Sunday, October 22, 2006, 3pm
Zellerbach Hall

Orpheus Chamber Orchestra
with
Emanuel Ax, *piano*

PROGRAM

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) Overture to *Così fan tutte*, K.588

Mozart Piano Concerto No. 17 in G major, K.453†

Allegro
Andante
Allegretto—Finale: Presto

INTERMISSION

Mozart Piano Concerto No. 25 in C major, K.503

Allegro maestoso
Andante
Allegretto

Mozart Symphony No. 35 in D major, K.385, "Haffner"

Allegro con spirito
Andante
Menuetto
Presto

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† Mr. Ax performs on a Johann Fritz fortepiano made in Vienna ca. 1805 on generous loan from Ms. Belle Bulwinkle.

Orpheus Chamber Orchestra
Emanuel Ax, *piano*

Violin
Ronnie Bauch
Eva Burmeister
Diana Cohen
Laura Frautschi
Liang-Ping How
Joanna Jenner
Sophia Kessinger
Adela Peña
Richard Rood
Carmit Zori
Joanna Farrer

Viola
Benjamin Ullery
David Cerutti
Christof Huebner
Shmuel Katz

Cello
Priscilla Lee
Melissa Meell
Alberto Parrini
James Wilson

Double Bass
Jordan Frazier
Peter Rosenfeld

Flute
Susan Palma
Elizabeth Mann

Oboe
Stephen Taylor
John Snow

Clarinet
Alan Kay
David Singer

Bassoon
Gina Cuffari
Cynde Iverson

Horn
Angela Cordell
John Smith

Trumpet
Nathan Botts
Bradley Siroky

Timpani
Maya Gunji

Program Notes

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Born January 27, 1756, in Salzburg, Austria.
Died December 5, 1791, in Vienna, Austria.

Overture to *Così fan tutte*, K. 588 (1790)

For orchestra consisting of 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani and strings. Approximately 5 minutes.

Following *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*, Mozart and librettist Lorenzo da Ponte teamed up one last time to create *Così fan tutte*, popularly translated as "Women are like that." What women are like is the central question of this comedy, driven by a wager in the opening scene in which the cynical Don Alfonso bets the love-struck young soldiers Ferrando and Guglielmo that their fiancées, the sisters Dorabella and Fiordiligi, can be proven fickle. The soldiers pretend to go off to war, come back disguised as Albanians, and eventually seduce each other's fiancées. Don Alfonso sums it up shortly before the finale with the phrase "Così fan tutte," sung first alone and then in chorus with the two soldiers. This music appears twice in the overture, once at the end of the opening *Andante* section, and again shortly before the end; listen for a descending arpeggio in the low strings, first alone and then accompanied by a woodwind chorale. The bulk of the overture is a sprightly *Presto*, propelled by nearly constant eighth notes and punctuated by hammering chords.

Piano Concerto No. 17 in G major, K. 453 (1784)

For solo piano and orchestra consisting of flute, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 2 horns and strings. Approximately 30 minutes.

Mozart's K. 453, also from his fertile period in Vienna, is one of the few concertos the composer wrote expressly for another pianist. This one was for his precocious student Barbara von Ployer, who premiered the concerto on June 13, 1784. This particular concert also included a performance of his sonatas for two pianos with teacher and student as performers. The work is not noticeably easier than contemporaneous concertos, but one feature of its origin is that Mozart provided fully notated cadenzas. (Mozart improvised the cadenza for his own performances, and, moreover, his piano parts were often the merest sketches—just enough to jog his prodigious memory.) The exposed, individualistic woodwind writing and warm string voicing in this concerto create a chamber music atmosphere. In the slow movement, Mozart spins out a touching melody over a series of distant and often dramatic modulations. The final movement is a set of variations on a tune Mozart apparently transcribed from his pet starling, beginning as a playful *Allegretto* and then moving *attacca* into a *Presto* finale.

