

# Midori, violin

## Robert McDonald, piano

Sunday, January 20, 2002, 3 pm  
Zellerbach Hall

### PROGRAM

Franz Liszt Valse-caprice No. 6, S. 42  
(arranged for violin and piano by David Oistrakh) (transcribed from Schubert's Soirées de Vienne)

Ludwig van Beethoven Sonata No. 7 in C minor, Op. 30, No. 2  
Allegro con brio  
Adagio cantabile  
Scherzo: Allegro  
Finale: Allegro

### INTERMISSION

Anton Webern Four Pieces, Op. 7 (1910)  
Sehr langsam  
Rasch  
Sehr langsam  
Bewegt

Richard Strauss Sonata in E-flat major, Op. 18  
Allegro ma non troppo  
Andante cantabile  
Andante: Allegro

Midori records exclusively for Sony Classical.

ICM Artists, Ltd., New York City  
Lee Lamont, chairman; David V. Foster, president and CEO

This performance by Midori is sponsored, in part, by Wendy and Mason Willrich.

Cal Performances thanks the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation  
and the Zellerbach Family Fund for their generous support.

Cal Performances receives additional funding from the National Endowment for the Arts,  
a federal agency that supports the visual, literary, and performing arts to benefit all Americans,  
and the California Arts Council, a state agency.

Valse-caprice No. 6, S. 42 (transcribed from Schubert's Soirées de Vienne)  
Franz Liszt (1811–1886)  
Arranged for Violin and Piano  
by David Oistrakh

“O tender, ever-welling genius! O beloved hero of the heaven of my youth! From your soul's depths and heights pour forth melody, freshness, power, grace, reverie, passion, soothing, tears, and flames; and such is the enchantment of your world of emotions that we almost forget the greatness of your craftsmanship! ... Our pianists are scarcely aware of what a glorious treasure they have in the works of Schubert.” Franz Liszt uttered these words of veneration at the

end of 1868, when he was editing a collection of Schubert's piano music for publication. Though knowledge of Schubert's incomparable worth was still surprisingly limited during much of the 19th century—the "Unfinished" Symphony had been heard for the first time only three years earlier—Liszt championed his music throughout his career. During the 1830s and 1840s, Liszt transcribed some 50 of Schubert's lieder for solo piano, including the complete song cycles *Schwanengesang* and *Winterreise*, and six of the songs from *Die Schöne Müllerin*. In 1852, he returned to Schubert's music to arrange nine of his piano waltzes as the *Soirées de Vienne* ("Viennese Evenings"). The present arrangement of the *Valse-caprice* No. 6 for violin and piano is by the famed Russian violinist David Oistrakh.

Sonata No. 7 in C minor, Op. 30, No. 2  
Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

In the summer of 1802, Beethoven's physician ordered him to leave Vienna and take rooms in Heiligenstadt, today a friendly suburb at the northern terminus of the city's subway system, but two centuries ago a quiet village with a view of the Danube across the river's rich flood plain. It was three years earlier, in 1799, that Beethoven first noticed a disturbing ringing and buzzing in his ears, and he sought medical attention for the problem soon thereafter. He tried numerous cures for his malady, as well as for his chronic colic, including oil of almonds, hot and cold baths, soaking in the Danube, pills, and herbs. For a short time he even considered the modish treatment of electric shock. On the advice of his latest doctor, Beethoven left the noisy city for the quiet countryside with the assurance that the lack of stimulation would be beneficial to his hearing and his general health.

