

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who has supported and encouraged me in preparing for this junior recital. This performance reflects not only my own efforts, but also the care, guidance, and kindness of the many people who have walked alongside me throughout this journey.

I am especially thankful to Dr. Marsha and Mr. Kevin Lange for their generosity and warmth. They have created a place where I feel truly welcomed and at home, and their support has meant more to me than words can fully express.

I would like to offer a special and heartfelt thank you to my cello professor, Dr. Barbu, for her unwavering guidance, patience, and dedication. Her teaching has shaped me not only as a musician, but also as a person, and I am deeply grateful for all that she has invested in me. I will continue to strive to grow and become better, carrying forward what she has taught me.

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I am also incredibly grateful to the Grand Forks community, my friends, Faith Evangelical and its members. Your support, prayers, and kindness have lifted me up and reminded me that I am never alone.

Finally, thank you to everyone who has come to share in this recital. Your presence means so much to me, and I am truly honored to perform for you.

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VICTOR CHUKWU, CELLO

DR. YUKYUNG HWANG, PIANO

JUNIOR RECITAL

April 7, 2026 | 7:30 pm

Josephine Campbell Recital Hall | Hughes Fine Arts Center

PROGRAM

Cello Concerto in E Minor, Op. 85 (1919)

Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)

I. Adagio – Moderato

II. Allegro molto

III. Adagio

IV. Allegro – Moderato

PROGRAM NOTES

Edward Elgar composed his Cello Concerto in E Minor in the aftermath of World War I, completing it in 1919. It was a period of personal and national reflection for the composer, and this work reflects a deep sense of introspection, melancholy, and understated nobility. Written for the great cellist Felix Salmond, the concerto was premiered in 1919 at London's Queen's Hall.

Unlike Elgar's earlier, more extroverted works, such as the Enigma Variations or the First Symphony, the Cello Concerto is marked by its intimacy, restraint, and lyrical depth. The concerto's four movements flow without the fiery virtuosity typical of romantic concertos, favoring instead a chamber-like dialogue between the soloist and orchestra.

The first movement, Adagio – Moderato, opens with a quiet orchestral introduction, soon giving way to the cello's deeply expressive themes. It establishes the work's reflective tone, alternating between lyrical introspection and moments of subtle tension. The second movement, Allegro molto, is more agitated and rhythmically complex, yet retains a sense of elegiac beauty. The Adagio third movement offers one of the cello's most tender and haunting melodies, showcasing Elgar's gift for intimate, singing lines. The finale, Allegro – Moderato, revisits earlier themes and gradually moves toward a quiet, almost resigned conclusion.

Elgar's Cello Concerto is often associated with the composer's own sense of mortality and the loss experienced after the Great War. Its enduring power lies not in grand gestures but in its profound emotional honesty, making it one of the most beloved works in the cello repertoire.