



Denis Matsuev

Sunday Afternoon, October 16, 2016 at 4:00

Hill Auditorium

Ann Arbor

11th Performance of the 138th Annual Season
138th Annual Choral Union Series

PROGRAM

Ludwig van Beethoven

Piano Sonata No. 31 in A-flat Major, Op. 110

Moderato cantabile molto espressivo
Allegro molto
Adagio ma non troppo

Robert Schumann

Symphonic Etudes, Op. 13

Theme: Andante	Etude VI: Agitato
Etude I: Un poco più vivo	Etude VII: Allegro molto
Etude II: Marcato il canto	Etude VIII: Andante
Etude III: Vivace	Etude IX: Presto possibile
Etude IV: Allegro marcato	Etude X: Allegro
Etude V: Vivacissimo	Etude XI: Andante
Posthumous Variation No. 4	Etude XII: Allegro brillante
Posthumous Variation No. 5	

Intermission

Franz Liszt

Mephisto Waltz No. 1, S. 514

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Méditation, Op. 72, No. 5

Sergei Prokofiev

Piano Sonata No. 7 in B-flat Major, Op. 83

Allegro inquieto
Andante caloroso
Precipitato

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The Steinway piano used in this afternoon's recital is made possible by William and Mary Palmer.

Special thanks to Tom Thompson of Tom Thompson Flowers, Ann Arbor, for his generous contribution of floral art for this afternoon's recital.

Mr. Matsuev gratefully acknowledges The AVC Charity (Andrey Cheglakov, Founder) as a Strategic Partner of this afternoon's performance.

Mr. Matsuev appears by arrangement with Columbia Artists Management, Inc.

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The photography, sound recording, or videotaping of this performance is prohibited.

PIANO SONATA NO. 31 IN A-FLAT MAJOR, OP. 110 (1822)

Ludwig van Beethoven

Born December 16, 1770 in Bonn, Germany

Died March 26, 1827 in Vienna, Austria

UMS premiere: Myra Hess; January 1933 in Hill Auditorium.

Snapshots of History...In 1822:

- The Rocky Mountain Fur Company (“Ashley’s Hundred”) leave from St. Louis, Missouri, setting off a major increase in fur trade
- The first group of freed slaves from the US arrive to the west coast of Africa, founding Monrovia on April 25
- The Chippewas turn over a huge tract of land in Ontario to the United Kingdom

This work, one of the most lyrical and second-to-last of his 32 piano sonatas, was written in 1822, when Beethoven had already begun his Ninth Symphony and was working on the enormous *Missa Solemnis*. It is one of the three sonatas written between 1820 and 1822, a set of works highly diverse in content but similar in their precision and economy of development, the distillation of a lifetime’s musical experience. Aided by developments that within the span of his career had considerably expanded the range of the fortepiano, Beethoven took the inherited structure of the sonata form crystallized by Haydn and transformed it into a spacious framework for the expression of grand ideas. He did this by employing important innovations, such as frequent key changes, and by reintroducing into it fugal elements.

The first movement of this sonata, which is lyrical, friendly, and informal in construction, begins “*con amabilità*” (amiably, graciously). Like a foreboding of romanticism, an

ecstatic beauty of melody dominates the movement, which seems to have grown out of the tone colors that are peculiar to the pianoforte, partaking neither of the quartet nor the orchestral style. The music glides along, now disporting itself in graceful curves, arabesques, or trills, now speaking in eloquent declamation.

The second movement, scherzo-like, mixes the soft dialogue sounds with harder accents. It is a kind of fantastic march, with suspended rhythms, mobile basses, light and heavy, delicate and opulent, high and low, loud and soft. A trio-intermezzo in ‘D-flat’ flutters along, following a capriciously drawn line.

A subdued recitative at the beginning of the next movement leads to the deeply-moving *arioso*, filled with prayerful expression. Deep, melancholy shadows descend upon this sorrowful a-flat-minor piece. But it would not be worthy of Beethoven to remain in this mood long. Building a rampart against it, piling stone upon stone, the fugue follows, liberating

and elevating. Once again, in the middle portion, the beautiful *arioso* raises its plaintive voice. Hesitatingly, the fugue resumes its progress with an inner unrest, from which only the final sections bring release.

Program note © Columbia Artists Management Inc.

SYMPHONIC ETUDES, OP. 13 (1834)

Robert Schumann

Born June 8, 1810 in Zwickau, Germany

Died July 29, 1856 in Endenich

UMS premiere: Louis Mass; April 1884 in a general lecture room.