In addition to the distress over his physical condition, Beethoven was also wounded in 1802 by the wreck of an affair of the heart. He had proposed marriage to Giulietta Guicciardi (the thought of Beethoven as a husband threatens the moorings of one's presence of mind!), but had been denied permission by the girl's father for the then perfectly valid reason that the young composer was without rank, position, or fortune. On October 6, 1802, following several months of wrestling with his misfortunes, Beethoven penned the most famous letter ever written by a musician—the "Heiligenstadt Testament." Intended as a will written to his brothers (it was never sent, though he kept it in his papers to be found after his death), it is a cry of despair over his fate, perhaps a necessary and self-induced soul-cleansing. "O Providence—grant me at last but one day of pure joy—it is so long since real joy echoed in my heart," he lamented. But—and this is the miracle—he not only poured his energy into self-pity, he also channeled it into music. "I shall grapple with fate; it shall never pull me down," he resolved. The next five years were the most productive he ever knew. The Symphonies Nos. 2–5, a dozen piano sonatas, the Piano Concerto No. 4 and the Triple Concerto, *Fidelio*, three violin and piano sonatas (Op. 30), many songs, chamber works, and keyboard compositions were all composed between 1802 and 1806.

The Op. 30 sonatas that Beethoven completed by the time he returned from Heiligenstadt to Vienna in the middle of October 1802 stand at the threshold of a new creative language, the dynamic and dramatic musical speech that characterizes the creations of his so-called "second period." The Sonata in C minor opens with a pregnant main theme, announced by the piano and echoed by the violin, which, according to Samuel Midgley, "is like a taut spring about to snap." The second theme is a tiny military march in dotted rhythms. The development section, which commences with bold slashing chords separated by silences (the exposition is not repeated), encompasses powerful mutations of the two principal themes. A full recapitulation and a large coda round out the movement. The Adagio is based on a hymnal melody presented first by the piano and reiterated by the violin. A passage in long notes for the violin above harmonically unsettled arpeggios in the keyboard constitutes the movement's central section. The Scherzo, with its rhythmic surprises and nimble figurations, presents a playful contrast to the surrounding movements. The Finale, which mixes elements of rondo (the frequent returns of the halting motive heard at the beginning) and sonata (the extensive development of the themes), renews the troubled mood of the opening movement.

Four Pieces, Op. 7 (1910)  
Anton Webern (1883–1945)

The compositions of Anton Webern are unique in the history of music: nowhere else is the essence of the art concentrated to such a high degree. The whole of his life's creative work—31 numbered compositions produced over almost four decades—takes less than three hours to perform and fits comfortably onto three compact discs (as does Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier*). The longest is the Cantata No. 2, Op. 31, which runs to 14 minutes. Only three others take more than ten minutes; the shortest is just two minutes. Since almost all of Webern's works contain more than a single movement, the individual spans of music are very short: the extreme example, No. 4 of the *Orchestral Pieces*, Op. 10, is just six measures long, and can be played in 20 seconds. As with all the performing arts, however, it is not simply the time that a piece takes but what happens during that time that is paramount, and Webern packed more musicality,

meaning, and peerless technical mastery into these tiny masterpieces than their durations would seem to allow. The English composer and critic Humphrey Searle wrote, “Webern can say more in two minutes than most other composers in ten.” Arnold Schoenberg allowed that Webern could express “a whole novel in a sigh.”

The aphoristic *Four Pieces for Violin and Piano*, Op. 7, were composed during the summer of 1910 at Preglhof, the Webern family country estate in Lower Carinthia, where the composer had retreated after quitting an irksome job conducting operetta at the civic theater in Teplitz, Czechoslovakia. Violinist Fritz Brunner and pianist Etta Jonas-Werndorff gave the premiere in Vienna on April 24, 1911; the work, with its brief duration and its small ensemble, was among Webern’s most frequently heard during his lifetime. The full score was published by Universal Edition in 1922, but the first movement had been included in the March 1912 issue of *Der Ruf*, the short-lived journal of the Academic Society for Literature and Music in Vienna; it was the first music of Webern to appear in print. The *Four Pieces* are among Webern’s most succinct movements—the longest is 24 measures, the shortest is just nine—but follow the traditional grouping, slow–fast–slow–fast.

