



DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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Saturday, April 25, 2026 • 4:00 PM

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# MICHELLE MA

*Junior Recital*

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Brennan Family Recital Hall  
2330 North Halsted Street • Chicago

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# MICHELLE MA, VIOLIN

*Junior Recital*

DONG-WAN HA, PIANO

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## PROGRAM

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Johannes Brahms (1833–1897); arr. Jascha Heifetz  
**Contemplation (1886–1888)**

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)  
**Violin Sonata No. 1 in D major (1798)**

I. Allegro con brio

II. Tema con variazioni: Andante con moto

III. Rondo: Allegro

- Intermission -

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)  
**Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35 (1878)**

I. Allegro moderato

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*Michelle Ma is from the studio of Janet Sung. This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the degree Bachelor of Music.*

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

## PROGRAM NOTES

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Johannes Brahms (1833–1897); arr. Jascha Heifetz

### **Contemplation (1886–1888)**

*Duration: 2 minutes, 30 seconds*

*Contemplation* comes from the song *Wie Melodien zieht es mir* written by Johannes Brahms in the late 1880s. The song reflects Brahms's lyrical style and deep emotion through simple and beautiful melodies. Violinist Jascha Heifetz later arranged the song for violin and piano. In this version, the violin takes the role of the singer, showing the expressive melody while the piano provides a gentle accompaniment.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

### **Violin Sonata No. 1 in D major (1798)**

*Duration: 22 minutes*

Beethoven wrote his first violin sonatas in the late 1790s while living in Vienna. This sonata was composed early in his career, when he was starting to build his reputation as both a pianist and a composer. It was dedicated to Antonio Salieri, who was one of his teachers. At that time, violin sonatas were usually more focused on the piano, with the violin playing a smaller role. However, Beethoven began to treat the violin and piano more equally, allowing both instruments to share important musical lines.

The first movement, *Allegro con brio*, begins with an energetic and lively theme in the piano, followed by the violin. Throughout the movement, the two instruments interact closely, almost like a conversation. The music has a lot of rhythmic energy and strong contrasts, which are typical of Beethoven's style. The second movement, *Tema con variazioni*, presents a simple and elegant theme followed by several variations. Each variation changes the character in a different way while still keeping the original melody recognizable. The final movement, *Rondo: Allegro*, is bright and playful. The main theme keeps returning between contrasting sections, creating an engaging ending.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)

### **Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35 (1878)**

*Duration: 20 minutes*

Tchaikovsky composed his Violin Concerto in D major, Op.35 in 1878 while staying in Clarens, Switzerland. At that time, he was going through a very difficult period in his life. His brief and unhappy marriage had recently collapsed, and he left Russia in order to recover emotionally. During that time he was supported by Nadezhda

von Meck, who provided him with financial support and encouraged him to keep focusing on composing.

One of the works that greatly influenced Tchaikovsky during that time was *Symphonie espagnole* by Édouard Lalo. After studying and playing through Lalo's work, he was inspired to compose a violin concerto of his own. He began writing the piece in March 1878 and completed the main draft in less than two weeks, an unusually fast pace.

The concerto was first dedicated to famous violinist Leopold Auer, who was one of the most respected violin teachers in Russia at that time. But Auer declined to perform the work, believing that some passages were too difficult or not suitable for the violin, so the premiere was delayed for several years. The first performance was eventually given by Adolph Brodsky on December 4, 1881, in Vienna, and conducted by Hans Richter.

The first movement begins with a short orchestra introduction that presents a graceful opening idea before the solo violin enters. The violin introduces a lyrical main theme that highlights the instrument's singing quality. Throughout the movement, Tchaikovsky combines expressive melodies with virtuosic writing for the violin.

*Notes by Michelle Ma*