



WASHINGTON
PERFORMING ARTS

2022/23 SEASON THE WORLD IN OUR CITY



EMANUEL AX, piano

SUNDAY, APR. 16, 4:00 p.m.

THE MUSIC CENTER AT STRATHMORE



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THE WORLD IN OUR CITY

Upcoming events at The Music Center at Strathmore



Photo by RR Jones

MONTEREY JAZZ FESTIVAL ON TOUR

featuring Dee Dee Bridgewater,
Kurt Elling, Lakecia Benjamin,
Christian Sands, Yasushi
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The world-renowned festival celebrates its 65th anniversary with a sizzling ensemble fronted by Grammy-winning vocalists Dee Dee Bridgewater and Kurt Elling.



Photo by Jim McGuire

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Special thanks: Gordon and Lisa Rush

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Presents

EMANUEL AX, piano

SUNDAY, APR. 16, 4:00 p.m.
THE MUSIC CENTER AT STRATHMORE



This engagement of Emanuel Ax is made possible in part through the generous support of Mary and Chris Mahle, Ellen and Michael Gold, and the Special Presenter Initiatives program of Mid Atlantic Arts with support from the National Endowment for the Arts and DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

Washington Performing Arts's classical music performances this season are made possible in part through the generous support of Betsy and Robert Feinberg.

This is one of twenty 2022/23 season performances included in Washington Performing Arts's The World in Our City initiative, which promotes cross-cultural understanding and cultural diplomacy via the presentation of international visiting artists, globally inspired local programming, and the award-winning Embassy Adoption Program, a partnership with D.C. Public Schools.

A companion masterclass with Emanuel Ax was made possible in part through additional support from The Bruce and Lori Rosenblum Music Education Fund.

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MARS



PROGRAM

FRANZ SCHUBERT
(1797-1828)

Piano Sonata in A Major, Op. posth. 120, D. 664

Allegro moderato
Andante
Allegro

FRANZ SCHUBERT
(1797-1828)
Arr. Franz Liszt

Four Songs

“Aufenthalt,” S.560, No. 3
“Liebesbotschaft,” S.560, No. 10
“Der Müller und der Bach,” S.565, No. 2
“Horch, horch! die Lerch,” S.558, No. 9

FRANZ LISZT
(1811-1886)

Années de pèlerinage I, S.160

VI. *Vallée d'Obermann*

Intermission

FRANZ SCHUBERT
(1797-1828)

Piano Sonata No. 3 in B-flat Major, D. 960

Molto moderato
Andante sostenuto
Scherzo: Allegro vivace con delicatezza
Allegro, ma non troppo

PROGRAM NOTES

Piano Sonata in A Major, Op. posth. 120, D. 664 FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

In the summer of 1819, the 22-year-old Schubert accompanied his friend, the tenor Michael Vogl, on a walking trip through Upper Austria to see the country where Vogl had been born. The two of them spent that summer in the town of Steyr, about 90 miles west of Vienna. This was a relaxed time for the young composer: he said that he found the surrounding countryside "inconceivably lovely," and that summer he wrote one of the most relaxed and best-loved of his works, the "*Trout*" Quintet. The village of Steyr appears to have other charms as well—Schubert composed the *Piano Sonata in A Major* and dedicated it to the daughter of one of his hosts there, the 18-year-old Josefine von Koller, of whom he said: "She is very pretty, plays the piano well, and is going to sing some of my songs."

What most distinguishes this music is its extraordinary gentleness. Lyric ideas are stated and developed tenderly, and while the music can at moments proceed with a great deal of vigor, the *Sonata in A Major* is for the most part without stress or unsettling tension. Much of the writing is set very high in the piano's register, giving the sonata a ringing, bell-like sonority—the main theme of its final movement, in fact, has been compared to a music-box tune.

Schubert often favored a four-movement structure for his mature

piano sonatas, but the *Sonata in A Major* is in only three. The *Allegro moderato* opens with a long, constantly-singing idea. This theme has been criticized for being too much song and not enough true sonata theme, one capable of development, though that may be the source of its charm for many listeners. The development brings pounding triplet octaves, but Schubert keeps the mood gentle, and the movement concludes on quiet fragments of its opening idea.

