

Wednesday, February 26, 2014, 8pm  
Zellerbach Hall

**Emanuel Ax, *piano***  
**Yo-Yo Ma, *cello***

PROGRAM

*Brahms and Beyond*

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) Sonata No. 1 for Cello and Piano in E minor,  
Op. 38 (1862, 1865)  
Allegro non troppo  
Allegretto quasi Menuetto  
Allegro

Brahms Sonata for Cello and Piano in D major,  
Op. 78 (1879)  
*(arr. 1897 by Paul Klengel (1854–1935)  
from the Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano  
in G major, Op. 78)*

Vivace ma non troppo  
Adagio  
Allegro molto moderato

INTERMISSION

Brett Dean (b. 1961) Hommage à Brahms (2013)  
*for piano*

Engelsflügel 1: Nicht schnell aber fließend  
Hafenkneipenmusik: Lebhaft, unruhig  
Engelsflügel 2: Langsam, zart

*Commissioned by Cal Performances; the Los Angeles Philharmonic;  
Symphony Center Presents, Chicago; and Carnegie Hall.*

Brahms Sonata No. 2 for Cello and Piano in F major,  
Op. 99 (1886)  
Allegro vivace  
Adagio affettuoso  
Allegro passionato  
Allegro molto

*This performance is made possible, in part, by Corporate Sponsor U.S. Bank and by Patron Sponsors Gail and Dan Rubinfeld, and Susan Graham Harrison and Michael A. Harrison.*

*Cal Performances' 2013–2014 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.*

**Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)**  
**Sonata No. 1 for Cello and Piano in E minor,**  
**Op. 38**

*Composed in 1862 and 1865.*

Brahms was based principally in his hometown of Hamburg during the decade of the 1860s, but he was frequently on tour throughout Germany and northern Europe as a pianist and accompanist during those years. Seeking to broaden the range of his professional activities, he first visited Vienna and gave a recital there in September 1862 and was cordially received. At the end of the year, he learned that he had been passed over as conductor of the Philharmonic Concerts in Hamburg. Miffed at the rejection by his hometown, he readily accepted the offer of the Vienna *Singakademie* to become its director the following summer and regularly visited thereafter until he settled in the city for good in 1870.

One of Brahms's first important contacts in Vienna was Dr. Josef Gänsbacher, a teacher of singing at the Conservatory and an administrator of the *Singakademie*, through whose influence he was appointed to the post with that organization. Gänsbacher was also an accomplished cellist, and it was for him that Brahms undertook his Cello Sonata in E minor in 1862. Three movements were written for the work in that year, but the *Adagio* was jettisoned even before Gänsbacher had seen it; it was not until three years later that Brahms returned to the Sonata and provided it with what now stands as its finale. (The original *Adagio* may have been reworked as the slow movement of the F major Cello Sonata of 1886.) After the work was finished, Gänsbacher was eager to try it out, but as he read through the piece with Brahms he complained that he was being drowned out by the richly voiced piano part. "I can't even hear myself," he protested. "You're lucky," the curmudgeonly Brahms bellowed back. When the Sonata was published in 1866, it was the first of Brahms's duo sonatas that he made public, though there are known to have been earlier attempts that the secretive composer destroyed without a trace.

Since Brahms deleted the proposed *Adagio* from the First Cello Sonata, the work has an unusual architectural plan: a large sonata-form structure followed by smaller movements in the style of a minuet and a fugue. "Hardly ever again did Brahms write such a movement as the first," wrote Walter Neumann in his study of the composer, "so rich and fervent in its inspiration, both human and spiritual, or such an unalloyed record of intimate emotion." The cello announces the movement's main theme, a melancholy song that the Brahms (and Bach) scholar Karl Geiringer noted was reminiscent of the *Contrapunctus III* from Bach's *The Art of Fugue*. The lyrical nature of the Sonata is reinforced by the subsidiary motive, a melody begun by an arpeggio that turns back upon itself before breaking into a large arch of wordless song. A brighter emotion is suggested before the end of the exposition, but the development returns to the introspective melancholy of the opening theme. The second theme and then the third are treated in the development before a full recapitulation of the earlier subjects rounds out the form of the movement.

The second movement is a microcosm of the history of the Austrian popular dance. The outer sections of its three-part form (A-B-A) are marked "quasi Menuetto," and exhibit the polite demeanor associated with that old dance. The central trio, however, more animated in character and more adventurous in its harmonic peregrinations, is one of the tributes to the Viennese waltz that Brahms embedded in a number of his instrumental works, and which also inspired the set of *Waltzes for Piano* whose opus number (39) immediately follows that of this Cello Sonata.

