

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

András Schiff, *piano*

Sunday, October 23, 2005, 3 pm
Zellerbach Hall

PROGRAM

Franz Joseph Haydn Capriccio in G major on “Acht Sauschneider
müssen sein,” Hob. XVII:1

Haydn Sonata No. 53 in E minor, Hob. XVI:34
Presto
Adagio
Vivace molto innocentemente

Ludwig van Beethoven Sonata No. 16 in G major, Op. 31, No. 1
Allegro vivace
Adagio grazioso
Rondo: Allegretto

INTERMISSION

Haydn Variations in F minor, Hob XVII:6

Beethoven Sonata No. 21 in C major, Op. 53 “Waldstein”
Allegro con brio
Introduzione: Adagio molto
Rondo: Allegretto moderato

*Exclusive Representation for András Schiff:
Kirshbaum Demler & Associates, Inc.
711 West End Avenue, Suite 5KN
New York, NY 10025*

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

András Schiff was born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1953. He began piano lessons at the age of five with Elisabeth Vadász and continued his musical studies at the Ferenc Liszt Academy with Professor Pál Kadosa, György Kurtág and Ferenc Rados; he also worked with George Malcolm in London. Recitals and special projects take him to all of the international music capitals and include cycles of the major keyboard works of Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Chopin and Bartók. In 2004, he began a series of performances that explores the 32 Beethoven piano sonatas in chronological order—a project recorded live for ECM New Series and released in September of 2005. The Beethoven Sonata Project will be repeated throughout North America commencing with the 2007/08 season.

In 1999, Schiff created his own chamber orchestra, the Cappella Andrea Barca, for a seven-year series of the complete Mozart piano concertos, taking place during the Mozartwoche of the Internationale Stiftung Mozarteum in Salzburg. The group, which consists of international soloists, chamber musicians and close friends, will tour North America during the 2005/06 and 2006/07 seasons in a series of concerts slated for Carnegie Hall and Avery Fisher Hall to commemorate the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth. The six concerts will include twelve of the Mozart piano concerti, plus chamber music and symphonies.

In October 2005, Schiff embarks on an extensive recital tour throughout North America with performances in New York, Ann Arbor, Boston, Chicago, Fort Worth, Kansas City, Vancouver, Seattle, Carmel and Berkeley. He also performs as conductor and soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in a program of Mendelssohn's Sinfonia No. 10 in B minor for String Orchestra; Schumann's Introduction and Allegro Appassionato, Op. 92; Haydn's Concerto for Piano in D major; and Schumann's Symphony No. 1 in B-flat major.

During the next few seasons, the focus of Schiff's orchestral activities will be conducting programs of Bach, Beethoven and Mozart from the keyboard. He has annual engagements with the Philharmonia Orchestra, London, and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe as conductor and soloist. He is a regular visiting conductor and soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra, Staatskapelle Dresden, Budapest Festival Orchestra

and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. He has conducted Bach's B minor Mass and Haydn's *Creation* with the London Philharmonia and was conductor and soloist with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe on a critically acclaimed tour of New York, Chicago and San Francisco.

Since childhood, Schiff has enjoyed playing chamber music and was Artistic Director of the "Musiktage Mondsee," an annual chamber music festival near Salzburg from 1989 until 1998. He is presently joint artistic director of the "Ittinger Pfingstkonzerte," a chamber music festival he founded in Switzerland with Heinz Holliger in 1995. In 1998, Schiff started a similar series entitled "Hommage to Palladio" at the Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza. In September 2004 he became artist-in-residence of "Kunstfest Weimar," a new festival in Germany.

Schiff has established a large discography, including recordings for Teldec (1994–97), London/Decca (1981–94) and, since 1997, ECM New Series. Recordings for ECM include the complete solo piano music of Janáček, a solo disc of Schumann's piano pieces and his second recording of the Bach *Goldberg Variations*. He has received several international recording awards, including two Grammy Awards for "Best Classical Instrumental Soloist (Without Orchestra)" for the Bach English Suites, and "Best Vocal Recording" for Schubert's *Schwanengesang* with tenor Peter Schreier.

