

# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 26, 2025

## **The Philadelphia Orchestra Welcomes Cellists Jiayin He, Michael Katz, and Eugene Lin, and Violist Hsiang-Hsin Ching**

(*Philadelphia*, March 26, 2025)—The Philadelphia Orchestra and Music and Artistic Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin are pleased to announce the addition of **Jiayin He**, **Michael Katz**, and **Eugene Lin** to the Orchestra's cello section, and **Hsiang-Hsin Ching** to the Orchestra's viola section. Jiayin started with the Orchestra in February and Michael, Hsiang-Hsin, and Eugene will start in April, May, and September 2025, respectively.

"Jiayin, Michael, Eugene, and Hsiang-Hsin each bring incredible talent, a true passion for music-making, and an energetic spirit for collaboration," said Music and Artistic Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin. "They will be invaluable members of their respective sections and to the Orchestra as a whole. I look forward to working with them and to witnessing their contributions to the Orchestra's world-renowned string section."

Cellist **Jiayin He** is a candidate for the Master of Music degree at the Curtis Institute of Music, where he earned his bachelor's degree. He currently serves as principal cello for the Curtis Symphony Orchestra. Originally from Shanghai, China, he began studying the cello at the age of five. He made his debut performing Haydn's C-major Cello Concerto at age 11, followed by a performance of Lalo's Cello Concerto at the Shanghai Concert Hall with the Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra at age 12. Jiayin has gained international recognition winning prestigious awards, including First Prize at the 2013 Alice and Eleonore Schoenfeld International String Competition, First Prize at the 2012 Aiqin Chinese National Cello Competition, Second Prize at the 2014 Knushevitsky International Cello Competition, Second Prize at the 2013 David Popper International Cello Competition, and Third Prize at the Antonio Janigro International Cello Competition. He has been the recipient of full scholarships offered by the Seiji Ozawa Music Academy in Japan and the Morningside Music Bridge in Calgary for multiple years. From 2016 to 2018, he served as principal cello in opera productions conducted by Seiji Ozawa and performed in numerous concerts across Japanese cities, including Tokyo, Nagoya, Kyoto, and Matsumoto.

Grammy-nominated Israeli cellist **Michael Katz** has appeared as a soloist and chamber musician in venues such as Weill Recital Hall, Alice Tully Hall, David Geffen Hall, the Kennedy Center, the Kimmel

Center, Lucerne KKL, Tokyo's Oji Hall, and Jerusalem's Henry Crown Auditorium. His musicianship has been recognized with many awards, among them all three prizes at the 2011 Aviv Competition and First Prize at the Juilliard School's 2010 Concerto Competition and the 2005 Turjeman Competition. As the cellist of the Lysander Piano Trio, Michael was a winner of the 2012 Concert Artists Guild Competition and was awarded First Prize in the 2011 Coleman Chamber Ensemble Competition and 2011 J.C. Arriaga Chamber Music Competition. With the trio, he has released two albums and performed across 39 states, as well as Canada, Mexico, Denmark, and Israel. He has collaborated with artists such as Itzhak Perlman, Midori, Anthony Marwood, Donald Weilerstein, Peter Frankl, Roger Tapping, and Charles Neidich. Festival appearances include Ravinia, Music@Menlo, Lucerne, Mostly Mozart, Chamber Music Northwest, Bravo! Vail, Bard, Copenhagen, Festival Mozaic, Yellow Barn, Sarasota, Málaga Clásica, and the Holland Music Sessions. Michael has a great passion for expanding the cello and chamber music repertoire—he has premiered works by over 50 composers. He is also deeply committed to audience engagement and community outreach. He was a Fellow in Carnegie Hall's Ensemble Connect from 2014–16 and has performed dozens of outreach concerts in Japan, Myanmar, and Nepal with Midori's International Community Engagement Program. He received his Bachelor of Music from the New England Conservatory as a student of Laurence Lesser and his Master of Music from the Juilliard School where he studied with Joel Krosnick. He has completed a Doctor of Music degree at SUNY Stony Brook as a student of Colin Carr.

**Eugene Lin** is an accomplished cellist with a distinguished record of orchestral, competition, and festival experience. Currently based in Los Angeles, he has performed as a substitute cellist with esteemed ensembles, including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, and has held principal cello roles with the Pacific Music Festival, the American Youth Symphony, and the Colburn Orchestra. He has also excelled in international competitions, winning Second Prize at the Trondheim International Chamber Competition in 2023 and progressing to the semi-finals of the Geneva International Cello Competition in 2021. Additionally, Eugene was a quarterfinalist at the 2022 Queen Elisabeth Cello Competition and won First Prize at the National Taiwan Music Competition in 2013. Committed to musical growth and collaboration, he has participated in prestigious festivals, including the Ravinia Steans Music Institute, Taiwan Connection Music Festival, and the Heifetz Institute of Music. Currently pursuing a Professional Studies Certificate at the Colburn Conservatory of Music, Eugene previously earned a Performance Diploma from Colburn and has studied under renowned teachers including Clive Greensmith, Ben Hong, Ronald Leonard, and Hans Jensen.

**Hsiang-Hsin Ching**, a Taiwanese violist and Audio Engineering Society Gold Award–winning recording engineer, holds a Bachelor of Music in Recording Arts and Sciences and Viola Performance from the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University where she is currently also pursuing a Master of Music degree in Viola Performance under the guidance of Philadelphia Orchestra Principal Viola Choong-Jin Chang. She has appeared as a fellow in music festivals including the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, Taipei Music Academy and Festival, Aspen School of Music and Festival, and the New York String

Orchestra. She has performed in numerous venues across Europe, Asia, and the United States. As a chamber musician, she has performed in various venues including the Embassy of the Czech Republic, Meyerhoff Auditorium, Friedberg Hall, and the Van Cliburn Concert Hall with the Nosremé Quartet as the quartet-in-residence of the Texas Chamber Music Institute. Notable awards include First Prize in the 2024 Mary Graham Lesley Concerto Competition and Third Prize in the 2024 Yale Gordon Competition; she also appeared as a quarterfinalist in the prestigious Primrose International Viola Competition in 2024. She is currently serving as the musician-in-residence of Roland Park Place Senior Living, bringing music and joy to its residents.

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