The finale is a fugue poured into sonata form, the sort of generic hybrid that also absorbed much of Beethoven's interest during his last years. The subject, a ribbon of triplets, was probably modeled on the *Contrapunctus XIII* from Bach's *The Art of Fugue*; the countersubject (in eighth notes rather than triplets) is also used as the second theme in the sonata structure. The movement bristles with precisely worked-out counterpoint in three and four voices, a circumstance requiring a fullness of

texture from the piano that prompted Daniel Gregory Mason to commiserate with the cellist: “When you set a single cello to competing like this with the two hands of an able-bodied pianist, the odds are certainly on the pianist.” The cello manages to assert itself in the final pages, however, and leads through rousing stretto statements of the themes to bring the Sonata to a close.

## Brahms

### Sonata for Cello and Piano in D major,

Op. 78

*Arranged from the Violin Sonata No. 1 in G major, Op. 78, by Paul Klengel (1854–1935)*

*Composed in 1879 and arranged in 1897.*

Brahms was inspired by his first trip to Italy, in the early months of 1878, to write his glowing and autumnal Piano Concerto in B-flat major. He returned to Goethe’s “land where the lemon trees grow” six times thereafter for creative inspiration and refreshment from the chilling Viennese winters. On his way back to Austria from Italy in May 1879, he stopped in the lovely village of Pörschach on Lake Wörth in Carinthia, which he had haunted on his annual summer retreat the preceding year. “I only wanted to stay there for a day,” he wrote to his friend the surgeon Theodor Billroth, “and then, as this one day was so beautiful, for yet another. But each day was as fine as the last, and so I stayed on. If on your journeys you have interrupted your reading to gaze out of the window, you must have seen how all the mountains round the lake are white with snow, while the trees are covered with delicate green.” Brahms succumbed to the charms of the Carinthian countryside and abandoned all thought of returning immediately to Vienna—he remained in Pörschach for the entire summer. It was in that halcyon setting that he composed his Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano.

Brahms had long been wary of the difficulty in combining the lyrical nature of the string instruments with the powerful chordal writing that he favored for piano, and it was only with the *Klavierstücke*, Op. 76, completed in 1878, that he developed a keyboard style lean

enough to accommodate the violin as a partner. His other two violin sonatas followed within nine years. The Op. 78 Sonata is a voluptuously songful and tenderly expressive testament to this important advance in Brahms’s creative development, the musical counterpart of his sylvan holiday at Pörschach. His faithful friend and correspondent Elisabeth von Herzogenberg told him that the work “appeals to the affection as do few other things in the realm of music.” In his biography of the composer, Peter Latham noted, “Brahms has written nothing more spacious than these three violin sonatas, in which he never seeks grandeur, and woos rather than compels.” Brahms himself allowed that the Sonata No. 1 was almost too intimate for the concert hall. The work is one of his most endearing creations, and it did much to dispel the then widely held notion that his music was academic and emotionally austere. “[The Sonata] must have won Brahms almost more friends than any of his previous compositions,” judged J. A. Fuller-Maitland.

The transcription of the Violin Sonata No. 1 for cello and piano was done in 1897 by Paul Klengel (1854–1935), the German pianist, violinist, conductor, and composer who studied at the Leipzig Conservatory, held prominent choral conducting positions in Leipzig, Stuttgart, and New York, taught at his alma mater, and arranged many works for the firm of Simrock, Brahms’s principal publisher.

The Sonata is, throughout, warm and ingratiating, a touching lyrical poem. The main theme of the sonata-form first movement, sung immediately by the cello above the piano’s placid chords, is a gentle melody lightly kissed by the Muse of the Viennese waltz. Its opening dotted rhythm (long–short–long) is used as a motto that recurs not just in the first movement but later as well, a subtle but powerful means of unifying the entire work. The subsidiary theme, flowing and hymnal, is structured as a grand, rainbow-shaped phrase. The *Adagio* has a certain rhapsodic quality that belies its tightly controlled three-part form. The piano initiates the principal theme of the movement, which is soon adorned with little sighing phrases by the cello. The central sec-

tion is more animated, and recalls the dotted rhythm of the previous movement's main theme; the principal theme returns in the cello's double stops to round out the movement. Brahms wove two songs from his Op. 59 collection for voice and piano (1873) into the finale: *Regenlied* ("Rain Song"—this work is sometimes referred to as the "Rain" Sonata) and *Nachklang* ("Reminiscence"). The movement is in rondo form, and, in its *scherzando* quality, recalls the finale of the B-flat major Piano Concerto, written just a year before. Most of the movement (whose main theme begins with the familiar dotted rhythm) is couched in a romantic minor key (it turns brighter during one episode for a return of the theme from the second movement, played in double stops), but moves into a luminous major tonality for the coda.

