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UPCOMING TUTUNOV PIANO SERIES CONCERTS

Season Finale: Peter Serkin – April 20, 7:30 pm

**For more information and tickets: 541-552-6348
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PRESENTS

MARCO SCHIAVO

AND

SERGIO MARCHEGIANI

PIANO DUET

MUSIC RECITAL HALL

MARCH 23, 2018

7:30 PM

OREGON
CENTER FOR THE ARTS
AT SOUTHERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

Biographies

“Schiavo-Marchegiani piano duet shows how exciting is to make music together”; “They offered a perfect musical night”; “They are pianists with amazing sound culture... their performance of Schubert’s pieces was brilliant, noble and extraordinarily original”.

Mr. Schiavo and Mr. Marchegiani are highly appreciated by the audience and critics for their musical personality, great expressiveness and naturalness, beauty of sound, intensity and overwhelming energy of their performances. At the same time as their solo concert international activity, since 2006 they play together all over the world performing hundreds of concerts in the most prestigious venues and festivals including Carnegie Hall in New York, Goldener Saal at Musikverein and Konzerthaus in Vienna, Mozarteum in Salzburg, Philharmonie (Grosser Saal) and Konzerthaus in Berlin, Laeiszhalle in Hamburg, Beethoven-Haus in Bonn, Smetana and Dvořák Hall in Prague, Sala Verdi in Milan, Suntory Hall in Tokyo, Solis Theatre in Montevideo, Sao Paulo Hall in Brazil as well as in Rome, Paris, Zurich, London, Sofia, Istanbul, Moskow, St. Petersburg, Montreal, Washington, Mexico City, Baku, Astana, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Singapore, etc. In 2013 they made their debut at prestigious Ravello Festival playing Mozart’s Concerto for two pianos and orchestra K. 365.

Their dazzling career has made them regular guests with the most prestigious orchestras such as Berliner Symphoniker, Budapest Symphony Orchestra, New York Symphonic Orchestra, Mexico State Symphony Orchestra, Istanbul Symphony Orchestra, Prague Chamber Orchestra, Thailand Philharmonic Orchestra, Madrid Chamber Orchestra and Azerbaijan State Symphony Orchestra. They recently performed with Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra in Dvořák Hall; this concert was broadcasted live by Czech National Radio and later by Italian National Radio RAI3. They recorded for other important National TV and Radio channels in Germany, Bulgaria, Russia, Mexico, Hong Kong, etc.

In 2014 Decca label published their first CD, completely dedicated to Franz Schubert which got amazing reviews from the critics and five-star on Amadeus magazine. “In the Fantasia the two pianists play with a lively and easy immediacy, whilst giving a strong sense of clarity to Schubert’s more poetic movements... it has some lovely poignant moments and his highly evocative... The remainder of the items on the disc are all admirably played” (Robert Hugill); “Marco Schiavo and Sergio Marchegiani do a nice job with this music... they’re forthright and clear-eyed, producing a nice range of tones and textures, and handling transitions with assurance...” (Stephen Francis Vasta).

Sergio Marchegiani and Marco Schiavo studied with great musicians such as Ilonka Deckers Kűszler, Alexander Lonquich, Bruno Canino, Franco Scala, Aldo Ciccolini and Sergei Dorenski. They teach in Alessandria and Potenza Conservatories and are in frequent demand for masterclasses and piano competition jury all over the world (Spain, Serbia, Turkey, United States, Mexico, Kazakhstan, Japan, Australia, Brazil, etc.).



Sergio Marchegiani and Marco Schiavo

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launched the SOU Tutunov Piano Series. Join them
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BRAHMS

HUNGARIAN DANCES - BOOKS 1 and 2 (1869)

Avoiding both flashy, ornamental virtuosity on the one hand, and vacuous, trivial music for the amateur market on the other, Brahms was known for “the unrelenting seriousness of his piano music” (Leon Botstein). Because Brahms also chose to write ‘absolute music’ (no tone poems, programmatic references or any attempt to tell a story), this further enhanced his serious and somewhat stodgy image. Didn’t he ever let down his hair and have some fun? Critic Thomas May writes that the answer was a resounding ‘Yes!’ “Fun was very much a part of his performing persona, in moments with friends when he wanted to relax...That’s the origin of the Hungarian Dances, which started out as party pieces he would trot out when the mood struck.” When Brahms played these 4-hand duets with Clara Schumann, he entertained her children as “his eyes flash[ed] fire all the while” (Brahms scholar George Bozarth).

Brahms’s extensive association with the Hungarian professional violinists Edward Remenyi and Joseph Joachim resulted in a love of what he thought were actual Hungarian folksongs and dances. But ‘Hungarian’ in this instance “turned out to be the music played by traveling ‘Gypsy’ (Roma) bands. Nonetheless Brahms’s first collection of 10 Hungarian Dances, which he published as 4-hand piano pieces in 1869, are simply a delight. Popular too; Brahms later arranged them for solo piano (1872), and wrote orchestral arrangements for numbers 1, 3 and 10. Later composers, including Dvorak, arranged all 21 dances for orchestra.

He considered them arrangements, not original compositions, so Brahms published them without opus number. He was unduly modest, as he composed three of the 11 dance melodies in the second set (published in 1880). Brahms set most of these dances in A B A form, though numbers 3, 4 and 8 extend beyond that format. He constantly varies the tempo from dance to dance, as well as the different sections within each dance. These dances sparkle; listen for the humor in the second strain of the main melody in Dance no. 6, where all the grace notes sound like mistakes the pianist is making. Every theme in dance number 3 features that beloved Hungarian penchant for three-bar phrasing. It crops up in other dances as well, along with the continual rhythmic turns of phrase.

