

The School of Music  
presents the 83rd program of the 1988-89 season



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## University Masters Series

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M522  
1989  
5-16

Patricia Michaelian  
Pianist

Maurice Ravel  
Valse Nobles et Sentimentales

Sergei Rachmaninoff  
Variations on a Theme of Corelli

Franz Schubert  
Sonata in A Major, *opus posthumous*

May 16, 1989  
8:00 PM, Meany Theater

School

of

Music

University

of

Washington

DAT # 11,480

CASS # 11,481

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# Program

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CASS SIDE 1A

**Valses Nobles et Sentimentales** ..... MAURICE RAVEL

*Modéré - très franc* (19')

*Assez lent*

*Modéré*

*Assez animé*

*Presque lent*

*Vif*

*Moins vif*

*Lent*

**Variations on a Theme of Corelli** ..... SERGEI RACHMANINOFF

(20')

→ ————— *Intermission* —————

CASS SIDE 1B

**Sonata in A Major, opus posthumous** ..... FRANZ SCHUBERT

*Allegro* (46')

*Andantino*

*Scherzo: Allegro vivace*

*Rondo: Allegretto*

ENCORE (2)

placed out of sequence on the cassette copy  
at the end of Side 1A

the Schubertian style – spontaneous melody, richly expressive harmonies, rhythmic vitality, charming changes of key, emotion-charged shifts from major to minor, and great freedom in the handling of classical form.

The **Piano Sonata in A Major** – second of three written in 1828 – is one of Schubert's finest. The first movement, an *Allegro* in 4/4, opens vigorously. Triplet rhythms abound throughout the movement whose second theme reveals Schubert at his most songful. In the middle section we find a bold departure from tradition. Instead of basing this development on either of his two previous themes, Schubert introduces new material – a ballade-like section marked by bewitching lyricism. This is followed by technical fireworks based on the rapid crossing of hands. The final section restates the material with subtle changes in the musical fabric.

The slow movement is an *Andantino* in 3/8 that opens with a poignant melody. The left hand accompanies in a rocking rhythm, which, repeated over and over, is almost hypnotic in effect. The dramatic middle section is marked by clashing dissonances and changes from minor to major and back. Finally, the opening melody is repeated with delicate ornamentation.

Pervaded by the spirit of Austrian peasant dance, the third movement, an *Allegro Vivace* in 3/4, is a splendid example of the Schubertian scherzo. The middle section is quieter, but requires deftness in hand crossing; then the opening episode is repeated in its entirety.

The finale, an *Allegretto* in 4/4, is a rondo with an opening theme of almost Beethoven-like serenity. This melody is followed by another that is expanded at length, though the rondo theme keeps returning in many fascinating guises. Equally worthy of note are the dramatic silences that punctuate the music just before the whirlwind coda. — *Joseph Machlis*

## Patricia Michaelian

Born in San Francisco into a musical family, Patricia Michaelian began her piano studies at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music where she studied with Claire James and Adolf Baller. At the age of fifteen, she was accepted into the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia where her teachers included Mieczyslaw Horszowski and Rudolf Serkin.

Miss Michaelian has toured extensively throughout the United States, Europe, Great Britain, Australia and the Orient. Recital appearances include such major capitals as New York, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Minneapolis, San Francisco, Los Angeles, London, Lisbon, Manila and Bangkok. She has been heard as soloist with such orchestras as the New York Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Boston Pops, Baltimore Symphony, San Diego Symphony, New Orleans Symphony, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Los Angeles Chamber Symphony and the Northwest Chamber Orchestra. Conductors she has collaborated with include Leonard Bernstein, Josef Krips, Arthur Fiedler, John Williams, Edo de Waart, Sergiu Comissiona and Milton Katims. Miss Michaelian has

## Program notes

Ravel was not exuberant by nature. His minutest details were carefully thought out, and his pleasure held within the bounds of intellect even when he seemed to throw off all restraint, as in the *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales*. Composed in 1911, they were performed for the first time at the Société Musicale Indépendante during a concert at which the audience was invited to guess the names of the composers of the works played. And these Valses Nobles were attributed to Kodály, to Erik Satie, and even to Theodore Dubois! Ravel must have been maliciously amused. He had placed on the title page of his score this phrase of Henri de Régnier: "The delicious pleasure of useless occupation." This pleasure is apparent in the mastery of his expression and the harmonic subtleties reflecting an artist in eager pursuit of intimate and secret joy. — *Gérard Bauër (translated by Louis Biancolli)*

