

The Masters Series Concerts (2011-12)

Sundays* at 3:00pm, at Studio Hollywood (*unless otherwise noted)

Programs, Notes & Seating charts for reservations available at: www.studio-hollywood.com

Alan Murray, piano

Program	Date
Chopin – The Piano Music	
the Etudes (& sel. Nocturnes & Mazurkas)	Oct 2 the Scherzos “ Oct 30
the Preludes “ “	Oct 9 the Sonatas “ Nov 6
the Polonaises “ “	Oct 16 the Impromptus “ Nov 19*
the Ballades “ “	Oct 23 the Waltzes “ Dec 3 *
Introduction & Rondo, Fantasy, Berceuse, Barcarolle, Andante Spianato & Grande Polonaise Dec 17 *	
Schumann – The Piano Music	
Fantasy, Arabeske, Carnaval	Nov 13
Kreisleriana, Toccata, Blumenstück, Symphonic Etudes	Nov 20
Faschingsschwank aus Wien (Carnival of Vienna), Kinderszenen (Scenes fr Childhood), Romances	Nov 27
Sonata #1 in F-sharp minor, Novellette #1, Davidsbündlertänze	Dec 4
Sonata #2 in G minor, Waldszenen, Papillons (“Butterflies”), Humoreske	Dec 11
Sonata #3 in F minor (“Concerto w/o Orchestra”), Fantasiestücke, Gesänge der Frühe, Novellette #2	Dec 18
The French & Spanish Masters	
Ravel – The Piano Music	
Gaspard de la Nuit, Jeux d’eau, Sonatine, Pavane, Valses Nobles et Sentimentales, ...	Jan 8
Le Tombeau de Couperin, Sérénade Grottesque, Menuet-Haydn, Menuet Antique, Miroirs, ...	Jan 15
Debussy – The Piano Music	
the Etudes, l’Isle joyeuse, Estampes, ...	Jan 22
the Preludes (Books I & II)	Feb 5
Images, Children’s Corner, Suite Bergamasque, Pour le Piano, Arabesques, Danse, Masques, ...	Feb 12
Granados – Goyescas , El Pelele	Albéniz – Iberia , Navarra Feb 19 & Mar 4
Beethoven – The 32 Sonatas & Diabelli Variations (1wk Series; M-F at 7:00pm; S/S at 3:00)	
(1) Sonatas #1-4 Mar 18 (5) Sonatas #22-26 (d) Mar 22	
(2) Sonatas #5-10 (a) Mar 19 (6) Sonatas #27-29 (e) Mar 23	
(3) Sonatas #11-15 (b) Mar 20 (7) Sonatas #30-32 Mar 24	
(4) Sonatas #16-21 (c) Mar 21 (8) Diabelli Variations Mar 25	
<i>a) Pathétique’ b) Moonlight’, Pastoral’ c) Tempest’, Waldstein’ d) Appassionata’, Les Adieux’ e) Hammerklavier’</i>	
J.S. Bach – The Keyboard Music (1-week Series, Apr 7-14; Mon-Fri at 7:00pm; Sat/Sun at 3:00pm)	
(1) Chromatic Fantasy/Ital. Concerto/Inventions Apr 7 (5) Engl & French Sts, Partita #4/WTC25-32 Apr 11	
(2) Engl & French Suites & Partita #1/WTC1-8 Apr 8 (6) Engl & French Sts & Partita #5/WTC33-40 Apr 12	
(3) Engl & French Suites & Partita #2/WTC9-16 Apr 9 (7) Engl & French Sts & Partita #6/WTC41-48 Apr 13	
(4) Engl & French Suites & Partita #3/WTC17-24 Apr 10 (8) The Goldberg Variations Apr 14	
Brahms, Schubert & Liszt – The Major Works	
Brahms – Handel Variations & Fugue, Paganini Variations / Schubert – Sonata in A minor (D845)	Apr 22
Brahms – Sonata No. 3 in F minor / Schubert – Sonata in G, «Wanderer» Fantasy	Apr 29
Schubert – The Late Piano Sonatas: in C minor, A major, B-flat major (Op. Posth.)	May 6
Liszt – Sonata in B minor, S. del Petrarca, Vallée d’Obermann, Mephisto Waltz, Au bord d’une source	May 13
The Transcendental Etudes, Après une lecture de Dante, Hungarian & Spanish Rhapsodies, ...	May 20
The Russian & Eastern European Masters – The Major Works	
Rachmaninoff – the Preludes	May 27
Rachmaninoff – the Etudes-Tableaux & Moments Musicaux / Balakirev – Islamey	Jun 3
Rachmaninoff – the Sonatas (No. 1 in D minor; No. 2 in B-flat minor) / Szymanowski – Metopes	Jun 10
Prokofiev – Sonata No. 6 / Scriabin – Sonata No. 2 / Berg – Sonata / Janacek – Sonata 1X1905	Jun 17
Prokofiev – Sonata No. 7 / Scriabin – Sonata Nos 4&5 / Medtner – Sonata / Stravinsky – Petrouchka	Jun 30*
Prokofiev – Sonata No. 8 / Mussorgsky – Pictures at an Exhibition / Bartók – Out of Doors	Jun 24
American Masterpieces	
Gershwin Rhapsody in Blue, Barber Sonata, ... - Jul 1 Works by Ives , Copland , Carter , Bolcom , others - Jul 8	

