

Pittsburg State University
Pittsburg, Kansas

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Masters Recital
Zia Ryu, piano

Monday, April 18, 2005
McCray Recital Hall
7:30 p.m.

PROGRAM

Sonata in f minor K. 239.....Domenico Scarlatti
Sonata in A major K. 39 (1685-1757)

Sonata in C Major, Hob. XVI: 50.....Franz Joseph Haydn
- Allegro (1732-1809)
- Adagio
- Allegro molto

Phantasien Opus 116.....Johannes Brahms
1. Capriccio (1833-1897)
2. Intermezzo
3. Capriccio
4. Intermezzo
5. Intermezzo
6. Intermezzo
7. Capriccio

Intermission

Sonata Opus 26.....Samuel Barber
II. Allegro vivace e leggero (1910-1981)
III. Adagio mesto
IV. Fuga: Allegro con spirito

Program Notes

Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757)

The sixth of ten children of Alessandro Scarlatti, Domenico Scarlatti was born in Naples, Italy in 1685, the same year as Johann Sebastian Bach and Georg Frideric Handel. His music teachers included his father, and then Bernardo Pasquini, and Francesco Gasparini. Scarlatti's association with Corelli contributed to his growth as a harpsichordist. Scarlatti's compositions include operas, oratorios, sinfonias, harpsichord concertos, and other vocal music. His most important musical contribution in the category of keyboard music is the sonata. He wrote over five hundred and fifty single movement sonata or exercises (esercizi) for harpsichord.

Most of Scarlatti's sonatas are in one movement, binary form with the double bar near the mid-point. Each part is to be repeated. Characterized as unconventional, and containing innovative features, in his sonatas, Scarlatti presents the motive in various ways, and consequently the motives or the fragments of the theme appear throughout the music. Phrases take their place as a development of melodic sequence, using sounds rather than just notes. Scarlatti also uses pauses and breaks in and between phrases in a most effective and way. Scarlatti produced brilliant and colorful sounds. These sounds can suggest the violent and passionate strumming of the Spanish guitar or mandolin, and percussive sounds. This he accomplished by incorporating insistent rapidly repeated figurations, taut rhythms, and extensive uses of the appoggiatura. Scarlatti also explored and developed a virtuoso technique in these sonatas. He employed frequent crossing of hands, wide leap, rapidly repeated notes, brilliant arpeggio figuration and running thirds and sixths. Despite all these technical and compositional elements, Scarlatti never loses the clear, pure sound and neat texture of the music. These unusual gestures, textures, harmonics, unexpected motives, and jesting rhythms make his sonatas not only unique but also ingenious.

Sonata K. 239: This sonata is in two-part (binary) form in f minor. The piece starts in contrapuntal style. Alternating guitar effects in one hand contrasting the other hand's melody line, syncopated rhythms and brilliant passagework characterize this piece.

Sonata K. 39: This sonata is in typical binary form in A major. This piece is a good example of a Scarlatti sonata containing consistent running sixteenth notes. Other technical features include hand- crossing, repeated notes in a toccata-like fashion, bouncing articulations, and dynamic contrast which all work together to create a musically stunning piece.

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Born in Rohrau, Austria in 1732, the son of a wheelwright, Haydn was trained as a chorister at St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna. When his voice broke at 17, he was dismissed from choir and subsequently lived in poverty as a freelance musician, playing the violin and keyboard instruments, and accompanying for singing lessons given by the composer Porpora, who helped and encouraged him. In 1759 he was appointed music director to Count Morzin. Soon after, Haydn moved soon into service as Vice-

Kapellmeister with one of the leading Hungarian families, the Esterhazys, becoming full Kapellmeister in 1766.

Haydn remained with the Esterhazy family for 30 years. He spent a lot of time each year at Eszterhaza, which is a palace away from Vienna. This palace was equipped with everything that a musician of the classical era would need to allow his art to grow. Without having any outside influences Haydn's music became emotional and truly reflected his own inner personal being. Haydn said "There was no one near to confuse me, so I was forced to become original."

