



FRIENDS OF  
CHAMBER  
MUSIC  
DENVER

# GARRICK OHLSSON PIANO

FEBRUARY 20, 2018

**LUDWIG  
VAN BEETHOVEN**  
(1770-1827)

**Sonata No. 8 in C Minor, Op. 13, "Pathétique"**  
Grave, Allegro di molto e con brio  
Adagio cantabile  
Rondo: Allegro

**ALEXANDER  
SCRIABIN**  
(1871-1915)

**Selections**  
Étude, Op. 65, no. 1  
Étude in D-flat Major, Op. 8, no. 10  
Prelude, Op. 59, no. 2  
Poème in F-sharp Major, Op. 32, no. 1

Sonata No. 5, Op. 53, "Poem of Ecstasy"

## INTERMISSION

**FRANZ SCHUBERT**  
(1797-1828)

**Sonata No. 21 in B-flat Major, D. 960 (Op. posth)**  
Molto moderato  
Andante sostenuto  
Scherzo: Allegro vivace con delicatezza  
Allegro ma non troppo



**GARRICK OHLSSON**

*piano*

**GARRICK OHLSSON, PIANO**

Since his triumph as winner of the 1970 Chopin International Piano Competition, pianist Garrick Ohlsson has established himself worldwide as a musician with authoritative interpretive and technical prowess. Although long regarded as one of the world's leading advocates of the music of Frédéric Chopin, Mr. Ohlsson commands an enormous repertoire, which ranges over the entire piano literature. A student of the late Claudio Arrau, Mr. Ohlsson has come to be noted for his masterful performances of the works of Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert, as well as the Romantic repertoire. To date he has at hand more than 80 concertos, ranging from Haydn and Mozart to works of the 21st century, many commissioned for him. This season, that vast repertoire can be sampled as he performs in cities including St. Louis, Washington D.C., Cincinnati, San Francisco, Portland, OR, Prague, Stockholm, Wrocław, and Strasbourg. In recital he can be heard in New York's Tully Hall, Seattle, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, and Puerto Rico. At the invitation of Music Director Krzysztof Urbanski he will appear twice during the season with the Indianapolis Symphony – first playing two Prokofiev concerti in a weekend in which all five will be programmed, and returning later in the season with Tchaikovsky's renowned Concerto No.1.

A frequent guest with the orchestras in Australia, Mr. Ohlsson has recently visited Perth, Brisbane, Melbourne,

Sydney, Adelaide, and Hobart as well as the New Zealand Symphony in Wellington and Auckland. An avid chamber musician, Mr. Ohlsson has collaborated with the Cleveland, Emerson, and Tokyo string quartets, and this fall he toured with the Takács Quartet. Together with violinist Jorja Fleezanis and cellist Michael Grebanier, he is a founding member of the San Francisco-based FOG Trio. Mr. Ohlsson has also appeared in recital with such legendary vocal artists as Magda Olivero, Jessye Norman, and Ewa Podles.

Mr. Ohlsson can be heard on the Arabesque, RCA Victor Red Seal, Angel, BMG, Delos, Hänssler, Nonesuch, Telarc, Hyperion, and Virgin Classics labels. His ten-disc set of the complete Beethoven Sonatas for Bridge Records has garnered critical acclaim, including a Grammy for Vol. 3. The latest CDs in his ongoing association with Bridge Records are the Complete Scriabin Sonatas, *“Close Connections,”* a recital of 20<sup>th</sup>-Century pieces, and two CDs of works by Liszt. Most recently, both Brahms concerti and Tchaikovsky’s second piano concerto were released on live performance recordings with the Melbourne and Sydney Symphonies on their own recording labels, and Mr. Ohlsson was featured on Dvořák’s piano concerto in the Czech Philharmonic’s recordings of the composer’s complete symphonies and concertos, released July of 2014 on the Decca label.

A native of White Plains, N.Y., Garrick Ohlsson began his piano studies at the age of 8, at the Westchester Conservatory of Music, and at 13 he entered The Juilliard School in New York City. His musical development has been influenced by a succession of distinguished teachers, most notably Claudio Arrau, Olga Barabini, Tom Lishman, Sascha Gorodnitzki, Rosina Lhévinne, and Irma Wolpe. Although he won First Prizes at the 1966 Busoni Competition in Italy and the 1968 Montréal Piano Competition, it was winning the Gold Medal at the 1970 International Chopin Competition in Warsaw that brought him worldwide recognition as one of the finest pianists of his generation (and he remains the single American with this distinction). Since then he has made nearly a dozen tours of Poland, where he retains immense personal popularity. Mr. Ohlsson was awarded the Avery Fisher

Prize in 1994 and received the 1998 University Musical Society Distinguished Artist Award in Ann Arbor, MI. He is also the 2014 recipient of the Jean Gimbel Lane Prize in Piano Performance from the Northwestern University Bienen School of Music. He makes his home in San Francisco.

