

BÉLA SIKI

A benefit piano concert
in memory of Boris Weinstein

Sunday, April 28, at 3:00 p.m.
UW Meany Theater

Tape 10, 823

HAYDN: Sonata in D major 18'19
(1732-1809) *Moderato*
Adagio, ma non troppo
Finale-Allegro assai

BEETHOVEN: Sonata in C minor, Opus 111 25'19
(1770-1827) *Maestoso—Allegro con brio ed appassionato*
Arietta: Adagio molto, semplice e cantabile

INTERMISSION

Tape 10, 824

RAVEL: *Oiseaux Tristes* 10:56
(1875-1937) *Une barque sur l'ocean*

LISZT: *Ricordanza* 24:01
(1811-1886) *Sonetto del Petrarca No. 104*
Legende: St. Francis walking over the waves

ENCORE

(4:52)

Wagner - Parsifal 4:24

Haydn: Sonata in D major

Although Haydn was not a virtuoso pianist like Mozart, he wrote many more piano sonatas. While this may seem surprising today, it makes perfect sense within the context of eighteenth-century musical life: the solo piano concert did not yet exist and the concerto was the usual vehicle for the virtuoso. Piano sonatas were used for teaching pieces or for domestic music-making.

Both Haydn's and Mozart's piano sonatas were clearly geared toward these practical purposes, and often bear dedications to the students or musical amateurs for whose use they were intended. But, while Mozart's piano sonatas merely follow in the wake of his operas, concertos and symphonies, Haydn's sonatas are full participants in his astounding compositional development.

The Sonata in D major, Opus 53, No. 2, was written during his so-called "Sturm und Drang" ("Storm and Stress") period (c. 1766-1775). Like the symphonies of this period the sonatas became more serious and weighty. This sonata has taken over some features of the Baroque concerto, particularly by introducing a slow movement which substitutes for the previously customary minuet.

Beethoven: Sonata in C minor, Opus 111

Beethoven's last three piano sonatas, Opus 109, 110, and 111, were possibly conceived as a set. Opus 111, his last piano sonata, was begun in 1821 and finished and published in 1822. Like all of Beethoven's last works, it is even today considered challenging to both performer and listener, but, contrary to popular myth, was greeted with enthusiasm and interest at the time. The *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* stated:

"It may be somewhat more than thirty years since the glorious phenomenon of Beethoven's genius first delighted the receptive and educated members of the musical world. This genius created a new era. All conditions for a musical work of art, invention, spirit and feeling in melody, harmony and rhythm, were fulfilled by Beethoven in a new and original way."

Beethoven's works in the key of C minor often mirror a psychological progression from doubt to affirmation and struggle to victory, as illustrated in his most well-known piece in that key, the Symphony No. 5 with its brilliant close in C major. The Piano Sonata, Opus 111 charts a similar progression from minor to major. The contours of this are much more vague and equivocal, the moods are more complex, and the final resolution is less a matter of assertion than of transcendence.

The first movement of Opus 111 can easily be compared to the Fifth Symphony, with its arresting opening and fitful starts and stops. The dramatic opening gesture, repeated three times, slides off into a series of seemingly aimless chords, then is brought back to the home key to subside again into a low rumble in the bass, out of which the real first theme finally grows. Only as the movement proceeds does it gather steam, and it becomes apparent that Beethoven has timed his stops and starts precisely, to create a more and more compelling motion. The movement builds to an emphatic statement of the theme in four staccato chords; its previous swirling motion is again taken up, but this time in a calmer C major. The resolution we have gained however is still uneasy. The

next movement, a theme and variations in C major, is devoted to exploring and solidifying that key. As the variations proceed, the theme is broken down into smaller and smaller note values, accelerating the inner motion until, in the final variation, it dissolves into a trill with the original, simple form of the melody sounding above.

Ravel: *Oiseaux Tristes* ***Une barque sur l'océan***

Imitation on natural sounds, and of bird songs in particular, has often attracted French musicians, including Janequin, Francois Couperin and, most recently, Messiaen. Ravel's evocation of bird songs in "Oiseaux tristes," No. 2 of *Miroirs* (1904-05), followed a definite aesthetic quality. His close friend and the chief interpreter of his piano music, Marguerite Long, described it as follows:

"This title in itself is an aesthetic proposition. It underlies what the Impressionists have amply proved—the pre-eminence of reflected light from the direct image in the appeal to our sensibility and in the creation of an illusion. These pieces are intensely descriptive and pictorial. They banish all sentiment in expression but offer to the listener a number of refined sensory elements which can be appreciated according to his imagination."

Ravel himself wrote, "...in this work, I evoke birds lost in the torpor of a somber forest, during the most torrid hours of summertime."

