



The German Society of Pennsylvania

proudly presents

Xiaopei Xu



Sunday, January 5, 2020 at 3:00pm

The German Society of Pennsylvania
www.germansociety.org

611 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, PA 19123

Calendar of Events

January 2020

Sat. Jan. 11 Buchclub: *Der Tod in Venedig* by Thomas Mann, 1:30pm

Fri. Jan. 17 Friday Film Fest: *Die Unsichtbaren*, 6:30pm

February 2020

Sat. Feb. 8 Buchclub: *Die Verwandlung* by Franz Kafka, 1:30pm

Wed. Feb. 12 Konversationsabend: Glühwein Dreams, 6:00pm

Fri. Feb. 21 Friday Film Fest: *Transit*, 6:30pm

Sat. Feb. 29 9th Annual Bierfest, 2:00pm

March 2020

Wed. Mar. 11 Konversationsabend: The Bauhaus - 100 Years, 6:00pm

Sat. Mar. 14 Buchclub, 1:30pm

Fri. Mar. 20 Friday Film Fest: *Der Vorname*, 6:30pm

Tue. Mar. 31 German Script Course, 10:00am

Save the dates for our next “Wister and More!” concerts:

Sun. Mar. 8 New World Recorders

This baroque recorder quartet will perform J.S. Bach's “Art of the Fugue”, Orchestral Suite No. 1 in C Major, and Capriccio in Bb Major.

Sun. Apr. 19 Duo Parisienne

Nancy Bean (violin) and Anne Sullivan (harp) will present pieces by Debussy, Piazzolla, Marais, Massenet, and Corelli.

Sun. May 10 Academy of Vocal Arts

Current AVA students and alumni will perform selections from Broadway musicals and German operettas from their vast repertoire.

All of our events are open to the public.

We welcome members and non-members alike.

Most events require tickets. Please call or email the office to inquire about purchasing:

215.627.2332 | info@germansociety.org

Xiaopei Xu, Piano

PROGRAM

Piano Sonata No. 2 in A Major, Op. 2, No. 2

I. Allegro Vivace

II. Largo Appassionato

III. Scherzo, Allegretto

IV. Rondo Grazioso

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Gretchen am Spinnerade

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
and Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

Der Müller und der Bach

Erlkönig

- Intermission -

Piano Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13 "*Pathétique*"

I. Grave - Allegro di molto e con brio

II. Adagio cantabile

III. Rondo Allegro

Ludwig van Beethoven

Ballade No. 4 in F minor, Op. 52

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1839)

Nocturne in D-flat Major, Op. 27, No. 2

Etude in F Major, Op. 10, No. 8

Etude in G-sharp Major, Op. 25, No. 6

Waltz in A-flat Major, Op. 42

There will be one 15-minute intermission. We offer refreshments from our bar during that time. Your ticket to our concert also invites you to a complimentary reception with the artists in the Ratskeller (downstairs) following the performance.

Program Notes



The first three piano sonatas, under Op.2, were composed in 1794-95 and published in 1796. They were dedicated to Joseph Haydn, not long after Beethoven studied with him in Vienna. Clearly the dedication is a gesture of homage—although their student-teacher relationship was contentious, to say the least—but it was certainly not a statement of intent to continue in the style of Haydn. Quite the contrary; with these sonatas Beethoven sets himself apart, not only with the four-movement form (compared with the usual three movements of Haydn) but in the far more intensive emotional content of the works and in their technical demands on the performer, so much more challenging.

—Tamás Ungár

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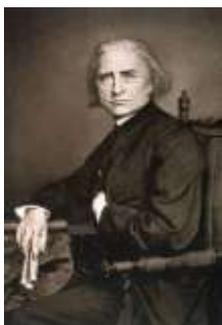


In the nineteenth century Franz Liszt probably did more than any other composer for the genre of the piano transcription. His transcriptions and paraphrases made an important contribution to the development of piano music, with their technical challenges, innovative notation, and complex pianistic and dramatic effects. He was also active at a time when huge developments in the manufacture and mass production of pianos meant that the instrument was almost ubiquitous in every domestic setting, and amateur players were keen for repertoire which could be enjoyed at home.... It is in his transcriptions of Franz **Schubert's songs** that **Liszt's fine art of transcription** reaches its apogee. He transcribed some 60 of Schubert's songs for solo piano and in doing so helped popularize the then obscure works of Schubert, quickly elevating them to the position of popular concert pieces where they remain today. Liszt's Schubert transcriptions are not simple "arrangements" of the original songs: many of the works consist of two or three piano accompaniments and one line of melody or a doubling of the melodic line, yet without any paraphrasing or free fantasies. Such is Liszt's skill he is able to present music which is pianistically "totally Liszt", yet retains the core melodic and emotional depth of these works, so that the essence of the composer is captured with all the lyrical beauty and of Schubert's original. As Liszt intentionally pre-

served all the details of the original songs, the transcriptions present challenges for the pianist, such as how to produce a beautiful vocal line and convey the meaning of the song's words on the piano, as well as interpretive aspects such as ornamentation and style.

