

Achievement in Music Level 12 Recitals

Sunday, July 20, 2019

3:00 PM

Family Piano Co.

Timothy Zhang, piano

Program

Prelude and Fugue in A-flat Major, BWV 862 from <i>The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book 1</i>	Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Sonata in C Major, Op. 53 <i>1. Allegro con brio</i>	Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)
Prelude from <i>Pour le Piano</i> , L. 95	Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6 in D-flat Major, S. 244	Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

William Dai, piano

Program

Prelude and Fugue in F# Major, BWV 858 from <i>The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book 1</i>	Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Sonata in C minor, Op. 111 <i>1. Maestoso – Allegro con brio ed appassionato</i>	Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)
Jardins sous la pluie from <i>Estampes</i> , L. 100	Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
Ballade No. 1 in G minor, Op. 23	Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)



William Dai is a prospective senior at Vernon Hills High School. He began taking piano lessons at the age of six, and he has been playing for over 11 years. He has had a wide range of piano teachers and participated in a variety of piano events, all building up to the piano player he is today. He hopes to attend the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for Computer Science or Northwestern University for Biology. William enjoys sports like swimming and volleyball, the arts, and spending time with friends and family.

William would like to thank his friends, family, and pastor for their support and love throughout the years, especially his mother who has dedicated more than 17 and a half years lecturing, supporting, and pouring out her love for her son. William would especially like to thank Jennifer Cohen for being an awesome mentor and teacher for the entirety of his time with her, and for nurturing his passion for music.

Program Notes by William Dai

Johann Sebastian Bach, Prelude and Fugue in F# Major, BWV 858

The Prelude and Fugue in F# Major belongs to the well-known collection of works known as *The Well-Tempered Clavier*. The WTC book 1 consists of 24 Preludes and Fugues, showcasing the best Bach had to offer. The works exhibit a wide range of colors, styles, and techniques, and while each work lasts only a couple of minutes, the expression and exploration of music that are present truly demonstrate Bach's genius. Both the Prelude and Fugue feature melodies that are gentle, yet constantly directed forward. In the Fugue, we are introduced to the main theme, or subject, one at a time in all three voices. As the subject recurs again and again in different keys and voices, multiple other themes are brought in, creating a piece with a variety of expression, yet maintaining the consistent gentle, rolling style of the work.

Ludwig Van Beethoven, Sonata in C Minor, Op. 111 Mvt. 1

Beethoven's music is categorized into three main periods: the early period, the middle (heroic) period, and the late period. As he lived during a time where music transitioned from strictly classical to romantic, these three periods reflect that change. His early music is characterized by restraint, clarity, and balance, clearly influenced by the likes of Haydn and Mozart. Music from his middle period is what most people are familiar with, going beyond musical themes and treading into the territory of human themes, like struggle and love. The late period features highly intellectual depth and intense, personal expression. This period is the most difficult to summarize as the works lack standard musical organization, yet are extremely complex and expressive. Beethoven was a composer who had experienced a multitude of traumas and tragedies in his lifetime, such as the abuse from his father, his difficult love life, and the deterioration of his mental and physical health, most notably his hearing. The fast, turbulent passages of the piece express the anger and chaos Beethoven experienced, while the light, serene passages highlight the instances of joy and assent. Being the last Sonata composed by Beethoven near his death, Op. 111 represents the hardships and grievances he experienced throughout his life, ultimately resolving in peace and acceptance.

Claude Debussy, Jardins Sous la Pluie, Estampes

This work belongs to a composition for solo piano known as "Estampes", or literally, "Prints". The three movements are highly pictorial, expressive pieces, each describing a unique region of the world. For example, the first movement "Pagodas" conjures images of East Asia, drawing from Asian melodies and sounds while the second movement "The Evening in Granada" transports the listener to a summer night in Spain, at times mimicking the guitar. The third movement "Jardins Sous la Pluie" or "Gardens in the Rain" is based on a French folk song and evokes images of a garden in Normandy during a heavy rainstorm. There are multiple elements in the music that mimic the blowing wind, the rustling trees, and most notably, the pattering rain with rapid sixteenth notes that rarely come to a stop. As the music continually intensifies and fades, one can hear the strengthening and weakening of a rainstorm and visualize the transformation from a slight drizzle to a ferocious downpour.

Frédéric Chopin, Ballade No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 23

The term "ballad" initially referred to French poetry during the 15th century, and only until the 19th century did musicians begin to adopt it. A piano ballad is a piece written in a "narrative style", where musical parts follow each other in a determined order. Each part leads into the next part, oftentimes coming all together to create a "story". Chopin's Ballade No. 1 is the first piece to showcase this style of music, and other composers like Schumann and Brahms are notable for their ballads. The piece begins with a bold entrance that leaves the listener confused as to where it's heading. Only until a couple measures later does it finally land in the main key and begin a recurring theme. The structure of the ballad is obvious through the multiple shifts in tone and color, yet through all of these changes, Chopin successfully brings these parts into a cohesive piece, telling a story that can only be interpreted by the listener. The piece contains some of the most musically mesmerizing moments, with shifts from solemnity to ferocity, from mystery to singsong, and from grief to pure bliss. The ballad finishes with a ferocious coda and cascading scales and octaves, definitively resolving one of Chopin's greatest masterpieces.