

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 Mar 11 & Apr 15
Beethoven – The 32 Sonatas & Diabelli Variations (Mon-Fri at 7:30pm; Sat/Sun at 3:00pm)	
(1) Sonatas #1-4 Mar 17 (5) Sonatas #22-26 (d) Mar 25	
(2) Sonatas #5-10 (a) Mar 18 (6) Sonatas #27-29 (e) Mar 31	
(3) Sonatas #11-15 (b) Mar 23 (7) Sonatas #30-32 Apr 01	
(4) Sonatas #16-21 (c) Mar 24 (8) Diabelli Variations Apr 14	
<i>a) Pathétique’ b) Moonlight’, Pastoral’ c) Tempest’, Waldstein’ d) Appassionata’, Les Adieux’ e) Hammerklavier’</i>	
J.S. Bach – The Keyboard Music (1-week Series, Apr 7-14; Mon-Fri at 7:30pm; 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 8	Jul 1 & 8

The Masters Series Concerts (2011/12)

at Studio Hollywood, Hastings-on-Hudson

Sunday, April 15, 2012 at 3:00pm

The Spanish Masterpieces

Isaac Albéniz – IBERIA

No. 1 – *Evocación*

No. 2 – *El Puerto*

No. 3 – *Corpus Christi en Sevilla*

No. 4 – *Rondeña*

No. 5 – *Almería*

No. 6 – *Triana*

No. 7 – *El Albaicin*

No. 8 – *El Polo*

No. 9 – *Lavapiés*

No. 10 – *Málaga*

No. 11 – *Jerez*

No. 12 – *Eritaña*

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Navarra

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.

Isaac Albéniz: IBERIA

Isaac Albéniz' masterpiece **Iberia** consists of four books of 'Impressions' of Spain (with an emphasis on Andalucía, although Albéniz felt himself a Moor at heart). These are sublimated impressions rather than depictions. Large-scale and full of swirling color, they are lavish in rhythmic and melodic invention, and employ a bold harmonic sense and a vast scale of dynamics. Albéniz grouped these musical impressions into four sets of three movements each. Their extreme and unprecedented difficulty of technique nearly drove the composer to destroy them as unplayable, and the eminent pianist Blanche Selva – who at Albéniz' request premiered all twelve pieces – was appalled by their complexity and even complained to the dying Albéniz of the work being 'unplayable'. Playable it is, but **Iberia** is seldom performed in public as a complete work. Each set of three was published sequentially between 1905 and 1909. These movements are based on the rhythms of Spanish dance and depend structurally, for the most part, upon the alternation or combination of these rhythms with a *copla*, the melody to which the verses that are part of Spanish dance are sung.

Opening the work, and setting a tranquil mood at the outset, is **Evocación**, a meditative *fandanguillo* whose *copla* appears first in the bass and then (marked 'very sweet and distant') in the upper register. The piece is a romantic, and elusive, reverie. **El Puerto**, is named after the little fishing port of *Santa María*, on the Bay of Cadiz in the south of Spain. This piece ups the tempo and has an air of happy bustle; like all the early pieces of **Iberia**, it finally fades away tranquilly, as if in a dream. Here, three dances converge: a *polo*, characterized by phrases shaped around the second beat of the measures, a *bulería*, whose off-beat accents interrupt the *polo* at first tentatively and then with assertion, and a *seguirayas gitanas*, or gypsy *seguidillas*. All three dances jostle each other vigorously but give way to a quiet coda. **El Corpus Christi de Sevilla** depicts the traditional procession of a statue of the Virgin Mary, carried by a tumultuous crowd as it draws near. The popular march that signals its approach is heard with increasing strength, heralded by drumbeats. This march is suddenly cut by a *saeta*, a piercing crying of mourning that speeds – like the arrow from which it takes its name – from balcony to balcony, invoking the Virgin Mary or recalling the sufferings of Christ. Excitement rises to a fever pitch, against the jangling of bells. In a tremendous climax that require three staves for its notation, the *saeta* and the march reinforce each other, until the gradual passage of the procession leaves only an echo of lamentation in the air.

