

SIR ANDRÁS SCHIFF PIANO



A pianist, conductor, and teacher, Sir András Schiff brings masterful insights to his performances that inspire audiences and critics alike. For today's program, he will draw from his vast classical repertoire, brilliantly uniting performance and pedagogy as he brings his role as a master educator to the stage, allowing audiences to experience both his artistry and the thinking behind it. The program will include works by Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert, with each selection introduced from the stage.



SIR ANDRÁS SCHIFF

Sir András Schiff is world-renowned as a pianist, conductor, teacher, and lecturer. He brings masterful insights to his performances that inspire audiences and critics alike. Born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1953, Sir András studied piano at the Liszt Ferenc Academy with Pal Kadosa, György Kurtág, and Ferenc Rados; and in London with George Malcolm.

He has performed cycles of the complete Beethoven piano sonatas and the complete keyboard works of J.S. Bach, as well as keyboard works of Haydn, Schubert, and Bartók. Having collaborated with the world's leading orchestras and conductors, he now focuses primarily on solo recitals and exclusive conducting projects. His Bach has become an annual highlight at the BBC Proms, and he regularly performs at the Verbier, Salzburg, and Baden-Baden Festivals as well as Wigmore Hall. This season in North America Sir András will perform eight recitals of Bach's *Goldberg Variations* as well as programs announced from the stage. In April he will perform nine concerts as Artist-in-Residence of the New York Philharmonic.

Vicenza is home to Cappella Andrea Barca, his own chamber orchestra, founded in 1999, consisting of international soloists, chamber musicians, and friends. Together they have appeared at Carnegie Hall, the Lucerne Festival, and the Salzburg Mozartwoche, and forthcoming projects include a tour of Asia and a cycle of Bach's

keyboard concertos in Europe. He currently curates a festival in Vicenza at the Teatro Olimpico.

Sir András enjoys close relationships with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, the Budapest Festival Orchestra, and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (OAE). In 2018 he accepted the role of Associated Artist with the OAE, complementing his interest in performing on period keyboard instruments.

With an extensive discography, he established an exclusive relationship in 1997 with Producer Manfred Eicher and ECM New Series. Highlights include the complete Beethoven piano sonatas, recorded live from Zurich, solo recitals of Schubert, Schumann, and Janáček, and J.S. Bach's Partitas, *Goldberg Variations*, and *Well-Tempered Clavier*. His most recent discs were the two Brahms piano concerti with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment on period instruments in June 2021.

He continues to support new talent, primarily through his "Building Bridges" series, which gives performance opportunities to promising young artists. He also teaches at the Barenboim-Said and Kronberg academies and gives frequent lectures and master classes. In 2017 his book *Music Comes Out of Silence: A Memoir* was published by Bärenreiter and Henschel.

Sir András Schiff's many honors include the International Mozarteum Foundation's Golden Medal (2012), Germany's Great Cross of Merit with Star (2012), the Royal Philharmonic Society's Gold Medal (2013), a Knighthood for Services to Music (2014), and a Doctorate from the Royal College of Music (2018). He was awarded the Jean Gimbel Lane Prize in Piano Performance in 2021 from The Henry and Leigh Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University.

Sir András Schiff's recordings are available on the Decca/London, Teldec/Warner and ECM labels.
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AN OVERVIEW
OF SOLO
PIANO MUSIC
BY MOZART,
BEETHOVEN,
AND SCHUBERT

NOTES

Mozart

An oft-quoted adage among pianists holds that Mozart is too easy for children, yet too difficult for adults. Nowhere is this paradox more evident than in his solo piano sonatas. On the surface, they lack the virtuosity and brilliance of Mozart's splendid piano concerti. Their apparent simplicity is a double-edged sword, however. The issue boils down to technique versus musicianship. That is, the notes may be "easy" to play accurately, but to play them with gentle emphasis to bring out inner voices is more difficult. To shape phrases and perform music expressively, with a sense of direction, requires a higher level of musical sensitivity for the music to rise from the pleasing to the sublime.

Mozart was 18 when he wrote his first six piano sonatas, all composed in Munich between January and March, 1775. Mozart's models for these works were likely the sonatas of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach and Joseph Haydn. These works, and most of his later sonatas, were conceived as teaching vehicles for Mozart's private piano students: players with aptitude, but not necessarily prodigious musical gifts. The exceptions are the two sonatas in minor mode: the A Minor Sonata and the C Minor Sonata, which are both weightier works and more demanding from a technical standpoint.

