

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	
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, December 18, 2011 at 3:00pm

Robert Schumann – The Piano Music

Gesänge der Frühe (Songs of Dawn), Op. 133

- I. Im ruhigen Tempo
- II. Belebt, nicht zu rasch
- III. Lebhaft
- IV. Bewegt
- V. Im Anfange ruhiges, im Verlauf bewegtes Tempo

Fantasiestücke, Op. 12

- Des Abends (In the Evening)
 Aufschwung (Soaring)
 Warum? (Why?)
 Grillen (Whims)
 In der Nacht (In the Night)
 Fabel (Fable)
 Traumes Wirren (Dream’s Confusions)
 Ende vom Lied (End of the Song)

Intermission

Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 14

(‘Concerto without Orchestra’)

- Allegro brillante
 Scherzo: molto commodo
 Quasi variazioni: Andantino de Clara Wieck
 Finale: Prestissimo possibile

Novellette in D major, Op. 21, No. 2

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, surround-ded 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.

Schumann: Fantasiestücke, Piano Sonata No. 3 in F minor

Robert Schumann's early piano music was original, novel, poetic and, to a large extent, autobiographical. Many of his works take as their subject Schumann's alter egos: Florestan and Eusebius, dual musical personalities that permeate works such as *Carnaval* and *Davidbündlertänze*. Others derive from his passionate love for Clara, and turn this love into a theme, using it to give musical expression to experiences, longings, anxieties, hopes and expectations, visions, dreams and fantasy images. Schumann himself confirmed this in a letter of 5 September 1839 to his former teacher Heinrich Dorn: "Certainly my music contains some the struggles Clara has cost me, and certainly it can be understood by you as such. She was practically my sole motivation for writing the *Concerto*" [i.e. the 'Concerto without Orchestra', referring to the Sonata No. 3 in F minor], among other earlier works.

Fantasiestücke – Schumann's Fantasiestücke (Fantasy Pieces) Op. 12 are eight titled pieces, written in 1837. Schumann titled the work inspired by the 1814 collection of novellas *Fantasiestücke in Callots Manier* by his favorite author, E.T.A. Hoffmann, and dedicated it to Fräulein Anna Laidlaw, an accomplished and attractive 18-year old Scottish pianist with whom Schumann had carried on a brief flirtation. Schumann composed the pieces with the characters Florestan and Eusebius in mind, representing the duality of his personality. Eusebius depicts the dreamer in Schumann while Florestan represents his passionate side. These two characters parlay with one another throughout the collection, and here Schumann once more gives a sublime illustration of the fusion of literary and musical ideas.

Des Abends is a notable example of Schumann's predilection for rhythmic ambiguity, as unrelieved syncopation plays heavily against the time signature, (leading to a feeling of 3/8 in a movement marked 2/8). Schumann, after completing the work, then gave the piece its title, which introduces the character of Eusebius, who serves as a symbolic representation of Schumann's dreamy self. He intended the imagery to be a "gentle picture of dusk." **Aufschwung**: Schumann conceived of this as a depiction of the character Florestan (from Beethoven's *Fidelio*) indulging in his desires. **Warum?**: The title "Why?" was intended by Schumann to signify Eusebius's reflection on the excesses of Florestan in "*Aufschwung*". The piece proceeds with "gentle questioning" and ends with an "inconclusive answer." **Grillen**: With its whimsical, quirky nature, this piece solely represents Florestan and his eccentricities. **In der Nacht**: The two characters of Florestan and Eusebius (the interaction of which Schumann was attempting to represent within the *Fantasiestücke*, similar to the *Davidbündlertänze*) unite for the first time in this piece, which has both "passion together with nocturnal calm." Schumann is said to have perceived in "*In der Nacht*" the story of *Hear and Leander*, albeit not until after writing it. **Fabel**: Like the previous piece, this also juxtaposes both the passionate and dreamy side of Schumann within the same work (as opposed to representing each separately, as in the first subset). In this piece, the whimsical nature of Florestan is set against the ethereal tranquility of Eusebius, resulting in a "placid narrative together with rich veins of humor." **Traumes Wirren**: The title is implicative of the struggle between the dreams and the passions within Schumann. In this piece the dreamy quality of Schumann, represented by the character of Eusebius, becomes entangled by the passions of Florestan, who symbolizes Schumann's more emotional side. The piece is rhythmically intense and a rapid pulse permeates it. **Ende vom Lied**: Schumann

described this piece as a combination of wedding bells and funeral bells. In a letter to Clara, his wife, he wrote about this last piece: "At the time, I thought: well in the end it all resolves itself into a jolly wedding. But at the close, my painful anxiety about you returned."

Sonata No. 3 in F minor ('Concerto without Orchestra') – The Sonata No. 3 in F minor was originally conceived in 1836 as a five-movement sonata with two scherzos. He offered it to the Viennese publisher Tobias Haslinger, who agreed to publish it, but under the condition of being allowed to call it "Concerto without Orchestra". Schumann went along with this whim, but found it necessary to omit one – or perhaps both – of the scherzos. In its three-movement guise, the work was dedicated to Ignaz Moscheles, a prominent pianist and composer at the time, who immediately noticed the discrepancy between its conception and its title and wrote to Schumann: "The work has less of the prerequisites of a concerto and more of the characteristic qualities of a grand sonata, as with some of Beethoven's and Weber's. The overriding seriousness and passion are not at all what one expects to hear in a concert hall these days."

In a letter to Clara, Schumann referred to the F minor Sonata as "one long *cri du coeur* for you" – a formulation that corresponds exactly to the work's passionate character. The connection with his beloved is especially manifest in the third movement: four highly expressive and imaginative 'variants' (*Quasi variazioni*) on a funeral march-like *Andantino* theme by Clara, and another case, like the *Davidbündlertänze*, where Clara's melody is quoted. Also typical is the fact that the first movement – *Allegro brillante* – begins with the principal motif of this *Andantino*: a descending five-note sequence in F minor. The same motif, in inverted form, establishes the opening them of the *Finale*. Like the opening movement and *Andantino*, the *Scherzo's* principal theme is also based on a descending scale in on register (here the treble), that is echoed shortly immediately afterwards either in another register. Schumann omitted both *Scherzos* from the early edition, but restored one of them, however, in the 1853 edition. The *Finale* is marked by the most intense passion: a restless *Prestissimo possibile*, which takes Schumann's virtuoso writing perhaps to the greatest extreme of all his works while also exploring daring and even overlapping harmonic transitions that presage musical impressionism of Ravel and Debussy. The tempo guidance Schumann offers for the *Finale* (*Prestissimo possibile-Più presto: As fast as possible-Even faster*) echoes that of the Sonata No. 2 in G minor's first movement (*So rasch wie möglich-Noch schneller*) and *Rondo* (*Presto-Prestissimo*). In all these cases, the indicated tempo is as much qualitative guidance as metronomic. What is essential, however, is the relentless brewing intensity of the pages, which has much more to do with the musical writing and its rhythmic, melodic and harmonic subtleties than with speed for its own sake.

Notes: Wikipedia, Ewen/Burkholder/Palisca (Fantasiestücke), Floros/Petazzi (Sonata No.3); edit 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.