The Masters Series Concerts (2011/12)

at Studio Hollywood, Hastings-on-Hudson

Sunday, December 11, 2011 at 3:00pm

Robert Schumann – The Piano Music

Papillons, Op. 2

Humoreske, Op. 20

Einfach – Sehr rasch und leicht – Wie im Anfang

Hastig – Nach und nach immer lebhafter und starker – Adagio

Einfach und zart – Intermezzo

Innig – Sehr lebhaft – Mit einigem Pomp

Zum Beschluss – Adagio – Allegro

Intermission

from Waldszenen (Forest Scenes), Op. 82

Eintritt (Entrance)

Vogel als Prophet (The Prophet Bird)

Sonata No. 2 in G minor, Op. 22

So rasch wie möglich

Andantino

Scherzo: Sehr rasch und markirt

Rondo: Presto - Prestissimo

Alan Murray, piano

The Masters Series Concerts (2011-12)

The **Masters Series Concerts (2011-12)** comprise a series of approximately 50 mostly Sunday afternoon programs at *Studio Hollywood* (www.studio-hollywood.com), spanning the cycles of piano music of most of the great composers for the instrument, from Bach and the Classical and Romantic masters, to great composers of the 20th Century. The programs are intended to provide guests with 1-2 hours of quality weekly listening in a contemplative setting, surrounded by the natural beauty that is visible from the recital hall. The performances are intended to be informal but well-prepared offerings, as an interim step toward full concert preparation.

Schumann: Papillons, Humoreske, Piano Sonata #2

Papillons – *Papillons* (Butterflies) is a suite of piano pieces written in 1831 that is meant to represent a masked ball and was inspired by a novel by Jean Paul (Richter). The fusion of literary ideas with musical ones – generally referred to as *program music* – may be said to have first taken shape in *Papillons*, Op. 2, a musical portrayal of events in Jean Paul's novel *Die Flegeljahre*. In a letter from Leipzig dated April 1832, he bids his brothers "read the last scene in Jean Paul's *Flegeljahre* as soon as possible, because the *Papillons* are intended as a musical representation of that masquerade." This inspiration is foreshadowed to some extent in his first written criticism, in which Chopin's work is discussed by imaginary characters created by Schumann himself: Florestan (the embodiment of Schumann's passionate, voluble side) and Eusebius (his dreamy, introspective side) – the counterparts of Vult and Walt in *Flegeljahre*. A third, Meister Raro, is called upon for his opinion. Raro may represent either the composer himself, Clara Weick/Schumann, or the combination of the two (Clara+Robert).

The suite begins with a six-measure introduction before launching into a variety of dance-like movements. Each movement is unrelated to the preceding ones, except for the finale, in which the theme of the first movement returns. This movement starts by quoting the theme of the traditional *Grossvater Tanz* (Grandfather's Dance), which was always played at the end of a wedding or similar celebration. Schumann quoted some themes from *Papillons* in his later work, including *Carnaval*, Op. 9, but none of them appear in the section of *Carnaval* titled "Papillons". The main waltz theme from the first movement in *Papillons* was quoted in the section "Florestan", with an explicit acknowledgment written in the score, and again in the *Finale*: "Marche des *Davidsbündler* contre les Philistins", but without acknowledgment. The *Grandfather Dance* also appears in the final section, with the inscription "Thème du XVII^{ème} siècle".

Humoreske – Despite its title, Schumann's *Humoreske* is not fundamentally a whimsical piece and wasn't intended to be 'funny'. Neither is it a slight work. Rather, it is one of Schumann's weightier and more lyrical works and its overall emotional effect is one of thoughtful melancholy. Perhaps it is this character, together with its extended and indefinite musical architecture, that prevents it from being a popular work. The title refers to humor in a broader sense where the word refers to a passing mood. Schumann himself said that the humors offered an "infinity of contrast" which infiltrated every aspect of the music. The abrupt shifts in mood and the use of musical figures that make one-time appearance makes the work sound chaotic, as if it were merely following one person's whim after another. The actual emotional trajectory, however, gives the work a deeper sense of coherence. The *Humoreske* is normally divided into four larger sections which, in turn, are divided into contrasting subsections. The first section begins with a reflective and mildly melancholy theme that sets the tone for the whole piece. This theme is followed by two subsections which generate more ebullience before returning to the initial. The second section is a scherzo marked *hastig* (hastily). The first subject is followed by a more energetic one before returning to the first. This is followed by an Adagio which one again brings back the reflective temperament of the piece. The Adagio sets up the third section, marked *einfach und zart* (simple and tender). The opening theme again embodies the melancholy character of the beginning of the work, but is somewhat more intense, even agitated at times. The last subsection here is marked *innig* (inwardly) and it returns to the more resigned and relaxed mood underlying this work. The final section begins with the sort of energetic theme that one expects in a finale and is followed by a mildly pompous figure.

