

WOMEN'S MUSICAL CLUB OF TORONTO

15
16

118TH SEASON

MUSIC IN THE AFTERNOON



PAVEL
KOLESNIKOV

Honens Prize Laureate, piano

MAY 5, 2016 | 1.30 PM



MUSIC IN THE AFTERNOON

wmct@wmct.on.ca | www.wmct.on.ca | 416-923-7052

Today's concert is sponsored by

The J.P. Bickell Foundation

The Women's Musical Club of Toronto gratefully acknowledges the
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Music in the Afternoon.





GREETINGS from Simon Fryer, Artistic Director Women's Musical Club of Toronto

Welcome to the fifth concert of the 118th season of the Women's Musical Club of Toronto's *Music in the Afternoon*. For the 118th time the WMCT proudly presents the most sought-after musicians on the world stage, as well as younger performers who will surely be in that position before too long. I am excited to bring you five programmes of the finest chamber music, brought to life by artists of the most vivid imagination. Our opening concert featured a magical program from harpist Caroline Léonardelli, the Afiara Quartet and double bassist Joe Phillips, paving the way for the remarkable vocal beauty of our November recitalist, Simone Osborne. 2016 opened with the Daedalus Quartet and clarinetist Romie de Guise-Langlois performing the monumental clarinet quintet by Brahms, which was followed by *Dannthology*: a program initiated by well-known Canadian viola hero, Steven Dann. Steve presented an intriguingly eclectic array of works and performers including the 2016 commissioned work from celebrated young Canadian composer, Zosha Di Castri. Our season closes today with extraordinary pianist Pavel Kolesnikov. Honens Competition Laureate, Pavel is winning hearts around the world and will surely continue to do so at the WMCT.

Pavel Kolesnikov generates huge enthusiasm everywhere he goes. This is a young man with admirable depth of vision, wonderful musical insight, and exemplary control of the instrument. His program of C.P.E. Bach, Beethoven, Chopin and Debussy, although encompassing a relatively short span of history, offers diverse musical languages, and thus superb opportunity for expression from this remarkable artist.

Thank you for subscribing to the 118th season of the WMCT – the heart of artistry, the essence of chamber music.

Women's Musical Club of Toronto

56 The Esplanade, Suite 203A, Toronto, Ontario M5E 1A7 www.wmct.on.ca

PROGRAMME

Keyboard Sonata in A Major, WQ 55/4

Allegro assai

Poco adagio

Allegro

C. P. E. Bach
(1714 - 1788)

Piano Sonata No.10 in G Major, Op.14, No.2

Allegro

Andante

Scherzo: Allegro assai

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770 - 1827)

INTERMISSION

Scherzo No. 4 in E major, Op. 54

Frédéric Chopin
(1810 - 1849)

Preludes: Book I

Danseuses de Delphes: lent et grave

Voiles: modéré

Le vent dans la plaine: animé

Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir: modéré

Les collines d'Anacapri: très modéré

Des pas sur la neige: triste et lent

Ce qu'a vu le vent d'ouest: animé et tumultueux

La fille aux cheveux de lin: très calme et doucement expressif

La sérénade interrompue: modérément animé

La cathédrale engloutie: profondément calme

La danse de Puck: capricieux et léger

Minstrels: modéré

Claude Debussy
(1862 - 1918)

Visit the artist's website at www.pavelkolesnikov.com

Complimentary refreshments will be available at intermission.
Please come and meet the artist in the lobby following the concert.

NOTES

What's in a name? If you are trying to track down a classical music composition, the answer is often, not enough. The challenge here is not whether this particular sonata would smell as sweet whatever its name, but whether you have the right sonata – or scherzo, or prelude - in the first place. Not exactly the problem Shakespeare's Juliet faces. In spite of the confusions that they can cause, composers have often preferred these generic titles for their music, and for widely different reasons; one is undoubtedly because they don't want to suggest that their music is 'about' something other than its own logic. But that can be a tricky concept for listeners. The eighteenth century French writer Fontenelle put it neatly when he asked 'Sonate, que me veux-tu?' usually translated as 'Sonata, what do you want from me?' C. P. E. Bach might have replied, it depends very much on what you have to offer; whether, for example, you have formal musical training or not. What he actually said, or rather what his publisher said was that the group of sonatas from which the one on today's programme is taken was suitable "*Für Kenner und Liebhaber*," that is, for connoisseurs and for amateurs. As a publisher's advertising slogan this has an obvious appeal, but it can also suggest the cheering idea that everyone should hear the pieces in their own way; there is no one correct way.