Brahms became one the first composers supported solely by the royalties from his music (and concert income). The three sets of dances he worked on in the 1860s and 1870s – the 16 Waltzes Op. 39 and the first books of the Hungarian Dances and Liebeslieder Waltzes – continued to provide a significant portion of that income for the remainder of Brahms’s life.

program notes by Ed Wight

Program

Sonata in C major, K. 521

I. Allegro

II. Andante

III. Allegretto

W. A. Mozart
(1756-1791)

Fantasy in F minor, Op. 103, D. 940

F. Schubert
(1797-1828)

Intermission

Hungarian Dances, no. 1-10

No. 1 in G minor: Allegro molto

No. 2 in D minor: Allegro non assai

No. 3 in F major: Allegretto

No. 4 in F minor: Poco sostenuto

No. 5 in F sharp minor: Allegro

No. 6 in D flat major: Vivace

No. 7 in F major: Allegretto

No. 8 in A minor: Presto

No. 9 in E minor: Allegro non troppo

No. 10 in E major: Presto

J. Brahms
(1833-1897)

Ars longa vita brevis

Program Notes

MOZART

SONATA for PIANO 4 HANDS in C MAJOR, K. 521 (1787)

After some isolated piano duet predecessors, several dating from the 17th century, they first appeared consistently after the mid-18th century. English music historian Charles Burney became the first to publish some 4-hand sonatas in 1777. Johann Christian Bach included some duets among his Op. 15 and Op. 18 piano sonata sets in the 1770s. For true grandeur, however, the 2001 New Grove Dictionary states that “Schubert was the one great composer to write extensively for the medium.”

But Mozart was not that far behind. He wrote six authentic duets, and his last two 4-hand sonatas – K. 497 in F Major, and tonight’s K. 521 in C Major – are hugely important works in the genre’s history, “having all the richness of texture of his mature instrumental style” (Grove). Mozart’s late style in K. 521 surfaces with other features as well. Motives from the expansive primary theme dominate both the softly lyrical 8-bar secondary theme and the 3-bar closing theme. And in Mozart’s early works in Sonata form, he often wrote very short development sections sometimes lasting only eight to fifteen bars. Mozart’s extensive motivic and virtuosic display in this late development section now lasts over fifty.

Mozart sets the following Andante movement in A B A form, fashioning a gentle mood for the F Major “A” section. The renders the stormy drama of the D Minor “B” section all the more striking. And once again in mature fashion, Mozart knits the separate sections together by prominently employing a rhythm from the opening theme in this dramatic middle section. He closes in delightful fashion, with a light-hearted Rondo in Allegretto tempo. Though he offers many delightful episodes to contrast with the refrain’s continuous return, his hard-won sense of mature structure surfaces once again. The rapid, virtuosic first episode originally appears in G Major – but returns in the tonic C Major at the end, further enhancing the tonal unity of the movement.

Mozart’s father Leopold claimed that with a 4-hand sonata in C Major from 1765 (now viewed as inauthentic), Mozart had invented a new genre. Leopold was willfully ignorant of the genre’s early history, and simply wanted to continually market his nine-year-old son as a prodigy. Mozart didn’t need the help, as his six authentic works for four hands remain the most influential collection before Schubert. Mozart truly popularized the genre for central Europe, paving the way for late classical works by “Pleyel, Dussek, Turk, Hummel, Diabelli, Kuhlau, and others” (Grove), opening the door eventually for Mendelssohn - and especially for Schubert.

SCHUBERT

FANTASIE in F MINOR for PIANO 4 HANDS, D. 940 (1828)

Building on the achievements of such gifted piano designers as Johann Stein and Conrad Graf, by 1800 over sixty piano makers built the new fortepianos in Vienna – rivaled only by London as a piano center. Beethoven and Schubert, composing some of the most celebrated piano sonatas ever written, wonderfully exploited the distinctive colors of the Viennese pianos. Furthermore, Schubert helped continue the emergence of another major keyboard genre as well. During his career he wrote over 40 publications for piano duet (many of them collections of smaller pieces), an unprecedented focus. “No composer before or after created such substantial and compelling four-hand pieces” (Schubert scholar Christopher Gibbs), nor did anyone match the sheer number of such works.

As with the celebrated Wanderer Fantasy, he sets the four movements as one, linking them all together. Tonight’s Fantasie opens with a wonderfully gentle, elegiac theme in F Minor. He creates an extraordinary (and characteristic) moment of magic when bringing it back in F Major a bit later. In this first movement, Schubert alternates it with a more dramatic and jagged, dotted-rhythm theme in F Minor. Yet he once again provides a gentler version of this theme as well, in D-flat Major. More than any earlier composer, “Schubert was the pioneer” (musicologist Richard Taruskin) of the free and extensive mixture of the major and minor-mode harmonies of the same key.

Schubert sets both inner ‘movements’ in F-sharp Minor and A B A form. For the Largo movement, he adopts the French overture style of heavily-dotted 8th and 16th notes. To create the dramatic and expressive effects, he gives some eighth notes three dots. The contrasting central section is another soft and gentle burst of sunshine in – surprise! - F-sharp Major. Schubert contrasts the fortissimo yet dance-like Scherzo with a pianissimo and lyrical Trio in D Major, which he marks *Con delicatezza*.

He returns to the tender opening theme of the first movement to open the F Minor finale, providing a sense of cyclic unity. The other theme of that opening movement returns as well, now serving as the (varied) basis of an extensive fugue of Beethovenian breadth. And after writing so much piano 4-hand music for the socially delightful Schubertiades, biographer Christopher Gibbs writes “Schubert’s late music reveals a new seriousness, subjectivity, and rigorous self-examination... He no longer wrote music just for the delight of companions...but was writing for himself - and for the future.” Future indeed, as this Fantasie became yet another work published only after his death.