

The Masters Series Concerts (2011-12)

Sundays* at 3:00pm, at Studio Hollywood (*unless otherwise noted)

Programs, Notes & Seating charts for reservations available at: www.studio-hollywood.com

Alan Murray, piano

Program	Date
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Chopin – The Piano Music

the Etudes (& sel. Nocturnes & Mazurkas)	Oct 2		the Scherzos	"	Oct 30		
the Preludes	"	"	Oct 9		the Sonatas	"	Nov 6
the Polonoises	"	"	Oct 16		the Impromptus	"	Nov 19*
the Ballades	"	"	Oct 23		the Waltzes	"	Dec 3 *
Introduction & Rondo, Fantasy, Berceuse, Barcarolle, Andante Spianato & Grande Polonaise						Dec 17 *	

Schumann – The Piano Music

Fantasy, Arabeske, Carnaval	Nov 13
Kreisleriana, Toccata, Blumenstück, Symphonic Etudes	Nov 20
Faschingsschwank aus Wien (Carnival of Vienna), Kinderszenen (Scenes fr Childhood), Romances	Nov 27
Sonata #1 in F-sharp minor, Novellette #1, Davidsbündlertänze	Dec 4
Sonata #2 in G minor, Waldszenen, Papillons ("Butterflies"), Humoreske	Dec 11
Sonata #3 in F minor ("Concerto w/o Orchestra"), Fantasiestücke, Gesänge der Frühe, Novellette #2	Dec 18

The French & Spanish Masters

Ravel – The Piano Music

Gaspard de la Nuit, Jeux d'eau, Sonatine, Pavane, Valses Nobles et Sentimentales, ...	Jan 8
Le Tombeau de Couperin, Sérénade Grotesque, Menuet-Haydn, Menuet Antique, Miroirs, ...	Jan 15

Debussy – The Piano Music

the Etudes, l'Isle joyeuse, Estampes, ...	Jan 22
the Preludes (Books I & II)	Feb 5
Images, Children's Corner, Suite Bergamasque, Pour le Piano, Arabesques, Danse, Masques, ...	Feb 12

Granados – Goyescas, El Pelele	Albéniz – Iberia, Navarra	Feb 19 & Mar 4
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Beethoven – The 32 Sonatas & Diabelli Variations (1wk Series; M-F at 7:00pm; S/S at 3:00)

(1) Sonatas #1-4	Mar 18		(5) Sonatas #22-26 (d)	Mar 22
(2) Sonatas #5-10 (a)	Mar 19		(6) Sonatas #27-29 (e)	Mar 23
(3) Sonatas #11-15 (b)	Mar 20		(7) Sonatas #30-32	Mar 24
(4) Sonatas #16-21 (c)	Mar 21		(8) Diabelli Variations	Mar 25

a)'Pathétique' b)'Moonlight', 'Pastorale' c)'Tempest', 'Waldstein' d)'Appassionata', 'Les Adieux' e)'Hammerklavier'

J.S. Bach – The Keyboard Music (1-week Series, Apr 7-14; Mon-Fri at 7:00pm; Sat/Sun at 3:00pm)

(1) Chromatic Fantasy/Ital. Concerto/Inventions	Apr 7		(5) Engl & French Sts, Partita #4/WTC25-32	Apr 11
(2) Engl & French Suites & Partita #1/WTC1-8	Apr 8		(6) Engl & French Sts & Partita #5/WTC33-40	Apr 12
(3) Engl & French Suites & Partita #2/WTC9-16	Apr 9		(7) Engl & French Sts & Partita #6/WTC41-48	Apr 13
(4) Engl & French Suites & Partita #3/WTC17-24	Apr 10		(8) The Goldberg Variations	Apr 14

