

Candlelight Concert Society Presents

BEHZOD ABDURAIMOV PIANO

Saturday, January 21, 2023, 7:30 pm
Earl and Darielle Linehan Concert Hall
University of Maryland, Baltimore County



This performance is co-sponsored by Paul Hassoun and Helen Weems

FLORENCE PRICE (1887-1953)

Fantasia Nègre No. 1 in E Minor (1929)

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

Kreisleriana (1838)

- I. Äußerst bewegt
- II. Sehr innig und nicht zu rasch
- III. Sehr aufgeregt
- IV. Sehr langsam
- V. Sehr lebhaft
- VI. Sehr langsam
- VII. Sehr rasch
- VIII. Schnell und spielend

Intermission

DILOROM SAIDAMINOVA (B. 1943)

The Wall of Ancient Bukhara (1973, revised 1988)

Selected Movements:

- Mosque Kalon*
- Tomb of Ishmail Samani*
- Samanid Kingdom*
- Stars over Bukhara*
- At the Walls of Ancient Bukhara*

MODEST MUSSORGSKY (1839-1881)

Pictures at an Exhibition (1874)

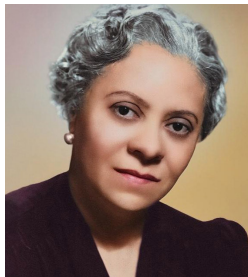
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|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| I. Promenade | IX. Ballet of Unhatched Chicks |
| II. The Gnome | X. Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuÿle |
| III. Promenade | XI. Promenade |
| IV. The Old Castle | XII. The Marketplace at Limoges |
| V. Promenade | XIII. Catacombs (Sepulchrum romanum) |
| VI. Tuileries | XIV. Cum mortuis in lingua mortua |
| VII. Bydlo | XV. Baba Yaga's Hut on Chicken Legs |
| VIII. Promenade | XVI. The Great Gate at Kiev |

Behzod Abduraimov appears by arrangement with HarrisonParrott

PROGRAM NOTES

FANTASIE NÈGRE NO. 1 IN E MINOR (1929)

Florence Price (1887-1953)



Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1887, **Florence Price** was the first African-American woman to be recognized as a symphonic composer, and the first African-American woman to have a composition played by a major orchestra. Her legacy includes four symphonies and four concertos, as well as choral

works, art songs, chamber music, and music for solo organ and piano. Much of her oeuvre would have been lost to posterity, were it not for 2009's accidental discovery of a substantial collection of works and papers in her abandoned summer home near St. Anne, Illinois.

After graduating from high school at the top of her class at the age of fourteen, Price attended the New England Conservatory of Music, from which she graduated with honors in 1906. She taught music in Atlanta until 1912, when she married Thomas J. Price. The two moved back to Arkansas, where he had a law practice, and she was forced to abandon her teaching career, but she found other ways to stay musically active. By the time she wrote *Fantasia No. 1* in 1929, she had given birth to two daughters, moved to Chicago—where she enrolled at the University of Chicago and the American Conservatory of Music—and written a number of piano works. Her public debut as a composer took place in 1930, with the premiere of the first *Fantasia Nègre* at the twelfth annual convention of the National Association of Negro Musicians. Two years later, Price wrote three more *Fantasia Nègre*, for a total of four luscious fantasies.

The mixed-language title *Fantasia Nègre* is apt for the works, as Price combines African-American folk songs with German Romanticism in each. No. 1 adapts the spiritual, “Sinner, Don’t Let This Harvest Pass” and adds interludes in the style of Chopin and Brahms. Price dedicated it to fellow pianist-composer Margaret Bonds, who also premiered the work and accompanied a ballet arrangement of it shortly thereafter.

KREISLERIANA (1838)

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)



One of the most dramatic works by a composer known for drama, **Robert Schumann's** *Kreisleriana* is a fantasy for piano consisting of eight contrasting movements. In 1839, shortly after the work was published, Schumann identified it in a letter as “my favorite work,” attesting that he had written it in three days of feverish

activity and that it had sprung from his fascination with Johannes Kreisler, a quixotic conductor in the novels of E. T. A. Hoffmann. Passionate and volatile, Kreisler loves the guitarist Julia Marc, and is consumed with longing as he can only adore her from afar. In the 1830s, Schumann probably resonated with Kreisler's plight, as he still awaited permission to marry Clara Wieck, with whom he had fallen in love when he had been a pupil of her father in the late 1820s. Similar to Kreisler's volatile nature, Schumann also found himself plagued by extreme bouts of depression and manic activity from 1833 onward.