Piano Concerto No. 25 in C major, K. 503 (1786)

For solo piano and orchestra consisting of flute, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani and strings. Approximately 31 minutes.

Mozart wrote a staggering 27 piano concertos, starting at age 11 and ending within the last year of his life. Most of these works showcased his own virtuosity at the keyboard, exploiting the rapidly developing instrument with newfound power to carry a solo. A full 15 of the piano concertos were written in Vienna between 1782 and 1786, the last of which was K. 503. It reveals a scope and grandeur beyond any of its predecessors, a work that draws rightful comparisons to Mozart's later "Jupiter" Symphony (also in C major) and Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony. The concerto's symphonic first movement, nearly 15 minutes long, opens with a triumphant declamation. It tails off into an unexpected shift from major to minor, leading into the next theme in the strings, with the rhythm of *dot-dot-dot-dash-dash* that figures so prominently in the rest of the movement. Despite its grandiosity, the movement leaves ample space for the piano's sinuous passage-work and subtle harmonic colorations. The slow movement is a stately *Andante* in F major, enriched by occasional flurries of faster motion. The final *Allegretto* builds a march around a catchy tune with a Gavotte-like emphasis on the weak pickup beat.

Symphony No. 35 in D major, K. 385, "Haffner" (1782)

For orchestra consisting of 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani and strings. Approximately 18 minutes.

Mozart was having a tumultuous summer in 1782. He had just prepared the opera *The Abduction from the Seraglio* for its premiere, and was then onto the task of arranging the score for winds ("otherwise someone will beat me to it and secure the profits instead of me," was how he explained the project in a letter to his father, Leopold). He had also just moved his residence and was arranging his wedding to Constanze on the sly without tipping off his disapproving father quite yet. One can imagine the stress he felt when, in the midst of all this, Leopold requested a new work in honor of the ennoblement of Sigmund Haffner, a boyhood chum of Wolfgang's and the son of the Salzburg Burgomaster. Nevertheless, Mozart completed a first movement within a week, and sent five subsequent movements in the following weeks. The work in its original form was really a serenade—not to be confused with the "Haffner" Serenade, K. 250, written for an earlier family wedding—with an introductory march, an extra minuet movement and a smaller woodwind complement than what you see before you today. It is unclear whether the work ever was performed in this version in Salzburg, but Mozart requested the score back from his father a few months later and reshaped it into what we now know as the Symphony No. 35. The work is a model of economy, with short, simple forms and the creative development of even the simplest material, such as the octave leaps that fill the first movement. The *Andante* and *Minuet* movements are fittingly genteel, considering the social event for which they were intended. In the closing *Presto*, Mozart lets his hair down, teasing with a polite first eight bars and then launching a breathless and thundering Perpetual Motion.

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In Their Own Words

Interviews by Aaron Grad

Emanuel Ax, *piano*

You played with Orpheus just a few years ago. What was that like? Did that experience inspire this current project?

We played the Mozart D minor Concerto, No. 20, and it was an incredible experience. When we went on stage we all walked out together, not the orchestra first and then me—that was a microcosm of the whole experience. As soon as I came off the stage, I was asking to play together again. I wanted to play Mozart with Orpheus all over the country, and that is what we are now doing. Also, this is an important year for Mozart, his 250th birthday.

How important is it to you to mark milestones like a composer's birthday?

I think it offers a way to punctuate one's career. I wanted to play Mozart anyway; this just adds to the relevance. Mozart is one of the few composers you can play over and over again and never tire of it.

Speaking of anniversary years, it happens that this is the 30th anniversary of when you first played with Orpheus. Do you remember anything of that?

Yes, we played Mozart at Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center. It was one of the first concerts I played in New York after winning a competition in Israel, the Artur Rubinstein Competition. It was really exciting to be playing at a slightly higher visibility, and also a great thrill that Rubinstein, who happened to be in New York, came to the performance.

What would the original instrument and performance conditions have been like for these Mozart piano concertos?