Snapshots of History...In 1834:

- York, Upper Canada, is incorporated as Toronto
- Anti-abolitionist riots in New York City begin
- The Office of Indian Affairs is organized in the US

Robert Schumann is a central figure in musical Romanticism; his music is infused with much self-expression, potent lyricism, and extra-musical associations — both personal and literary — thus making him one of the quintessential Romantic composers. Though Schumann was above all a composer of piano music and art songs, the concert literature of the 19th century would be greatly impoverished without his orchestral works.

Son of a bookseller, publisher, and author, Schumann demonstrated such talent in both musical and literary spheres while still a schoolboy that his father thought to send him to study composition with Carl Maria von Weber in 1826. Unfortunately, both Weber and Schumann's father died before this plan could be realized, and in 1828, Robert's mother sent him to the University of Leipzig to matriculate as a law student. After a rather dilatory pursuit of legal studies in both Leipzig and Heidelberg, he finally won his parent's permission to devote himself solely to music in 1830.

Much of this was due to the support of the renowned piano pedagogue Friedrich Wieck, who later, after much

resistance and a court battle, would become Schumann's father-in-law. Wieck told Frau Schumann that three years of solid study could see her son one of the foremost pianists of the day. His share of Robert's tutelage however, dropped to naught when his daughter Clara showed promise as a concert pianist herself and required his presence on concert tours.

The *Symphonic Etudes, Op. 13*, is not only one of Schumann's greatest works, but a landmark in the history of piano literature. The title of the work underwent several metamorphoses: Schumann had originally intended to call it *12 Davidsbündleretuden* in reference to the League of David which he had invented as a symbol of his battle with musical philistines. Later he thought of the more portentous title of *Etudes in Orchestral Character*, finally settling for the double title of *Etudes en forme de Variations, or XII Etudes symphoniques*.

The theme is, in fact, not by Schumann, but Baron von Fricken, an amateur composer and the father of Ernestine von Fricken (Schumann's fiancée at the time). In 1834, the Baron asked Schumann to look at a set of

variations he composed. Schumann, impressed with the theme, used it for his own *Symphonische Etüden*. But he felt that the somber character of the theme was too prevalent in the Baron's work (a problem Schumann eventually solved by giving his work a triumphant conclusion). As he explained in a letter to the Baron:

No doubt the subject ought to keep in view but it ought to be shown through different colored glasses, just as there are windows of various colors which make the country look rosy like the setting sun, or as golden as a summer morning...I am now really arguing against myself, as I have actually been writing variations on your theme, and am going to call them "pathetic." Still, if there is anything pathetic about them I have endeavored to portray it in different colors.

Strangely enough, Schumann struggled all his life to find the perfect version of this work. He was not only interested in composing variations with the utmost variety, but variations that united structurally to form a work of symphonic proportions.

The first version contained 18 variations, but when it was published in 1837, it had just 12 variations. In 1852, Schumann published a second edition in which numbers three and nine were deleted and the finale revised. After Schumann's death, Clara Schumann and Brahms published five variations of the six that had been left out of the first edition. This afternoon's program presents the first edition, as well as the last two so-called posthumous variations.

Etude No. 1 is a rhythmically tense march confined almost exclusively to the middle and lower half of the

keyboard. No. 2 pits an assertive and massive triplet accompaniment against a canto in duple time. The wide-spaced "violin" *arpeggios* in the right hand of No. 3 provide a background for the left hand's elegant melody. No. 4 is another march, with full chords in both hands separated from one another by eighth-note rests; it leads directly into No. 5, a scherzo handled in pseudo-canonic fashion. The fourth of the posthumous variations is a waltz setting with a prominent accent on the second beat of the measure. The final variation of this set combines brilliant finger work with the melody hidden in the offbeats. Returning to the first edition, No. 6, marked *agitato*, gets its tumbling, fluttering quality by a complicated figuration divided between the two hands. No. 7 starts with both hands moving close together, in parallel motion, but the right hand gradually gains a separate identity. No. 8, with its persistent dotted rhythm and ascending-descending slides, resembles the opening of a baroque overture. No. 9 is another puckish scherzo, to be played *presto possibile*. There is never a pause in the massive, 16th-note progression of No. 10. The left hand is equally persistent in the following etude, but above it the right hand spins out an expressive nocturne.