Completed on June 19, 1931, the *Variations on a Theme of Corelli* is in many ways the best of Rachmaninoff's extended works for solo piano. The work is dedicated to Fritz Kreisler who introduced Rachmaninoff to the theme, which is not in fact by Corelli. It is a traditional dance tune *La Folia*, used by Corelli as the theme for a set of variations for violin. Rachmaninoff's twenty variations are grouped to form a large structure. They demand a fine pianist, but the piano writing is more linear than the heavily chordal textures of his earlier works. Although three variations are marked by Rachmaninoff as optional, the work can only make its proper effect if all are played.

Regrettably, the premiere which Rachmaninoff gave on October 12 in Montreal was not a great success. Following a tour in which he played the "Variations" many times, Rachmaninoff sent a score to Medtner with a letter that shows his tongue-in-cheek, self-deprecatory awareness.

... "I've played them about fifteen times but of these performances only one was good. The others were sloppy. I can't play my own compositions and it's so boring; not once have I played them all in one continuity. I was guided by the coughing of the audience. Whenever the coughing increased I would skip the next variation. Whenever there was no coughing I would play them in proper order. In one concert, I don't remember where - some small town - the coughing was so violent that I only played ten variations in all (out of twenty). My best record was set in New York where I played eighteen variations. However, I hope that you will play them all and won't cough . . ."

Rachmaninoff's sensitivity was so great that he hardly ever gave this superb work its proper chance; no wonder its acceptance was lukewarm. And yet it was very possibly this lack of success which discouraged him from writing any more music for solo piano. — *Robert Walker*

Lyricalism was the mainspring of Schubert's art, and the lyric impulse predominates in his instrumental music no less than in the vocal. His sonatas are spacious, fantasy-like compositions that display all the characteristics of

appeared on nationwide television with Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic on a "Young People's Concerts" program and with Josef Krips and the San Francisco Symphony on a "Bell Telephone Hour" program.

A recipient of numerous awards and prizes, Patricia Michaelian was highlighted by "Hi-Fidelity-Musical America" magazine in 1968 as an outstanding young artist. In 1979, she made her New York recital debut at Alice Tully Hall in Lincoln Center on one week's notice to critical and public acclaim. Since that time, she has been heard in a variety of concerts in New York including an appearance at Carnegie Hall for a special Beethoven's birthday celebration, chamber music with the Cleveland Quarter at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and recitals on the 92nd Street "Y" series.

Highlights of Miss Michaelian's 1988-89 concert season include North American tours encompassing ten states and Canada and an appearance next month as soloist with the Seattle Symphony on its Mainly Mozart series.

In addition to solo performances, Miss Michaelian is an active chamber musician and has been heard frequently at the Seattle Chamber Music Festival. She is currently on the piano faculty at the University of Washington.

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### Upcoming Concerts

- The Contemporary Group, May 17, 8:00 PM, Meany Theater**
- University Percussion Ensemble, May 18, 8:00 PM, Meany Studio Theater**
- Collegium Musicum, May 19 and 20, 8:00 PM, Brechemin Auditorium**
- University Singers, May 22, 8:00 PM, Meany Theater**
- University Madrigal Singers, May 23, 8:00 PM, Meany Theater**
- University Wind Ensemble & Symphonic Band, May 24, 8:00 PM, Meany Theater**
- University Jazz Combos, May 25, 8:00 PM, Brechemin Auditorium**
- Soni Ventorum Wind Quintet, May 26, 8:00 PM, HUB Auditorium**
- Baroque Chamber Ensemble, May 27, 8:00 PM, Brechemin Auditorium**
- Scott Jones Memorial Concert, May 28, 8:00 PM, Brechemin Auditorium**
- Young Composers, May 30, 8:00 PM, Brechemin Auditorium**