Opus 3 Artists provides exclusive representation for Mr. Ohlsson.

## NOTES

*Program Notes © Elizabeth Bergman*

### BEETHOVEN: SONATA NO. 8 IN C MINOR, OP. 13 "PATHETIQUE"

#### IN BRIEF

**BORN:** December 1770, Bonn, Germany

**DIED:** March 26, 1827, Vienna, Austria

**FIRST PUBLISHED:** 1799, dedicated to Prince Karl von Lichnowsky

**ESTIMATED DURATION:** 20 minutes

Beethoven's life story has become the stuff of legend, owing partly to the political, personal, and even artistic crises he experienced: the Napoleonic wars, unrequited love, deafness, the emergence of the composer as an independent artist freed from the service of church or court, the beginnings of Romanticism and the ideal of absolute music. But historians have also tended to embellish his biography, seeking to read the man into the music and vice versa.

So here are the basics, unromanticized: Beethoven was born in Bonn in 1770, the son of a court musician. At age 13 he too took a position in the court orchestra, then in 1792 struck out on his own, moving from his provincial hometown to the great musical capital of Vienna. There he studied for a time with Joseph Haydn and made a living performing in music salons. Instead of relying on aristocratic patronage, however, Beethoven depended on commissions. From 1800, his emotional and psychological outlook was clouded by the onset of deafness; it appears that he even contemplated suicide, the evidence contained in a famous letter of 1802 known as the Heiligenstadt Testament. By 1815, he was almost completely deaf and had to rely on his inner ear to guide him in composing. He

never married, though he did end up with a family. When his brother Kaspar died, Beethoven became embroiled in a prolonged battle with his sister-in-law for custody of his nephew. He won, but their relationship was strained at best. In 1827, Beethoven died at age 57.

He left us with nine symphonies, newly monumental in scope and ambition; sixteen string quartets of unprecedented complexity; and thirty-two piano sonatas that almost immediately defined—and redefined—the genre.

Consider the slow, dramatic opening of the “Pathétique” Sonata, composed in 1799. Its powerful *pathos* clutches listeners by the throat. (“Pathétique” does not mean “pathetic” here, in the sense of pitiable, but rather full of feeling.) The ruminative mood is suddenly broken. A cascading scale, the spark that runs along the fuse, sets off an Allegro explosion. Rumbling octave tremolos seem to pull at the legs of a rising chordal melody in the right hand. The slow introduction returns to mark both the beginning of the development and the coda at the end such that the two moods alternate throughout the first movement.

The lyrical Adagio breaks the cycle of aggressive attack and fleeting respite, offering the soothing comforts of a hymn. The finale, too, contains a calm central episode, and a series of short scales at the very end hints at a more reflective ending. But crashing chords bring the sonata to a dramatic conclusion. Never before had the piano sonata been so hard-hitting—either musically or emotionally.

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## IN BRIEF

**BORN:** December 25, 1871, Moscow, Russia

**DIED:** April 14, 1915, Moscow, Russia

## SCRIABIN: SELECTIONS

As Alexander Scriabin (1871-1915) matured as a composer, he shed the influences of the German Romantics and embraced the aesthetics of the Russian Symbolists. The Symbolist movement was first associated with literature before spreading to the visual arts and music. Art was meant to serve as a gateway, a point of departure to other realms beyond the material world. Scriabin believed that art could unlock the mysteries of the universe, using the key of new musical techniques.

Program Notes  
*Continued*

ÉTUDE, OP. 65,  
NO. 1

ÉTUDE IN D-FLAT  
MAJOR, OP. 8,  
NO. 10

PRELUDE, OP. 59,  
NO. 2

*Tonight marks the first  
performance of these  
works on our series.*

POÈME IN F-SHARP  
MAJOR, OP. 32,  
NO. 1

*Last performed on our  
series October 4, 2011, Yuja  
Wang, piano.*

SONATA NO. 5,  
OP. 53, "POEM OF  
ECSTASY"

Grand orchestral fantasies aside, Scriabin was in essence a pianist, a child prodigy who loved to play Chopin. Like Chopin (and Debussy and Bach before them all), Scriabin wrote sets of preludes and études. They chart his move away from traditional tonality and toward new harmonic idioms intended to capture a world beyond. In particular, Scriabin explored non-diatonic, non-traditional scales and chords.

