

AT THE ART CENTER

onstage

2011 | 2012 SEASON

Bold-Brilliant-Beautiful

Gleb Ivanov | pianist

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 2012 | 8 PM

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Program GLEB IVANOV

PROGRAM

Gleb Ivanov | *pianist*

Sonata in C major Hob.XVI:48

Andante con espressione

Rondo: Presto

Franz Joseph Haydn

(1732–1809)

Sonata in A minor, D. 784

Allegro giusto

Andante

Allegro vivace

Franz Schubert

(1797–1828)

INTERMISSION

Etude-Tableau in A minor, Op. 39, No. 2

Melody in E major, Op. 3, No. 3

Humoresque, Op. 10, No. 5

Sergei Rachmaninoff

(1873–1943)

Funerailles

(Harmonies poetiques et religieuses, S.173: no. 7)

Franz Liszt

(1811–1886)

Valse de l'opera Faust (S. 407)

Franz Liszt - Charles Gounod

(1811–1886) (1818–1893)

Biography GLEB IVANOV



GLEB IVANOV | *pianist*

Born in Moscow, Gleb Ivanov comes from a family of musicians, and began to accompany his father's vocal recitals at the age of eight. He has also played the clarinet and the accordion, and holds a diploma in clarinet from Lyardov High School. Mr. Ivanov graduated from the Moscow Conservatory, and worked with Nina Svetlanova at the Manhattan School of Music, where he received the Harold and Helene Schonberg Piano Scholarship.

Mentored by the late Mstislav Rostropovich, Mr. Ivanov performed with the famous maestro as the soloist with the Nizhny Novgorod Philharmonic. He has also appeared with the Moscow State Orchestra in the Great Hall at Moscow Conservatory, and at the Pushkin, Glinka, and Scriabin Museums in Moscow. In 2005, the young artist won the Young Concert Artists International Auditions. He made his American debut recitals at Carnegie's Zankel Hall in New York and at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., to rave reviews. "The 23-year-old Russian pianist Gleb Ivanov is eerily like the ghost of Horowitz," wrote *The Washington Times*.

Program Notes **GLEB IVANOV**

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732 – 1809)
Sonata in C major Hob.XVI:48

Joseph Haydn is often called the “father of the symphony” and the “founder of the string quartet,” although in fact he had an equally important part to play in the development of the piano repertoire. This disparate point of view has a long history, dating back to the eighteenth century, and in the comments of contemporary critics. In 1780, a German critic wrote of Haydn’s piano sonatas, “One does not find here the strong and original mood that prevails in the composer’s new *Quattros* and *Quintettos* but does find a highly pleasing mood and entertaining wit.”

Of great importance to these works, and indeed to Haydn’s artistic development as a whole, was his relationship to Mozart. The unparalleled friendship and mutual influence of these two great musicians is known to all. It is evident that even before the first meeting of the two composers, Haydn had already studied Mozart’s work since some of his sonatas for the pianoforte, published before the date of that meeting, show clear signs of Mozart’s influence. But equally significant is the instrument itself.

The C Major Sonata is an important transitional stylistic work, part of a series of “exuberant” works composed after Haydn acquired a fortepiano by the Viennese builder Wenzel Schanz in October, 1788. Karl Geiringer quotes a letter by the composer praising the “light touch and comfortable action” of the Schanz fortepiano compared to the more expensive Walter instruments preferred by Mozart. This ease is reflected in the highly imaginative two movements of the Sonata and *Andante con espressione* with an ornate theme which is varied in a series of fantasy variations alternating major and minor modes, followed by a thrilling monothematic Rondo.

Franz Schubert (1797 – 1828)
Piano Sonata in A minor, D. 784

Franz Schubert, born in Vienna, son of a schoolmaster, showed an early, unmistakable musical gift that led him quickly to studies with the Emperor’s music director, Antonio Salieri. By the time he was 17, the young man was an assistant at his father’s school, and had begun to make the acquaintance of numerous poets, lawyers, singers, and actors, who soon would be the principal

performers of his works at private concerts in their homes or in those of their wealthier friends. The young Schubert lived, for a time, in the home of one of these friends, and with a piano at the residence, Schubert set about writing several piano sonatas. Unhappily, in 1823 a busy schedule of composition and performance was interrupted by illness so severe that Schubert was sent to the Allgemeines Krankenhaus — the General Hospital, in Vienna. Recuperation was slow and gradual, and the Piano Sonata in A minor was the first sonata written by the restored composer. It is arguably his darkest work for piano, opening with a simple, hauntingly ghostly theme.

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873 – 1943)
Etude-Tableau in A minor, Op. 39, No. 2
Melody in E major, Op. 3, No. 3
Humoresque, Op. 10, No. 5

Born into a wealthy family in Czarist Russia, Sergei Rachmaninoff had his first piano lessons with his mother at the family estate. He continued his studies at the conservatory in St. Petersburg before going on to Moscow. While still a student, he wrote a one act opera and a set of piano pieces, Op. 3, which contains the popular and famous Prelude in C sharp minor, a piece he came to detest through 40 years of audiences demanding it as an encore at his piano recitals. Rachmaninoff’s first symphony was a complete flop with the critics, and this disastrous reception, coupled with his distress over the Orthodox Church’s objection to his marrying a cousin, led to a nervous breakdown. But happily a course of therapy with psychologist Nikolai Dahl helped him recover his confidence, and it was to Dr. Dahl that the composer dedicated his Piano Concerto No. 2. The piece was very well received at its premiere, at which Rachmaninoff played the solo part himself, and it remains one of his most popular compositions, gaining fame from its use in the films *Brief Encounter* and *The Seven Year Itch*, as well as having its themes made into popular songs in the 1940s.

