

## ANTON NEL, piano

Anton Nel, winner of the first prize in the 1987 Naumburg International Piano Competition at Carnegie Hall enjoys a remarkable and multifaceted career that has taken him throughout North and South America, Europe, Asia, and South Africa. Following an auspicious debut at the age of twelve with Beethoven's C Major Concerto after only two years of study, the Johannesburg native captured first prizes in all the major South African competitions while still in his teens, toured his native country extensively and became a well-known radio and television personality. A student of Adolph Hallis, he made his European debut in France in 1982, and in the same year graduated with highest distinction from the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. He came to the United States in 1983, attending the University of Cincinnati, where he pursued his Masters and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees under Bela Siki and Frank Weinstock. In addition to garnering many awards from his alma mater during this three-year period he was a top prizewinner at the 1984 Leeds International Piano Competition in England and won several first prizes at the Joanna Hodges International Piano Competition in Palm Desert in 1986.

Highlights of Mr. Nel's nearly three decades of concertizing include performances with the Cleveland Orchestra, the symphonies of Chicago, San Francisco, Seattle, Detroit, and London, among many others. (He has an active repertoire of more than 100 works for piano and orchestra.) Anton Nel has performed the Beethoven piano concerto cycle several times, most notably on two consecutive evenings with the Cape Philharmonic in 2003. He was also chosen to give the North American premiere of the newly discovered Piano Concerto No. 3 in E Minor by Felix Mendelssohn in 1992. Stephen Paulus composed a piano concerto for Mr. Nel and the acclaimed world premiere took place in New York in 2003.

As recitalist he has appeared at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Metropolitan Museum and the Frick Collection in New York, at the Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena, Davies Hall in San Francisco, and the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. Internationally he has performed recitals in major concert halls in Canada, England (Wigmore Hall in London), France, Holland (Concertgebouw in Amsterdam), Italy, Russia, Japan (Suntory Hall in Tokyo), Korea, and South Africa.

A favorite at summer festivals he has performed at the Ravinia Festival, at Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart Festival, as well as at the Aspen Music Festival (where he is on the artist-faculty), among many others. Possessing an encyclopedic chamber music repertoire he has, over the years, regularly collaborated with some of the world's foremost string quartets, instrumental soloists, and singers. With acclaimed violinist Sarah Chang he completed a highly successful tour of Japan as well as appearing at a special benefit concert for Live Music Now in London, hosted by HRH the Prince of Wales.

Eager to pursue dual careers in teaching and performing he was appointed to the faculty of the University of Texas at Austin at the age of 23, followed by professorships at the Eastman School of Music, and the University of Michigan, where he was chairman of the piano department. In September 2000, Anton Nel was appointed as the Priscilla Pond Flawn Regents Distinguished Professor of Piano and Chamber music at the University of Texas at Austin, where he teaches an international class of

students and now heads the Division of Keyboard Studies. Since his return he has also been the recipient of both the Austin-American Statesman's Critics Circle Award for his performance of the Rachmaninov Second Concerto, as well as the University Cooperative Society/College of Fine Arts award for extra-curricular achievement. In 2001 he was appointed Visiting "Extraordinary" Professor at the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa, and continues to teach master classes worldwide.

He has four solo CDs (including a recital disc for EMI) as well as several concerto and chamber music recordings to his credit.

Anton Nel became a citizen of the United States of America on September 11, 2003.

His website is [www.antonnel.com](http://www.antonnel.com)

#### BRIAN LEWIS, violin

One of the most versatile violinists on the current scene, Brian Lewis is an exceptionally gifted and charismatic artist. Acclaimed performances include concerto debuts in both New York's Carnegie Hall and Avery Fisher Hall, as well as performances with the Berlin (Germany), Louisiana, Kansas City, Syracuse, Odense (Denmark), Wichita, Hartford, Eugene, Spokane, and American Symphony orchestras, among others. In Asia, Mr. Lewis has appeared as soloist with the Taejon City Symphony in Korea, the Royal Metropolitan Orchestra in Japan, and the Taipei Conductors Orchestra in Taiwan. Activities in Central and South America include a residency in San Jose for the U.S.-Costa Rican Cultural Center, recitals and master classes throughout Honduras for the United States Information Agency, as well as concerto performances with the Philharmonic of Lima in Peru. His extensive solo recitals include performances on five continents in such countries as Australia, Canada, Denmark, England, France, the French West Indies, Taiwan, Puerto Rico, Mexico, and Japan, as well as appearances on the *What Makes it Great?* series with pianist Laura Kennedy and narrator Robert Kapilow in Kansas City, the Mostly Mozart Festival in New York, and cities across the United States. Mr. Lewis has made highly acclaimed recital debuts at both Wigmore Hall in London, and New York's Lincoln Center on the Great Performers Series. He has recorded six CDs, most recently for Delos as soloist with the London Symphony Orchestra of music by Leonard Bernstein and Hollywood composer Michael McLean. Radio and television appearances include performances on WNYC, WFMT (Chicago), National Public Radio, and CBS "Sunday Morning" in a feature story on Dorothy DeLay. He has also performed at the Aspen Music Festival, the Sunflower Music Festival, the St. Barth's Music Festival, The International Festival Institute at Round Top, the Casals Series, the Cape May Music Festival, the Evian Music Festival conducted by Mstislav Rostropovich, and at the Cabrillo Festival performing *The Red Violin* for composer John Corigliano's 60th birthday celebration. An advocate for music education in the schools, Mr. Lewis frequently presents concerts, workshops, and master classes for Young Audiences of Houston. Named National Artist of the Year in 1998 by Young Audiences, Inc., he was also presented the 2003 Fredell Lack Award by YAH for having performed for more than 165,000 young people in the Houston area over the past eight years. Mr. Lewis is on faculty at the University of Texas at Austin School of Music where he is the David and Mary Winton Green Chair Fellow in String Performance and Pedagogy. In 2005-06, Mr. Lewis received both the Texas Exes Teaching Award and the