Étude Op. 65, no. 1 pounds out dissonant ninths (rather than more conventional octaves) in the right hand. Here Scriabin creates a glissando-like effect with a blur of ninths sweeping upward. In contrast, Scriabin composed the études of Op. 8 to focus on the left hand, perhaps wary of further taxing his right hand after injuring it in 1891 due to excessive practicing.

Prelude, Op. 59, no. 2 was composed in 1910, near the end of Scriabin's life. Marked "savage, bellicose," the music exemplifies Scriabin's creative and innovative harmonic language. The interval of a tritone—a symmetrical division of the octave—is emphasized throughout and is especially easy to hear in the left-hand pounding octaves. Nearly every octave in the right hand is marked with an accent so that the music exactly captures a brutal, yet beautiful belligerence.

At the time Scriabin composed the Two Poèmes, Op. 32, he was fascinated by the title *poème* and the ideal of the poetic as something ineffable. Just what this lyrical, yet restless poem captures remains up to the listener to determine.

Scriabin explored unusual scales, harmonies, and forms, while also experimenting with synesthesia, the blending of the sensory experiences, in search of the "ecstasy" of artistic and spiritual revelation. Scriabin's most famous work, *The Poem of Ecstasy*, reflects a spiritual striving for another world, the search for another level of perception in a different configuration of space and time.

The brief, single-movement sonata is a companion piece to the symphonic *Poem of Ecstasy*. Both works reference the same poem by the composer himself:

I call you to life, oh mysterious forces!  
Buried in the obscure depths  
Of the creative mind, sketchy  
Outlines of life, to you I bring my proud spirit.

Like Beethoven's "Pathétique," Scriabin's Sonata No. 5 opens with a stark contrast: a shockingly brusque opening is followed by a dreaming, free-floating meditation (tonality is nearly meaningless in this piece). A kaleidoscope of musical moments ensues, including sprightly music that begins cheerfully enough but soon becomes a bit unhinged into slow, chromatic muddles of sound and glassine octaves that reach into the stratosphere.

*Last performed on our  
series October 4, 2011,  
Yuja Wang, piano*

## IN BRIEF

**BORN:** January 31, 1797, Aisergrund, Vienna, Austria

**DIED:** November 19, 1828, Vienna, Austria

**FIRST PERFORMED:** September 27, 1828

**MOST RECENT FRIENDS OF CHAMBER MUSIC**

**PERFORMANCE:** January 9, 2013, Paul Lewis, piano.

**ESTIMATED DURATION:** 37 minutes

**SCHUBERT:  
SONATA NO. 21  
IN B-FLAT  
MAJOR, D. 960**

As with Beethoven, Franz Schubert (1797-1828) has often been cast in the mold of the suffering artist. Yet in truth, he was an affable, social person with the typical tastes and habits of a man of his time. Schubert was the twelfth child of Maria Katharina and Franz Theodor Schubert, an elementary school teacher. He probably began composing at age thirteen, after receiving commendation for his music skill from his teachers. His first public recognition came in 1814, when his Mass in F was played. He won a position in the Imperial Court Chapel Choir in Vienna, and thereafter received the best musical training in the most musical city in Europe.

The musicians in Schubert's close circle of friends actively performed and preserved his earliest compositions. After 1821, when his acclaimed art song "The Elf King" was premiered, his career took off. His music began to be published, and he was happy to compose on commission, specializing first in profitable domestic genres before turning to large-scale symphonic and operatic composition. He died in 1828, earning the sad distinction of being the shortest-lived composer of his stature.

In the very last weeks of his life Schubert completed his last three piano sonatas, monumental works of profound beauty and feeling. Contrasts here are more subtle and less dramatic, but all the more captivating perhaps for being somewhat sublimated. In the first movement of D. 960, for example, the gorgeous serenity of the lazily circular opening theme is disturbed by a low, almost menacing trill. Listeners have long sensed the trill as a premonition—a cry from beyond, the primal fear of the dark.

Despite the hint of the demonic, Schubert's music remains as unfailingly elegant and melodic as it is expansive. The capacious first movement is followed by an equally unhurried Andante and ebullient Scherzo. In the Finale, the jocular theme is interrupted by startling octave punctuations that recall, in their effect, the trills in the first movement. Behind such beauty lurks something unseemly, the full force of which is unleashed in a dramatic episode. Yet music—and life—are here to be savored, and the brash, brief coda sounds almost like peals of laughter in the face of death.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Have you had the chance to visit FCM's website lately? Here are a few things you'll find:

- Artist and program information for all upcoming concerts, including links to purchase single tickets.
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### Pre-Concert Happy Hours at the Pioneer!