The *Andante* is built on a simple chordal melody, but here the phrases fall into the unusual length of seven measures. The development section, once again employing triplet rhythms, moves from D major to D minor before the quiet close.

The amiable concluding *Allegro* is based on runs and dotted rhythms, though Schubert leads us into another world with the dancing second subject. Much of the writing is again set high in the instrument's range, and this movement dances home to the sound of ringing bells.

Four Songs

"Aufenthalt"

"Liebesbotschaft"

"Der Müller und der Bach"

"Horch, horch! die Lerch"

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

Arr. FRANZ LISZT

Though Liszt never met Schubert (he was only 17 when Schubert died), he knew and loved Schubert's music at a time when it was virtually

unknown to most audiences. He was drawn in particular to Schubert's songs, but he was attracted to them for their music rather than for Schubert's skill in setting a text; Liszt's mistress Marie d'Agoult prepared French translations of Schubert's songs so that Liszt could more fully understand music that he had already come to love. Between 1833 and 1846 Liszt transcribed about sixty of Schubert's songs for solo piano and played them on his recitals. These were quite successful, as a review of an 1840 London performance makes clear: "In Schubert's songs it is no exaggeration to say that he made the instrument sing . . . the showers of light notes which he scattered through some of the variations realized every idea that can be formed of fairy music. In fine, we have no hesitation in saying that Liszt leaves every other performer, whether on the pianoforte or any other instrument, at an immeasurable distance behind him."

On this recital, Mr. Ax offers four of these transcriptions. The first two songs are from *Schwanengesang*, composed during the final summer of Schubert's life; both these songs set poems by Ludwig Rellstab. The title "Aufenthalt," is ironic, because the last thing this song is about is a "resting place": a wanderer finds what solace he can amidst the crashing torrent, far from the society of man.

"Liebesbotchaft," ("Love's Message") is a gentle love song, addressed to a brook that functions as the messenger between lovers—the

quiet sound of the stream rustles throughout this strophic song in the shimmer of the pianist's 32nd-notes. Liszt's transcription is fairly literal: the melodic line moves into the pianist's right hand, and only in the concluding measures does Liszt offer some (very tasteful) embellishment of Schubert's piano figuration.

"Der Müller und der Bach" is the next-to-last song from Schubert's cycle *Die schöne Müllerin*, composed in 1823. In this dialogue song the downcast young miller, contemplating suicide by drowning, speaks with the brook, which unknowingly celebrates love. Liszt repeats and expands the final section of Schubert's song.

During the summer of 1826 Schubert composed his only three settings of Shakespeare. "Horch, horch! die Lerch" also known as *Ständchen* ("Serenade") comes from Act II of *Cymbeline*, where a band of musicians sings it outside Imogen's window. This is a strophic song with a famous opening line *Horch, horch! die Lerch* ("Hark, hark! the lark!").

Années de pèlerinage I, S.160

VI. *Vallée d'Obermann*
FRANZ LISZT (1811-1886)

As a touring virtuoso, Liszt performed throughout Europe, but he developed a particular love for Switzerland, and between 1835 and 1840 he composed a collection of piano pieces inspired by Swiss scenes and published these in 1842 under the title *Album d'un voyageur*. He was only in his twenties when he wrote these pieces, and as the years went by he felt the need to revise

these youthful efforts. He came back to them when he was in his early forties and living in Weimar, revised the set, and published them in 1855 under the title *Années de pèlerinage (Suisse)*: “Years of Pilgrimage (Switzerland).”

The nine pieces of the Swiss collection stretch out to nearly fifty minutes, and they encompass a wide range of expression, from gentle pastoral impressions through thunderous mountain storms, from solemn and heroic music to the playful. The sixth piece, *Vallée d’Obermann*, was inspired by a scene from Etienne Senancour’s novel *Obermann* (1804), in which a wild young hero wanders restlessly through the forests of Switzerland. This is the longest of the nine pieces, and Liszt sets for himself the difficult task of picturing the hero going through a transcendental experience. The conception seems almost orchestral, and in fact Liszt instructs the pianist at points to play *quasi cello* and *quasi oboe*. Beginning quietly on the falling phrases that run throughout, this piece rises to an ecstatic climax.

