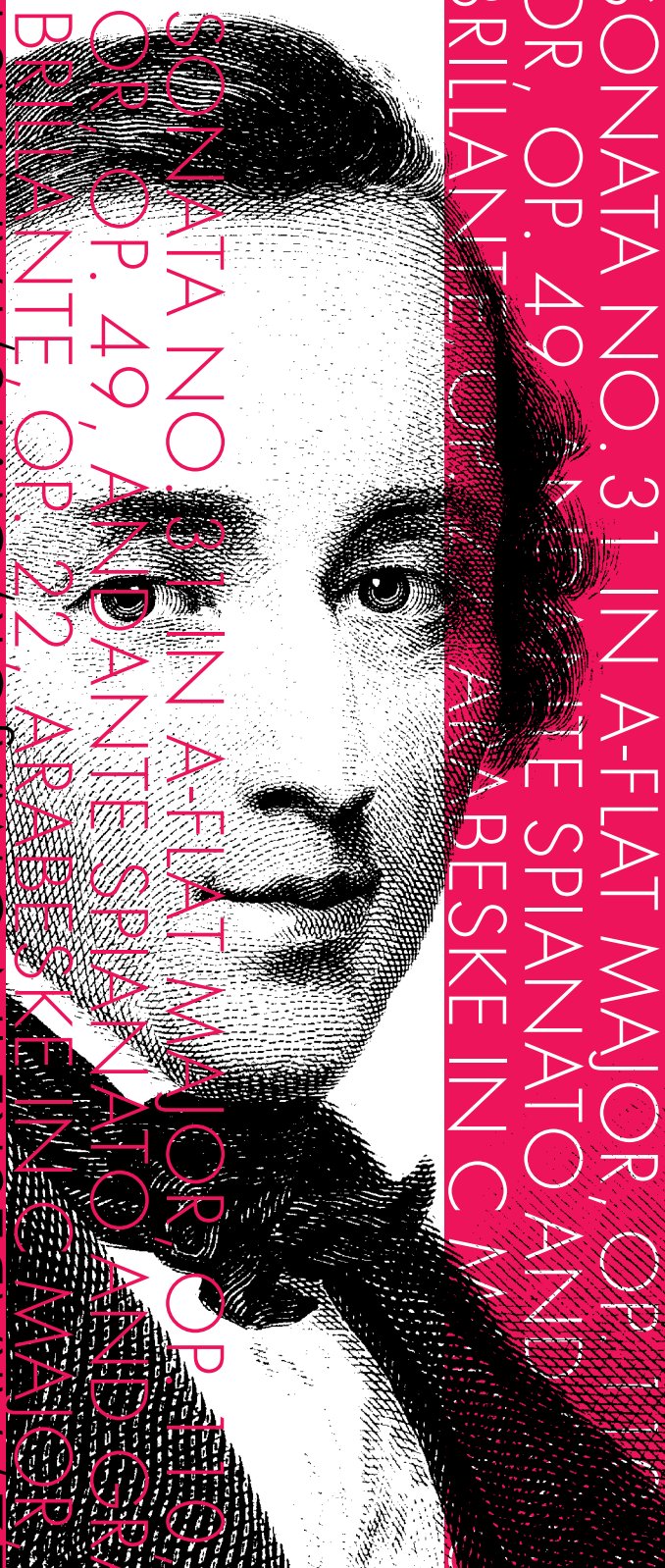


7 IN A-FLAT MAJOR, OP. 110, FANTASY IN F MINOR AND ANTE SPIANATO AND GRANDE POLONAISE NO. 22, ARABESKE IN C MAJOR, OP. 18, FANTASY IN



SONATA NO. 31 IN A-FLAT MAJOR, OP. 111
OR, OP. 49 IN THE SPANATO AND
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Somehow, I keep getting involved in endeavors that are supposedly doomed.

This month I've been picking up extra holiday cash by working part-time at the post office. I'm stationed at Cherrybell, Tucson's main post office, feeding letters and parcels into various components of a network of Rube Goldberg machines that handle the sorting and routing much faster and more accurately than any human could.

The Cherrybell mail handling center was supposed to have been shut down five years ago as part of the post office's nationwide program to lay off workers and consolidate facilities. The Internet, it is said, is killing the postal service. People use e-mail for most of the communications they used to write out by hand and stamp. At the same time, UPS is taking potentially fatal bites out of the USPS parcel delivery business.

But Cherrybell and the USPS have been saved, at least for a while. My aching back and I can tell you that people continue to mail lots of Christmas cards and gifts this time of year, the drugs-by-mail industry is booming, and Tucsonans still read literally tons of magazines. Negotiating a delivery contract with Amazon has done more than anything to save the service. There is usually a way to survive through adaptation and innovation.

