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Photo credit: Owen Zhou.

Faculty Tuesdays

David Korevaar, piano
Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2026, 7:30 p.m.
Grusin Music Hall

PROGRAM

Sonata in G Major, Op. 79 (1810)

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Presto alla tedesca
Andante
Vivace

Six Etudes de Concert, Op. 35 (published 1886)

Cécile Chaminade (1857-1944)

1. Scherzo
2. Automne
3. Fileuse

Sonata in E Major, Op. 109 (1820)

Ludwig van Beethoven

Vivace ma non troppo–Adagio espressivo
Prestissimo
Andante molto cantabile ed espressivo (Gesangvoll mit innigster Empfindung)

Intermission

Six Etudes de Concert, Op. 35

Cécile Chaminade

4. Appassionato
5. Impromptu
6. Tarantelle

Sonata in C minor, Op. 111 (1821-22)

Ludwig van Beethoven

Maestoso–Allegro con brio ed appassionato

Arietta: Adagio molto semplice cantabile

PROGRAM NOTES

Tonight's program in part celebrates the release of my complete Beethoven Sonatas recording on Prospero Classical by bringing together three sonatas that represent Beethoven in wildly contrasting moods. The Beethoven sonatas are joined (and separated) by Cécile Chaminade's Six Concert Etudes, Op. 35—fabulous works composed in the 1880s that show a wide range of expression and a terrific command of a variety of different textures and techniques.

The **Sonata in G major, Op. 79**, was written as part of a group of sonatas commissioned by the London-based pianist, composer, piano manufacturer, and publisher Muzio Clementi. At just under 10 minutes, this is one of Beethoven's shortest sonatas. While he seems to have been trying to write an "easy" piece, there are plenty of things here that make it quite tricky to play, notably the hand crossings in the development of the first movement and the polyrhythms in the varied repetitions of the rondo theme in the third movement. The term *alla tedesc*a in the bouncy and brilliant first movement's tempo indication refers to a German dance akin to a waltz. The second movement, an *Andante* in G minor, is a kind of pastoral bagatelle; short, simple, and direct in its emotional appeal. The *vivace* finale is a cheerful rondo whose theme uses a common sequence and thus feels wholly familiar even if you've never heard the piece.

The first of **Chaminade's Concert Etudes**, entitled *Scherzo*, is a playful and bravura study in staccato double notes, challenging the pianist with frequent leaps and hand crossings alongside the obvious difficulties of playing those staccato double notes lightly

and effortlessly. The second, *Automne*, was one of Chaminade's most popular works; she recorded a piano roll of it which can be heard online, and performed it on many of her recitals. The opening section in D-flat major presents a lyrical song-without-words with a memorable melody. A stormy F-minor section provides a dramatic change in the weather before the opening, seemingly unperturbed, returns. The third etude, *Fileuse*, features running sixteenth notes in 6/8 time circling in various ways to evoke the movement of a spinning wheel.

In the years 1820 to 1822, Beethoven worked on four major piano works: his last three sonatas, opp. 109-11, and the Diabelli Variations, op. 120. In **Op. 109**, Beethoven has recast the standard proportions of the sonata, with two short movements in sonata form followed by an extended set of variations that is longer than the first two movements combined. Within this unusual structure, Beethoven explores the widest possible range of emotional states. The first movement is unusual in having its two thematic areas in completely different tempo worlds—*Vivace ma non troppo* and *Adagio espressivo*. The second movement, *Prestissimo* in E minor, bursts into life as an impatient interruption of the first movement's tranquil ending. The music scurries busily, coming to rest briefly from time to time, with the bass line from the opening becoming the melody in the imitative development section. The theme of the last movement is one of Beethoven's most beautiful conceptions. The variations are unconventional in their flexibility with both melodic and harmonic motives. In the second variation, a seemingly new idea enters—a sequence of descending thirds and rising fourths that will ultimately become the theme of the op. 110 sonata. In the context of op. 109, it will become the basis

for important contrapuntal developments in the following three variations, which take the form of a two-part, three-part and four-part invention. The final variation brings back the motion of the theme and adds ever-accelerating trills until a climactic outburst of Bachian fantasy. The movement closes with a quiet reprise of the original theme.

The program continues after intermission with the rest of **Chaminade's Concert Etudes**. The fourth, *Appassionato*, is a dramatic (dare I say Beethovenian?) exercise in alternating double and single notes in C minor. It was originally composed as the finale of her Sonata in C minor, Op. 20 (the only context in which I have performed it before), but it fits the spirit of this set of etudes. The beautiful F-major *Impromptu* features interesting left-hand arpeggiations against a beautifully flexible melody. The G-major section that follows continues with faster left-hand filigree accompanying a gently fanfare-ish idea in double notes in the right hand. The final etude, *Tarantelle*, is a formidably difficult perpetual motion, brilliant throughout with its bravura displays of nonstop triplets.