**Brett Dean (b. 1961)**  
**Hommage à Brahms**

*Composed in 2013. Première on February 25, 2014, at the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles by Emanuel Ax.*

Composer, violist, and conductor Brett Dean, one of Australia's most acclaimed musicians, was born in Brisbane in 1961 and studied at the Queensland Conservatorium before moving to Germany in 1984 to become a violist in the Berlin Philharmonic. After serving in that distinguished ensemble for 16 years and beginning to compose in 1988, Dean returned to Australia in 1990 to work as a freelance musician. He established his reputation as a composer when his clarinet concerto, *Ariel's Music*, won the UNESCO International Rostrum of Composers Award in 1995. Dean has since been Artistic Director of the Australian National Academy of Music in Melbourne (2006–2010), served residencies with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (2002–2003), Cheltenham Festival (2002, 2009, 2010), Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra (2007–2008), Trondheim Chamber Music Festival (2011), and Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra (2011), fulfilled commissions from the Berlin Philharmonic, Concertgebouw

Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, BBC Proms, Lucerne Festival, Cologne Philharmonie, BBC Symphony, Melbourne Symphony, and Sydney Symphony, and received such notable awards as the Paul Lowin Orchestral Prize from the Australian Music Centre (2013), Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's Elise L. Stoeger Prize for his contributions to chamber music (2011), Grawemeyer Award from the University of Louisville for his violin concerto *The Lost Art of Letter Writing* (2009), Australian National Music Award (2000, 2005), and an honorary doctorate from Griffith University in Brisbane. Dean has written extensively for orchestra with and without soloists (he has performed his 2005 Viola Concerto in London, Los Angeles, Sydney, Lyon, Hamburg, Amsterdam, Dresden, Stockholm, and Melbourne), chamber ensembles, chorus, solo voice, film, and radio. His debut opera, *Bliss*, based on a novel by two-time Booker Prize winner Peter Carey, was critically acclaimed on its première in Melbourne in 2010 and has since been staged in Sydney, Edinburgh, and Hamburg.

In 2009, Canadian-British pianist and Bach specialist Angela Hewitt requested "short new piano pieces that are either Bach transcriptions or pieces directly inspired by Bach" from several prominent composers for a "Bach Book" she was then assembling. Brett Dean responded with an *Hommage à Bach* that he said "also serves as the opening movement for a planned set of piano etudes I'm currently working on entitled *The Homage Etudes*, all of which pay their respects to different compositional approaches to the keyboard across the ages, ranging from Bach, via Janáček and Scriabin, to the Australian composer Richard Meale, who died in 2009." The ongoing set so far includes tributes to Bach, Janáček (2010), the Hungarian composer György Kurtág (2011), and the *Hommage à Brahms*, composed in 2013 for Emanuel Ax on a commission from Cal Performances, Symphony Center Presents (Chicago), the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association, and Carnegie Hall. The score is inscribed, "...for Manny, in admiration." The *Hommage à Brahms* consists of three short movements—*Engelsflügel 1*

(“Angel Wings 1”), *Hafenkneipenmusik* (“Harbor Pub Music”), and *Engelsflügel 2*—that Dean indicated could be performed as a set but “were conceived as interludes to be played between Johannes Brahms’s four final piano pieces, Op. 119 (1893): Intermezzi in B minor, E minor, and C major and Rhapsody in E-flat major.”

Dean writes that “*Hommage à Brahms* pays homage not only to Brahms the composer but also to aspects of his biography. With these pieces, I drew particular inspiration from accompanying textures and figurations as found in the duo sonatas and *Lieder*. Seeing a duo recital of Emanuel Ax and Frank Peter Zimmermann performing the three Brahms violin sonatas in Dresden in 2013 was especially stimulating. Taking into account aspects of Brahms’s personal life, and specifically the long and complicated relationship he had with Clara Schumann, these pieces come from the idea of a line or part that is absent—the person not by his side. Although it is therefore music that emerges out of a supportive rather than a leading musical role, ultimately the movements take on lives of their own, thus shining a different harmonic and emotional light on Brahms’s poignantly melancholic Op. 119 pieces.”