Brahms, Schubert & Liszt – The Major Works

Brahms – Handel Variations & Fugue, Paganini Variations / Schubert – Sonata in A minor (D845)	Apr 22
Brahms – Sonata No. 3 in F minor / Schubert – Sonata in G, «Wanderer» Fantasy	Apr 29
Schubert – The Late Piano Sonatas: in C minor, A major, B-flat major (Op. Posth.)	May 6
Liszt – Sonata in B minor, S. del Petrarca, Vallée d'Obermann, Mephisto Waltz, Au bord d'une source	May 13
The Transcendental Etudes, Après une lecture de Dante, Hungarian & Spanish Rhapsodies, ...	May 20

The Russian & Eastern European Masters – The Major Works

Rachmaninoff – the Preludes	May 27
Rachmaninoff – the Etudes-Tableaux & Moments Musicaux / Balakirev – Islamey	Jun 3
Rachmaninoff – the Sonatas (No. 1 in D minor ; No. 2 in B-flat minor) / Szymanowski - Metopes	Jun 10
Prokofiev – Sonata No. 6 / Scriabin – Sonata No. 2 / Berg – Sonata / Janacek – Sonata 1X1905	Jun 17
Prokofiev – Sonata No. 7 / Scriabin – Sonata Nos 4&5 / Medtner – Sonata / Stravinsky – Petrouchka	Jun 30*
Prokofiev – Sonata No. 8 / Mussorgsky – Pictures at an Exhibition / Bartók – Out of Doors	Jun 24

American Masterpieces

Gershwin Rhapsody in Blue, Barber Sonata, ... - Jul 1 Works by Ives, Copland, Carter, Bolcom, others	Jul 1 & 8
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The Masters Series Concerts (2011/12)

at Studio Hollywood, Hastings-on-Hudson

Sunday, November 13, 2011 at 3:00pm

Robert Schumann – The Piano Music

Arabeske, Op. 18

Fantasy, Op. 17

- I. Durchaus phantastisch und leidenschaftlich vorzutragen - Im Legendenton - Adagio
- II. Mässig. Durchaus energisch - Etwas langsamer - Viel bewegter
- III. Langsam getragen. Durchweg leise zu halten - Etwas bewegter

Intermission

Carnaval, Op. 9

- Préambule
- Pierrot
- Arlequin
- Valse noble
- Eusebius
- Florestan
- Coquette
- Réplique
- [Sphinxes]
- Papillons
- A.S.C.H. - S.C.H.A: Lettres Dansantes
- Chiarina
- Chopin
- Estrella
- Reconnaissance
- Pantalon et Colombine
- Valse allemande – Intermezzo: Paganini
- Aveu
- Promenade
- Pause
- Marche des "Davidsbündler" contre les Philistins

Alan Murray, piano

The Masters Series Concerts (2011-12)

The **Masters Series Concerts (2011-12)** comprise a series of approximately 50 mostly Sunday afternoon programs at *Studio Hollywood* (www.studio-hollywood.com), spanning the cycles of piano music of most of the great composers for the instrument, from Bach and the Classical and Romantic masters, to great composers of the 20th Century. The programs are intended to provide guests with 1-2 hours of quality weekly listening in a contemplative setting, surrounded by the natural beauty that is visible from the recital hall. The performances are intended to be informal but well-prepared offerings, as an interim step toward full concert preparation.

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Schumann: Fantasy, Arabeske & Carnaval

When Friedrich Wieck, Schumann's piano teacher, became aware that Schumann was becoming much more than a sugar daddy to his 11-year-old daughter Clara (and at the time the finest female pianist alive), he decided he wasn't going to have his daughter's career wrecked by marriage to Schumann, and he took steps to derail the attachment, ultimately unsuccessfully. However, his lamentable part in the affair had its redeeming features. In 1836, Wieck managed to make Schumann believe for a while that he would never see Clara again. Schumann's despair is embodied in the *Fantasy*, one of the most profoundly beautiful of all works in the piano literature. In the process, Wieck also initiated Schumann's infatuation for Ernestine von Fricken, out of which came the *Carnaval*, among other works.