Sonata in E-flat major, Op. 18  
Richard Strauss (1864–1949)

Franz Strauss, Richard’s father, was one of the outstanding horn players of his day, renowned for the power and artistry of his solos in Mozart’s concertos, Beethoven’s symphonies, and Wagner’s music dramas as principal hornist of the Munich Court Orchestra for over 40 years. Franz was also a musician of the most firmly held opinions, all of them reactionary, so it is hardly surprising that young Richard was trained in the most conservative musical idioms, becoming thoroughly (and exclusively) versed in the style, forms, and ethos of High Classicism.

Strauss, nurtured on the conservative styles espoused by his father, showed a precocious talent for musical composition. His first published work, the *Festival March for Orchestra*, appeared in 1876, when he had ripened to the age of 12; he wrote his *Overture in A* in 1879 and a string quartet the following year. His *Symphony in D minor* was introduced in March 1881 by the Munich Court Orchestra. The successful premiere of his *Serenade for Winds*, Op. 7, in Dresden on November 27, 1882, brought Strauss to the attention of the distinguished pianist-conductor Hans von Bülow, who asked the young musician to write another work for winds (the *Suite*, Op. 4) for his Meiningen Orchestra, and then invited him to make his debut as a conductor in its premiere on November 18, 1884, in Munich. On October 1, 1885, Bülow appointed the 21-year-old Strauss as his conducting assistant. In Munich, Strauss met the violinist and sometime composer Alexander Ritter, who introduced him to the revolutionary works of Wagner and Liszt, music that Strauss’ reactionary father had forbidden him to hear. Strauss became convinced by Ritter, and the musical examples he provided, that an instrumental piece could spring from the inspiration of what Strauss later called “a poetic idea,” and need not be restricted to the abstract expression of the Classical masterworks that had served as the models for his earlier compositions. The *Sonata for Violin and Piano* of 1887–1888, the last work of Strauss’ youthful Classicism, stands at this nexus in his creative life.

Strauss’ *Violin Sonata* is firmly rooted in the Classical models that he mastered as a youth, but it also shows the breadth of gesture and the sharpening of artistic profile that he had gained through the contemporaneous work on his first three symphonic poems, *Aus Italien*, *Macbeth*, and *Don Juan*. Indeed, the heroic proclamation from the piano that serves as the main theme of the work’s opening movement could well have been chiseled for *Don Juan*. The violin responds with a tender reflection of the piano’s phrase without losing the music’s impetuous rhythmic drive and sense of urgency. The subsidiary subject, floated high in the violin’s compass, provides lyrical contrast. The center of the movement is devoted to a loquacious development of the principal motives before a full recapitulation of the earlier themes provides balance and formal closure. Though Strauss titled the second movement *Improvisation*, there is nothing extemporaneous about the work’s precisely delineated form nor about its richly textured instrumental lines. An arching violin melody, a wordless product of Strauss’ skill as a song writer, occupies the *Andante*’s first section before the movement moves onto more animated and chromatically inflected music in its center region. The opening melody, considerably elaborated, returns to round out the movement. The main theme of the sonata-form finale, previewed in a shadowy piano introduction, revives the bold, quasi-symphonic style of the first movement. A delicately playful transition leads to the second theme, a broad melody introduced by the violin over sweeping piano arpeggios. The development section is brief, little more than a few iterations of the main subject at various tonal levels. The recapitulation is announced by the piano’s bold theme. A dashing coda, based on the principal theme, closes this final work of Richard Strauss’ apprenticeship.

Midori (violin), heralded as one of the world's foremost violinists, consistently seeks to share herself with others and finds great personal fulfillment in that pursuit, both on and off the concert stage. Her performing schedule, balanced between recitals with Robert McDonald and appearances with the most prestigious symphonic ensembles, annually takes her to the great concert stages of Europe, North America, and the Far East. Chamber music has become an equally important element of her activities: she has spent several summers at the Marlboro Music Festival in Vermont and makes time for special chamber music projects throughout the year. Midori added an important dimension to her life in 1992 when she founded Midori & Friends, a non-profit organization whose motto, "Inspiring Children Through Music," is realized on a daily basis through music instruction programs benefiting thousands of children each year.