These concertos would have been played on a fortepiano, and clearly in a room that is much smaller than anything we have today. For Mozart's grand series of six concertos in 1784, the total subscription was 150 people. A lot of things were more audible up close. I think the old pianos actually have tremendous character. I have done some work on pianos from 1825 and 1826. It is very exciting and brilliant, but the sheer volume is simply not there.

Do the qualities of original instruments influence your performances on modern instruments?

It is something that happens subconsciously. Once you have played those instruments, maybe you hear things a little differently; there is a different kind of balance. There is more brilliance in the treble, and a little more clarity in the bass, so maybe you go more for that, use a little less pedal generally, that kind of thing.

With a work like Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 25 (K. 503) that is so expansive and grand, will it feel strange to approach it with more of a chamber music mentality?

I do not think chamber music means playing small. I think it means to play with a strong connection between individuals. In a piece like this, where the winds are as prominent as the strings, it is important to be in contact with everyone. By playing it as chamber music we all play together, rather than relying on an intermediary for the beat.

The power and grandeur of K. 503 are evident right from the start, but what are some of the other intriguing qualities that stick out to you?

The harmonies in this piece may be the most adventurous of all the Mozart concertos. As you hear in the second half of the first movement, he finds his way through a wonderful series of modulations to B major, which is about as distant as you can be—at least in our harmonic hierarchy—from the home key of C major. The idea of seeing the piece as big, grand and spacious does not describe all of it very well. You also have to say adventurous, unusual, touching and poignant.

Mozart provided cadenzas for the first concerto on this program, K. 453, but for K. 503 you have to find or write your own. What do you use for this piece, and how does it compare to playing a cadenza that Mozart wrote himself?

I tried for a long time to compose my own, but I was not successful in coming up with anything decent. I heard a really wonderful cadenza that Alfred Brendel does, and I wrote him a letter and asked whether I could play it. He very kindly sent off a copy to me as soon as he got my letter, so I am now playing the Brendel cadenza. The Mozart cadenzas are so perfect that you are always slightly intimidated, and you want to play them as perfectly as you can. When it is not by him, maybe you feel a little freer.

Though the two concertos on this program are not much different in length or scoring, they have such different moods. What gives K. 453 such a smooth character?

I think beginnings and ends are important. You can draw an analogy to the fourth piano concerto of Beethoven. People very often tell you that the fourth piano concerto is a very lyrical piece, yet there are things in it that are as loud and dramatic as anything in the third and fifth. It is the way the piece starts that seduces us, and I think the same is true of Mozart's K. 453.

Mozart was remarkably clever in how he played with pacing, phrasing and rhythm. For example, the second and third movements of K. 503 and the first movement of K. 453 each begin with some potential ambiguity as to the placement of the beat and phrase. Can you explain what Mozart is doing in these moments?

Mozart is always playing with the expected against the unexpected in very subtle ways. I think Haydn and Beethoven were much more demonstrative about their surprises. Mozart always keeps the surprises veiled underneath this seemingly predictable pattern, and that is what I think makes the music so incredibly special and original. He wrote about some of his concertos that they "contain surprises for both the amateur and the connoisseur." I think most of the time with Mozart all of us are amateurs, because to be a connoisseur of his music requires a very high degree of sophistication. His simplicity is arrived at only through an incredibly complex process. To take K. 453 as an example, I find the rhythmic displacement to be the most fascinating thing about the opening: There are four-bar units in the tune and four-bar units in the accompaniment, except that they are one bar apart. So you never really know, nor should you know, where the strong bars really are. It is like an M. C. Escher drawing, if you look at it a certain way it is one picture, and if you look at it a different way it is a different picture. I think it is exactly the same in this music, and that is what keeps it so mysterious and flowing.

What strikes you in K. 453's slow movement?