Fantasy - Schumann originally intended this work as his contribution toward the cost of erecting a memorial to Beethoven in Bonn. He proposed setting aside his royalties and gave the work a flamboyant title: 'Ruins. Trophies. Palms.: Grand Sonata for Piano by Florestan and Eusebius'. But the scheme was shelved and the work was finally published that year with its present title ("..Sonatas or fantasies (what's in a name?)..." he wrote in 1839), a dedication to Liszt, and a motto which had nothing to do with Beethoven. Beethoven does have his influence, however, for a three-movement sonata with a rhapsodic first movement, a march as the second movement and a slow finale would have been inconceivable without him. Furthermore there are echoes of the Adagio from the 'Emperor' Concerto in the finale, of the finale of the Fifth Symphony in the March, and overt references to the song-cycle *An Die Ferne Geliebte* in the first movement. Here we come to the crux of the matter, for the song in question ('Take them, beloved, these songs I sang to you') is obviously directed to Clara, as is the motto, a quotation from Schlegel:

Durch all Töne tönet

Through all the sounds

Im bunten Erdentraum

In Earth's bright dream

Ein leiser Ton gezogen

Sounds one soft note

Für den der heimlich lauschet

For him who listens secretly

The work relates to the despair of the summer of 1836, when Schumann believed Clara to be lost forever. He later told her that the Fantasy – easily his greatest work for piano – was a 'deep lament' for her, and it is arguably the most passionate music he ever composed. This 'soft tone' is perhaps the series of ideas subtly developed throughout, unifying the work.

The first movement is an extraordinary mixture of wild desperation and introspection so refined that the music on occasion dissolves into silence. The organization of such extremes of emotion put a severe strain on the composer, but Schumann marshals his obsessive first theme (which is constantly breaking through in its original key) into a sort of sonata scheme, with first section, recapitulation and a large middle section in the minor key. This unconventional structure makes perfectly satisfying aural sense and well illustrates a paradox found in the music of many Romantic composers: that apparent spontaneity is in fact often the result of calculated thought. This is more evident when one discovers that the elemental opening theme is actually a transformation of the Beethoven song, gradually becoming more like the original until in the coda it is a real quotation.

After the wayward effect of the opening movement, the March comes as a stabilizing

influence. It is bold and triumphant in character, and clear in outline. Its dotted rhythms also recall the march-like second movement (*Vivace alla marcia*) in Beethoven's Sonata Op. 101, whose first movement is considered to be Beethoven at his most *Schumannesque*. It has the same sort of function as a minuet after a poignant slow movement in a classical symphony. Its Trio is typically Schumannesque, the theme embedded within rich harmony and capricious rhythm. The animated coda brings the movement to a stunning and brilliant conclusion.

In the slow finale Schumann enters a spiritual world in which conflicts are over, and in which he has resigned himself to separation from Clara and has come to accept her as a tranquil memory. The boldness and, at the same time, the tenderness of the harmony and a feeling for sound so acute one can almost touch it reveal, however, that he still experiences their love to the depths of his being.

Astonishingly, and despite the dedication, Liszt never played this masterpiece in public. Perhaps the music was too personal. From his concert receipts from other programs, however, Liszt later provided the money needed to complete the Beethoven memorial which Schumann, during his last years in a mental asylum, near Bonn, would occasionally visit.

Arabeske - Schumann wrote his Arabeske (in C major) in 1839. In the summer of 1838 he had left Leipzig for Vienna, his relationship with Clara seeming to have reached a point of no return, as her father vehemently opposed anything that might interfere with his daughter's career as a pianist and strongly disapproved of Schumann as a possible son-in-law. Geographically, yet not at all emotionally, detached from Clara, he was able to communicate with her only through letters and in his own music, and during this period he found himself beset by depression and professional disappointment. This has been proposed as an explanation for this work, which alternates passages of wistful longing with more robust, declamatory episodes. Schumann wrote in the year of the creation of the Arabeske, "Never refer to me again as Jean Paul (Richter) II or Beethoven II ... I am willing to be ten times less than these others, and only something to myself." The term Arabeske is used here as a poetic metaphor, not only to describe florid decoration, but also, in Schlegel's terms, to suggest a fluid, organic system of fragments that transcends artificial classical forms. Schumann employs a modified version of the rondo form (ABACA) with the gently lyrical main section A, two intense episodes B (Florestan) and C, and a beautifully pensive epilogue (Eusebius). The piece moves lithely between contrasting moods, and concludes with a gentle recapitulation of the opening materials. The poignant postlude that follows comes as an exquisite surprise.