Classical music is supposedly doomed by the aging of the audience, the decline of music education, competition from other media, and changes in the American lifestyle. Yet AFCM is still here, selling out its Wednesday evening and summer concerts, and finding new ways to bring new people into the concert hall and take chamber music out to wherever fresh ears happen to be. Like the people who fought to keep our main post office open, we and you continue to defend live chamber music in Tucson.

James Reel

JAMES REEL
President



DANIEL HSU, PIANO

DECEMBER 16, 2018



Daniel Hsu, *piano*

DANIEL HSU

Characterized by *The Philadelphia Inquirer* as a “poet . . . [with] an expressive edge to his playing that charms, questions, and coaxes,” American pianist Daniel Hsu captured the bronze medal and prizes for best performance of both the commissioned work and chamber music at the 2017 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. Also a 2016 Gilmore Young Artist, first prize winner of the 2015 CAG Victor Elmaleh Competition, and bronze medalist of the 2015 Hamamatsu International Piano Competition, he is increasingly recognized for his easy virtuosity and bold musicianship.

A native of the San Francisco Bay Area, Mr. Hsu began studying piano at age 6, made his concerto debut with the Fremont Symphony Orchestra at age 8, and gave his recital debut at the Steinway Society of the Bay Area at age 9, before being accepted into Curtis at the age of 10. Since then, he has made his debuts with the Philadelphia Orchestra (2016) and at Carnegie Hall (2017) as part of the CAG Winners Series at Weill Recital Hall, and performed across the United States, China, and Japan. A sensitive and keen collaborator, he has worked with the Tokyo, North Carolina, Fort Worth, and other orchestras, under the baton of conductors Leonard Slatkin, Nicholas McGegan, Cristian Măcelaru, Ruth Reinhardt, and Marcelo Lehninger. He also regularly tours with the Verona Quartet and in duo piano programs with his brother, Andrew.

Now 21 years old, Mr. Hsu is the Richard A. Doran Fellow at the Curtis Institute of Music, where he has studied with Gary Graffman, Robert McDonald, and Eleanor Sokoloff. He is also a Marvel film buff and enjoys programming. He contributed to the creation of Workflow, a popular productivity app that allows users to automate tasks on iPhone, iPad, and Apple Watch, which received the 2015 Apple Design Award and was acquired by Apple in March 2017.

Mr. Hsu appears by arrangement
with The Cliburn.

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201 Main Street, Suite 100
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THIS AFTERNOON'S PROGRAM

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)

Sonata No. 31 in A-flat Major, Op. 110

Moderato cantabile, molto espressivo

Allegro molto

Adagio ma non troppo

Fuga: Allegro ma non troppo

FRYDERYK CHOPIN (1810–1849)

Fantasy in F Minor, Op. 49

*Andante spianato and Grande polonaise brillante,
Op. 22*

INTERMISSION

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810–1856)

Arabeske in C Major, Op. 18

Fantasy in C Major, Op. 17

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PROGRAM NOTES

ALTHOUGH BEETHOVEN'S audiences took years to understand his final works, his penultimate sonata—the lyrical Opus 110—gained immediate acceptance. This warmly expressive A-flat major work continues to be the most performed of his late sonatas. Completed on Christmas Day of 1821, Opus 110 is the only work that Beethoven completed during that difficult year of physical problems and isolation. Despite his circumstances, Beethoven created a searching but essentially uplifting statement that unfolds with emotional shifts reflecting his complex inner life.

Before hearing loss ended his performing career, Beethoven was lauded as Europe's finest concert pianist. Despite his disability he continued to compose for piano, and over the course of his career he wrote thirty-two piano sonatas that reflect his creative evolution. His last five sonatas reveal characteristic features of his late style period—the flexible development of concise themes; a meditative quality in the slow movement; and the inclusion of a fugal movement, perhaps resulting from his lifelong veneration for Johann Sebastian Bach.

In his Opus 110 Beethoven offers the performer specific guidance for interpretation. The opening movement is marked “With moderate tempo, played songfully and with much expression” and “with amiability.” Structured in free sonata form, the movement develops two themes that are subtly varied and interconnected to create a continuous flow of poetic melody. The brief development leads almost imperceptibly into the recapitulation, animated by ethereal arpeggio figuration.

The second movement provides earthy contrast. Formally a scherzo, its themes allude to two popular songs—the first, “My cat just had kittens,” the second, a Viennese street song often translated as “I’m a slob, you’re a slob” (“Ich bin liederlich, Du bist liederlich”). In the middle section virtuoso writing for the right hand is punctuated by offbeat rhythms in the left. The opening material is repeated, and the movement concludes with a brief coda.