School of Music Teaching Excellence Award. He is also the Artistic Director of the Starling-DeLay Symposium on Violin Studies at The Juilliard School in New York City, and concertmaster of the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra in Houston. At UT, Mr. Lewis is also the Artistic Director of the Starling Distinguished Violinist Series.

Mr. Lewis has won numerous young artists' competitions, including the grand prize in the Mid-America Violin Competition. In addition to the Waldo Mayo Talent Award, he holds both the Peter Mennin Prize and William Schuman Prize awarded by Juilliard for outstanding achievement and leadership in the field of music. Mr. Lewis was one of the first recipients of the Sony ES Award for Musical Excellence, and he has received two Elizabeth B. Koch Fellowships from the Kansas Cultural Trust. Known for his variety in programming and ability to communicate with audiences of all ages, Mr. Lewis has performed frequently as a member of the Kansas Arts Commission Touring Program and the Mid-America Arts Alliance Regional Touring Program. As a student of Eleanor Allen, Mr. Lewis began his violin studies at the age of four, and participated in the Ottawa Suzuki Strings program under the direction of his mother, Alice Joy Lewis. He later studied with Tiberius Klausner, and twice traveled to Japan where he studied with Dr. Shinichi Suzuki at the Talent Education Institute in Matsumoto. He holds both the Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from The Juilliard School where he was a student of Dorothy DeLay, Masao Kawasaki, and Hyo Kang.

#### ROGER MYERS, viola

Roger Myers enjoys an impressive record of performing and teaching both here and abroad. While he maintains a successful viola class at the University of Texas at Austin where he is Professor and Head of The String Division, he has traveled widely presenting critically acclaimed concerts and master classes in countries on three continents including Austria, Norway, Scotland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Mexico as well as the U.S.A.

He has been associated with some of the nation's most prestigious summer festivals including the Bowdoin Summer Music Festival in Maine and the International Festival Institute at Round Top, Texas. In June of 1997 he served as the youngest ever Artistic Director and Host Chairman of the XXV Silver Anniversary Viola congress, an event praised by the "Strad" magazine as a "joyful and instructive week. . . a mixture of edification and entertainment". He continues to serve on the faculty of the Idyllwild Arts Summer Music Program in California and has taught at the International School for Musical Arts in Canada. He regularly performs at the Festival de Musique on the French West Indian island of St. Barts and is an artist at the Sunflower Festival in Topeka Kansas and the Buzzards Bay Musicfest in Marion Massachusetts.

Roger Myers was born in Sydney, Australia where he played with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra while still a student. He has lived in the United States since 1987 when his Sydney Conservatorium String Quartet was invited to become the international quartet in residence at Michigan State University. Later he studied on scholarships with Donald McInnes at the University of Southern California and on completion of his Masters degree the string faculty named him its most outstanding graduate of the year.

Presenting solo and chamber performances hailed internationally, the Toronto Star described his playing as "Spirited" and the New Zealand Evening Post proclaimed him a "Fine violist" whose playing was "various and entertaining". Roger Myers has given chamber music performances with such artists as Lynn Harrell, Jean Barr, Martin Canin, Steve Doane, Sidney Harth, Yehonatan Berick, Norman Fischer, Jorja Fleezanis, Ronald Leonard, Martin Lovett, Donald McInnes, Kurt Nikkanen, James Parker, Tsuoshi Tsutsumi, Zvi Zeitlin, the Cavani and Miro String Quartets and the Dorian Wind Quintet. He has performed with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, as principal violist with the Santa Fe Pro Musica and had the honor of being asked to play with the New West Symphony Orchestra in Los Angeles as principal viola on tour with Andrea Bocelli. Chamber performances include concerts with the Camerata Pacifica chamber music organization in California and at the Niagara International Chamber Music Festival in Canada. In 2004 Roger had the honor last summer of performing as a featured soloist on the 100th birthday tribute concert to the great violist William Primrose at the XXXII International Viola Congress in Minneapolis and in 2005 enjoyed a successful Carnegie Hall debut with the newly formed Texas Piano Quartet.