The finale is more than three times the length of any of the preceding etudes and tends to overshadow them by its brilliance and melodic appeal. As a tribute to the young Englishman William Sterndale Bennet, a close friend of Schumann's to whom the work is dedicated, Schumann used the theme "*Du stolzes England, Freue*

dich" (Proud England, rejoice) from a Marschner opera, *Der Templer und die Jüdin*, as the theme for the finale.

Though one of Schumann's most brilliant works, the *Etüden* were received with so much hostility when first performed by Clara, that Schumann advised her not to play it in public again. He said it was written not to please the public but for its own sake.

Program note © Columbia Artists Management Inc., edited by Mark Williams.

MEPHISTO WALTZ NO. 1, S. 514 (1860)

Franz Liszt

*Born October 22, 1811 in Raiding, near Sopron, in the Austro-Hungarian Empire
Died July 31, 1886 in Bayreuth, Germany*

UMS premiere: Harold Bauer; January 1902 in University Hall. Orchestral performance by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Frederick Stock, May 1921 in Hill Auditorium.

Snapshots of History...In 1860:

- Christians and Druzes clash in Damascus, Syria
- Shoe-making workers of Lynn, Massachusetts, strike successfully for higher wages; the strike spreads throughout New England and eventually involves 20,000 workers
- The Pony Express begins its first run from St. Joseph, Missouri to Sacramento, California with riders carrying a small bible

The *Mephisto Waltz* is the first of four such title works Liszt wrote, this one in 1860. Goethe's *Faust*, one of his favorite pieces of literature, inspired these and many of Liszt's compositions, but this music is based on a scene from Nicolaus Lenau's poetic setting of the legend. Subtitled "The Dance in the Village Tavern," the story inscribed at length in Liszt's score follows in brief:

Faust and Mephistopheles enter a village tavern where a wedding celebration is in progress. Faust becomes enamored of a dark-eyed beauty, while Mephistopheles takes over the fiddle-playing. The dancers become intoxicated by his demonically inspired music-making and the party becomes a bacchanalia. The dancers trip to the meadows, with Mephistopheles' laughter echoing from time to time as a double-note trill. Finally, the nightingale's song is heard. The heavy desire pulls them down. And they are swallowed in the boiling sea of ecstasy.

Liszt scored this work first for full orchestra, then later transcribed it for piano solo and for two pianos. The *Mephisto Waltz* is a grand showpiece; it presents the performer with technical problems that are truly diabolical. There are few compositions that offer such a wealth of dazzling pyrotechnics in so few minutes.

Program note © Columbia Artists Management Inc.

MÉDITATION, OP. 72, NO. 5 (1892–93)

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Born May 7, 1840 in Votkinsk, Russia

Died November 6, 1893 in St. Petersburg

UMS premiere: This piece has never been performed on a UMS concert.

Snapshots of History...In 1893:

- Thomas Edison finishes construction of the first motion picture studio in West Orange, New Jersey
- The 1893 World's Fair, also known as the World's Columbian Exposition, opens to the public in Chicago; the first US commemorative postage stamps are issued for the Exposition
- New Zealand becomes the first country in the world to grant women the right to vote

Tchaikovsky's works do not exhibit the raw national and folk-song idiom to the extent of Mussorgsky's music, for instance, and his colors are not quite as brilliant as Rimsky-Korsakov's; yet, more than those by either of these two composers, Tchaikovsky's works are considered by musicians over the world to be the epitome of Russian music. While he adhered to Western European forms of technical skill and lyric style, in his essentials Tchaikovsky remains a Russian of the most classic tendencies — his language is emotionally Slavic. His music glows with the peculiar fire that burned in his soul; rapture and agony, and gloom and joy seem in perpetual struggle for expression.

Tchaikovsky's piano works often take a backseat compared to his orchestral and vocal works. This is curious when one realizes the praise they were given by both Bülow and Rubinstein. Nevertheless, his works are infrequently played, and little gems like his *Méditation, Op. 72, No. 5* are quite

deserving of inclusion in the recital repertoire. Its grand tune, interesting figurations, and strong sense of direction paired with its strong Russian roots and contemplative nature make this piece the well-deserved respite in a virtuosic recital.

Program note © Columbia Artists Management Inc, by Elizabeth E. Torres.

PIANO SONATA NO. 7 IN B-FLAT MAJOR, OP. 83 (1942)

Sergei Prokofiev

Born April 23, 1891 in Sontsovka, Ukraine

Died March 5, 1953 in Moscow

UMS premiere: Vladimir Horowitz; January 1945 in Hill Auditorium.