Carnaval - Schumann relates in 1840 that *Carnaval* was finished 'exactly at carnival time in 1835... hence the title.' At the time he was in love with Clara, Wieck's daughter, and infatuated with Ernestine (also a pupil of Wieck), daughter of Baron von Fricken. Schumann was excited to discover that Ernestine was born in the town of Asch. Each letter of the place-name represented a musical note and these were moreover the same and only ones in his own name that could be express musically (A, As = A-flat, S = Es = E-flat, C, and H = B natural). In fact, the subtitle of the work is "miniature scenes based on four notes" These five notes were written out as three separate themes under the name *Sphinxes* following *Réplique*. There is no known reason for these themes to appear at this point, and on the evidence of Clara's own performance they were not meant to be played. The work is dedicated to Karol Lipinski who was generally accepted as being Paganini's only rival as a violin virtuoso.

Carnaval opens with great fanfare in the *Préambule*, which introduces several of the themes that permeate the work, and which is one of the few movements that do not refer to any of the ASCH themes. The first 24 bars were taken from sketches for a set of variations on Schubert's *Sehnsuchtwalzer*. *Pierrot* and *Arlequin* introduce 2 of the 4 characters of the *Commedia dell'Arte* (the others being *Pantalon* and *Colombe*) with astonishingly accurate miniature caricatures: every traditional gesture and movement is faithfully portrayed, down

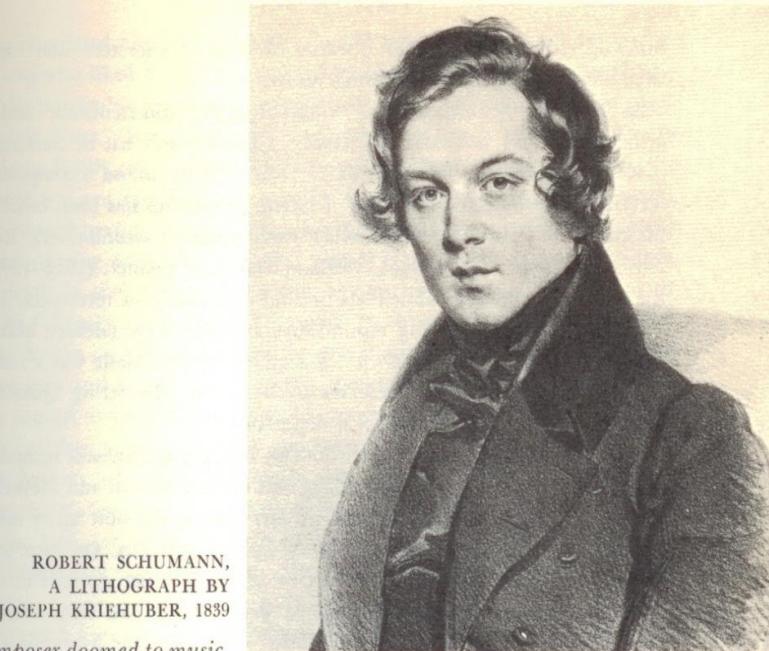
to Pierrot, the clown and figure of pathos, taking a few dignified strides and falling over his own feet. There are also six appearances of a group of 5 descending notes, originating in Clara's