Kreisleriana's wildly contrasting movements embody Schumann's expression of Kreisler, as well as his own mental state. Indeed, the parallels between Hoffman's Kreisler and Schumann were uncanny as the latter's life progressed. Hoffmann projected for his character eventual madness and retirement to a monastery. Schumann was eventually diagnosed with “psychotic melancholia,” now thought to have been a combination of bipolar disorder and perhaps mercury poisoning. His condition worsened steadily, and he attempted suicide in 1854. He was admitted at his own request to a mental asylum, where he died of pneumonia in 1856. Each in his or its own way, Johannes Kreisler, Robert Schumann, and *Kreisleriana* embody the Romantic soul in its struggle to bring to the surface the deepest of its personal feelings, often at the risk of madness or death.

THE WALLS OF ANCIENT BUKHARA (1973, REV. 1988)

Dilorom Saidaminova (b. 1943)

Uzbek composer **Dilorom Saidaminova** studied composition at the State Conservatory of Uzbekistan in Tashkent, where she earned a Doctor of Musical Arts in composition in 1971. She also studied at the Tchaikovsky State Conservatory in Moscow, where her mentors included Yuri Fortunatov and Edison Denisov, one of the



patriarchs of Soviet avant-garde music. Saidaminova is a member of the Union of Composers of Uzbekistan and the Union of Composers of Russia, as well as the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP). Her works have won several national and international music competitions, and also were the subject of portrait concerts in Tashkent in 2013, 2002, 2000, 1998, and 1992.

Saidaminova is the first Uzbek composer to have had works performed at Carnegie Hall in New York—her *Concerto for Saxophone and Symphony Orchestra* had its world premiere there in 2004. She taught as a professor of composition, music history, and piano at the State Conservatory of Uzbekistan from 1967-1995 and was the General Musical Editor of the National Uzbekistan State TV Company in Tashkent from 1985-1988.

The historic center of Bukhara, Uzbekistan, is more than two thousand years old, and is one of the best-preserved Islamic cities of Central Asia when it was part of the Persian Empire. Taking inspiration from Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, Saidaminova has created a set of eight pieces inspired by various monuments and scenes in Bukhara: *The Kalon Mosque*, *The Samanid Kingdom*, *The Tomb of Ismail Samani*, *The Domes*, *The Minaret of Death*, *The Stars over Bukhara*, *Ancestral Shadows*, and of course, *Near the Walls of Ancient Bukhara*.

Notes by Stephen Ackert

PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION (1874) Modest Mussorgsky (1839-1881)



In 1874, one year after the death of his artist friend Victor Hartmann, **Modest Mussorgsky** attended a memorial exhibit of Hartmann's works in St. Petersburg. In tribute to his friend, Mussorgsky composed *Pictures at an Exhibition*, a set of short piano pieces musically representing the pictures on display. Pianists were slow to take it up, and it remained in obscurity until Maurice Ravel created his brilliant orchestration of it in the 1920s. To this day, listeners

often assume that the work was originally composed for orchestra, but it was the composer's intent that it be presented on a smaller scale, and in a recital hall rather than a grand orchestral setting.

Pictures at an Exhibition is in ten parts, with a recurring "Promenade" theme appearing as a linking passage. This powerful, rhythmically irregular theme depicts Mussorgsky himself, moving from one picture to another. Each time it reappears it changes character, suggesting changes in mood as each picture comes into view.

The Gnome portrays a limping dwarf that is grotesque and capricious, with lurching music that frequently stops and starts. In *The Old Castle*, a troubadour sings a melancholy song before the walls of a medieval castle. *Tuileries* provides a spritely sketch of children playing and quarreling in the famous gardens. In *Bydlo (Cattle)*, a drunken Polish peasant drives his ox cart, and his jolly song can be heard over the grinding of the enormous cartwheels.