With the death of the Prince Nicholas in 1790, Haydn was released from his duties at the palace and was allowed travel to London. He went to London twice, in 1791-2 and 1794-5. It was in the years 1794-1795 that Haydn composed and completed this Sonata in C major, Hob.XVI: 50. Thus earning its nickname as one of the "London Sonatas."

This sonata belongs to the mature Classical style of Haydn. Haydn's mature classical style, with regards to the keyboard sonata, emphasized thematic development, contrast, and exploits the potentialities of its medium – the pianoforte.

1st movement-Allegro: The brilliant Allegro contains some of Haydn's most difficult music. This movement is unique in that Haydn provides pedal marking (damper pedal) for a mysterious veiled effect. This movement is in a monothematic sonata form, based on one theme throughout, and demonstrates the fullest flowing of variation procedures in Haydn's sonatas. The entire opening statement of the C major movement evolves out of the first five notes. Thus, each figure within the C major movement has a relatively close relationship to each musical figure throughout the movement.

2nd movement – Adagio: This slow movement is one of deep introspection. It contains expressive and improvisatory passages. Its form is a sonatina, which refers to sonata form without development. This movement is similar to the first movement in its varied repetition of the opening materials and its larger structure.

3rd movement - Allegro molto: The third movement is unique as it is somewhat hard to determine its form. It is essentially in asymmetrical binary form as it is in two sections whereas the B section is longer than the A section. Additionally, rounded binary might pertain, as some of the material from A is partially restated in section B. Just hinting at rounded binary demonstrates Haydn's genius and wit not only in the form but also in other musical parameters as we can taste Haydn's sense of musical humor throughout this movement. Unresolved harmonies combined with a pause, reorganization of phrase rhythm, jesting repetition and the premature conclusion are all manifestations of the composer's work.

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833 – 1897)

Brahms was born in Hamburg, Germany, the son of a double-bass player. He studied piano from the age of seven, and theory and composition with Eduard Marxsen. Brahms had his public debut as pianist, in Hamburg, in Sept. 1848.

Fundamentally reserved, logical and studious, Brahms was fond of taut forms in his music, though he used genre distinctions loosely. He showed particular talent for composition and the use of developing thematic transformation and variation technique in the piano music. In the piano music, the dividing lines between ballade and rhapsody, and capriccio and intermezzo, are vague; such terms refer more to expressive character than to musical form.

Brahms' piano music falls into three groups Op.1-35, representing the young and eager concert pianist, Op.76-79, the latter, particularly if played together, representing one of Brahms's most passionate utterances, and Op.116-119, making a

unique body of mainly short works of a quite exceptional richness of harmony and rhythmic device, calling for an intimate fusion of fingers and brain. These four collections, Op.116 – Op.119, published in 1892 and 1893, belong to Brahms' last period of creation and conclude Brahms's composition for the pianoforte.

Fantasien Op.116 comprises three Capriccios and four Intermezzi. These pieces were first published by Simrock, in November 1892, and the first three were first performed at a Vienna concert in January 1893. Brahms expanded his imagination in these pieces to create works of amazingly beautiful and intimate introspection that contain spiritual depth and intellectual intensity. These late works of Brahms have been described as 'children of autumn, golden, juicy fruit, full of ripe, strong sweetness,' in allusion, above all, to their prevailing mood, which for the most part is deeply resigned, weary, and full of a pessimistic Weltschmerz.¹

No.1, Capriccio in D minor, is defiant and unruly, with its startling sforzati on the final unaccented beat, the third quaver in a 3/8 bar.

No.2, Intermezzo in A minor, was greeted by Clara Schumann with particular enthusiasm. It is intense, but not stressful. There is relaxed warm feeling in its first section with a soft, dim, lament sound on the high register in its middle section.

No. 3, Capriccio in G minor, is extremely agitated with broad chordal effects. The powerful sweep of its middle section in E flat major (un poco meno allegro), is closely akin to the first section.

No. 4, Intermezzo in E major, has a peculiarly loose thematic scheme, growing out of a triple motive almost like an improvisation. Its second theme is smooth and soothing, velvet in sound.