The second set begins with a **Rondeña** which takes its name from Ronda, the traditional home of bull-fighting. The dance is a wedding *fandango* performed in the street facing the window of a bride on her wedding night. It is based upon the restless alternation of different tempo meters (6/8 and ¾) time and is subdued only momentarily by its *copla*, a *malagueña* which enters at the *poco meno mosso* and wars contrapuntally with the initial dance. **Almería**, a harmonically adventurous piece, derives its name from the Andalusian port of Almería, in a piece characterized by the rhythms of the *tarantas*, a dance of the inhabitants of the province of Jaen, and by its use of the Lydian mode, whose melodic pattern contrasts strongly with the ornamented *copla* taken from an Almerian *jota*. The last movement of the second set catches the festive mood of **Triana**, the 'Greenwich Village' of Seville.

Here, the incisive rhythms of a *paso-doble*, or two-step, and a *marcha torrera* ('bull-fight march') vie with each other in a brilliant piece of virtuoso writing. But the virtuosity is marvelously subdued, with markings in the score, even during the swirling middle section, such as 'gracious and tender', 'very sweet', and 'tranquilly'.

At the beginning of the third set, Albéniz introduces us to **El Albaicín**, the gypsy section of Granada perched on a hill looking out at the Alhambra. Here, in a work suffused with passionate melancholy, the irregular rhythms and guitar-like accompaniment of a gypsy *bulerías* contrast with the delicate arabesques of the *copla*, whose melodic line, circling around the sixth degree of the scale, derives from the *cante hondo* (or 'deep song') of Andalucía. This work was particularly admired by Debussy. The second movement, **El Polo**, is based on the *polo*, a dance form popular in Andalucía and related indirectly to the *schottish* and *java*. A vein of melancholy pervades this piece, and the mood is broken only in the middle of the work, with the advent of a kind of syncopated waltz which is developed at length. **Lavapiés**, the final piece of the set, depicts the popular quarter of Madrid, where, as the *copla* hints, the Cuban *habanera* is a favorite dance. This is ostensibly the only non-Andalusian piece in **Iberia**, and its spirit evokes the Latin-American rhythms that were fashionable in its dance-halls.

Opening the final set – the most conspicuously virtuosic of the four – **Málaga** takes its name from the Mediterranean port city, on whose subtle rhythms this piece is built. Albéniz then takes us to another Spanish city, the wine center **Jerez**, whose name is associated with sherry. Here the *soleares*, a dance of the Spanish gypsies, mingles in the hypodorian mode (resembling A minor without the leading tone) in rich textures, with the Moorish arabesques of a *cante hondo* melody. The delicate filigree of the graceful and complicated arabesques evokes the exquisite traceries of Moorish architecture. **Eritaña**, the concluding movement of **Iberia**, describes the gaiety of a country inn/tavern popular with revelers from Seville, marking a complete contrast from the prior piece with its whirlwind of high-spirited gaiety. Albéniz, as if to emphasize the verve and dash of the Spaniard, here chooses not to interrupt the exciting rhythms of the *sevillanas*, or Andalusian *seguidillas*, with a lyrical *copla*, instead letting the rhythmic and melodic intensity of this continue without interruption, and bringing this almost epic musical tour of Spain to a thrilling conclusion.

Navarra had originally been intended for the last book of **Iberia**, but the composer considered it 'too plebeian' and replaced it with **Jerez**. He did not live to complete it, and the final 26 bars were added posthumously by Albéniz' friend, the composer Deodat de Severac.

(Notes by Jean Bowen, IMC, No. 2075; Peter Avis, EMI-479062 and Decca/London: 448-191-2)

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, children's and general-interest books, local authors, and educational materials.