Among other honors, Schiff was awarded the Bartók Prize in 1991 and the Claudio Arrau Memorial Medal from the Robert Schumann Society in Düsseldorf in 1994. In March 1996, he received the highest Hungarian distinction, the Kossuth Prize, and in May 1997 he received the Leonie Sonnings Music Prize in Copenhagen. He was awarded the Palladio d'Oro by the city of Vicenza, and the Musikfest-Preis Bremen for "outstanding international artistic work" in 2003. In 2001 he became a British citizen. Mr. Schiff resides in Florence and London and is married to the violinist Yuuko Shiokawa.

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

Sonata No. 53 in E minor, Hob. XVI:34

Unlike Mozart, Beethoven, Clementi or a number of other of his contemporaries, Haydn was not a virtuoso pianist. Haydn recognized this, once stating, “I was a wizard on no instrument, but I knew the strength and working of all.” Until Beethoven, the piano sonata was not composed as a vehicle for virtuoso technique—that was the domain of the concerto—but as entertainment for amateurs in the privacy of their homes. Often such pieces were directed toward women, who were expected to attain a moderate degree of accomplishment on a keyboard instrument in order to be “eligible for marriage.” Also, many such pieces were written for students, as something of an exercise.

Haydn had a number of students for whom he composed piano sonatas, and the wide range of ability among his students accounts for the disparate levels of sophistication we find among the nearly fifty surviving sonatas, most of which were written before 1770. Some of these works have been lost because Haydn gave the manuscripts to his students without making copies. A few of Haydn’s sonatas, however, were not composed for his students. Three of these, the Sonatas in C major, D major and E-flat major (Hob. XVI: 50–52), were written for Therese Jansen, a leading pianist in London who had studied with Clementi. Haydn composed them in 1794–5, during his second visit to the English capital. The last three piano sonatas give evidence not only of Jansen’s formidable technique, but of the more powerful sonority of the English piano in comparison to its German and Austrian counterparts.

Haydn’s Sonata in E minor, Hob. XVI:34, is among his pre-London works for non-professionals, but is nonetheless full of wit. The simplicity of the finale, *Vivace molto innocente*, should not make the listener forget the tonal and thematic interest of the first movement, nor the elegance of central Adagio.

Variations for piano in F minor, Hob. XVII:6 ; Capriccio in G major on “Acht Sauschneider müssen sein,” Hob. XVII:1

Haydn may have conceived the Variations in F minor, a gem of classical-era piano literature, as the first movement of a full piano sonata, but he chose to let the work stand on its own. It is arguably the most original set of variations in the Viennese

Classical style before Beethoven, and the coda anticipates the power of Beethoven’s piano works.

Haydn’s inscription on the copy he presented to Babette von Ployer, a former student of Mozart for whom Haydn composed the Variations, describes the work as “Un piccolo divertimento” (a little *divertissement*), but this description belies the work’s genius. Two alternating but related themes, in F minor and F major, become the material for the double-variation set, in which we hear two variations on each theme before the structure loosens, and a dramatic coda resolves to restfulness to close the piece.

Haydn’s earlier *Capriccio* in G major on “Acht Sauschneider müssen sein,” Hob. XVII:1, is a hybrid rondo/variations form, most notable for excursions into distant tonal areas.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Sonata No. 16 in G major, Op. 31, No. 1

Written in 1802, the sonatas of Op. 31 probably parallel the drafting of Beethoven’s famous “Heiligenstadt Testament,” in which the composer attempts to admit to his brothers, and indeed to all people, that he suffers from a loss of hearing. This was not his first communication concerning his ailment. In June of the previous year, Beethoven had written to Franz Wegeler, an old friend in Bonn:

“I must confess that I am living a miserable life. For almost two years I have ceased to attend any social functions, just because I find it impossible to say to people: I am deaf. If I had any other profession it would be easier, but in my profession it is a terrible handicap. As for my enemies, of whom I have a fair number, what would they say?”