The title *Engelsflügel* of the first and third movements may refer to their wide-ranging arpeggiated figurations, one of Brahms’s most characteristic keyboard devices, while *Hafenkneipenmusik* recalls the teenage Brahms playing piano in the rough waterfront bars of his native Hamburg.

## Brahms

### Sonata No. 2 for Cello and Piano in F major, Op. 99

*Composed in 1886. Premiered on November 14, 1886, in Vienna by cellist Robert Hausmann and the composer as pianist.*

For many years, Brahms followed the sensible practice of the Viennese gentry by abandoning the city when the weather got hot. He spent many happy summers in the hills and

lakes of the Salzkammergut, east of Salzburg, but in 1886 his friend Joseph Widmann, a poet and librettist of considerable distinction, convinced Brahms to join him in the ancient Swiss town of Thun, 25 kilometers south of Bern in the foothills of the Bernese Alps. Brahms rented a flower-laden villa on the shore of Lake Thun in the nearby hamlet of Hofstetten and settled in for a long, comfortable summer. The periods away from Vienna were not merely times of relaxation for Brahms, however, but were actually working holidays. Some of his greatest scores (Violin Concerto; Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies; Piano Concerto No. 2; *Haydn Variations*; *Tragic Overture*; and many others) had largely been realized at his various summer retreats in earlier years. The three summers that he spent at Thun (1886–1888) were equally productive: the Violin Sonatas Nos. 2 and 3, C minor Piano Trio, Second Cello Sonata, *Gypsy Songs*, Choral Songs (Op. 104), *Lieder* of Op. 105–07, and Double Concerto were all written there. Brahms composed the Second Cello Sonata, Op. 99, in Hofstetten during the summer of 1886; he gave the work an informal reading at Widmann’s house (along with the new Violin Sonata No. 2 and the C minor Trio) before returning to Vienna in the fall. The Sonata’s formal première was given on November 14, 1886, in Vienna by Robert Hausmann, cellist in the string quartet led by the composer’s longtime friend and musical ally, violinist Joseph Joachim.

The F major Cello Sonata, like many of the works from Brahms’s fullest maturity, is suffused with an autumnal glow that speaks of the composer’s satisfaction with his life at that time. “That Brahms was very happy in Hofstetten is evident from the works he composed there,” wrote William Murdoch. “He had finished his Fourth Symphony, and had led its première [on October 25, 1885, in Meiningen]. He was everywhere acclaimed, and his fame was worldwide. He had no more obstacles to overcome, and his works from now onward give that impression of security and certainty that can only be the outcome of a contented mind and a knowledge of

mastery. Sadness and heartfelt emotion we shall find, but no longer that yearning after the unattainable that so often pervaded his earlier works.”

The first edition of the F major Sonata, published by Simrock in 1887, noted that the piece is “for Piano and Violoncello,” an indication of the complete integration of the participants that marks Brahms’s greatest instrumental works. The Sonata is in four expansive movements (Robert Schumann, in his 1853 article heralding the arrival of Brahms on the German musical scene, referred to his chamber compositions as “veiled symphonies”), whose expressive characters Florence May, the English pianist who studied with Brahms in the 1870s and eventually became his biographer, summarized thus: “the first broad and energetic; the second touching; the third passionate; the fourth vivacious.” Three ideas comprise the first movement’s exposition: the cello’s main theme, anticipatory in its leaping motion and snapping rhythms, is supported by the piano’s restless tremolos; the arching second

subject is smoother in contour and gentler in expression; the agitated closing motive is urged on by strong repeated figurations. The development section is woven from all three themes, though its character is largely dominated by the restless tremolos that opened the movement. A full recapitulation and a coda based on the main theme provide formal balance for the movement. The second movement, “among the finest of the master’s *adagios*” according to William Murdoch, follows a leisurely three-part form (A-B-A): the outer sections begin with a broad piano theme buoyed upon resonant pizzicato notes in the cello; the central episode is more animated and somewhat melancholy. The third movement is a scherzo whose impassioned mood is balanced by the sweetly flowing trio at its center. The finale-rondo, generally lightweight in character, is given emotional substance by the darkly colored passage that occupies its middle region.