Carl Philip Emanuel Bach was the second surviving son of Johann Sebastian and his first wife Maria Barbara, born in 1714, shortly after his parents moved to the court of Weimar. He received his earliest musical training from his father and in 1740 he was appointed to the musical establishment of the Prussian Crown Prince Frederick, shortly before he became king as Frederick II – later known as Frederick the Great. It was here that he wrote most of his keyboard music, as well as an influential textbook on keyboard performance. He eventually tired of this life. The delights of accompanying the flute playing king daily through a limited repertoire of flute sonatas must have lost much of its appeal and he moved to Hamburg to become Kantor, a similar position to the one his father had held in Leipzig.

The two sonatas that comprise Beethoven's Op. 14 were written around 1799 and published in that same year. By then the composer had been living in Vienna for six years, studying briefly with Haydn and for a little longer with Albrechtsberger and Salieri and gradually consolidating his position as pianist and composer. He had appeared as a performer a number of times in public, had made some concert tours and had published a significant body of solo piano and chamber music. With the publications he had, up to this point, stayed away from the genres that Haydn had increasingly made his own – namely the string quartet and the symphony – but that was about to change. The new century was to see the appearance of his first group of string quartets and the first symphony. Whether this was in the back of his

mind when he chose to dedicate the two piano sonatas of Op. 14 to Baroness Josephine von Braun is impossible to say. It certainly looks like a shrewd move since her husband, Baron Peter von Braun, one of the richest men in Austria at the time, was the manager of the two court theatres in Vienna, the Kärntnertor-Theater and the Burgtheater, and was later to purchase a third theatre in the city. He and his wife were both very competent pianists, but it must surely have been the baron's strong hold over the cultural life of the city that suggested the dedication. If so, it was a mixed success since only a couple of years later the baron refused Beethoven permission to use one of the theatres for a concert "and gave it to other, very mediocre, artists." The memory of this obviously rankled and in an 1804 letter to Joseph Sonnleithner the composer complained: "Ever since we met, [Braun's] treatment of me has been persistently unfriendly – Well, so be it." There is none of this tension in the music of this sonata, which most writers see as an untroubled farewell to the musical world of the eighteenth century.

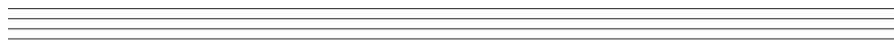
Scherzo is Italian for joke or jest, and the word has been used since the 17th century for a variety of musical genres, few of them having much to do with humour. Beethoven used the title to designate a faster-moving and more highly developed substitute for the minuet in symphonies, sonatas and other works, although he was not consistent here; the scherzo in today's sonata follows a different pattern, and appears as the last movement. Later nineteenth-century composers developed the scherzo as a stand-alone piece, with the four examples by Chopin in the forefront. Curiously, Chopin had naming problems with the work on today's programme, not with its title, but with the name of the dedicatee. The work was published in Germany with a dedication to Mlle. Jeanne de Caraman, one of the composer's pupils. According to the pianist Richard Goode, Chopin decided to dedicate the French edition to her sister Clothilde, but was too late telling Schlesinger's, the Parisian publishers, and it appeared exactly as in Germany with Jeanne's name in the place of honour. They then had to re-issue it with a revised title page. Why Chopin wanted – or perhaps needed - to strike this delicate balance between the two siblings has not been recorded.

Debussy wrote the twelve *Preludes* that make up the first collection in a relatively short time at the end of 1909 and the beginning of 1910, and published them almost immediately. During the following two years he worked on a second set and these were published in 1913. Although the two collections are generally unified by their style, there is no indication that Debussy thought of them as a set that had to be performed intact, or even in the order in which they were published. When it comes to names, Debussy provides a rather subtle answer. He gives us the generic title of *Prelude*, but in addition he has individual titles for each separate piece. These he places, not at the head of a

prelude but at its conclusion, as if to say, I didn't set out to make a sound picture of this particular subject, but now I've written it, the music reminds me of ... In doing this Debussy, like C. P. E. Bach, may simply be giving audiences room to experience the music in their own ways.

