

Bard College Conservatory of Music

Degree Recital

Luca Sakon, *violin*

Neilson Chen, *piano*

Friday, May 2, 2025 at 4:00 PM

László Z. Bitó '60 Conservatory Building, Performance Space

Sonata for Violin and Piano in G Minor, L. 140 (1917)

Allegro vivo

Intermède: Fantasque et léger

Finale: Tres anime

Claude Debussy

(1862 - 1918)

Poème, op. 25 (1896)

Ernest Chausson

(1855 - 1899)

Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, op. 28 (1863)

Camille Saint-Saëns

(1835 - 1921)

— Intermission —

Violin Sonata in B Minor, P. 110 (1917)

Moderato

Andante espressivo

Passacaglia: Allegro moderato ma energico

Ottorino Respighi

(1879 - 1936)

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Luca Sakon began her violin studies at the age of 5 at the Special Music School in New York City. She debuted at Merkin Concert Hall at the age of 12, and during her high school years, she attended Manhattan School of Music Pre-College where she studied with Bela Horvath. She graduated from Barnard College in 2023 as an education studies major, and studied violin performance with Peter Winograd and Patinka Kopec through the Barnard-Manhattan School of Music Exchange Program.

Luca is passionate about chamber music and was in the Columbia Music Performance Program as a member of a piano trio which was coached by Eliot Bailen and selected to perform at venues such as Rose Studio and Carnegie's Weill Hall. Since then, she has collaborated with renowned artists including Arnaud Sussman, Luosha Fang and Raman Ramakrishnan. Luca has performed in masterclasses with Masao Kawasaki, Daniel Phillips, Tessa Larks, Benjamin Beilman, Joseph Lin and Aaron Rosand, and has participated in numerous summer festivals including the Sarasota Music Festival, Heifetz International Music Institute, and Moritzburg Festival Academy. She is excited and honored to be attending the Classical Music Institute and Pacific Music Festival this summer.

Luca is graduating from the Instrumental Arts masters program at Bard Conservatory where she is studying with Mira Wang under the Instrumental Arts Fellowship. Luca has served as concertmaster for the Bard Conservatory Orchestra and has also performed in The Orchestra Now (TON) under Maestro Leon Botstein. In addition to performing, she is committed to education equity and increasing access to music through engaging with various audiences.

Dr. Neilson Chen, a native of Taiwan, is a highly sought-after recitalist and collaborative pianist, whose thoughtful interpretations and dazzling technique have been described by the L.A. Times as "stunning." The recipient of Master's degrees from Taiwan and the University of Texas at Austin and a Doctor of Musical Arts from Arizona State University, Neilson has studied under such esteemed teachers as Constance Lee, Anne Epperson and Dr. Andrew Campbell. Currently, he is a Collaborative Pianist at The Orchestra Now (TÖN) and Bard College-Conservatory of Music as well as a Collaborative Pianist in Residence at Meadowmount School of Music. Over the course of his career, Neilson has been the recipient of many prestigious honors and awards, including winning the inaugural Duo Competition at Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, in 2019. Performing extensively throughout the United States and internationally, he has concertized in Germany, Luxemburg, France, Ireland, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. Honored to have performed in renowned venues, he appeared at the National Concert Hall in Taiwan in conjunction with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and in 2023 was the pianist for Bard College's performances at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. As a staff pianist for summer music festivals, worldwide appearances have included the Kathaumixw Choir Festival in Canada, Saarbùrg International Music Festival in Germany, the Vianden Music Festival and School in Luxemburg, and Rocky Ridge Music Center in Colorado. Recent collaborations with prestigious artists include Joshua Bell, Milena Pajaro-van de Stadt, Luosha Fang, Janet Sung, Raman Ramakrishnan and members of the Juilliard String Quartet. Committed to fostering the talent of younger musicians, Neilson is esteemed by many musicians as a colleague and a mentor.