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Lisa Mare Mazzucco

Born in Lvov, Poland, Emanuel Ax moved to Winnipeg, Canada, with his family when he was a young boy. His studies at the Juilliard School were supported by the sponsorship of the Epstein Scholarship Program of the Boys Clubs of America, and he subsequently won the Young Concert Artists Award. Additionally, he attended Columbia University, where he majored in French. Mr. Ax captured public attention in 1974 when he won the first Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Competition in Tel Aviv. In 1975, he won the Michaels Award of Young Concert Artists, followed four years later by the coveted Avery Fisher Prize.

Mr. Ax's 2013–2014 season began with appearances at the Barbican Centre and Lincoln Center with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bernard Haitink, as well as collaborations with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and Mariss Jansons in Amsterdam, Bucharest, China, and Japan during their worldwide centenary celebrations. The second half of the season sees the realization of a project inspired by Brahms, which includes new pieces from composers Missy Mazzoli, Nico

Muhly, Brett Dean, and Anders Hillborg all producing works linked to Brahms and commissioned jointly by Cal Performances, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, and Carnegie Hall, with the participation of collaborators Anne Sophie von Otter and Yo-Yo Ma. To conclude the season, Mr. Ax travels to Hong Kong and Australia for a complete cycle of Beethoven concertos with incoming chief conductor David Robertson in Sydney and with Sir Andrew Davis in Melbourne.

In conjunction with Mr. Ax's multiple weeks as Artist in Residence with the New York Philharmonic during the 2012–2013 season, Sony Classical released his latest recital disc of works from Haydn to Schumann to Copland reflecting their different uses of the "variation" concept. In the spring, he joined that orchestra on their European tour conducted by Alan Gilbert. He returned to the orchestras in Los Angeles, St. Louis, Atlanta, Detroit, Washington, and Pittsburgh, where he is a beloved regular.

Highlights of the 2011–2012 season included return visits to the symphonies of Boston, Houston, Toronto, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Cincinnati; the New York and Los Angeles philharmonics; and the San Francisco Symphony, with whom he collaborated in the "American Mavericks" festival presented in San Francisco, Ann Arbor, and at Carnegie Hall. As curator and participant with the Chicago Symphony for "Keys to the City," a two-week spring residency, he performed multiple roles as leader and collaborator in a festival celebrating the many varied facets of the piano.

Mr. Ax has been an exclusive Sony Classical recording artist since 1987. His recent releases include Mendelssohn trios with Mr. Ma and Itzhak Perlman, Strauss's *Enoch Arden* narrated by Patrick Stewart, and discs of two-piano music by Brahms and Rachmaninoff with Yefim Bronfman. Mr. Ax received Grammy Awards for the second and third volumes of his cycle of Haydn's piano sonatas. He has also made a series of Grammy-winning recordings with Mr. Ma of the Beethoven and Brahms sonatas for cello and piano. His other



## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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recordings include the concertos of Liszt and Schoenberg, three solo Brahms albums, an album of tangos by Ástor Piazzolla, and the première recording of John Adams's *Century Rolls* with the Cleveland Orchestra for Nonesuch. In the 2004–2005 season Mr. Ax also contributed to an International Emmy Award-winning BBC documentary commemorating the Holocaust that aired on the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

In recent years, Mr. Ax has turned his attention toward the music of 20th-century composers, premièring works by John Adams, Christopher Rouse, Krzysztof Penderecki, Bright Sheng, and Melinda Wagner. Mr. Ax is also devoted to chamber music, and has worked regularly with such artists as Young Uck Kim, Cho-Liang Lin, Mr. Ma, Edgar Meyer, Peter Serkin, Jaime Laredo, and the late Isaac Stern.

Mr. Ax resides in New York City with his wife, pianist Yoko Nozaki. They have two children together, Joseph and Sarah. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and holds honorary doctorates of music from Yale and Columbia universities.

Mr. Ax is managed exclusively by Opus 3 Artists, 470 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016, [www.opus3artists.com](http://www.opus3artists.com). He plays the Steinway piano. For more information, please visit [www.emanuelax.com](http://www.emanuelax.com).



Todd Rosenberg

Yo-Yo Ma's multifaceted career is testament to his continual search for new ways to communicate with audiences, and to his personal desire for artistic growth and renewal. Whether performing new or familiar works from the cello repertoire, coming together with colleagues for chamber music, or exploring cultures and musical forms outside the Western classical tradition, Mr. Ma strives to find connections that stimulate the imagination.