Piano Sonata in B-flat Major, D. 960 FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

Schubert’s final year was dreadful. Ill for years, he went into steady decline in 1828 and died in November at 31. It is dangerous to assume that a composer’s final works must be haunted – as were Mahler’s and Shostakovich’s – by premonitions of death. And in fact, Schubert’s final works do not agonize in the way Mahler’s *Symphony No. 10* or Shostakovich’s *Symphony No. 14* do. But it remains true that as

Schubert’s condition worsened across the span of that final year, his music took on a depth and poignancy rare in his works. And it is hard not to hear in the beginning of the *Sonata in B-flat Major* a direct premonition of mortality. The *Molto moderato* begins simply with a flowing chordal melody of unusual expressiveness. But in the eighth measure comes a discordant trill deep in the left hand, and the music glides to a complete stop. The silence that follows – Schubert marks it with a fermata to be sure that it is prolonged – is one of the few genuinely terrifying moments in music. It is as if a moment of freezing terror has crept into this flow of gentle song. Out of the silence the theme resumes. Again the deep trill intrudes, but this time the music rides over it and continues. Claudio Arrau has spoken of this movement as one written “in the proximity of death,” and while this music is never tortured, it *is* some of the most expressive Schubert ever wrote. This is a long movement full of the harmonic freedom of Schubert’s best music. It ends quietly in B-flat major with a chorale-like restatement of the main theme.

The *Andante sostenuto* is as moving as the first movement. The somber opening melody, in the unexpected key of C-sharp minor, proceeds darkly in the right hand, while the left hand offers an unusual accompaniment that skips – almost dances – through a four-octave range, reaching up above the right hand’s melody. The middle section is of a nobility that might almost be called Brahmsian, were that not absurd; perhaps it suggests why, a half-century later, Brahms admired

Schubert's music so much. By contrast, the quick silvery *Scherzo* flashes across the keyboard with a main theme that moves easily between the pianist's hands; at times the rhythms and easy flow make this seem more like a waltz than a scherzo. Schubert specifies that it should be played *con delicatezza*, and certainly its smooth modulations between A major and B-flat major are accomplished most delicately; the brief trio is enlivened by off-the-beat accents. The finale – *Allegro*,

ma non troppo – dances along its two main ideas. The writing is brilliant and once again full of harmonic surprises, but in the midst of all this sparkle one hears a wistfulness, an expressive depth that stays to haunt the mind long after the music has ended.

Program notes by Eric Bromberger

ABOUT THE ARTIST



Born in modern day Lvov, Poland, Emanuel Ax moved to Winnipeg, Canada, with his family when he was a young boy. Mr. Ax made his

New York debut in the Young Concert Artists Series, and in 1974 won the first Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Competition in Tel Aviv. In 1975 he won the Michaels Award of Young Concert Artists, followed four years later by the Avery Fisher Prize.

Mr. Ax has been a Sony Classical exclusive recording artist since 1987, his most recent being Brahms Trios with Yo-Yo Ma and Leonidas Kavakos. He has received Grammy Awards for the second and third volumes of his cycle of Haydn's piano sonatas. He has also made a series of Grammy-winning recordings with cellist Yo-Yo Ma of the Beethoven and Brahms

sonatas for cello and piano. In the 2004/05 season Mr. Ax contributed to an International EMMY® Award-Winning BBC documentary commemorating the Holocaust that aired on the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. In 2013, Mr. Ax's recording Variations received the Echo Klassik Award for Solo Recording of the Year (19th Century Music/Piano).

Mr. Ax is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and holds honorary doctorates of music from Skidmore College, New England Conservatory of Music, Yale University, and Columbia University. For more information about Mr. Ax's career, please visit www.EmanuelAx.com.

