

RACHMANINOFF SONATA FOR CELLO AND PIANO

LECTURE/RECITAL TMTA CONVENTION

Arlington, TX

June 18, 2011

1:00 pm

Sonata Op. 19 in G minor
Lento: Allegro moderato
Allegro scherzando
Andante
Allegro mosso

Sergei Rachmaninoff
(1873-1943)

Rachmaninoff's Sonata was written in 1901 for Russian cellist, Anatol Brandukov, and stands as a unique contribution to the duo sonata literature. This work is of the same period as his famous Second Piano Concerto. The composition of these works came after a major period of depression for Rachmaninoff stemming from the debut of his first symphony. The Sonata shows the maturity of Rachmaninoff's compositional style, with broad sweeping melodies and extreme virtuosity in the piano part, so characteristic of all his compositions for this instrument. This work was written before his emigration from Russia, which occurred in 1917 after successful tours as a solo pianist. As both a composer and one of the preeminent piano virtuosos of the day, Rachmaninoff had the great challenge of managing both sides of his musical career. After leaving Russia, he never really felt at home. He maintained his focus on performing, but much of his earlier prolific composition dropped off. Although he spent many years in Europe and the U.S. he was continually homesick for Russia and made a habit of surrounding himself with Russian friends. This Sonata is from a young Rachmaninoff, still happy in his homeland.

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Kristin Isaacson, is Assistant Professor of Cello and Bass at Hardin - Simmons University. Recent performances include the "Tango" in the summer of 2009 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She received her Doctor of Musical Arts degree in cello performance at Louisiana State University. Dr. Isaacson received her Bachelor of Music from Indiana University. Her interests in Jazz and improvisation led her to pursue a thesis topic on translating the improvisational style of Charlie Parker to the cello. Dr. Isaacson has held faculty positions at Abilene Christian University, Eastern Kentucky University, the Blue

Lake Fine Arts Camp, the Craftsbury Chamber Players Youth Program, the Music Academy at Louisiana State University, and she served as instrumental music director at the Upper Valley Waldorf School in Quechee, Vermont. Isaacson has performed extensively in New England and Louisiana, performing with such diverse groups as the Craftsbury Chamber Players, the Hop River Chamber Players, the Abilene Chamber Players, the Louisiana Sinfonietta, the Ohio Light Opera, the Vermont Symphony, and the Lexington Philharmonic. Her principal teachers include Iseut Chuat, Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi, Helga Winold, Dennis Parker and master classes with Janos Starker, Aldo Parisot, and Ralph Kirschbaum. In addition, she has studied improvisation techniques with Eugene Friesen and jazz improvisation with pianists Willis Delony and Kent Hewitt. She has studied chamber music with Rostislav Dubinsky, Miriam Fried, members of the Tokyo Quartet, and the Apple Hill Chamber Players.

Dr. Leslie Spotz
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With the 2010-2011 season, pianist, **Leslie Spotz**, Associate Professor of Piano at Tarleton State University, celebrates her 50th year playing piano. She enjoys an international solo career that has included performances in Moscow at Tchaikovsky Hall of Moscow University, South Bank Center of London, Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., the famed Academy of Music in Philadelphia, her highly acclaimed tours of Germany, concerts in Italy at the Lorenzo de' Medici Institute and her performance at the inaugural opening of Philadelphia's new performance venue, the Kimmel Center. February 2010 included an all-Chopin Bicentennial recital in New York City at the Tenri Cultural Institute. December, 2010 she returned to Germany in a solo recital at the prestigious Heilig-Kreuz-Kirche in Berlin. Hailed by the **Süddeutsche Zeitung** of Munich, Spotz' Beethoven was described thus: "Stripped of veneer, revealing all the edges and corners, Spotz earnestly confronted Beethoven's tempi and dynamic indications, leaving mediocrity and shallow beauty behind and bringing out truth. In all, a concert of the highest critical standard, further proof of the high carat quality of this series." Spotz has performed extensively throughout the U.S. from coast to coast. Concert highlights include her 2007 performance at Tarleton as soloist with the Fort Worth Symphony, performances of twenty Beethoven Sonatas at Rutgers University and her recitals for the Bach Festival of Philadelphia. Receiving a full scholarship to the Curtis Institute of Music, Spotz studied for five years with the legendary, Mieczyslaw Horszowski. She completed her doctorate at Rutgers University in 2002. Her appearances as soloist include the Mozart Society of Philadelphia, South Jersey Symphony, Curtis Symphony, Kinhaven Symphony in Vermont, the Piedmont Chamber Orchestra in North Carolina, the Old York Road Symphony in Abington, PA, and the Clear Lake Symphony in Texas. Spotz has become an advocate for women musicians

through her performances, collaborating with flutist Adeline Tomasone on the critically acclaimed CD *Fantasias*, and women composers are featured on her solo CD, issued by Leonore Records in 1999. In July, 2008 she was invited to record the entire piano repertoire for the International Piano Performance Examination Committee, (IPPEC) Taiwan, R.O.C. in a five CD set. She has collaborated with violinists, Maria Bachmann, Joseph Genualdi, and Mark Steinberg; David Wetherill, former co-principal horn of the Philadelphia Orchestra; Frank Kaderabek, former principal trumpet of the Philadelphia Orchestra and Joseph Depasquale, former principal viola of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Among the notable international singers for whom Spatz has accompanied are sopranos Amanda Squitieri, Julianne Baird, Gwendolyn Bradley, Judith Lovat and Donna Connolly, and tenors Martin Dillon and Robert Guarino. According to the **The Philadelphia Inquirer**, "Miss Spatz commands the resonant sound and the elegant gesture... playing of great color, boldness, and suavity... most engaging...".

From May 17-29, 2011, Dr. Isaacson and Dr. Spatz performed chamber music in London, UK, as members of the Abilene Chamber Players. Their performances included Southwark Cathedral, St. George's Bloomsbury, and The Space.