

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
Chopin – The Piano Music	
the Etudes (& sel. Nocturnes & Mazurkas)	Oct 2 the Scherzos “ Oct 30
the Preludes “ “	Oct 9 the Sonatas “ Nov 6
the Polonaises “ “	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, Carnival	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 Grottesque, 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
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 Jul 1 & 8	
Gershwin Rhapsody in Blue, Barber Sonata, ... - Jul 1 Works by Ives, Copland, Carter, Bolcom , others - Jul 8	

The Masters Series Concerts (2011/12)

at Studio Hollywood, Hastings-on-Hudson

Sunday, November 6, 2011 at 3:00pm

Frédéric Chopin – The Piano Music

Four Mazurkas, Op. 33

- No. 1 in G-sharp minor
- No. 2 in D major
- No. 3 in C major
- No. 4 in B minor

Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor (“Funeral March”), Op. 35

- Grave - Doppio movimento
- Scherzo
- Marche funèbre: Lento
- Finale: Presto

Intermission

Two Nocturnes, Op. 48

- No. 1 in C minor – Lento
- No. 2 in F-sharp minor – Andantino

Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58

- Allegro maestoso
- Scherzo: Molto vivace
- Largo
- Finale: Presto non tanto

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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Chopin: The Sonatas

Of Chopin's three published piano sonatas, only the second and third survive as concert staples and command the full respect of pianists, audiences and critics alike; the first (Op. 4) is a student work that reveals Chopin's early talents, but at a clearly underdeveloped level. Chopin's published output is exceptional among the great composers for the fact that essentially all of his works remain in the active performance repertoire to this day; the first sonata being a notable exception. The B-flat minor and B minor sonatas, however, stand as the composer's two large-scale works that at once complement each other in spirit and reveal Chopin's extraordinary freedom of creative expression within the confines of the classical sonata form. They are two of the most finished and coherent contributions to this genre, which by Chopin's time had become something of a rarity.

Sonata No. 2 in B-flat Minor ("Funeral March"), Op. 35 – In the case of the Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 35, all four movements are in minor keys and the *Marche funèbre* is not only the poetic center, but was also the starting point of the work, dating from 1837, followed by the other three movements two years later, in 1839. Links between the *Marche* and the other movements are deep, including affinities between the opening three-note motif in the bass of the first movement and the dramatic first subject, with its panting anxious motion. The second subject makes use of the same intervals. Such structural affinities take their place beside sharp expressive contrasts: the breathless excitement of the first subject (in B-flat minor) being set against the comparatively terse, hymn-like intensity of the second (in B-flat major). The development is concise and taut, and the recapitulation begins with a transposition of the second subject, omitting the first altogether, which instead reappears in the brief, intense and frenetic coda. The violent contrasts in the organization of the first movement reappear in the Scherzo, between the opening section and the dazed lyricism of the trio, which recalls the Polish song *Niepodobienstwo* ("Impossibility"); this similarity has given rise to various improbable 'programmatic' interpretations. In fact, its shape has already been anticipated in the final bars of the first part of the Scherzo; yet another instance of affinities between moments of entirely different expressive character. The most significant example of such integration, however, is the link between the principal idea of the *Funeral March* and the opening of the first movement (the first five notes are the retrograde inversion of the melodic outline of the *Marche*). Relationships of this kind, and the links between the trio sections of the Scherzo and the *Marche*, create the unity of this sonata underlying the violent contrasts that led Schumann to deem it scandalous, suggesting that Chopin had "simply bound together four of his most unruly children". The 'scandal' of Op. 35 lies chiefly in the character of the two last movements, whose intransigent coherence of expression does little to redeem the gloomy tensions of the first two movements. As universally familiar as the principal theme of the *Marche funèbre* may be, it is the D-flat major

interlude that immortalizes this work, and whose celestial luminosity sets the solemn funeral procession in stark relief. The radicalism of the astonishing Finale never ceases to surprise, and although Schumann could not accept it, he did not fail to recognize its enigmatic spirit and his characterization reveals a puzzled admiration for these bold harmonic sequences and spectral gesticulations "with no melody". Chopin himself likened the finale to hushed "gossip following the funeral march", and Arthur Rubinstein aptly characterized it as "wind howling around the gravestones".

Sonata No. 3 in B Minor, Op. 58– The Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58 (composed in the summer of 1844) is of an entirely different character and reveals an extraordinary wealth of imagination, with moments of lofty and luminous lyrical inspiration. This quality sets the work in a special light (similar to how the E major Scherzo, Op. 54, sets itself apart from the earlier three), both 'distant' and reflective, sharing characteristics of Chopin's other late piano works such as the Berceuse (Op. 57) and the Barcarolle (Op. 60). The opening movement begins in martial character, but heavy chords and filigree soon give way to a melodic second theme. The extended lyrical line of the second subject begins a blossoming of motifs that continues through the exposition. The development revisits the dramatic tension of the opening, then transitions to a rambling fantasy of musical ideas. The two principal themes of this movement, which concludes in a sunny B major, share a common nucleus, revealing Chopin's coherent thematic organization in this expansive work. The Scherzo (in the distant key of E-flat major, with a trio in B major) has an airy lightness and magical quality. Following a brief, solemn introduction, the Largo is suggestive of a nocturne: the *cantabile* melody evokes the human voice through its miraculous purity, and shares an affinity with the first movement's second theme. The atmosphere is one of singular refinement, and the middle section has an extraordinarily magical quality, like the trio of the Scherzo, again evoking a sense of 'distant' light. A bold and bracing octave chordal transition ushers in the Finale's restless excitement and feverish impetus. Marked *presto non tanto*, it is intense yet perfectly controlled, but it belongs to a very different world from that of the Largo. The finale is a rondo, and each return of the theme heightens the rhythmic density and intensity. The coda brings this monumental work to a sparkling and triumphant conclusion, thoroughly vanquishing the morbid gloom of the earlier sonata.

Notes by Paolo Petazzi (DG 415 346-2) and Wikipedia

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 Dec/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.