Beethoven’s frustration evolved into despair during the six months he spent in the village of Heiligenstadt, just outside Vienna, in 1802. In the “Heiligenstadt Testament,” found after the composer’s death, Beethoven admits to being distraught over his diminishing hearing and tries to explain his apparent misanthropy in words that in places read like a suicide note. The document, addressed to his brothers, was never sent, and remained in Beethoven’s possession until his death.

Of the three sonatas of Op. 31, the first two were most likely composed while Beethoven was at Heiligenstadt. The three works, bearing no

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dedication, are in G major, D minor and E-flat major. Nos. 1 and 2 were published in the spring of 1803 in Nägeli's *Répertoire des Clavecinistes* as *Cahier 5*; No. 3 was published a year later, with the "Sonate pathétique," in *Cahier 11*.

Beethoven used the piano as his primary medium of experimentation. Thus, it is not surprising that the piano sonatas of Op. 31 are among the first works published by the composer after venturing on his self-proclaimed "new path." Only one of the three sonatas of Op. 31, the second, in D minor, however, contains the intensity we find in the "middle period" works. Also, the first and second sonatas are in the older, three-movement format; only the third uses the four-movement format of Beethoven's earlier, "grand" sonatas.

Often overshadowed by the second sonata of the set, the G major sonata possesses some of the truly innovative aspects, not the least of which is the nervous rhythmic energy of its first theme. The "on-the-beat" and "off-the-beat" juxtaposition in the main theme culminates in a strident clash near the end of the development section, relieved only by the welcome return to the tonic and opening material. Also, the tonal plan of the first movement is significant in that the second group is the mediant key, both major and minor. This bold substitution for the dominant was unusual in 1802, but was to become almost a standard working procedure for Beethoven in his later works, including the not-so-late "Waldstein" sonata.

The second movement, in C major and marked *Adagio grazioso*, moves in a majestic 9/8 meter. The third and final movement, an *Allegretto Rondo* in G major, begins in a relaxed fashion, but its closing *Presto* section moves forward with an intensity that looks ahead to the finale of the "Waldstein" sonata.

Sonata No. 21 in C major, Op. 53 "Waldstein"

With his Third Symphony, Op. 55, Beethoven embarked on a path formed by a new symphonic ideal, creating unified works of sweeping force. This ideal permeated all of his compositions, not only those for orchestra. The Sonatas for Piano, Op. 53 and 57 are brilliant examples of the symphonic ideal translated to the piano. With the "Waldstein" sonata, Beethoven had truly arrived at his "middle period" in the piano sonata.

Beethoven's Sonata in C major, Op. 53, draws

its popular name from its dedicatee: Count Ferdinand von Waldstein, who helped finance Beethoven's initial trip to Vienna. Published in Vienna in 1805, the work maintains a level of difficulty that put it beyond the reach of the amateur salon pianist.

The first movement of the "Waldstein" is in sonata form, and its fundamental tonal structure is related to that of the first movement of the earlier Sonata No. 16 in G major, Op. 31, No. 2, in that the secondary key is the mediant. That, however, is where the similarity between the two works ends. The first theme of the "Waldstein" pushes forward with incessant repeated notes, which stop only with the arrival of the second group of themes. The first of the several themes of the second group is an expansive chorale, a great contrast to the main theme, that anticipates the broad, expansive music that is to follow. Beethoven develops the secondary themes immediately, even before the exposition closes in the striking key of E major. The intense development section holds off the return to the tonic as long as imaginable, increasing drama and anticipation until the arrival of the recapitulation and the tonic, C major. As in many of Beethoven's works of this period, the extended coda becomes a second development section.

Beethoven originally composed a long slow movement for the sonata, but removed it shortly before the piece was finished. The movement was later published alone as *Andante favori*. In its place, Beethoven wrote an *Adagio molto*, designed as a harmonically searching introduction to the finale, played without a break.

The finale of the "Waldstein" is a tour-de-force of piano technique. Formally a Rondo, it contains as much energy as the first movement, developed through rapid scales and trills. Unlike the first movement, the finale clings stubbornly to the home key of C major, aside from an excursion into C minor, through its *Prestissimo* ending.

John R. Palmer