Snapshots of History...In 1942:

- Daylight savings time goes into effect in the US
- The first African-American seamen are taken into the US Navy
- On her 13th birthday, Anne Frank makes the first entry in her new diary

Not many contemporary composers write music that has such an unmistakable identity as that of Prokofiev. What is particularly interesting is that Prokofiev's music stylistically changed little over the decades; the same qualities and mannerisms by which his later works are recognized can be found in many of his earlier compositions. In his autobiography, Prokofiev stated that five principal factors dominated his art; these are: 1) the influence of Baroque and Classical forms, 2) the desire to innovate new harmonies into his expressive music, 3) strong rhythms, 4) elements of lyricism, and 5) the jesting and mocking characteristics so typical of his symphonies, concertos, and stage works.

In his keyboard works, Prokofiev sought freedom from typical 19th-century techniques. He used the piano's full sonority, at the same time treating it as a basically percussive instrument. This music, which has become extremely popular, often suggests strange, psychological elements.

Prokofiev wrote more than 100 piano pieces, of varying lengths and in many styles; however, his finest

keyboard writing is exhibited in the nine piano sonatas. Their composition covers a span of over 40 years. The Seventh Piano Sonata was begun in 1939 and completed three years later in Tbilisi, where and when he also completed the opera *War and Peace*. The composer entitled this sonata, along with the Sixth and Eighth, the "War Sonatas," as they were written during the period when the impact of the Nazi invasion was most strongly felt by the Russian people, and especially by Prokofiev.

The first performance of this work was given by Sviatoslav Richter in Moscow, January 18, 1943; the pianist described the Sonata in these terms:

The Sonata throws us immediately into the anxious atmosphere of a world off-balance. Disorder and uncertainty reign. Man watches the play of death-bearing forces. That which made up his life has ceased to be. He feels, he loves. The fullness of this feeling is now directed toward all men. He, together with all men, protests and keenly experiences the general grief. The impetuous offensive rush, full of the will of victory, sweeps all in its path. He gains strength in the

battle, acquiring gigantic power, and this becomes an affirmation of life.

In his biography of the composer, Israel Nestyev writes as follows about the Seventh Sonata:

They were correct who sense in the tempestuous, precipitate rhythms of the first movement, in its “percussive” harmonies, in the Cyclopean might of its finale — music of gigantic, thundering tension, as if overturning everything in its path — a reflection of the shattering events endured by the Soviet Union in these years. The Sonata has no program, but the storms of the war years are surely reflected in its general emotional tonality. For a brief moment at the beginning of the second movement the nervous dynamics give way to the charm of a live-lyrical minuet theme. But soon this oasis of pure lyricism is engulfed by the steely pressure of the B-flat Major finale, courageously uniting in itself the Russian monumentalism of Borodin with sharp, modern, “machine” rhythms.

One of the landmarks of 20th-century piano literature, the Seventh Piano Sonata brought the composer the award of the Stalin Prize.