Mr. Myers plays a beautiful and rare J.B. Guadagnini viola from Parma made in 1763 .

#### BION TSANG, cello

Cellist Bion Tsang has been internationally recognized as one of the outstanding instrumentalists of his generation: among his many honors are an Avery Fisher Career Grant, an MEF Career Grant and the Bronze Medal in the IX International Tchaikovsky Competition. He has been featured on America Online as CultureFinder's "Star Find of the Week," on the Internet Cello Society as "Artist of the Month," and most recently in print in the newly published book *21st Century Cellists*.

Mr. Tsang has appeared as soloist with such orchestras as the New York, Moscow and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestras, the National, American, Pacific, Delaware and Atlanta Symphony Orchestras, the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra and the Taiwan National Orchestra. In recent seasons, he made solo debuts at Orchestra Hall in Chicago with Zubin Mehta and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles with the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, and at the Esplanade in Boston with the Longwood Symphony Orchestra. He also gave the US premiere of the Enescu Symphonie Concertante, Op. 8 with Leon Botstein and the American Symphony Orchestra in Avery Fisher Hall, the US premiere of Tan Dun's Crouching Tiger Concerto for Cello Solo and Chamber Orchestra at Atlanta's Symphony Hall, the Boston premiere of the Korngold Cello Concerto, Op. 37, and the world premiere of a new concerto written for him by Noam David Elkies.

As a chamber musician, Mr. Tsang has collaborated with such artists as violinists Pamela Frank, Jaime Laredo, Cho-Liang Lin, Anne Akiko Meyers and Kyoko Takezawa, violist Michael Tree, cellist Yo-Yo Ma, bassist Gary Karr and pianist and Leon Fleisher. Mr. Tsang will perform recitals in Austin and Dallas with Mr. Fleisher again this season. Mr. Tsang has been a frequent guest artist of the Boston Chamber Music Society, Chamber Music International of Dallas, Da Camera of Houston, Camerata Pacifica of Los Angeles and Bargemusic in New York and performed at such festivals as

Marlboro Music Festival, the Tucson, Portland and Seattle Chamber Music Festivals, the Bard Festival, Bravo! Colorado and the Laurel Festival of the Arts, where he served as Artistic Director for ten years.

Mr. Tsang's discography includes a recently released recording of the Kodaly Sonata for Unaccompanied Cello, Op. 8 as well as a forthcoming set of the complete Bach Suites for Unaccompanied Cello recorded on the 1713 "Bass of Spain" Stradivarius. In recent years, in an unusual twist, he performed the Kodaly Sonata in a production of *There, After...* and the Bach Suites in Plaza X, both by the Hong Kong City Contemporary Dance Company. He has performed all six Bach Suites in one sitting first in Austin and later in Seattle at Nordstrom Recital Hall at Benaroya Hall. In addition, Mr. Tsang has toured the complete Beethoven works for cello and piano with pianist Anton Nel in, among other venues, the new Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall and Jordan Hall in Boston, with the latter performance recorded and commercially released on the Artek label.

Mr. Tsang made his professional debut at age eleven in two concerts with Zubin Mehta and the New York Philharmonic. That same year he returned to perform two more concerts with Maestro Mehta and the Philharmonic. One of these performances was broadcast worldwide on the CBS *Festival of Lively Arts* television series. While still in his teens, he became the youngest cellist ever to receive a Gregor Piatigorsky Memorial Prize and the youngest recipient ever of an Artists International Award. He was also chosen as a Finalist of the NFAA's Arts Recognition and Talent Search and subsequently as a Presidential Scholar in the Arts. At age nineteen, Tsang became the youngest cellist to win a prize in the VIII International Tchaikovsky Competition.

Born in Michigan of Chinese parents, Bion Tsang began piano studies at age six and cello at age seven. The following year, he entered The Juilliard School. Tsang received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Harvard University and his Master of Musical Arts degree from Yale University, where he studied with Aldo Parisot. His other principal cello teachers have included Ardyth Alton, Luis Garcia-Renart, William Pleeth, Channing Robbins, and Leonard Rose.

Mr. Tsang is on the music faculty of The University of Texas at Austin, where he was the recipient of the 2004 Texas Exes Teaching Award after just one year of service. In 2005-06 he was also visiting professor at Indiana University in Bloomington. In his spare time, Bion enjoys golf, following the ups and downs of the Miami Dolphins, and especially playing with his two sons, Bailey and Henry.