ABOUT WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS

One of the most established and honored performing arts institutions in America, Washington Performing Arts has engaged for more than half a century with artists, audiences, students, and civic life. The city is truly our stage: for decades, in venues ranging from concert halls and clubs to public parks, we have presented a tremendous range of artists and art forms, from the most distinguished symphony orchestras to both renowned and emerging artists in classical music, gospel music, jazz, international genres, and more. Washington Performing Arts also has an ever-expanding artistic and educational presence on the internet, addressing the programming challenges of this time of pandemic while envisioning ongoing opportunities for online connection and community in a post-COVID world.

Washington Performing Arts deeply values its partnerships with local organizations and other arts

institutions. Through events online and in a myriad of performance venues and neighborhoods, Washington Performing Arts engages international visiting artists in community programs and introduces local artists to wider audiences. We place a premium on establishing artists as a continuing presence in the lives of both young people and adults through residencies and education programs.

For its achievements, Washington Performing Arts has been recognized with a National Medal of Arts and with three Mayor's Arts Awards from the D.C. Government. We have now embarked upon our second half-century, ever inspired by the motto of our founder, Patrick Hayes: "Everybody in, nobody out."

For more information, please visit WashingtonPerformingArts.org

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Gerson Zweifach

† *deceased*

In Kind

Anonymous
H.E. Shaikha Aisha AlKhalifa
and H.E. Shaikh Ambassador
Abdullah AlKhalifa
Sunny and Bill Alsup
Anita Antenucci
Henry Berman
Carol and Landon Butler
Karen Chilton
Compass Pro Bono
Tom and Nancy Dungan
The Dupont Circle Hotel/
Doyle Bar & Lounge
Embassy of the Kingdom of
Bahrain
Embassy of Finland
Embassy of Japan
Embassy of the Kingdom of
the Netherlands
First Baptist Church of
Highland Park
Mr. Burton J. Fishman
Tom Foster and Steven Dahllorf

Susan and Cab Grayson
Ashley Kennedy
Danny Korengold and
Martha Dippell
Igor Levit
Elizabeth Locke and
John Staelin
Lubin Fine Art Portraits
Jacqueline Badger Mars
Mars, Incorporated
John McFadden and
Lisa Kabnick
Jean Perin
Remo Inc.
Ridgewells Catering
Ristorante i Ricchi
RJ Whyte Event Production
Ronald Reagan Building and
International Trade Center
Shiloh Baptist Church
Songbyrd Music House
SVS | Home Audio Speakers &
Subwoofers
Total Wine & More
Tregaron Conservancy and
Lynn Parseghian
Turkish Airlines
Vermont Avenue
Baptist Church
Washington Performing Arts
Women's Committee

THE RUTH BADER GINSBURG MEMORIAL FUND

The Ruth Bader Ginsburg Memorial Fund was established in 2021 to honor the late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's life, legacy, and passion for music with an annual award to a distinguished artist that includes the opportunity to choose a musical talent deserving of wider recognition to be presented in a Washington Performing Arts recital in Justice Ginsburg's memory.

Anonymous (3)
Linda Fienberg and
Jeffrey Bauman
Carole and Henry Berman
Paul Schiff Berman
Jenny Bilfield and
Joel Phillip Friedman
Barbara Broidy
Mr.† and Mrs. Calvin Cafritz
Henry Cao
Dr. and Ms. Abe Cherrick
Robin Rowan Clarke
Chris Conte
Frank and Sunny Cook
Robert and Jamie Craft
Ronald Dabrowski
Anthony DiResta and
Terrance Mason
Michael Dockterman
David Ellen
Mr. and Mrs. William and
Michele Farquhar
Marian and
Milton Carr Ferguson
Anne and Burton Fishman
Norma Lee† and
Morton Fungert
Barbara Myers and
Tom Gallagher
Barbara D. Gholz
Caroline and Mark Goldzweig
Jamie Gorelick and
Richard Waldhorn
Susan R. and
Sanford D. Greenberg
Hannah Grove-Dejarnett
Sarah Haft