One of Mr. Ma's goals is the exploration of music as a means of communication and as a vehicle for the migrations of ideas across a range of cultures throughout the world. Expanding upon this interest, in 1998, Mr. Ma established the Silk Road Project, a nonprofit arts and educational organization. Under his artistic direction, the Silk Road Project presents performances by the acclaimed Silk Road Ensemble, engages in cross-cultural exchanges and residencies, leads workshops for students, and partners with leading cultural institutions to create educational materials and programs.

The Project's ongoing affiliation with Harvard University has made it possible to broaden and enhance educational programming. In the 2013–2014 school year, with ongoing partnerships with arts and educational organizations in New York City, it continues to

expand *Silk Road Connect*, a multidisciplinary educational initiative for middle-school students in the city's public schools. Developing new music is also a central undertaking of the Silk Road Project, which has been involved in commissioning and performing more than 60 new musical and multimedia works from composers and arrangers around the world.

As the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant, Mr. Ma is partnering with Maestro Riccardo Muti to provide collaborative musical leadership and guidance on innovative program development for the Institute for Learning, Access, and Training at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and for Chicago Symphony artistic initiatives. Mr. Ma's work focuses on the transformative power music can have in individuals' lives, and on increasing the number and variety of opportunities audiences have to experience music in their communities. Mr. Ma and the Institute have created the Citizen Musician Initiative, a movement that calls on all musicians, music lovers, music teachers and institutions to use the art form to bridge gulfs between people and to create and inspire a sense of community. The website [www.citizenmusician.org](http://www.citizenmusician.org) features stories of Citizen Musician activity across the globe.

Mr. Ma is also widely recognized for his strong commitment to educational programs that bring the world into the classroom and the classroom into the world. While touring, he takes time whenever possible to conduct master classes as well as more informal programs for students—musicians and nonmusicians alike. He has also reached young audiences through appearances on *Arthur*, *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, and *Sesame Street*.

Mr. Ma's discography of over 90 albums (including more than 17 Grammy Award-winners) reflects his wide-ranging interests. He has made several successful recordings that defy categorization, among them *Hush* with Bobby McFerrin, *Appalachia Waltz* and *Appalachian Journey* with Mark O'Connor and Edgar Meyer and two Grammy-winning tributes to the music of Brazil, *Obrigado Brazil* and *Obrigado Brazil: Live in Concert*. Mr. Ma's

recent recordings include Mendelssohn trios with Emanuel Ax and Itzhak Perlman. His most recent album, *The Goat Rodeo Sessions*, with Edgar Meyer, Chris Thile, and Stuart Duncan, received the 2013 Grammy for Best Folk Album. Across this full range of releases, Mr. Ma remains one of the bestselling recording artists in the classical field. All of his recent albums have quickly entered the *Billboard* chart of classical bestsellers, remaining in the Top 15 for extended periods, often with as many as four titles simultaneously on the list. In fall 2009, Sony Classical released a box set of over 90 albums to commemorate Mr. Ma's 30 years as a Sony recording artist.

Yo-Yo Ma was born in 1955 to Chinese parents living in Paris. He began to study the cello with his father at age four and soon came with his family to New York, where he spent most of his formative years. Later, his principal teacher was Leonard Rose at the Juilliard School. He has received numerous awards, including the Avery Fisher Prize (1978), the Glenn Gould Prize (1999), the National Medal of the Arts (2001), the Dan David Prize (2006), the Sonning Prize (2006), the World Economic Forum's Crystal Award (2008), the Presidential Medal of Freedom (2010), the Polar Music Prize (2012), and the Vilcek Prize in Contemporary Music (2013). In 2011, Mr. Ma was recognized as a Kennedy Center Honoree. Appointed a CultureConnect Ambassador by the U.S. Department of State in 2002, Mr. Ma has met with, trained, and mentored thousands of students worldwide in such countries as Lithuania, Korea, Lebanon, Azerbaijan, and China. Mr. Ma serves as a U.N. Messenger of Peace and as a member of the President's Committee on the Arts & the Humanities. He has performed for eight American presidents, most recently at the invitation of President Obama on the occasion of the 56th Inaugural Ceremony.

Mr. Ma and his wife have two children. He plays two instruments, a 1733 Montagnana cello from Venice and the 1712 Davidoff Stradivarius.

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