The wonderful thing, aside from just the beautiful tunes, is the fabulous use of the wind instruments, which is maybe a little reminiscent of the Grand Partita [Serenade No. 10, K. 361]. Do you remember in the movie *Amadeus*, when Salieri almost faints from the beauty of Mozart's music? What is being played is this amazing oboe line from the Grand Partita. There is a little bit of that in this movement when the oboe comes in. What makes it even more fabulous are the amazing rests. After each fermata, there is always something incredibly special.

The slow movement of K. 453 seems unusually sentimental for Mozart. Is this a departure from his core vocabulary?

No, it is just another aspect of his incredibly all-encompassing invention. You cannot say he experimented with anything, because everything he did, he did perfectly the first time. Each concerto is in a way an experiment; it was a very new form. He is always playing with the way the piano enters, for example. The C major concerto, K. 503, has an incredibly arresting way for the piano to come in. The way the orchestra finishes is kind of like a character walking off stage, and the piano is like a character walking on stage,

very operatic. In the G major, he launches right in with this wonderful passage, and directs things back to the beginning of the tutti. He is always experimenting with these things, and each one is very successful.

Mozart based the third movement of K. 453 on a tune his pet starling sung. How does that work?

I think he wrote down somewhere what the bird sang, and it is not exactly what is in the concerto. I think the first couple of bars are, and then he changes it a bit. He had some nerve! It is of course a wonderful tune and an incredible set of variations. He was very good at variations. Variations are the kind of thing that really shows off compositional ability, proving how many ways one can make something interesting. And of course Beethoven and Mozart were the champs.

Following your concertos, the orchestra closes the program with the "Haffner" Symphony. What do you find most special about this piece?

Probably for sheer brilliance, there is no symphony like it. I think the next symphony that approximates anywhere near that kind of effect is the second symphony of Beethoven, in the same key of D major. The "Haffner" Symphony is an out-and-out virtuoso piece. It is very difficult, but it makes a fabulous effect.

What is the overall feeling you have performing Mozart's concertos?

These pieces are always a thrill to play. There is something very special about sharing this music with your colleagues onstage and with the audience. I suppose that is why it is so nice to do them without a conductor, so that we can all be involved to the highest possible degree. Every part is interesting. The first violin, the second violin, the viola, even the trumpet parts are interesting. Everything is fascinating, well composed and brilliantly realized.

Jordan Frazier, *bass*

A newly appointed member of Orpheus, Jordan Frazier has performed with the Orchestra since 1993. Mr. Frazier is also a member of the American Composers Orchestra, the Westchester Philharmonic and the American Symphony Orchestra, and serves on the faculty of the Mannes College of Music.

Congratulations on having been elected a member of Orpheus! How did you first get involved with the group?

First, I want to say how honored I am to be a member. Orpheus is a tight-knit group, and membership does not come up very often, so it is a real pleasure that this could happen. My introduction to Orpheus happened around 1988, when I first heard their recordings, and I was absolutely blown away. It just happened that [Orpheus founding member and bassist] Donald Palma joined the faculty at Manhattan School of Music when I was starting as a freshman, and I decided to study with him. The first time I played with Orpheus was in 1993 at Carnegie Hall with Dawn Upshaw. Coming out of school and being so young, I was thrilled to have that opportunity. It has been almost 13 years now, and a wonderful education for me.

The expansion of Orpheus's membership from one to two basses is significant. What sort of repertoire has created the need for larger string sections?

Certainly adding Beethoven, Mendelssohn and Schumann symphonies has had an influence. Usually you hear these symphonies played with eight or nine basses. Playing them with one is lovely, but it is not necessarily that gratifying when you do not feel like you can match the dynamic. Also, there is a lot of *divisi* [when one part divides separate lines] that requires two basses, especially in new music.

In this all-Mozart concert, the basses never play an independent part. How does it feel to play in this true double bass role?

You are really an extension of the cello section. You play the same notes, but you do not have the same sound. The challenge is to create a unified bass sound. When playing with two basses you also have to match the pitch with the other bass player, but luckily there are always great bass players to play with in Orpheus so that is not such a problem. There are certainly moments when you play in a large orchestra where each player somewhat plays on their own. But in this group, everyone is focused on blending and matching the sound and bowing; that is really the most important thing.

