

Sunday, September 7, 2014

2:30 pm

Program Notes by Steven Zhang

## Program

Italian Concerto, B.W.V. 971 I. Allegro II. Andante	J.S. Bach
Piano Sonata No. 23 in F minor, Op. 57 I. Allegro Assai	Beethoven
Excursions, Op. 20, No. 1	Barber
Mephisto Waltz No. 1 Dance in the Inn from Lenau's "Faust"	Liszt

### Bach Italian Concerto, B.W.V. 971

Concertos are typically written for a solo instrument and an orchestra; in Bach's Italian Concerto, the piano attempts to emulate the contrasting parts of the orchestra. The Italian Concerto was originally written for the two-manual harpsichord, which was like a piano, but only had two dynamics: soft and loud. By using the two different manuals, Bach was able to create the different sounds of an orchestra through one instrument. With today's piano that can create a larger variety of dynamics, the contrasts are even more emphasized.

### Beethoven Piano Sonata No. 23 in F minor, Op. 57 "Appassionata"

Sonatas typically have three movements. The first movement of this sonata, Allegro Assai, is in Sonata-Allegro form, containing an exposition, development, and recapitulation. This is one of Beethoven's most technically challenging sonatas, and Beethoven described it as a "brilliantly executed display of emotion and music". The sonata continually alternates between beautiful melody and furious technical passages. The main theme that is played at the beginning of the piece continually returns, lastly in the long coda, which increases in tempo and intensity before ending in a hushed *ppp* tonic chord.

### Barber Excursions, Op. 20, No. 1

Barber described his collection of excursions as "'Excursions' in small classical forms into regional American idioms." The one that will be played today, Excursion No. 1, has been nicknamed the "Boogie-woogie", which is an African-American blues style characterized by a repetitive bass figure. This repetitive nature of the bass in the left hand can be heard right from the beginning with the ostinato rhythm that goes throughout the entire piece.

### Liszt Mephisto Waltz No. 1

The Mephisto Waltzes are a collection of four waltzes written throughout a period of over 20 years. The first Mephisto Waltz is one of the most popular, and was originally composed for orchestra. Liszt also wrote it for piano and piano duet. The Mephisto Waltz No. 1 is meant to depict a scene from Lanau's "Faust", a tone poem written of how Faust, the main character is manipulated by Mephistopheles, the devil. At the Dance in the Inn, Mephistopheles convinces Faust to join a wedding dance, which he then turns into a wild party through his frenetic violin playing. The piece is a combination of beautiful lyrical melody and furious technical passages.

*In Fulfillment of AIM Level XII Performance Requirement*



# AIM Level XII Recital

## Steven Zhang



Steven Zhang is currently a senior at Vernon Hills High School. He has been playing piano since he was 5, and has been playing for almost 13 years. He has participated in numerous piano competitions, including the Sonata-Sonatina Festival and the NWSMTA Awards Competition. Along with his passion for piano, Steven is a devoted clarinetist. He is the principal clarinetist at the VHHS Wind Ensemble and Symphony Orchestra and also participates in the Midwest Young Artist Symphony Orchestra, a youth orchestra that meets on Saturdays to rehearse. He devotes much of his time to music, but he also loves math and watching football.

Steven would like to thank Marie Rutter and Jennifer Cohen for being such excellent mentors and helping him become the pianist he is today, and also would like to thank all of the people who have assisted him as he grew and continues to grow as a musician. Furthermore, he would like to thank his parents for supporting him and pushing him to continue music. Lastly, he would like to thank God for giving him this talent and love for music that he is sharing with you today.

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Lake Zurich