

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, Carnival	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 Apr 15
Beethoven – The 32 Sonatas & Diabelli Variations (Sat & Sun at 3:00pm, Fri at 7:30pm)	
(1) Sonatas #1-4 Mar 17 (5) Sonatas #22-26 (d) Mar 25	
(2) Sonatas #5-10 (a) Mar 18 (6) Sonatas #27-29 (e) Mar 31	
(3) Sonatas #11-15 (b) Mar 23 (7) Sonatas #30-32 Apr 1	
(4) Sonatas #16-21 (c) Mar 24 (8) Diabelli Variations Apr 14	
<i>a) ‘Pathétique’ b) ‘Moonlight’, ‘Pastorale’ 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 7:30pm; 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, March 18, 2012 at 3:00pm

Ludwig van Beethoven – The Piano Sonatas

Sonata No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 10 No. 1

Allegro molto e con brio

Adagio molto

Finale: Prestissimo

Sonata No. 6 in F Major, Op. 10 No. 2

Allegro

Allegretto

Presto

Sonata No. 7 in D Major, Op. 10 No. 3

Presto

Largo e mesto

Menuetto - Allegro

Rondo – Allegro

Intermission

Sonata No. 9 in E Major, Op. 14 No. 1

Allegro

Allegretto

Rondo: Allegro comodo

Sonata No. 10 in G Major, Op. 14 No. 2

Allegro

Andante

Scherzo: Allegro assai

Sonata No. 8 in C Minor (“Pathétique”), Op. 13

Grave; Allegro di molto e con brio

Adagio cantabile

Rondo: Allegro

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, surround-ded 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.

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Ludwig van Beethoven: The Piano Sonatas (Op. 10, 13 & 14)

Beethoven was a pianist, so of course nothing came more naturally to him than the piano sonata – except (perhaps) for one thing: extemporization. The young pianist-composer made his way with the Viennese aristocracy in the 1790s not only by composing, but by improvising and winning improvisation contests, which had an immediacy that the deliberate process of publication did not. While still a child, he is said to have exasperated his father by rambling away at the piano making things up instead of practicing. We know of occasions when Beethoven comforted unhappy women by sealing in quietly and just playing for them. It's doubtful he played the 'Moonlight' Sonata, as in the 1994 film 'Immortal Beloved'. More likely, he started out like the 'Moonlight' and advanced to soundscapes of fantasy we can never know. So the feeling of improvisation permeates Beethoven's thirty-two sonatas for piano. We hear such things in his other works too – because Beethoven found ways to make even his symphonies sound improvisatory. A pervasive sense of spontaneity, stemming ultimately from piano improvisation, lies at the heart of Beethoven's music.

The easiest way to aggrandize the piano sonata was to expand it to a four-movement cycle, like a symphony or a quartet: for Haydn and Mozart, three movements was the limit. In the sonatas of Op. 10, published in 1798, Beethoven stepped back. Only the last of the set has four movements, as compared with all three of Op. 2 and Op. 7.

Again the opus opens with its minor-mode member, the **Sonata in C minor, Op. 10 No. 1**. Though the opening theme recalls its Op. 2 predecessor in its rocketing melodic profile and its nervous energy, the first movement is nowhere near as terse, but finale is, full of the sort of Beethovenian brusqueness known from C-minor works such as the Symphony No. 5, and fraught with gestures of extemporization.

After this Beethoven seems to have reconsidered his policy for slow movements. In Op. 10, No. 3 he set his sights on pathos and tragedy, rather than solemnity and sheer length, and in the **Sonata in F major, Op. 10 No. 2** he left a slow movement out altogether. This entirely humorous work consists of two light-hearted F-major movements enclosing a mock-ominous *Allegretto* in F minor. The *finale* starts like a fugue, but the suspiciously simple fugue subject soon deconstructs into a sort of comic-opera refrain. In the interest of overall coherence, the main material of each outer movement returns at around the same place in the same distant key (D major). Haydn himself could hardly have written a more boisterous, irregular recapitulation for the finale. Another thing reconsidered at this time was the leisurely rondo. Beethoven wrote a smart set of piano

variations on the "Letter Duet" from Salieri's opera *Falstaff*, and in the jerky, wispy theme of the rondo finale in the **Sonata in D major, Op. 10 No. 3**, one can hear the Merry Wives' chatter: "What is it"? What is it? The very same, the very same: beast! monster!" The rocketing theme of the first movement, so much more highly charged than earlier ones, could surface again ten years later in the 'Ghost' Trio, Op. 70 No. 1: the recurrent 'noodling' on its first few notes reveals a new control over the large-scale manipulation of time. In terms of sonata form, both the development and the coda come of age with this work. Besides Op. 10 No. 3, Beethoven essayed only three slow movements using full-scale sonata form in the service of high pathos: in two string quartets and in the "*Hammerklavier*" Sonata. As though in awe of his own largo – '*Largo e mesto*', actually 'slow and dejected' – Beethoven eased off with an undemanding *minuet* and a zany *finale*.

With the '**Grande Sonata Pathétique**' in C minor, **Op. 13**, the return of the minor mode of the first movement in the last makes for a more compelling sequence of events (as in the earlier minor-mode sonatas). In the first movement, improvisatory gestures from the ominous *Adagio* that introduces the *Allegro*, with its maximal rocket theme, break the pace at two junctures later, and are even transformed to join the rocket and make the development section as strong as its predecessor in Op. 10 No. 3. And the slow movement is simple, its tune is the earliest by this composer that people remember and love, probably more than any other before the 9th Symphony's '*Ode to Joy*'.

After reaching this twin peak, Beethoven turned to shorter and lighter sonatas. In 1798 he also turned his main attention to string quartets and a symphony. At the time he probably thought the easiest of the sonatas not worth publishing (they waited until Op. 49). On the other hand, the **Sonata in E major, Op. 14 No. 1** is a sunny, skilful work with an *Allegretto* at the center, not a slow movement (as in Op. 10 No. 2), and a crisp rondo. More, perhaps than any other of the sonatas, the **Sonata in G major, Op. 14 No. 2** yields up its charm when played on a fortepiano of the composer's own time. The variation movement in the middle is another joke – thought not, perhaps, a very good one.

(notes by Joseph Kerman)

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, incepted 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 own and operate *Galápagos Books*, focused on world languages and literature, children's and general-interest books, local authors, and multi-media educational materials.