own *Caprice*, Op. 2 No. 2, which were important to the Fantasy and the Sonatas. *Valse noble* conveys spiritual longing. *Eusebius* and *Florestan* are self-portraits of Schumann – the dreamily reflective side (with fascinating rhythmic subtlety) and the vigorous man of action (including a reference to the opening of his *Papillons*, Op. 2), respectively, leading directly into the *Coquette*, the flirtations dancer who shows her impatience (at Schumann's own nature?) with a sudden, vigorous stamp of the foot. *Papillons* seems a tribute to his second published work. Although the ASCH note combination appears in various guises throughout the work, in *ASCH-SCHA (Lettres dansantes)* it is featured singingly. *Chiarina* is a portrait of Clara, and *Chopin* is Schumann's defense, as a critic, of the Polish composer-genius, given that Rellstab (the foremost music critic in Germany at the time) considered Chopin's music to be "nonsense". *Estrella* is a portrait of Ernestine von Fricken, also the subject of the ASCH note sequence. Schumann described *Reconnaissance* as a 'lovers meeting', with a cleverly harmonized middle section in the form of a canon, representing their dialogue. *Pantalon* (traditionally a caricature of the Venetian merchant) and later the elderly father of *Colombe* (in other words: *Arlequin* and *Colombe* were lovers). It was a concert given by *Paganini* in Frankfurt that finally persuaded Schumann to embark on a musical career, hence the tribute, intertwined with the *Valse allemande*. *Aveu* was described by Schumann as 'a confession of love', based on the second of the *Sphinx* themes. He described *Promenade* as 'a stroll through the ballroom arm-in-arm with one's partner. The *Pause* reintroduces the vigorous transition sequence from the *Préambule* to marshal his now-familiar characters together and usher in the final *March of the League of David (Davids-band) Against the Philistines*. The Davids-band was an association dreamt up by Jean Paul Richter, taking the name of the biblical King who possessed a deep intellect and was a ferocious fighter, two dueling personal traits that Schumann admired. "Master Raro" is a go-between, combining the last two letters of Clara's name with the first two of Robert's. The aim of the association was to fight outmoded pedantry and the cruelty of society. In 19th century Germany, a Philistine was the man who had settled down and complacently accepted the status quo. Much of the *Préambule* reappears in the *March*. The introduction of the *Grossvater Tanz*, (theme from the 18th century) in bar 50 (also appearing in the *Papillons*, Op. 2) represented the established order of things. Perhaps the conflict in real terms was Robert against Wieck (who violently opposed Schumann's relationship with his daughter), with Clara as the prize.

Upon hearing Clara play *Carnaval*, Liszt declared it among the greatest piano works, writing "*The more one penetrates Schumann's ideas, the more power and vitality one finds within them. The more one studies them, the more one is astonished by the richness and fertility.*"

Notes by Ian Kemp (Fantasy), Wikipedia (Arabeske) and N.C. Boyling (Carnaval); edited by A. Murray

Alan Murray has appeared as a concerto soloist with orchestras in Westchester and in solo and chamber music recitals. He holds a degree in physics and languages from Cornell, where he also received a special University award for distinguished piano soloist. The **Masters Series Concerts** represent a continuation of the **Sunrise Music Series** programs, inception in the Sept 2010–June 2011 season. In addition to this year's *Masters Series*, Alan continues the *Sunrise Series* programs Sundays at 8:30am, with the 2011-12 series devoted to the cycle of keyboard music of J.S. Bach, which also appears in this year's *Masters Series* in April. The 2010-11 *Sunrise Series* was the subject of a Nov/2010 feature article in *The Rivertown's Enterprise*. His future plans include performances of the *Masters Series* at universities and other cultural centers here and abroad in the coming years. A specialist in the Financial Institutions capital markets group at Moody's, where he focuses on U.S., major Latin American and worldwide developing markets, Alan also provides music at the early Sunday morning services of the First Unitarian Society of Westchester, where he enjoys blending classical music with diverse world musical traditions. Alan resides in Hastings with his wife Amada and daughter Celia, where they also own and operate *Galápagos Books*, focused on world languages and literature, children's and general-interest books, local authors, and multi-media educational materials.



ROBERT SCHUMANN,
A LITHOGRAPH BY
JOSEPH KRIEHUBER, 1839

A composer doomed to music.

Picture Archive of the Austrian National Library



CLARA SCHUMANN, NEE WIECK

*Great pianist, loving wife,
professional widow.*

Picture Archive of the Austrian National Library