How is it that this music can come across as so simple and genteel when it is actually so fiendishly tough to play well?

It is pure music. There is hardly any dissonance, and not many markings or dynamics. Old music is the most difficult music to play. Compared to the music that is being written today, yes it does sound proper and tame. But it was revolutionary in its time, and it still is revolutionary in the right hands. It is not music you can sit back and play in your sleep. In order to make it effective to the audience, it requires a lot of concentration and work within the orchestra. I tend to think that if a listener thinks Mozart is easy, it is probably not a great performance.

What was your earliest contact with Mozart's "Haffner" Symphony?

The first time I played the work was at Interlochen in Michigan when I was in high school. It is a notorious piece in the bass literature, being that the last movement is one of the most difficult excerpts from the repertoire to perform on the bass. Mozart instructed that it should be played "as fast as possible."

Will playing this piece bring back memories of sweating through auditions?

Yes, for sure! This excerpt will take down many bass players. I have been taken down, and I think there are a lot of other players who have been as well.

Aside from its infamy with bassists, what are your feelings about the piece?

It is incredible that someone could write this in two weeks. It is undoubtedly one of the great pieces that he wrote. The interesting thing about it, and Mozart in general, is bringing out dynamic extremes. Mozart only really indicated *piano* and *forte*, but within that he looked for exciting, dramatic contrasts and extremes of emotions. That is the thing that I find to be most exciting, especially in Orpheus. When the very large orchestras try to play this music, they rarely get the *piano* or *pianissimo* that is needed, because of the size of the group.

Are there particular performances or recordings of these works that have been the most influential for you?

Being from Cleveland, I grew up with the Szell recordings with the Cleveland Orchestra. Those are certainly landmark recordings for me. In the last 10 years or so, I have been influenced by Nikolas Harnoncourt and his recordings and performances with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe.

Now that you have paid your dues for 13 years, do you have any good war stories from your many performances with Orpheus?

I certainly have had frightening times with the bass. I had one really bad year—I think it was three times that the neck on my bass was broken, all on Orpheus tours. One time was flying to Ljubljana, Slovenia, and upon opening the case I saw the neck sticking straight up in the air with the strings flying all over the place. Luckily, we were a few hours from Vienna, and they were able to send it to the Musikverein and have it fixed in five days.

About the Artists

The Grammy Award-winning **Orpheus Chamber Orchestra** is internationally renowned for its fine artistry and distinctive approach to music-making, with a performing and recording legacy spanning 34 years. Performing with many of today's most dynamic and esteemed soloists, Orpheus presents an annual concert series at Carnegie Hall that illuminates both classic orchestral repertoire and new works by contemporary composers. Noted by critics and audiences alike for its unsurpassed energy, sensitivity and connection to listeners, Orpheus is considered one of New York's cultural treasures. In addition to a prestigious concert series at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Orpheus tours on a regular basis throughout the United States, Europe and Asia, and offers education and outreach programs for children and adults from diverse communities.

In the 2006–2007 season, Orpheus collaborates with world-renowned artists, including pianists Emanuel Ax, Garrick Ohlsson and Jeremy Denk, tenor Ian Bostridge and violinists Gil Shaham, Sarah Chang and Janine Jansen. The Orchestra will premiere commissioned works by Ingram Marshall and Stephen Hartke. Marshall's *Orphic Memories* is the second commission in the Cheswatyr New Music Initiative, a collaborative partnership between NPR, WNYC Radio, The Cheswatyr Foundation, The American Music Center and Orpheus.