In addition to the sonatas, Mozart composed keyboard variations, several based on popular opera arias of the day. His variations tend to grow progressively more brilliant in their finger work. He generally includes one variation in minor mode, another in an adagio tempo, and a finale that alters the meter and may include a brief cadenza-like passage. A third general category of Mozart's solo piano music comprises single-movement pieces, many of which draw on Baroque forms. These are outgrowths of Mozart's discovery of the music of Bach and Handel in the early 1780s. A few fantasias and rondos round out the list of Mozart's keyboard pieces, plus a lone Adagio in B Minor, K.540.

Beethoven

Like Mozart before him, Beethoven favored piano sonatas and variations in his solo piano music. There are a few miscellaneous shorter works: *Rage Over a Lost Penny*, three sets of *Bagatelles*, and the ubiquitous *Für Elise*. These miniatures afforded him the opportunity for experimentation. His 32 piano sonatas, however, are a better and more comprehensive reflector of Beethoven's stylistic development. Even more than the string quartets, the sonatas show his evolution from classic to romantic, from extrovert virtuoso to introspective philosopher. Piano was, after all, Beethoven's own instrument, and the 32 sonatas are as thorough a musical autobiography as any composer has left.

By the time Beethoven published his first piano sonatas in 1796 he was 26, well-established as a piano virtuoso in Vienna, and an experienced composer. Beethoven played violin, but he was primarily a pianist, and his early sonatas for solo piano have a self-assurance, sophistication, and technical polish not generally present in his ensemble works from the same period. These are not pieces intended for teaching, as were most of Mozart's solo keyboard sonatas. Nor were they courtly pieces intended for private performance, like Haydn's Esterházy sonatas. Rather, they are like Haydn's splendid late sonatas for Therese Jansen Bartolozzi: public concert works with a grand layout. Most of Beethoven's early sonatas have four movements.

Beginning in 1802, Beethoven's formal experiments in piano sonata composition (including the 'Moonlight' Sonata) ranged further afield. He assigned both of his Op. 27 sonatas from that year the subtitle *quasi una fantasia*, indicating a freedom of approach and an improvisatory quality that was, effectively, an emancipation proclamation from the structural demands of the Classical era sonata. A grand succession of masterpieces followed, many of which are known by their nicknames: the *Tempest*, Op. 31, no. 2; the *Waldstein*, Op. 53; the *Appassionata*, Op. 57, and *Les Adieux*, Op. 81a. Those four are crowning glories of Beethoven's so-called middle period. (Biographer

Maynard Solomon dubbed the period from 1802 to 1812 “Beethoven’s heroic decade.”)

The final sonatas – Op. 101 in A, Op. 105 in B-flat (*Hammerklavier*), and the culminating trilogy of sonatas Opp. 109, 110, and 111, draw us into the mysterious, compelling world that is late Beethoven. Beginning with Op. 101 he adopted German terminology for movement headings, following these interpretive instructions with their Italian counterparts. (In part, this was a reaction against Napoleon. Italian was a Napoleonic language, and using the German language for tempo and character markings was a way for Beethoven to assert national pride and identity as the Napoleonic era ended with the Congress of Vienna in 1815.)

His last three sonatas, which date from the early 1820s, have moments of intimacy and warmth as well as climaxes of heart-pounding intensity. Beethoven’s intellect is present in these works’ clear sense of formal organization and in their contrapuntal devices. He took full advantage of the newer hammerklavier, which had more keys, and thus a wider range, than the fortepiano of Mozart’s day. The hammerklavier also had the capacity for greater volume, and thus increased dynamic contrast, than earlier keyboards. Nobility, technique, craft, depth, and emotion fuse in these great compositions.

Schubert

Born in 1797, Schubert was a full generation younger than Beethoven. He came of age musically in a world that was evolving from what we call Classical style to the emergent tide of Romanticism. Such changes do not, of course, take place overnight. Schubert revered and studied the music of Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven. His early works are firmly entrenched in high Classical style. In terms of solo keyboard music, that meant composing a lot of sonatas.

Schubert was also a master of the miniature. He excelled at writing songs, and his gift for melody was extraordinary.