Midori's 2001/02 season began with the National Symphony's season-opening gala in Washington, DC. Further season highlights include a tour of Japan with the Pittsburgh Symphony, and appearances with the Munich Philharmonic, the Frankfurt Opera Orchestra, the Dallas Symphony, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, and the New York Philharmonic. She also continues her annual recital activities with Robert McDonald in the United States and many countries abroad, including France, Germany, Switzerland, Norway, and Italy.

The year 2002 marks the 20th anniversary of Midori's professional debut, which took place on New Year's Eve 1982, with Zubin Mehta and the New York Philharmonic. Commemorative events have been planned throughout the world: the celebrations begin in Japan in May 2002 as Midori plays a major recital tour with Robert McDonald. She also plans to perform in many smaller venues throughout Japan, experimenting with unique variations on the concert experience, including thematic concepts and proactive audience participation. The 20th anniversary will continue in the 2002/03 season as Midori performs with many international orchestras and in the key concert halls around the world that have played an important role in the development of her career.

In the nearly two decades of her career, Midori has worked with artists such as Claudio Abbado, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Emanuel Ax, Jonathan Biss, Daniel Barenboim, Leonard Bernstein, Sir Colin Davis, Christoph Eschenbach, Nobuko Imai, Mariss Jansons, Yo-Yo Ma, Kurt Masur, Zubin Mehta, Sir Simon Rattle, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Isaac Stern, and Pinchas Zukerman. In past seasons, she has also appeared with such orchestras as the Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, Israel Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, NDR Symphony Orchestra (Hamburg), Orchestre de Paris, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bavarian Radio Orchestra, and Vienna Philharmonic.

Midori records exclusively for Sony Classical. A new Mozart recording, made in Hamburg with Christoph Eschenbach and the NDR Symphony Orchestra, has just been released as both a conventional CD and as Sony Classical's first Super Audio CD (SACD), in both stereo and surround sound. On this disc, Midori plays the Sinfonia Concertante, K. 320d, with violist Nobuko Imai, as well as the newly reconstructed Concerto in D major for Violin and Piano

(K. 315f) with Eschenbach at the piano. Other concerto recordings include a disc pairing the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto with Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No. 1, both recorded live with Claudio Abbado and the Berlin Philharmonic; the Dvořák Violin Concerto with Zubin Mehta and the New York Philharmonic, also recorded live; the two Bartók violin concertos with the Berlin Philharmonic under Mehta; and the Sibelius Violin Concerto with Bruch's Scottish Fantasy, with Mehta and the Israel Philharmonic. Among Midori's other Sony Classical CDs is a Grammy-nominated recording of the Paganini Caprices for Solo Violin. Midori has recorded several discs of violin and piano repertoire with her duo partner Robert McDonald. These releases include the Elgar and Franck sonatas; Encore, a recording of

virtuoso showpieces; and soon-to-be-released sonatas of Bartók, Enescu, and Schnittke, followed by another duo recording, of the music of Saint-Saëns, Debussy, and Poulenc. Sony's live recording of Midori's Carnegie Hall recital debut (October 1990) is available in audio, video, and laser disc formats. Her next orchestral recording will be the Bruch and Glazunov concertos, to be recorded live with the Berlin Philharmonic under the direction of Mariss Jansons.

Midori devotes a significant part of each season to her work with Midori & Friends, a non-profit organization that provides music education—including instrument instruction and general music instruction, workshops, and concerts—to children who might not otherwise have the opportunity for involvement in the arts. The foundation is now partnered with numerous public schools in New York City. It is also active in Japan with various programs for school children, young adults, and children in hospitals. The work of the foundation in both countries has received strong support and encouragement from the public and from the educational and artistic communities. The focus of Midori & Friends, though imparted through music education, is not entirely musical; rather, it is an effort to nurture the whole child and increase self-esteem among the participants, and to offer awareness of cultural diversity.

