"expatiates with love and reverence the everlastingness of the Word, mighty and dulcet."

György Ligeti (1923-2006)
Sonata for Solo Cello (1948/1953)
Duration: 10 minutes
A leading figure of contemporary classical music, Hungarian composer György Ligeti was born into a Jewish family, but grew up under both Nazi and Soviet regimes. With dictatorships that had a vehement hatred for all things Modernist in art, Ligeti's knowledge of contemporary musical developments was restricted; his passion for the avant-garde only came into realization after he fled Hungary in 1956. As a result, Ligeti freely acknowledged that his pre-1956 compositions were highly influenced by Nationalist composers Zoltán Kodály and Béla Bartók.

The first movement of the Sonata was written during Ligeti's time at the National Academy of Music in Budapest. In 1948, Ligeti became secretly infatuated with cello student Annus Virány; for her, he wrote the Dialogo. Tender and delicate, the movement is a conversation for one instrument, with the lower and upper registers of the cello representing the voice of a man and a woman. Virány, unaware of Ligeti's feelings, thanked him for the piece, but never performed it. Then, in 1953, Ligei met another cellist: Vera Dénes. Dénes requested a solo cello piece from Ligeti, so he composed the Capriccio, which starkly contrasts the Dialogo. Unrelenting, aggressive, and exuberant in character, the second movement is a reference to Nicolò Paganini's Caprices for Solo Violin. However, the composition was subjected to the Hungarian Composers' Union, and the second movement was deemed too "modern." As a result, performance and publication rights were denied, and the piece was only allowed a single radio performance by Dénes, which was never ultimately broadcasted. The piece did not receive its first concert performance until 1983 and was not published until 1990.

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)
Sonata in G Minor for Cello and Piano, Op. 19 (1901)
Duration: 35 minutes
Following the abject failure of his First Symphony's premiere in 1897, Rachmaninoff suffered a psychological breakdown that caused him to fall into a period of deep depression. Unable to write anything for three years, his family eventually sought psychiatric help from Dr. Nikolai Dahl. After undergoing successful hypnotherapy treatments, Rachmaninoff began to compose again. What emerged was the significantly lauded Second Piano Concerto in 1901. Now overflowing with confidence, his Sonata for Cello and Piano was composed shortly after. Dedicated to cellist Anatoliy Brandukov, the composer and Brandukov premiered what became his most beloved—and his last—chamber piece on December 2, 1901, in Moscow.

The incredibly expansive Sonata is brimmed with features characteristic of Russia's Romantic era. After the beginning's hushed two-note statement, the cello introduces a dreamy melodic line, however it is soon juxtaposed by an uneasy drive from the piano. The agitated energy continues in the second movement, though lyrical, soulful melodies are dispersed throughout. The third movement is especially poetic. Brief, nostalgic, and warm; the two instruments bask in a highly tender theme. The last movement marks the end of the Sonata's journey with a celebratory remark. Highly exultant in character, a brief moment of repose is heard towards the end before concluding the piece with an invigorating excitement.

Notes by Ramida Nivasnanda

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