In the 1810s and 1820s other composers were veering away from the structural formalities of sonatas. Instead, they favored shorter, lighter pieces, variously called Impromptu, Bagatelle, Eclogue, Rhapsody, or simply dance names: Waltz, Mazurka, German Dance, Écossaise, Polka, etc. Schubert composed scores of such works for solo piano and one piano, four hands, but his greatest collections of shorter pieces are the six *Moments musicaux*, D.780 and two sets of Impromptus, D.899 [Op. 90] and D.935 [Op. Posth. 142]. These pieces are larger in scale and superior in musical quality to those of his contemporaries. The classic dichotomy between strong (“masculine”) and gentler (“feminine”) themes provides fertile ground for Schubert’s imagination. He develops his ideas with ornamentation and variants in movements that often have connections to sonata and rondo form. His textures are magical: flowing triplets, unexpected trills, rising and falling scale flourishes, triadic material combining with dotted rhythms. Always, delicious melodies abound.

Schubert’s piano sonatas cannot be summarized by a specific number (as with Beethoven’s 32 sonatas) because so many survive in fragments. Eleven of them are complete, however, and are wonderfully rewarding for pianists. He tends to meander through multiple key centers, particularly in his sonata form movements. The slow movements breathe with songfulness, occasionally interrupted by a more dramatic middle section. His scherzi are more Viennese than Germanic, with few of the hard edges one sometimes encounters in Beethoven. The spirit of dance – the peasant *Ländler* and the newer, more aristocratic waltz – is ever-present. Even when Schubert employs counterpoint, his textures remain transparent. As with Beethoven, Schubert’s final trio of sonatas, D. 958 in C minor, D.959 in A major, and D.960 in B-flat Major, are the crowning glories of his keyboard music. They all date from 1828, the last year of his brief life.

Notes by Laurie Shulman © 2022

FREE FAMILY CONCERT

SUN, OCT 23

1:00 PM

**Storytelling through Music
Featuring Ensemble Fauchaux**

Centro San Juan Diego
2830 Lawrence Street, Denver



Whether inspiring tears or excitement, music has a powerful role in storytelling. Join us for our next **Family Concert with Ensemble Fauchaux**, featuring Robyn Julyan and Ben Tomkins, violin; Catherine Beeson, viola; and Ernie Carbajal, cello. This dynamic quartet will explore how music evokes emotion and imagination, using a range of works from Mozart and Ravel to movie scores from *Harry Potter* and *Coco*.

Bring your family and friends to this free concert in the beautiful auditorium at Centro San Juan Diego, 2830 Lawrence Street (in the RiNo neighborhood). Following the concert, stay to meet the musicians and enjoy free refreshments. **No tickets or reservations required and plenty of free parking is available.**

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UPCOMING CONCERTS

JUNCTION (JCT) TRIO
WED, NOV 30, 2022 | 7:30 PM
Gates Concert Hall



This eclectic new trio features visionary artists of the next generation: Stefan Jackiw, violin; Conrad Tao, piano; and Jay Campbell, cello. They will perform the Ravel Piano Trio and a new work by American composer, Amy Williams, entitled *Bells and Whistles for Piano Trio*, commissioned

by Friends of Chamber Music in partnership with Celebrity Series of Boston. Williams will join us for a pre-concert talk beginning at 6:45 PM.

Tickets are \$40 each; \$15 for patrons under 30 and \$5 for current students (with ID).

WILL LIVERMAN, BARITONE
WED, DEC 14, 2022 | 7:30 PM
Gates Concert Hall



Grammy-nominated baritone Will Liverman, the renowned star of the Metropolitan Opera's *Fire Shut Up In My Bones*, continues to bring his compelling artistry to audiences nationwide. His program will feature a wide selection of classical and contemporary works.

Tickets are \$40 each; \$15 for patrons under 30, and \$5 for current students (with ID).

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Will Liverman, baritone

Wed, Dec 14, 2022 | 7:30 pm

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Sun, Feb 5, 2023 | 4:00 pm

Leila Josefowicz, violin

Wed, Mar 22, 2023 | 7:30 pm

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Wed, Apr 26, 2023 | 7:30 pm

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PIANO SERIES

Leif Ove Andsnes, piano

Mon, Jan 23, 2023 | 7:30 pm

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MUSIC IN THE GALLERIES

Patrick Hyatt, violin &

Ernie Carbajal, cello

Sun, Dec 11, 2022

11:00 am & 1:00 pm (identical concerts)

Clyfford Still Museum

1250 Bannock Street, Denver

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Ensemble Fauchaux

Sun, Oct 23, 2022 | 1:00 pm

Centro San Juan Diego

2830 Lawrence Street, Denver

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