The piece is rather free and improvisatory in form, contrasting with the *Sonatine*, written at the same time. The insistent repeated note which resounds throughout is prominent in Ravel's music, appearing also as the death knell in "Le Gibet" from *Gaspard de la Nuit*.

Liszt: *Ricordanza* ***Sonetto del Petrarca No. 104*** ***Legende: St. Francis walking over the waves***

Franz Liszt was born in Hungary, trained in Vienna and profoundly influenced by the intellectual and artistic milieu of Paris. However, the country which held the greatest fascination for him was perhaps Italy. Among his many compositions on Italian Renaissance models are the *Dante* sonata and symphony and his piano piece *Lo sposalizio*, which was inspired by a Raphael painting. Liszt originally set three sonnets by the Italian poet Francesco Petrarca (1304-74) as solo songs, and later reworked them for solo piano in a manner which employed his operatic paraphrases. Mirroring the structure of the poem directly, he extracts the song's central melodies and motives and builds a new and musically rounded whole. The piece is an impression rather than a direct representation of the poem.

Sonnet 104 (134), Petrarca

*I find no peace, but no reason for war,
I fear and hope, I burn but am like ice,*

*I fly to heaven, and must lie on the ground,
I hold nothing and yet embrace the world.*

*She has me in prison, but will not close the door,
Will not hold me nor let me go,
Love will not let me die, nor escape,
Will not let me live, but binds me.*

*Blind, I see, and mute, I cry out,
I long to perish and yet seek aid,
I hate myself and love another.*

*I feed on grief, and weeping, I laugh,
I despise both life and death,
In this state I am, O lady, because of you.*
(trans. R.M.)

Liszt's devotion to the Catholic faith, in spite of his unconventional life, was no doubt sincere. In 1865 he received minor orders in the Catholic Church, and thus church music forms a major, yet largely unfamiliar, part of his output. In his *Legend: St. Francis Preaching to the Birds* he created a picture of his patron saint to whom he was particularly devoted. Again, this piece follows musical rather than dramatic logic, gaining an impressionistic tableau, with the gentle voice of the saint amid the fluttering rush of the birds.

Program Notes by Rose Mauro

Contributions and proceeds from this concert will benefit the Boris Weinstein Fellowship Fund for Graduate Students in Chemistry.

Sponsored by the UW Chemistry Department, the UW School of Music and Meany Hall for the Performing Arts

BÉLA SIKI

Bela Siki, a concert pianist of international stature, has been impressing the world music community with his virtuoso performances since he launched his career by winning first prize in the Franz Liszt Society Piano Competition in both 1942 and 1943. Born in Budapest, he first studied with notable teachers such as Leo Weiner and Ernest von Dohnanyi. Later, he studied with the great Dinu Lipatti.

Truly a global artist, Bela Siki has performed on tour many times in Australia, Japan and the Far East, New Zealand, South America, South Africa, and the United States where the Hungarian-born pianist now makes his home. He has been acclaimed around the world "as one of the greatest virtuosos of our era." Mr. Siki has performed with the major orchestras of Europe and other continents under such eminent conductors as Ansermet, Sacher, Goossens, and van Otterloo.

Mr. Siki conducts master classes at leading universities and appears regularly on the faculty at Banff Music Center and Shawnigan in Victoria, British Columbia. He attracts students of an international background. Presently a Professor of Piano and artist-in-residence at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Mr. Siki will be returning to the University of Washington as Professor of Music in the fall of 1985.

BORIS WEINSTEIN

Boris Weinstein, Co-Secretary to the Editorial Board of *Organic Reactions* since 1972 and Secretary-Treasurer since 1978, died after a brief illness on July 29, 1983, in Seattle, Washington, at the age of 53.

Professor Weinstein was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, on March 31, 1930, and received his B.S. degree from Louisiana State University in 1951, his M.S. degree from Purdue University in 1953 and his Ph.D. degree in organic chemistry from Ohio State University in 1959. He was a postdoctoral fellow at the University of California, Berkeley, and a research chemist at Stanford Research Institute.

From 1961 to 1967, he was Director of the Chemical Laboratory at Stanford University. He became Associate Professor of Chemistry at the University of Washington in 1967 and Professor in 1974, a position he held at the time of his death.

During his career, he was active in research related to the synthesis of biologically active peptides and proteins and in the chemistry of natural products in the field of neurochemistry. Professor Weinstein was an editor of *Chemistry and Biochemistry of Amino Acids, Peptides, and Proteins*. As a teacher, Boris Weinstein exhibited both scientific and administrative abilities. His colleagues and friends are richer from his contributions and warm friendship.