Jo Ann Hearld
Betsy C. Hegg
Hermann and Janet Helgert
Harryette and Stanley Helsel
Beth and Stephen Hess
Ms. Michelle Hoffmann
Judy Honig and Stephen Robb
Judith Richards Hope,
Family Partners Fund
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Lisa Miller
Antonia B. Ianniello and
George Chuzi
Kari L. Jaksa
Kathryn and
J. Stephen Jones, MD
Jodie Kelley and Scott Sinder
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Ineke and Peter Kreeger/
David Lloyd Kreeger
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The Honorable Jan M. and
Elizabeth Lodal
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Daniel Magraw
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Alfred Mamlet and
Rochelle Bobroff
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Dr. and Mrs. Robert Martin
Dr. Gary Mather and
Ms. Christina Co Mather
KLMorris
Melanie Franco Nussdorf
Tom Kim and John Olson

W. Stephen and
Diane E. Piper
Samantha Pollack
Elizabeth Racheva and
Danail Rachev
Anne and Steven Reed
Gwen Renigar
Catherine B. Reynolds
Foundation
James E. Rocap III
Elaine Rose
James J. Sandman and
Elizabeth D. Mullin
Ami Scott
Peter Shields and Ace Werner
Kathleen Shurtleff
Miriam Steinberg-Egeth
Héctor J. Torres and
Jay Haddock Ortiz
Nina Totenberg and
David Reines
Rich and Kathleen Trautman
Meiyu Tsung and
Curtis Chang
Mary Jo Veverka
Christie-Anne and
Jeffrey P. Weiss
Philip R. West and
Barbara Yellen
Mr. and Mrs.
Douglas H. Wheeler
Jonathan and Ruby Zhu

*List complete as of
March 22, 2023*

THE REGGIE AWARD

“The Reggie” is an annual award established in 2018 to honor former Washington Performing Arts Board Chair Reginald Van Lee, granted to a high school junior or senior member of the Washington Performing Arts Children of the Gospel Choir to pursue additional arts-related education or activities.

Lorraine and Edward Adams
Jenny Bilfield and
Joel Phillip Friedman
Francesca Britton
Nicholas A. Brown
Hans and Josie Bruland
Dan Cameron Family
Foundation, Inc.
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Rebecca Chang
André Coleman
Carleen H. Dei
Candace Dyal
C. Lorenzo Evans III
Betsy and Robert Feinberg
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and Mr. Don Friedman
Tom Gallagher
Paula Seigle Goldman
Erica Green
Felecia Love Greer
Hannah Grove-DeJarnett
Cassidy Grunninger
Mike and Luanne Gutermuth
Susan B. Hepner

Michelle and
Dennis Hoffmann
Murray Horwitz and
Lisa Miller
Lloyd and Patricia Howell Jr.
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Mars, Inc. / Brad Figel
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Aaron Menenberg
Camden Miller
Thomas J. Kim and
John F. Olson
Janice J. Kim and
Anthony L. Otten
Samantha Pollack
Elizabeth Racheva and
Danail Rachev

Shebbie and William Rice
Denise Rollins
James J. Sandman and
Elizabeth D. Mullin
Ami Scott and Lucius Outlaw
Monica Scott and
Cameron Hamrick
Peter Shields and Ace Werner
Ruth and Arne⁺ Sorenson
Kerrien Suarez
Ebony Thomas
Meiyu Tsung and
Curtis Chang
Philip R. West and
Barbara Yellen
Doug and Catherine Wheeler
Roger J. Whyte II
Carolyn Ross Wilson
Washington Performing Arts
Women’s Committee
Njambi and Earl Wynn
As of October 10, 2022

For more information about Washington Performing Arts’s endowed fund opportunities, contact Meiyu Tsung at MTsung@WashingtonPerformingArts.org.

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Legacy Society members appreciate the vital role that performing arts play in the community, as well as in their own lives. By remembering Washington Performing Arts in their will or estate plans, members enhance our annual fund, endowment, or donor-designated programs and help make it possible for the next generations to enjoy the same quality and diversity of presentations both on stages and in our schools and community.

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Women's Committee

Margaret S. Wu

In memory of Y. H. and T. F. Wu

[†] deceased

As of March 10, 2023

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Gospel Choirs Anthony "Tony" Walker
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