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ARTIST

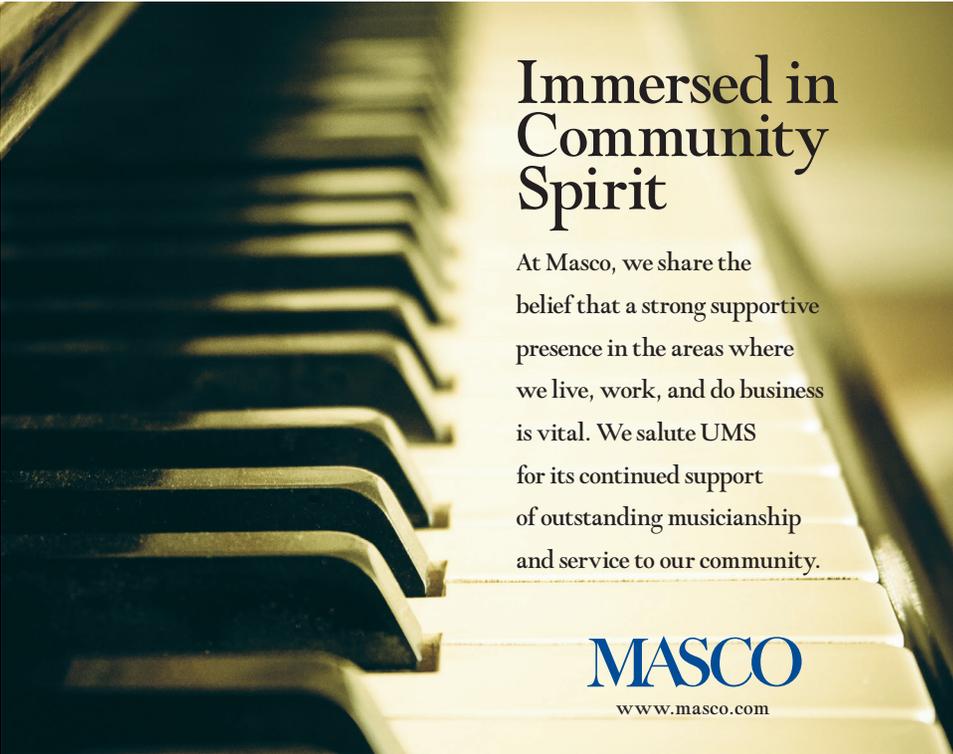
Denis Matsuev has enjoyed a stellar career since his triumphant victory in the 11th International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow and is now one of the most sought-after musicians of his generation. He appears regularly with world-famous orchestras such as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Pittsburgh Symphony, the London Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia and Los Angeles Philharmonic, Concertgebouw, Berliner Philharmoniker, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, and the Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre. He has successful creative partnerships with the world's most prominent conductors, including Valery Gergiev, Yuri Temirkanov, Mariss Jansons, Zubin Mehta, Kurt Masur, Paavo Jarvi, Antonio Pappano, Charles Dutoit, Alain Gilbert, Leonard Slatkin, Myung-Whun Chung, Semyon Bychkov, Iván Fischer, Adam Fisher, Gianandrea Noseda, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, James Conlon, Vladimir Spivakov, Mikhail Pletnev, Vladimir Fedoseyev, Yury Bashmet, and others.

Mr. Matsuev is a frequent guest of musical festivals such as the Ravinia Festival and the Hollywood Bowl in the US; BBC Proms and Edinburgh International Festival in Great Britain; Schleswig-Holstein, Rheingau, and Festspielhaus Baden-Baden in Germany; Chopin Festival in Poland, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino in Italy; Les Choregies d'Orange and Festival de la Rogue d'Antheron in France; Verbier and Montreux Festivals in Switzerland; and Stars of the White Nights Festival in Russia.

For many years, Mr. Matsuev has led numerous musical festivals and educational projects which have added to his role as a prominent public figure. Since 2004 he has organized Stars on Baikal in Irkutsk, Siberia (in 2009 he was awarded the title

of Honorary Citizen of Irkutsk), and since 2005 he has been the artistic director of the music festival Crescendo (a series of events held in international cities such as Moscow, St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg, Tel Aviv, Kaliningrad, Paris, and New York). In 2010 he became the artistic director of Annecy Music Festival in Annecy, France, with the goal to bring together Russian and French music cultures. In 2012 he became the artistic director of the first international Astana Piano Passion festival and competition, and in 2016 serves as the artistic director of the competition and chairman of the organizing committee that started the Grand Piano Competition, a new competition for young pianists in Moscow. Mr. Matsuev is the president of the charitable Russian foundation New Names, which discovers and supports talented children and helps to develop music education. More than 10,000 children have received monetary grants and/or the opportunity to perform on the professional stage.

Awards include The Presidential Council for Culture and Art's Honored Artist of Russia, the titles People's Artist of Republic of North Ossetia-Alania and People's Artist of Republic of Adygea. He is a laureate of the prestigious Shostakovich Prize in Music and State Prize of Russian Federation in Literature and Arts and is a People's Artist of Russia. He is also honorary professor of Moscow State University and became the head of The Public Council under The Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation. Mr. Matsuev was viewed by millions of spectators around the globe while performing excerpts from Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto at the closing ceremony of the Sochi Olympic Games. In April 2014, UNESCO designated Denis Matsuev as a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador.



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UMS ARCHIVES

This afternoon marks **Denis Matsuev**'s fifth performance under UMS auspices, following his UMS debut in October 2010 as soloist with the Mariinsky Orchestra and Maestro Valery Gergiev at Hill Auditorium. He most recently appeared in Ann Arbor in January 2015 with Maestro Gergiev and the Mariinsky Orchestra at Hill Auditorium in a performance of Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto.

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- 10/22 You Can Dance: Dorrance Dance
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- 11/19 You Can Dance: Nora Chipaumire
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 Boll Family Y, 1401 Broadway Street, Detroit, 2–3:30 pm
 Sessions will meet at Ann Arbor and Detroit locations concurrently.)

Educational events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.