The third subsection, *zum Beschluss* (towards the finale) but, far from carrying on the pomp of the preceding sections, it returns yet again to the melancholy mood that opened the work, but here in an extended manner. The brief ponderous coda that concludes the piece does nothing to dispel this dominant mood. It not only makes further mockery of the notion of a triumphalistic ending but it prevents the melancholy mood from having the last say in bringing closure to the work. As with the second and third sections, the final section fails to round off the sequence of musical ideas. Throughout its mood swings, the *Humoreske* builds a firm unity based on feeling in such a way that the listener is never given anything conclusive to hold onto.

Waldszenen (Forest Scenes) – Schumann's *Waldszenen* (Forest Scenes), Op. 82 (1848-49) consists of nine short pieces similar in style and spirit to the composer's *Kinderszenen* (Scenes from Childhood), Op. 15 (1838). The opening piece, *Eintritt* (Entrance), features unusual, asymmetrical phrasing, but in its gentle swaying motion seems almost an invitation for a stroll into the forest. The best-known and most striking piece of the set is *Vogel als Prophet* (The Prophet Bird); its cross-relations, incomplete melodies, and extreme delicacy of texture create a weirdly beautiful atmosphere. Following the *Waldszenen* the decline in the composer's mental and emotional capacities in ensuing years led him to redirect his energies largely toward the compilation and revision of earlier works rather than the production of new music. The set is dedicated to a young lady named Annette Preusser.

Sonata No. 2 in G minor – The Sonata No. 2 in G minor was close to final conception by 1835, therefore essentially predating the Sonata No. 1 in F-sharp minor, but Schumann's beloved Clara, who had yet to suffer through the horrendous five years of her father's resistance to Schumann's role in her life, complained about the difficulties of the original finale, and another one finally took shape by 1838. The original finale was published as a separate work (the seldom-played *Presto Passionato*) as an appendix to Op. 22. The G minor is the shortest and expressively most intense of Schumann's piano sonatas, marked as it is by sharp contrast between the almost manic energy and *cri du coeur* of the first and third movements and the tender repose of the exquisite Andantino second movement. The sotto voce *finale*, though designated as a *Rondo*, seems almost to be endowed equally with sonata movement characteristics, with well defined development and reprise episodes and a splendid cadenza to set the stage for the zestful final pages. Many writers have poked fun at the celebrated direction Schumann gives at the start of the first movement (*So rasch wie möglich-Noch schneller*: As fast as possible-Even faster). This is guidance that Schumann repeats in different words in the Rondo (*Presto-Prestissimo*: Very fast-Extremely fast) and in the finale of the Sonata No. 3 in F minor (*Prestissimo possibile-Più presto*: As fast as possible-Even faster). In all these cases, the indicated tempo is as much qualitative guidance as metronomic. What is essential, however, is the relentless brewing intensity of the pages.

Notes: Wikipedia (*Papillons*), andrewmarr.homestead.com/Schumann (*Humoreske*), D Hall (*Sonata #2*), AMurray

Alan Murray has appeared as a concerto soloist with orchestras in Westchester and in solo and chamber music recitals. He holds a degree in physics and languages from Cornell, where he also received a special University award for distinguished piano soloist. The **Masters Series Concerts** represent a continuation of the **Sunrise Music Series** programs, inception in the Sept 2010–June 2011 season. In addition to this year's **Masters Series**, Alan continues the **Sunrise Series** programs Sundays at 8:30am, with the 2011-12 series devoted to the cycle of keyboard music of J.S. Bach, which also appears in this year's **Masters Series** in April. The 2010-11 **Sunrise Series** was the subject of a Nov/2010 feature article in *The Rivertown's Enterprise*. His future plans include performances of the **Masters Series** at universities and other cultural centers here and abroad in the coming years. A specialist in the Financial Institutions capital markets group at Moody's, where he focuses on U.S., major Latin American and worldwide developing markets, Alan also provides music at the early Sunday morning services of the First Unitarian Society of Westchester, where he enjoys blending classical music with diverse world musical traditions. Alan resides in Hastings with his wife Amada and daughter Celia, where they also own and operate *Galápagos Books*, focused on world languages and literature, children's and general-interest books, local authors, and multi-media educational materials.