Some of the titles are fairly explicit. '*La cathedrale engloutie*', for example refers to old Breton legends of the mythical city of Ys swallowed up by the encroaching sea. The city is usually said to lie below the waters of Douarnenez Bay and some versions of the story say that when the sea is calm the bells of the cathedral can still be heard ringing from the depths – as they can in Debussy's music. The Puck of Prelude 11 is presumably Shakespeare's "merry wanderer of the night" from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, "swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow," while '*Minstrels*', according to Roger Nichols, was inspired by a group of musicians in red jackets who paraded through the streets of the English seaside town of Eastbourne, while Debussy was staying there in 1905. At least three of the preludes have poetic origins, the most complicated undoubtedly '*Le vent dans la plaine*.' The phrase comes from an 18th century comedy by Charles Simon Favart and is used as the epigraph to a collection of poems by Verlaine. Debussy had used these poems in his *Ariettes oubliées* twenty years earlier, and obviously knew that the quotation from Favart is actually longer: "The wind in the plain/ Holds its breath." Did he cut the second part because it was not appropriate to the music, or was he just leaving things deliberately ambiguous? The title of Prelude 4 is taken from Baudelaire's poem '*Harmonie du Soir*,' while the inspiration for Prelude 8 is a poem with the same title by Leconte de Lisle, one of his collection of Scottish Songs. The sometimes enigmatic nature of the titles is especially noticeable in Prelude 2. '*Voiles*' can mean sails, and many commentators provide imaginative seascapes to accompany the music. But the word can also mean veils and the French, later American, composer Edgar Varèse even managed to identify the dancer whose flimsy veils inspired the composition! Sails, veils, amateurs, connoisseurs – what, indeed is in a name?

John Mayo



TODAY'S ARTISTS

Pavel Kolesnikov,
Honens Prize Laureate,
piano

Following his Wigmore Hall debut in January 2014, *The Telegraph* gave Russian pianist Pavel Kolesnikov a rare five-star review and called his recital 'one of the most memorable of such occasions London has witnessed in a while.'

Since becoming Laureate of the Honens Prize for Piano in 2012, Kolesnikov has been winning hearts around the world. *BBC Music Magazine* praised the 'tremendous clarity, unfailing musicality and considerable beauty' of his playing and *The Sunday Times* described his recent all-Tchaikovsky disc as having 'affection and élan'.

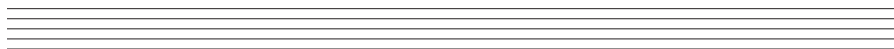
Significant recital and festival appearances resulting from the Honens Prize include Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall, Berlin's Konzerthaus, The Louvre, Vancouver Recital Society, Canada's Ottawa ChamberFest, and Banff Summer Festival.

He has been named one of BBC Radio 3's New Generation Artists for 2014 to 2016, a program that provides opportunities to develop live and recorded performances, including broadcasts with the BBC orchestras.

London-based Pavel Kolesnikov was born in Siberia into a family of scientists. He studied both the piano and violin for ten years, before concentrating solely on the piano. He has studied at Moscow State Conservatory with Sergey Dorensky, at London's Royal College of Music with Norma Fisher and at Brussels' Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel with Maria João Pires. Pavel is the RCM Benjamin Britten Piano Fellow for 2015-2016, studying on the Artist Diploma course.

'a poet of the keyboard, deeply sensitive and opting for an understated
simplicity'
The Guardian

www.pavelkolesnikov.com



NEXT SEASON



October 6, 2016 1.30 PM
Issachah Savage, tenor



November 24, 2016, 1.30 PM
James Sommerville, French horn
with Scott St. John, violin
and Peter Longworth, piano



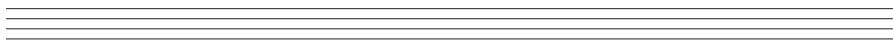
March 9, 2017, 1.30 PM
Trio Shaham Erez Wallfisch
Hagai Shaham, violin
Arnon Erez, piano
Raphael Wallfisch, cello



April 6, 2017, 1.30 PM
Aizuri Quartet
Miho Saegusa, violin
Ariana Kim, violin
Ayane Kozasa, viola
Karen Ouzounian, cello



May 4, 2017, 1.30 PM
Charles Richard-Hamelin, piano
2015 Career Development Award winner



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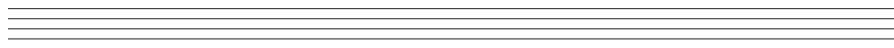
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ISSACHAH SAVAGE, tenor

Programme:

Schumann - Dichterliebe

Beethoven - An die ferne Geliebte

Songs by Richard Strauss and Roger Quilter

Spirituals

Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building
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The WMCT assists exceptional young Canadian talent through scholarships, awards and performance opportunities. Presented every third year, the Career Development Award is one of Canada's most prestigious awards for a young musician embarking on a performance career.

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