Join us prior to each concert for tacos, margaritas, and conversation at the Pioneer Bar, 2401 S. University Blvd., just around the corner from the Newman Center. We will have an area reserved for Friends of Chamber Music to gather for food and drinks beginning at 5:30 p.m. Whether you are a new subscriber or a longtime supporter, we hope you will stop by for a chance to get to know your fellow concert-goers.

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## MUSIC IN THE GALLERIES

For a third year, the Clyfford Still Museum is partnering with Friends of Chamber Music and Swallow Hill Music to offer a new way to encounter the work of Clyfford Still, the great American abstractionist. Music is free with admission to the galleries. FCM patrons can purchase \$5 half price tickets (if purchased in advance) to enter the museum on performance days. Link (with discount code) is available on our website. Note: Seating is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis.

All concerts will be held on Sundays at the Clyfford Still Museum, 1250 Bannock Street, Denver.

**MARCH 11, 2018, 2:00 - 3:00 PM**

Ensemble Faucheux

Featuring Robyn Julian (violin), Ben Tomkins (violin), Catherine Beeson (viola), and Heidi Mausbach (cello). Program will include an eclectic mix of highly personal works for string quartet by Ben Tomkins, John Corigliano, Sahba Aminikia and others.

**MAY 13, 2018, 2:00 - 3:00 PM**

Patterson/Sutton Duo

Featuring Kim Patterson on cello and Patrick Sutton on guitar. The program will feature Hector Villa-Lobos's Aria from Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5, Ricardo Iznaola's Musique de Salon, and a new work by Welsh composer, Stephen Goss.



## MUSIC WITH FRIENDS

### Featuring the Altius Quartet

Thursday, March 22, 2018

6:30 – 7:30 PM

Syntax Physic Opera

554 S. Broadway, Denver

Join Friends of Chamber Music and the Altius Quartet for our next “Music with Friends” concert at Syntax Physic Opera on Thursday, March 22, 2018, 6:30 – 7:30 PM. The Altius will present a “Shuffle” concert – an interactive experience where audience participation is a must. Choosing from a wide-ranging “menu” of pieces— from Haydn and Beethoven to Led Zeppelin and A-Ha — audience members will select what they want the quartet to play. Release your inner DJ as you create a set list with your friends!

The Altius Quartet has performed in recitals and festivals throughout the world and strives to communicate the art of chamber music to a more diverse audience through community engagement and innovative repertoire. Join us for a night of great music!

Concert is free to the public. Seating is limited – come early to grab a seat and enjoy some great happy hour food and drink specials. Questions? Call 303-388-9839 or email [tickets@friendsofchambermusic.com](mailto:tickets@friendsofchambermusic.com).

# MUSIC IN THE COMMUNITY

## MASTER CLASSES



On Tuesday evening, January 9, Igor Levit conducted a Master Class at the University of Denver with two students from the Lamont School of Music. Mr. Levit accompanied the first student, who performed the first movement of Beethoven's Fifth Piano Concerto, then coached the second student in a performance of Debussy's *Images*. Generously sharing insight on technique and performance with a warm dose of humor, Mr. Levit offered advice that the students clearly appreciated.



On February 5, Berlin Philharmonic Wind Quintet members Walter Seyfarth, clarinet, and Marion Reinhard, bassoon, conducted Master Classes at the University of Denver Lamont School of Music. Students of Clarinet Faculty member Jeremy Reynolds performed works of Bruch, Brahms, Cruchell, and Copland, while students of Bassoon Faculty member Martin Kuuskmann played works of Mozart, Saint-Saëns, and Shostakovich. Nine Lamont musicians, from freshmen to graduate students, enjoyed invaluable coaching from these world-class Berlin Philharmonic artists.



## MUSIC CREATION RESIDENCY

Friends of Chamber Music sponsored a Music Creation Residency for 114 second graders at Park Hill Elementary, December 18 – 21. Taught by members of The Playground Ensemble, these students learned to Soundpaint, a hand gesture-based composition language.

Students used percussion instruments to perform as an ensemble, with other class members leading the group in spontaneous compositions. Soundpainting will be incorporated into the school's spring concert.