The sustained and sorrowful third movement suggests somber internal dialogue. The opening section resembles a flexible operatic recitative; the following section, *Arioso dolente* (“plaintive song,” A-flat minor) unfolds as one of Beethoven's most profound statements. Played over an accompaniment of simply repeated chords, this extended poignant song portends the late piano sonatas of Schubert. A chordal interlude that conjures the pealing of deep bells (heard on Christmas as he composed?) signals the fugal finale.

Ensuing without pause, the finale develops fugally a theme based on the opening motif of the first movement; a simpler chorale melody provides a countertheme. As it reaches a dramatic peak with complex three-voice writing, the fugue ends abruptly, and the plaintive *Arioso dolente* from the third movement returns in G minor (marked “wearily complaining”). The song quietly halts, and the fugue softly returns, now inverted (upside down note arrangement), in a passage marked “little by little coming back to life.” The fugue becomes more animated and returns to its original position. Now marked “more and more gaining new life,” the fugue becomes a tour de force of contrapuntal writing. Its remarkable transformations and extensions, executed with virtuoso passagework, bring the work to a triumphant conclusion.

TEN YEARS AFTER he left Warsaw for Paris, accompanied by a silver urn of Polish earth, Fryderyk Chopin wrote and published his Opus 49 Fantasy in F Minor (1841). Chopin stated enigmatically upon its completion: “Today I finished my Fantasy—and the sky is beautiful, a sadness in my heart—but that’s all right. If it were otherwise, perhaps my existence would be worth nothing to anyone. Let us hide until death has passed.” Philosopher Theodor Adorno later sought his own meaning for this esteemed masterwork: “A listener would have to stop up his ears not to hear this F minor Fantasy as a kind of tragically decorative song of triumph to the effect that Poland was not lost forever, that someday she would rise again.” In fact, two years after its publication a reviewer noted that its melodies bear subtle resemblance to the revolutionary song “Liwaka”

and other themes taken from an 1832 songbook well known to Polish exiles. Often given to moments of nostalgia, Chopin most probably referenced these melodies from his homeland in his Fantasy.

Chopin's letters indicate that he perceived the Fantasy not as a clearly defined genre but rather as a romantic statement that evolves freely according to its own logic. The Opus 49 Fantasy alternates moments suggesting reflective improvisation with virtuoso passages of intense vigor and harmonic intricacy.

CHOPIN EXPRESSED his passionate Polish nationalism through the polonaise, a stately eighteenth-century dance (Polish, but with a French name) that symbolized for him alert elegance and ancestral glory. He contributed sixteen polonaises to the solo piano repertoire as well as the Opus 22 Grande polonaise brillante for piano and orchestra. Since the orchestra's role is minor, the work is most frequently performed as a piano solo with chords added as accompaniment.

Chopin began the Grande polonaise (E-flat major) in 1830, shortly after he had arrived in Paris from Warsaw. The Andante spianato (best translated as "a leisurely walk in an esplanade," G major), for solo piano, was most probably written in 1834 and immediately added to the Polonaise as an introduction. Marked "tranquillo," the Andante spianato projects a serene mood. The more forceful Polonaise is introduced by sixteen bars of heroic chords that were played by the orchestra in its original setting.

SCHUMANN WROTE his Opus 18 Arabeske (1839) shortly before his marriage to Clara Wieck, an interval when he enjoyed status as both a virtuoso pianist and a handsome bachelor. He spoke of his Arabeske with condescension, calling it a salon piece "written simply to please the Viennese ladies." Despite his criticism, Arabeske has remained one of Schumann's most popular short works for solo piano. The lyrical primary idea is followed by two secondary themes, each offering harmonic contrast. The inventive coda introduces new material.

**"Through all the tones
resounding through Earth's
many-hued dream a soft tone
threads its way for him who
secretly listens."**

EPIGRAPH OF SCHUMANN'S
FANTASY IN C MAJOR

WHEN THE CITY of Bonn planned to erect a monument to Beethoven, its favorite son, Schumann conceived a major piano work entitled "Ruins, Trophies, Palms" as a fundraiser. Although the monument project became stalled for over a decade, Schumann quickly completed his composition, now renamed "Fantasy" (1836). He wrote to Clara Wieck, with whom he was unhappily in love: "I do not think I ever wrote anything more impassioned than the first movement. It is a profound lament about you. You can understand the Fantasy only if you transport yourself back to the unhappy summer when I resigned you." Schumann dedicated the Fantasy to Franz Liszt and inscribed a poetic motto by Schlegel: "Through all the tones resounding through Earth's many-hued dream a soft tone threads its way for him who secretly listens."

The Fantasy's three sections are played without interruption. Schumann directed the first part, characterized by volatile changes of mood, to be played "with passion and fantasy throughout." The second section, "Moderate, with energy," is a sonorous march with harmonic modulations and discords unusual for its time. The concluding section, "Slow and sustained, quiet throughout," is a poetic nocturne that conjures an atmosphere of quiet reverie.