No.5, Intermezzo in E minor, the scheme of which, constantly broken by intense rests, with overlapping hands is merely the outward expression in notes of a sobbing, sighing melancholy. In its middle part one is lifted at once into an atmosphere of sorrow highlighted by the chromatic language.

No. 6, Intermezzo in E major, is a quite a slow piece in the style of a minuet. It is subdued and pensive.

No.7, Capriccio in D minor, starts with an obstinate accent on the first and second beat in the first section. Thereafter, it moves to a tender, fantastic, syncopated middle section, and closes with a passionate coda.

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Barber was born in West Chester, Pennsylvania in 1910. Barber wrote his first piece at age 7 and attempted his first opera at age 10. At the age of 14 he entered the Curtis Institute, where he studied voice, piano, composition, and conducting. Later, he taught orchestration and composition briefly at the Curtis Institute.

Barber was the recipient of numerous awards and prizes including the American Prix de Rome, two Pulitzers, and was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.² He wrote orchestral music, vocal music, stage works, chamber music, and piano music.

¹ Walter Niemann, *BRAHMS*. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. p240, 241

² 'Samuel Barber,' *G. Schirmer, Inc. and Associated Music publishers, Inc.* [On-line] Available from <http://www.gschirmer.com> accessed 25, February 2005.

Barber was one of the most talented American composers of the 20th century. He avoided the experimentalism of some other American composers of his generation, preferring relatively traditional harmonies and forms. Barber's musical style has been called neo-romantic, essentially lyrical dramatic with rich harmonic textures.

Piano Sonata Op.26

Barber's Piano Sonata op.26 (1949) was commissioned by Richard Rodgers and Irving Berlin to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the League of composers. At the time, only a small number of solo piano works by contemporary American composers were considered significant enough to be regularly performed, including Aaron Copland's sonata and Charles Ives' Concord Sonata.³

When Barber completed the score, it was only three movements, and Vladimir Horowitz recommended that he add a fourth movement. After struggling for a month, Barber composed the entire fourth movement in one day. Of course, Samuel Barber's sonata was first performed by Horowitz. It was the first large scale American piano work to be premiered by such an internationally renowned pianist. After Horowitz's premiere, Henry Levinger, critic for the Musical Courier, wrote: "This sonata is an important contribution to contemporary piano music. Its idiom shows modernism with traditional ties."⁴ As Levinger himself noted, Barber exploded his struggle between neoclassicism and modernism in this great contemporary work 'piano for sonata op.26'.

This sonata has a sonata structure overall, but each movement shows extensive use of modernist element.

First movement: The first movement is a sonata-allegro (allegro energico). The first movement is obviously close to the classical model, in terms of the form (sonata form: exposition, development, and recapitulation), however, Barber presents modern taste through dense chromaticism and elements of serialism.

Second movement: The second movement, allegro vivace e leggiero, is the shortest movement of this sonata. The character can be described as an airy-scherzo, with a constant light high sound reminiscent of insects flying around. Its fast constant eighth notes, leggiero quality, chromatics and exclusive use of the piano's upper register create its character. The second movement is in a rondo form.

Third Movement: The third movement, Adagio mesto, in contrast to the second movement, is the most thick, intensive, rhapsodic, heavy, movement. Its soulful yet sometimes bleak character gives way to a powerful climax. This movement is in ternary form and incorporates twelve-tone technique.

Fourth movement: The final movement Allegro con spirito, has become one of the most frequently performed and recognizable single movements of the twentieth century solo piano repertoire. The fourth movement is a fugue in E-flat minor. It is more rooted in tonality than the other three movements. The structure includes an exposition, with a subject and countersubject, a tonal answer, five episodes, and a coda.

Barber uses traditional contrapuntal procedures including augmentation, fragmentation, stretto, sequence, and inversion.

³ Heyman, *Samuel Barber*.

⁴ Henry W. Levinger, "New York Concerts," *Musical courier* 141 (February 15, 1950)