—Frances Wilson

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Franz Liszt explained what moved him to his intense preoccupation with Franz Schubert's lieder between the years of 1833 and 1845 during his 1838 visit in Vienna: "I heard in the salons, with vivid pleasure and sentimentality bringing tears to my eyes, an artistic friend, the Baron von Schönstein, present Schubert's lieder. The French translation renders only a very incomplete sense of how this mostly-very-lovely poetry connects to the music of Schubert, the most poetic musician ever to live. The German language is so admirable in the area of sentimentality, perhaps only a German is capable of comprehending the naïveté and fantastic aspects of so many of these compositions, their capricious appeal, their melancholy letting-go."

* * *

[In 1798, Beethoven completed]...the Piano Sonata in C Minor, Op. 13, called by Beethoven himself *Sonate Pathétique*. Here we have a true product of the Age of Romanticism, with its highly charged introduction and its second movement as sad and yet as glowing as the parting scene in Romeo and Juliet. It was too new for some, too heady for others; young Moscheles, perfecting himself as a pianist, was warned against "such eccentric stuff." Yet it won great fame; no doubt the title helped, though there is nothing "pathetic" in the Tchaikovskian sense about it, the word here denoting "full of tenderness."

—George R. Marek

* * *

People have been singing ballads since the beginning of human history, and poets have been writing them for almost that long. But it took Frédéric Chopin to turn the ballad (or ballade, as he called it) into soul-searching piano music....One reason Chopin gave the title Ballade to four of his major pieces is that they had literary inspiration. The jumping-off point for these works may



have been the themes and imagery within the writings of the Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz, whom Chopin met later in his life. Robert Schumann, writing about the Ballade No. 2 in 1841, recalls how Chopin himself talked about the poet's influence on his work....Still, there's no evidence to suggest that Chopin merely set Mickiewicz's stories to music. Far from it, especially in the enigmatic fourth Ballade in F minor. But the piece does seem to pivot from episode to episode — at one moment tender and wistful, at another fiery and violent....a kind of organic drama....

—Tom Huizenga



About the Artist

"Xu possesses technique, musicality and breadth - everything she needs to entrance her audience." — The Boston Musical Intelligencer



At her 2018 Boston Symphony Hall debut, Xiaopei Xu won over the audience with a dazzling performance of the Chopin E minor Piano Concerto with Maestro Keith Lockhart and the Boston Symphony Orchestra/Pops. Legendary pianist Martha Argerich describes her as "a sensitive, elegant pianist and a talented artist." Conductor Bramwell Tovey regards her as "one of the most inspiring young artists" after their first collaboration. Already establishing herself worldwide as a deeply expressive artist, Ms. Xu always uses her technical prowess to achieve poetic results in her interpretations.

Ms. Xu currently resides in Boston and is pursuing a Doctorate in Musical Arts from Boston University. She holds an MM degree from Yale University and BM degree from New England Conservatory of Music. Her principle teachers are Boaz Sharon, Hung-Kuan Chen, Meng-Chieh Liu, and Xun Pan. She has also worked with influential musicians such as Claude Frank, Richard Goode, Paul Bdura-Skoda, Andrea Bonatta and Russell Sherman. Ms. Xu has won top prizes at the 4th New York International Piano Competition, Oberlin International Piano Competition, Tureck International Bach Competition, the Washington DC International Young Artist Competition, the Richmond Piano competition and the Soloist Competition at Boston University.

Ms. Xu performs regularly at festivals including Pianofest in the Hamptons, PianoTexas in Fort Worth, Banff Music Centre in Alberta, Sarasota Music Festival in Florida, Young Artist Festival in Russia, and Walnut Hill Music Festival in Boston, where she was invited to serve as a teaching assistant in 2015 and 2016, and as a guest artist in 2018.

In addition to her musical life, Ms. Xu has a passion for the visual arts. Sections of her drawings have been published by the Clara Haskil Competition's *Jeune Critique*, and she has been commissioned for various installation and collaborative projects.

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We also wish to acknowledge with thanks the generous support received from The Philadelphia Cultural Fund for this season of our music program.