The Orpheus recording legacy consists of more than 70 albums and a 2001 Grammy Award for *Shadow Dances: Stravinsky Miniatures*. Their extensive catalog for Deutsche Grammophon includes the Baroque classics, works by Haydn, Mozart, Dvořák, Grieg and Tchaikovsky, as well as a number of 20th-century masterpieces. Additional releases include a recording of English and American folksongs with countertenor Andreas Scholl (Decca); *Creation*, a collection of jazz-inspired music from 1920s Paris, with saxophonist Branford Marsalis (Sony Classical); and a critically acclaimed series of Mozart's greatest piano concertos with Richard Goode (Nonesuch).

Orpheus is in the vanguard of a growing national trend to provide conservatory students with experiences that enhance their professional competitiveness through the Orpheus Institute. By sharing their unique artist-centered philosophy, methodology and skills with students at The Juilliard School and Manhattan School of Music, Orpheus musicians are building significant bridges between conservatory training and the professional music field. A year-long comprehensive set of seminars and courses provides opportunities for students to develop artistic and administrative leadership skills that will enhance their ability to participate fully in any performing arts organizations that might employ them.

Founded in 1972 by cellist Julian Fifer and a group of fellow musicians who aspired to present musician-led performances of standard and contemporary orchestral repertoire, Orpheus is a self-governing organization. Central to its distinctive personality is its practice of sharing and rotating leadership roles. For every work, the members of the orchestra select the concertmaster and the principal players for each section.

In addition to this performance, Orpheus's 2006–2007 season tour includes performances throughout the country at concert halls in Chicago, Los Angeles, Napa, Santa Barbara, Washington, D.C., and the states of North and South Carolina, Connecticut and Pennsylvania.

The Orpheus Chamber Orchestra's web site, www.orpheusnyc.org, provides information on the ensemble, the musicians, performances and special events.

J. Henry Fair

Pianist **Emanuel Ax** is renowned not only for his poetic temperament and unsurpassed virtuosity, but also for the exceptional breadth of his performing activity. Each season his distinguished career includes appearances with major symphony orchestras worldwide, recitals in the most celebrated concert halls, a variety of chamber music collaborations, the commissioning and performance of new music and additions to his acclaimed discography on Sony Classical.

Mr. Ax captured public attention in 1974, when, at age 25, he won the first Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Competition in Tel Aviv. In 1975, he won the Michaels Award of Young Concert Artists and, four years later, took the coveted Avery Fisher Prize. He has been an exclusive Sony Classical recording artist since 1987, making his debut on that label with a collection of Chopin scherzos and mazurkas. Mr. Ax's third volume in the recording cycle of Haydn piano sonatas (Nos. 29, 31, 34, 35 and 49) received a Grammy Award in February 2004; the previous recording in the cycle (sonatas Nos. 47, 53, 32 and 59) also won a Grammy. Other recent releases include two discs (with Yefim Bronfman) of two-piano works by Brahms and Rachmaninoff; period-instrument performances of Chopin's complete works for piano and orchestra (on two discs); and the Brahms Piano Concerto No. 2 with Bernard Haitink and the Boston Symphony. Other notable recordings are the two Liszt concertos paired with the Schoenberg Concerto, three solo Brahms albums, an album of tangos by Astor Piazzolla and a recording of John Adams's *Century Rolls* with the Cleveland Orchestra for Nonesuch.

For the opening Gala of the New York Philharmonic in September 2006, Mr. Ax appeared with Mr. Bronfman in Mozart's Concerto for Two Pianos conducted by Lorin Maazel with live national TV coverage. As an "On Location" artist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic this season, he will contribute to a series of chamber and orchestral programs centered around works of Mozart and Strauss. With his wife, pianist Yoko Nozaki, a project with the Mark Morris Dance Group originally conceived for New York's Mostly Mozart Festival in the summer of 2006 will be repeated in Vienna and London during 2007. Both concertos of Brahms are programmed during one week with the New York Philharmonic conducted by Mr. Maazel. This season's tours include a series of Mozart concertos with Orpheus on the West Coast and with the Atlanta Symphony under Robert Spano in Florida; a 10-city recital tour; duos with bassist Edgar Meyer in the spring; and concerts in Japan with his longstanding colleague and partner, Yo-Yo Ma.