It was as a pianist that Rachmaninoff made his first tour of the United States in 1909, an event for which he wrote his Piano Concerto No. 3. This successful tour made him very popular in America, and he immigrated to New York following the Russian Revolution of 1917. His compositional output started to slow down to some degree, partly because he was required to spend much of

his time performing in order to support himself, partly from homesickness. But one of his best known works, his *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* was written in the United States, as were the Corelli Variations, a group of 20 variations on Arcangelo Corelli's Sonata for violin, violone, and harpsichord (Op. 5, No. 12). Corelli's work was itself a set of variations on the La Folia theme, which was popularly used as the basis for variations in Baroque music. Most of Rachmaninoff's pieces are in a quite traditional romantic style, rather akin to Tchaikovsky, although a few of his later works are in a somewhat more emotionally detached style.

Franz Liszt (1811 – 1886)

Funerailles

(*Harmonies poetiques et religieuses*, S. 173; No. 7)

Franz Liszt, Hungarian pianist and composer, was the son of Adam Liszt, a steward in the service of Prince Esterhazy, and a musical amateur sufficiently gifted to teach his son the basics of pianoforte playing. A few local performances by the nine-year-old pianist were successful enough to persuade several Hungarian noblemen to guarantee him sufficient means to continue his studies for six years. For that purpose he went to Vienna, where he made his first public appearance on December 1, 1822. His genius was acknowledged with an enthusiasm in which the entire musical public joined unanimously. The young Liszt took lessons from Czerny and Salieri. After his second Vienna concert, Beethoven publicly kissed him on the forehead. He was introduced to Schubert.

Liszt settled in Paris for some years, and while there became acquainted with the leaders of French literature, Victor Hugo, Lamartine, and Georges Sand. More important, he met musical colleagues who would profoundly influence his development: Chopin and Berlioz. And his increasing performing success resulted in a move toward the career of a virtuoso. The example of Paganini was irresistible, as was the great violinist's music. Liszt's transcriptions for pianoforte of five of the Paganini Caprices and "La Campanella" were published in 1840.

This was the period of Liszt's greatest brilliance and success. He traveled almost incessantly from one country to another. He was lionized everywhere he went as no virtuoso had been before. His travels covered the whole of Europe, from Portugal to

Turkey and Russia. And when he closed his career as a virtuoso, he accepted a permanent engagement as conductor of the court theatre at Weimar, with the distinct purpose of becoming the advocate of the rising musical generation. Liszt hoped to perform works that might otherwise have little chance of seeing the light of the stage. Some of the works that he rescued from oblivion were Wagner's "Lohengrin," "Tannhauser," and "The Flying Dutchman;" "Benvenuto Cellini" by Berlioz; Schumann's "Genoveva;" music to Byron's "Manfred;" and Schubert's "Alfonso und Estrella." For a time, the small provincial city of Weimar was once again the artistic center of Germany, as it had been in the days of Goethe, Schiller, and Herder.

Charles Gounod (1818 – 1893)

Valse de l'opera Faust (S. 407)

Charles Gounod was born in Paris, the son of a pianist mother and an artist father. His mother was his first piano teacher, but he ultimately entered the Paris Conservatory, and studied with Fromental Halevy. In 1839 he won the Prix de Rome, and while in Italy studied the music of Palestrina and other sacred works of the sixteenth century; these he never ceased to cherish. An 1855 performance of Gounod's Saint Cecilia Mass, was very well received, and dates his fame as a noteworthy composer.

Fanny Mendelssohn, sister of Felix Mendelssohn, introduced the keyboard music of Johann Sebastian Bach to Gounod, who came to revere Bach. For him, *The Well-Tempered Clavier* was "the law to pianoforte study...the unquestioned textbook of musical composition." It inspired Gounod to devise an improvisation of a melody over the C major Prelude from the collection's first book. To this melody, Gounod fitted the words of the *Ave Maria*, resulting in a setting that became world famous.

Gounod wrote his first opera, *Sapho*, in 1851, but it was a commercial failure. He had no great theatrical success until *Faust* (1859), derived from Goethe. This remains the composition for which he is best known, and although it took a while to achieve popularity, it became one of the most frequently staged operas of all time. No fewer than 2,000 performances of the work took place by 1975 at the Paris Opera alone, not counting other theaters.

Thank you

ON STAGE 2011-12 SEASON UPCOMING CONCERTS

FRIDAY, MARCH 2, 2012

Fauré Quartett



SPECIAL SEASON HIGHLIGHT CONCERT!

THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 2012

Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio



SATURDAY, APRIL 21, 2012

Igor Begelman | clarinet
with **Phoebus Three**



CONCERTS BEGIN AT 8 PM

CONCERT TICKETS

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