The scampering fifth picture, *Ballet of Unhatched Chicks*, is an interpretation of Hartmann's sketches for the ballet *Trilbi*, which shows canaries enclosed in eggs with protruding legs and wings. *Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle* depicts two Polish Jews, one rich and arrogant and the other poor and deferential, which Mussorgsky brings to life with satiric flair through melodies that severely contrast in mood and register. In *The Marketplace at Limoges*, peasant women gossip in the marketplace, which Mussorgsky adapts with folksy cheer. This is immediately neutralized by the ominous eeriness of *Catacombs (Sepulchrum romanum)* and *Cum mortuis in lingua mortua*, which show Hartmann himself, the architect Kenel, and a guide holding a lamp as they make their way through the subterranean passages of Paris.

The final two pictures are perhaps most famous. *Baba Yaga's Hut on Chicken Legs* is loosely based on Hartmann's vision of the famous witch of Russian folklore; however, Mussorgsky chooses to focus on her wild rides through the sky in a virtuosic piece full of rhythmic accents and passages of unholy glee. She transitions directly to *The Great Gate of Kiev*, which depicts Hartmann's sketches of a new gate for the capital city of the Ukraine. Mussorgsky sonically embodies the majestic image through a grand hymn reminiscent of the coronation scene in his opera, *Boris Godunov*.

Note by James Cannon, 2007

TONIGHT'S ARTIST

BEHZOD ABDURAIMOV PIANO



'In sparkling beauty of sound, the pianistic sorcerer painted the inexhaustible melodic colour palette of the Hungarian composer in crystal-clear, brilliant, finely graded touch technique, filled with instrumental opulence'

*Online Merker, Gerhard Hoffman
Alte Oper Frankfurt recital*

Behzod Abduraimov's performances combine an immense depth of musicality with phenomenal technique and breath-taking delicacy. He performs with renowned orchestras worldwide including Philharmonia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, San Francisco Symphony, The Cleveland Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, and Concertgebouworkest. He also performs with prestigious conductors such as Juraj Valčuha, Vasily Petrenko, Lorenzo Viotti, James Gaffigan, Jakub Hrůša, Santtu-Matias Rouvali, and Gustavo Dudamel.

Behzod's 2022-23 European performances include concerts with Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Wiener Symphoniker, SWR Symphonieorchester, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin, Philharmonia Orchestra, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, and as part of Belgian National Orchestra's Rachmaninov Festival. In North America, Behzod will return to The Cleveland Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Cincinnati Symphony, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic amongst others. He will also

return to NHK Symphony Orchestra under Gianandrea Noseda's baton to perform Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 2. Other conductor collaborations include Semyon Bychkov, Karina Canellakis, Constantinos Carydis, Aziz Shokhakimov, and Xian Zhang.

Summer 2022 saw Behzod's third appearance at the BBC Proms, this time performing Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 1 with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Thomas Dausgaard. He also returned to Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra and to the Queensland and West Australian symphony orchestras.

In recital, Behzod has appeared a number of times at Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium, London's Queen Elizabeth Hall, and Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and has recently been presented by Alte Oper, Frankfurt; Amare Hall, The Hague; Vancouver Recital Society; and at The Conrad Center, La Jolla. His 2022-23 recitals will include Meany Hall, Seattle; Spivey Hall, Atlanta; and La Società dei Concerti di Milano, among others. Regular festival appearances include Aspen, Verbier, Rheingau, La Roque Antheron, and Lucerne Festivals.

2021 saw the highly successful release of his recital album for Alpha Classics based on a program of Miniatures including Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*. His 2020 recordings included Rachmaninov's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* with Lucerne Symphony Orchestra under James Gaffigan—recorded on Rachmaninov's own piano from Villa Senar for Sony Classical—and Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 3 with Concertgebouworkest, for the RCO live label. Both recordings were nominated for the 2020 Opus Klassik awards in multiple categories. A DVD of his BBC Proms debut in 2016 with Münchner Philharmoniker was released in 2018. His 2012 debut CD of Liszt, Saint-Saëns, and Prokofiev for Decca won the Choc de Classica and Diapason Découverte, and his first concerto CD for the label featured Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3 and Tchaikovsky's Concerto No. 1.

Born in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, in 1990, Behzod began the piano aged five as a pupil of Tamara Popovich at Uspensky State Central Lyceum in Tashkent. In 2009, he won First Prize at the London International Piano Competition with Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3. He studied with Stanislav Ioudenitch at the International Center for Music at Park University, Missouri, where he is Artist-in-Residence.