In the 2005–2006 season, Mr. Ax served as Pianist-in-Residence with the Berlin Philharmonic, performing with the orchestra and Sir Simon Rattle in Berlin and New York. Additionally, Mr. Ax appeared as soloist in a US tour with the National Symphony and Leonard Slatkin; recitals in London, Vienna and at New York's Carnegie Hall; and a duo recital tour with Richard Stoltzman.

Recent performance highlights include separate recital tours with two longstanding colleagues, cellist Yo-Yo Ma and pianist Yefim Bronfman; a tour of the Far East with recitals in Guangzhou, Beijing, Seoul, Hong Kong and Taipei; and a tour of the United States with

the Dresden Staatskapelle and Myung-Whun Chung, with performances in Carnegie Hall and Boston's Symphony Hall. In 2004–2005, Mr. Ax also contributed to a BBC documentary commemorating the Holocaust that aired on the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, and which was awarded a 2005 International Emmy.

Throughout the 2003–2004 season at Carnegie Hall, Mr. Ax focused on Debussy, his music and his influences. This season-long "Perspectives" series featured Mr. Ax in performances with the Boston Symphony under Bernard Haitink, with the Juilliard Orchestra under Charles Dutoit, in three chamber music concerts at Zankel Hall and in a solo piano recital. These programs featured world premieres of three Carnegie Hall commissions.

Always a committed proponent of contemporary composers, Mr. Ax has turned his attention in recent years toward the music of 20th-century composers. He gave the world premiere of John Adams's *Century Rolls* with the Cleveland Orchestra in 1997, the European premiere with the Concertgebouw Orchestra in 1998 and the New York premiere with the Cleveland Orchestra at Carnegie Hall in 2000. Another concerto dedicated to him, Christopher Rouse's *Seeing*, was premiered in 1999 with the New York Philharmonic and received its European debut at the BBC Proms in 2001. In 2000, Mr. Ax joined the Boston Symphony for the first performances of Bright Sheng's *Red Silk Dance*, and in March 2003 he joined Yo-Yo Ma, David Zinman and the New York Philharmonic to premiere Mr. Sheng's *Song and Dance of Tears*. Mr. Ax premiered Krzysztof Penderecki's *Resurrection* with the Philadelphia Orchestra in May 2002, and in May 2003 he premiered a concerto written for him by Melinda Wagner, *Extremity of Sky*, with Daniel Barenboim and the Chicago Symphony.

Devoted to chamber music literature, Mr. Ax has worked regularly with such artists as Young Uck Kim, Cho-Liang Lin, Yo-Yo Ma, Peter Serkin and Jaime Laredo, and he was a frequent collaborator with the late Isaac Stern. He has made a series of acclaimed recordings with Mr. Ma, and as a duo they have won three Grammy Awards for the Beethoven and Brahms sonatas for cello and piano. The pair has also teamed with Richard Stoltzman for a Grammy Award-winning album of clarinet trios and with Pamela Frank, Rebecca Young and Edgar Meyer for the Schubert "Trout" Quintet. The Ax-Stern-Laredo-Ma Quartet has recorded the piano quartets of Beethoven, Brahms, Dvořák, Fauré, Mozart and Schumann for Sony Classical.

Born in Lvov, Poland, Emanuel Ax moved to Winnipeg, Canada with his family when he was a young boy. His studies at The Juilliard School were greatly supported by the sponsorship of the Epstein Scholarship Program of the Boys Clubs of America, and he subsequently won the Young Concert Artists Award. His piano teacher was Mieczylaw Munz. Additionally, he attended Columbia University, where he majored in French.

Mr. Ax resides in New York City with his wife, the pianist Yoko Nozaki. They have two children together, Joseph and Sarah. For more information about Mr. Ax's career, please visit www.EmanuelAx.com.