Notes by Nancy Monsman



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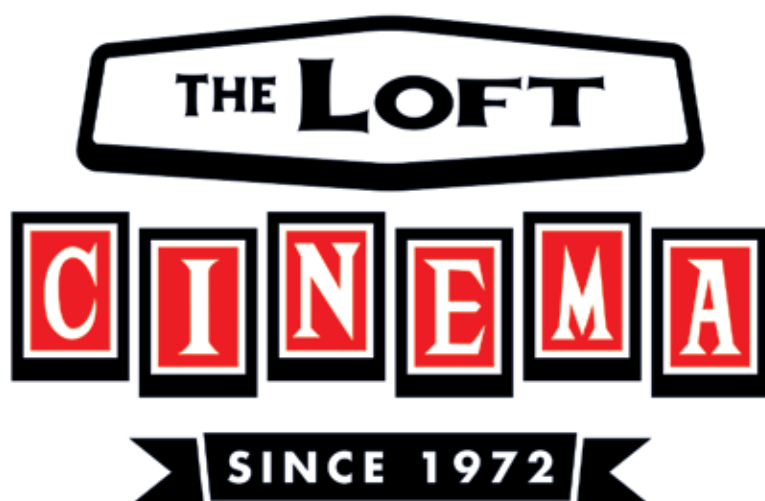
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We have encountered storms
Perfect in their drench and wreck

Each of us bears an ornament of grief
A ring, a notebook, a ticket torn, scar
It is how humans know their kind—

What is known as love, what can become
the heart's food stored away for some future
Famine

Love remains a jewel in the hand, guarded
Shared fragments of earth & air drift & despair.

We ponder what patterns matter other than moons and tides:
musical beats—rumba or waltz or *cha cha cha*
cosmic waves like batons furiously twirling
colors proclaiming sparkle of darkness
as those we love begin to delight
in the stars embracing



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© 2017 Patricia Spears Jones. First published on October 17, 2017
by The Academy of American Poets for their *Poem-a-Day* series.
Published here courtesy of the poet.

Selected for tonight's concert by Sarah Kortemeier, Library Director,
and Julie Swarstad Johnson, Senior Library Specialist, at the
University of Arizona Poetry Center.

Patricia Spears Jones is a poet, writer, playwright, cultural critic, and
winner of the 2017 Jackson Poetry Prize. *A Lucent Fire: New and
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and Paterson Poetry Prizes, and featured a Pushcart Prize winning
poem. She will teach at Barnard College in 2019.

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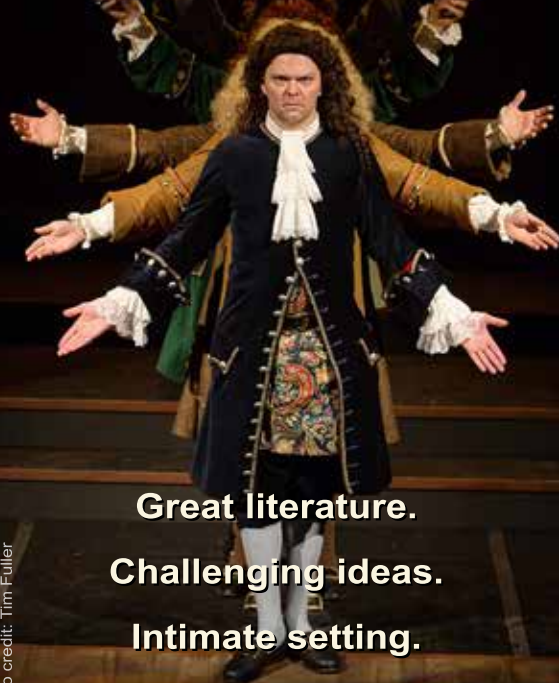
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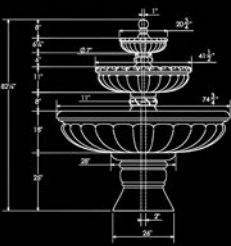
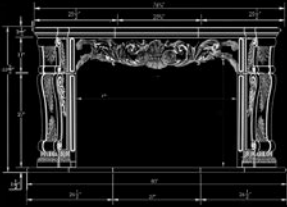
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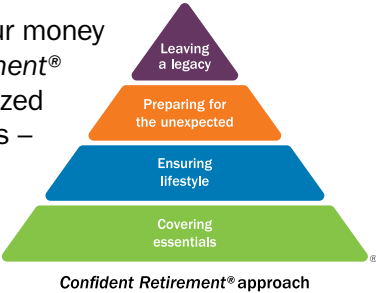
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