LUKE SEVERN | EVAN FEIN

OVER UNDER

CELLO | PIANO

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LUKE SEVERN, CELLO | EVAN FEIN, PIANO

Evan FEIN: Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 2, Op. 28 (2020)

1 I. Serene, warm   9'35
2 II. Redemptive, resonant   8'21
3 III. Molto, scherzando   3'41
4 IV. Lively, playful   7'18

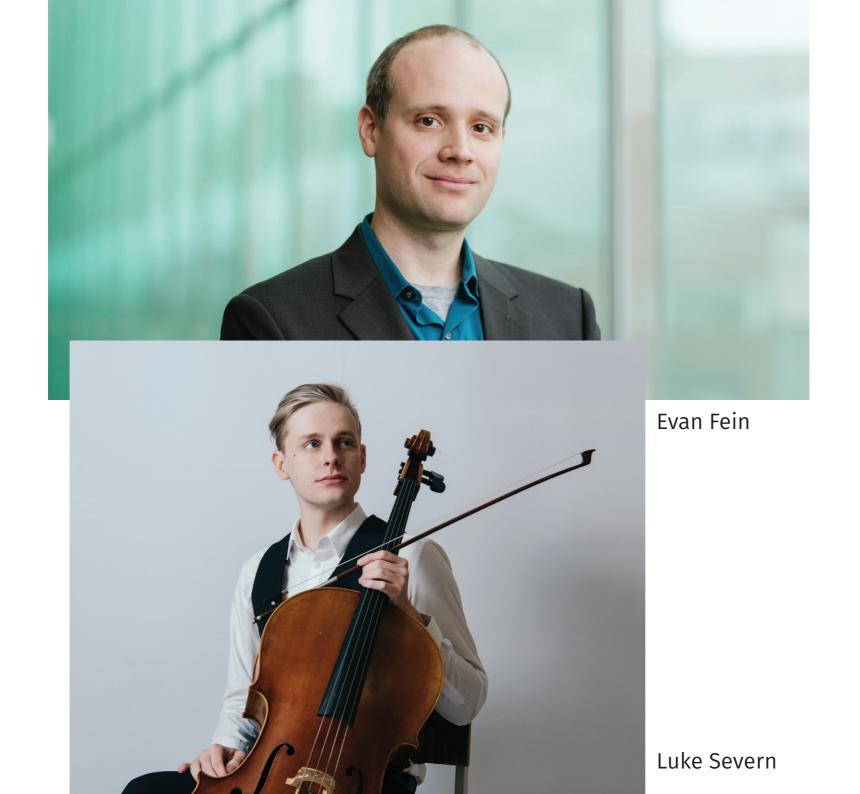**Johannes BRAHMS: Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 1 in E minor Op. 38**

5 I. Allegro non troppo   16'00
6 II. Allegretto quasi Menuetto   5'33
7 III. Allegro   7'01

Evan Fein

Luke Severn

Luke Severn

Conductor, Composer, and Concert Cellist Luke Severn possesses a musical voice of great versatility and passion. Noted for his expressive performances and dynamic and engaging personality he is emerging as an artistic tour de force in the Australian musical landscape.

Luke is currently the Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Bendigo Symphony Orchestra and Artistic Director of The Gisborne Singers with whom he has had the privilege of conducting some of Australia's top classical artists including Teddy Tahu Rhodes, Charlotte Miles, The Seraphim Trio and Merlyn Quaife AM. Recent conducting highlights include Beethoven's 9th Symphony, Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No.3 and a staged production of Purcell's opera, Dido and Aeneas, with the Gisborne Singers and the Macedon Ranges Chamber Orchestra. Also a champion of new composition and Australian works, he has conducted world premieres of works by Cally Barlett, Christopher Healey, Matan Franco and Elena Kats-Chernin.

As a soloist, Luke is a champion of both the standard concerto literature and new exciting works for cello and orchestra. In recent seasons he has performed as a soloist with The Monash Academy Orchestra, The Frankston Symphony Orchestra, The Essendon Symphony Orchestra, Monash Sinfonia and the Melbourne Sinfonia among others. In 2018 Luke gave the Australian Premiere of the Concerto for Cello and Strings (2008) by British-Bulgarian composer Dobrinka Tabakova.

Evan Fein

American composer Evan Fein was born in Cleveland, Ohio and currently resides in New York City, where he serves on the faculty of The Juilliard School Pre-College and Extension Divisions. His music has been performed by organizations including Musica Sacra, Opéra de Poche, The Albany Symphony, Marble City of Opera, Five Boroughs Music Festival, Juventas New Music Ensemble, and The New York Choreographic Institute. Evan was named winner of the American Prize for Composition in 2022, was awarded the 2014 Palmer Dixon Prize for Outstanding Composition, and is the recipient of honors from the ASCAP Foundation, Boston Metro Opera, and the American Scandinavian Society. He additionally serves as Trustee for Artistic Initiatives for the Oratorio Society of New York. He is the author of Inner Hearing, a sight singing method book published by Theodore Presser Company in 2020.

Career highlights include serving as Composer-in-Residence (Artiste Associé) for the Paris-based chamber opera troupe Opéra de Poche, a post he held from 2012-2020, and the premiere of his oratorio Deborah by Musica Sacra at Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center in 2016 under the direction of Kent Tritle. Also an accomplished collaborative pianist, he has performed throughout the USA, Australia and Iceland, and is also composer in residence at The Seven Hills Chamber Music Festival in Lynchburg, Virginia.

Evan Fein holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts and a Master of Music from The Juilliard School and a Bachelor of Music from the Cleveland Institute of Music. In addition, he pursued auxiliary studies at the Freie Universität Berlin (FUBiS) and L'École Normale de Musique de Paris (EAMA).

EVAN FEIN Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 2, Op. 28 (2020)

My Cello Sonata No. 2 was composed in *January 2020* in anticipation of an Australian tour with Luke Severn that was meant to take place that year. We had recently completed a number of recitals together in both Australia and North America featuring our own works, and it was my intention that this sonata capture the fun and dynamism of our collaboration, blending Severn's lyrical voice with my eclectic sense of humor.

The result is a sonata in four movements that moves freely between styles and moods and invokes some of the great cello and piano repertoire of the past. Thematically, our identities are also built into the work, a practice composers like Bach and Shostakovich occasionally indulged in: the main melodic motif features the notes E-F while the primary harmonic relationship features chord changes in tritones, reflective of Severn's initials L-S (La-Es, or A and E-flat in the solfège/German nomenclature systems).

The first movement is Brahmsian in scope, though with a contrasting playfulness. The second movement is a somber, defiant adagio. Following is breakneck, mercurial scherzo. A lively romp of a rondo concludes the work, revisiting and transforming the material from each of the previous movements before galloping to a finish.

hesitant, yet full of good nature. The finale embodies formality yielding to unapologetic exuberance; the fugato opening feigns a learned style which quickly dissolves into an elfin, nearly Mendelssohnian bravado, culminating in a sprint to the double bar.

This work is one of the most-frequently interpreted works in the chamber music literature, yet we dare to hope that some of our bolder musical decisions allow audiences to enjoy this beloved sonata in a new light.

DR. EVAN FEIN, 2022

JOHANNES BRAHMS Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 1 in E minor, Op. 38

Pairing this new sonata with Brahms's *Op. 38* seemed like a natural choice. A staple of the cello-piano repertoire, it was also the first major piece of chamber music we collaborated on and through which we got to know one another, both as people and as musicians. A number of parallels exist between the two works. The Brahms also begins with a brooding and expansive allegro, full of passion and contrast. This gives way to a quirky dance movement, heavy and