Beethoven's final piano sonata, **Op. 111**, was completed in January 1822 and is composed of two movements. The first of these is in C minor, and aptly encapsulates Beethoven's "C-minor mood" (think of the Fifth Symphony, the Third Piano Concerto, or the "Pathétique" Sonata). The dramatic opening *Maestoso* recalls the Adagio espressivo material in the first movement of op. 109, but now recast as a French Overture. This introductory material leads directly into the *Allegro con brio ed appassionato*'s memorable opening gesture—the notes C, E-flat, B-natural,

fortissimo, preceded by an upward three-note flourish. There is a contrapuntal (fugal) development of this material, followed by a brief moment of repose in the second theme. The development presents a brief fugato on the opening motive. The movement concludes with a fadeout to C major, foreshadowing the calm to come. The expansive second movement, an *Arietta* with variations, is easily twice the length of the first, moving from calm to exuberance and back to calm. There is too much beauty and amazing music here to even begin to come to terms with in a program note; listening to and experiencing this journey in a live concert is a far better way to begin to understand the power of Beethoven's music.

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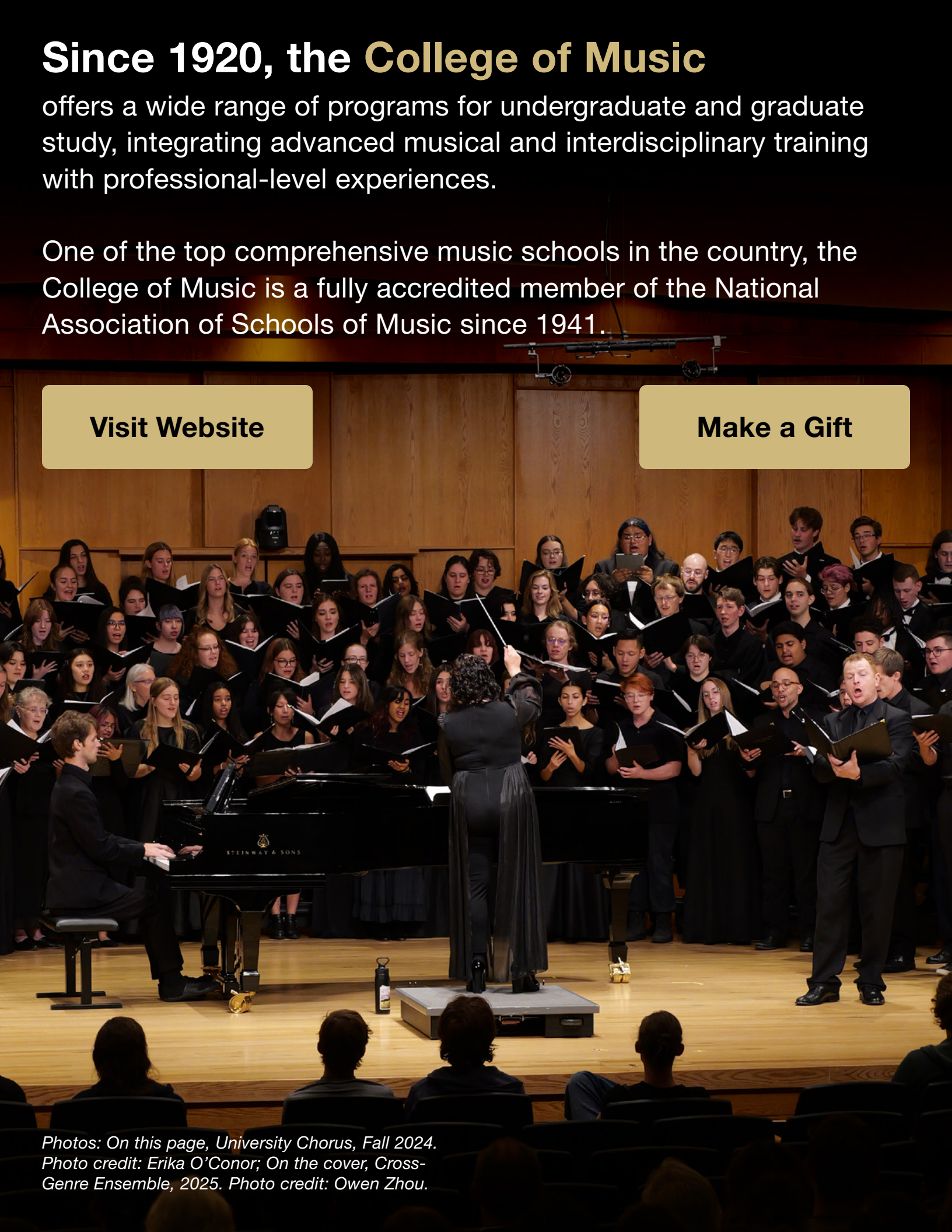

Photos: On this page, University Chorus, Fall 2024. Photo credit: Erika O'Conor; On the cover, Cross-Genre Ensemble, 2025. Photo credit: Owen Zhou.

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The Drowsy Chaperone *(2023).*
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