Midori's commitment to education extends beyond her foundation to her work with young violinists in master classes all over the world. This is in addition to lessons with students at the Manhattan School of Music, where Midori became a member of the violin faculty in 2001.

Midori's unique talents and lively personality have brought her wide recognition in the media. Her television appearances have ranged from the 1992 Winter Olympic Games telecast and several CNN programs to CBS' Sunday Morning, A&E's Breakfast with the Arts, Sesame Street, and the Tonight show. She has also been seen in numerous concert broadcasts worldwide, including Carnegie Hall's 100th Anniversary Gala concert.

Midori was born in Osaka, Japan, in 1971 and began studying the violin with her mother, Setsu Goto, at a very early age. In 1982, when Zubin Mehta first heard her play, he was so impressed that he invited her to be a surprise guest soloist for the New York Philharmonic's traditional New Year's Eve concert, on which occasion she received a standing ovation and the impetus to begin a major career.

Midori lives in New York City with her two dogs, Franzie (after Franz Joseph Haydn) and Willa (after Willa Cather, one of Midori's favorite writers). She recently completed a bachelor's degree in psychology and gender studies at the Gallatin School of New York University, graduating magna cum laude, and is now pursuing her master's degree. Away from school and the concert hall, Midori enjoys spending time with her younger brother, reads voraciously, and attends the theater. Her violin is the 1734 Guarnerius del Gesu "ex-Huberman," which is on a lifetime loan to her from the Hayashibara Foundation.

Robert McDonald (piano) has performed extensively throughout the United States, Europe, Latin America, and the Far East as a solo recitalist and as a recital partner to Isaac Stern and Midori, among other artists. An active chamber musician, he has collaborated with the Juilliard, American, Muir, Takács, Brentano, Fine Arts, Orlando, and Chicago quartets, as well as with Musicians from Marlboro on several of their tours. He has also appeared as soloist with the San Francisco, Baltimore, Milwaukee, Omaha, and Curtis symphony orchestras, with the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional of Costa Rica, and with the Orchestra Sinfonica Haydn di Bolzano e Trento in Italy.

McDonald has a strong commitment to music education. He is on the piano faculties of both the Juilliard School and the Peabody Conservatory. For the past 18 summers, he has been director of the keyboard program at the Taos School of Music and Chamber Music Festival in New Mexico. Other summer teaching and festival activities have taken him to the Marlboro, Brevard, and Caramoor festivals in the United States; the Montreaux, Lucerne, Bergen, and Besançon festivals in Europe; and the International School for Musical Arts in Canada. He also gives piano and chamber music master classes at prominent universities, music schools, and music festivals in North America, Japan, and Europe.

Robert McDonald's discography includes recordings for the Sony Classical, Vox, Bridge, Musical Heritage Society, and CRI labels with Midori, Isaac Stern, and Elmar Oliveira. His most recent release features the violin sonatas of Franck and Elgar, with Midori, on Sony Classical.

Among numerous awards, prizes, and grants, McDonald has won the Gold Medal at the Busoni International Piano Competition in Italy, the William Kapell International Competition, and the Washington International Competition. He is also the recipient of the National Federation of Music Clubs Artist Award, a National Endowment for the Arts Solo Recitalist Grant, and a Career Grant from the Philadelphia Foundation Arthur Hill Fund.

A magna cum laude graduate of Lawrence University in Wisconsin, where Theodore Rehl was his principal teacher, Robert McDonald continued his studies at the Curtis Institute of Music with Seymour Lipkin, Rudolf Serkin, and Mieczyslaw Horszowski; at the Juilliard School with Beveridge Webster; and at the Manhattan School of Music with Gary Graffman.

Exclusive Management:  
ICM Artists, Ltd.  
40 West 57th Street  
New York, NY 10019