## CORPORATE OUTREACH

The Altius Quartet performed at Four Winds Interactive on January 12, part of an FCM effort to reach new audiences at local high-tech companies. Playing Mendelssohn's String Quartet No. 6, the Altius demonstrated how an ensemble works on communication, conflict resolution, and leadership, issues that resonated with the listeners in this business setting.



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## BRINGING MUSIC TO LIFE

### **2018 Instrument Drive, March 5-17**

Learning to play an instrument can have a profound, positive impact on a child, teaching valuable life skills and boosting confidence and self-esteem. And that instrument you have at home can help make it happen.



From March 5 - 17, Bringing Music to Life will hold the 2018 Instrument Drive, collecting donations of gently-used band and orchestra instruments that will be repaired and awarded to deserving music programs throughout the state.

Last year more than 630 instruments were given to 53 elementary, middle and high schools in Colorado. However, many more children want to learn to play who cannot afford to rent or buy an instrument. If you have an instrument you can donate, please do so beginning March 5th.

Even if you don't have an instrument, you can help by contributing to Bringing Music to Life's repair fund. \$150 is all it takes to repair a donated instrument and put it in the hands of a child. Complete information about the upcoming drive is available at [www.bringmusic.org](http://www.bringmusic.org).

**THE FOLLOWING FRIENDS** have made gifts in the last 12 months. Your generous support is invaluable in assuring our continued standard of excellence. Thank you!

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 Paul Stein  
 Karen Swisshelm  
 Lincoln Tague  
 Barbara & Edward Towbin

Suzanne Walters  
 Barbara Walton

#### *MEMORIAL GIFTS*

*In memory of Henry Claman*  
 Carol & Garry Horle  
 Paul & Carol Lingenfelter

*In memory of Sarah Stern Fox*  
 Alix & John Corboy  
 Rosemarie & Bill Murane  
 Kathy Newman &  
   Rudi Hartmann  
 Michele Price  
 Myra & Robert Rich

*In memory of George Gibson*  
 Leslie Baldwin  
 Sue Lubeck  
 Rosemarie & Bill Murane

*In memory of Rogers Hauck*  
 Sandra Ahlquist  
 Anonymous  
 Bruce & Julene Campbell  
 Alix & John Corboy  
 Richard Foster & Tanis Bula  
 Yanita Rowan  
 Florence Seccombe  
 Melissa & Paul Steen  
 Ronald Swenson  
 Russell & Betsy Welty

*In memory of Frances Jean Norris*  
 Judy & Ed Butterfield  
 Barbara Mattes  
 Abe Minzer & Carol Schreuder  
 David & Mary Tidwell

*In memory of Allan Rosenbaum*  
 Andrew & Laurie Brock  
 Alix & John Corboy  
 Barbara Hamilton & Paul Primus  
 Larry Harvey

*In memory of Sam Wagonfeld*  
 Sheila Cleworth  
 Alix & John Corboy  
 Sue Damour  
 Elderlink Home Care  
 Thomas Fitzgerald  
 Celeste & Jack Grynberg  
 Mary Hoagland  
 Cynthia Kahn  
 Charles & Gretchen Lobitz  
 Dr. and Mrs. Fred Mimmack  
 Kathy Newman &  
   Rudi Hartmann  
 Pat Pascoe  
 Myra & Robert Rich  
 Philip Stahl  
 Zaidy's Deli

\* Gift made to FCM Endowment

# UPCOMING CONCERTS

## CHAMBER SERIES

### **Eighth Blackbird**

Monday, April 23, 2018

### **Jordi Savall**

### **Hespèrion XXI**

Monday, May 7, 2018

## PIANO SERIES

### **Marc-André Hamelin, piano**

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### **"Music in the Galleries"**

Clyfford Still Museum

1250 Bannock St., Denver

### **Ensemble Fauchaux**

March 11, 2018, 2:00 PM

### **Patterson/Sutton Duo**

May 13, 2018, 2:00 PM

### **"Music with Friends"**

Syntax Physic Opera

544 S. Broadway, Denver

### **Altius Quartet**

March 22, 2018, 6:30 PM

# SPECIAL THANKS

## **SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL FACILITIES DISTRICT (TIER III)**

for supporting FCM's outreach efforts  
through school residencies and master  
classes

## **COLORADO PUBLIC RADIO (KVOD 88.1 FM)**

for broadcasting FCM concerts on its  
"Colorado Spotlight" programs

## **BONFILS-STANTON FOUNDATION**

for sponsorship of FCM's Piano Series  
and audience development programs in  
memory of Lewis Story

## **ESTATE OF JOSEPH DEHEER ESTATE OF SUE JOSHEL**

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