



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

“Horowitz in Moscow” Recital

Robert Holm, piano

Jerry Alan Bush, piano

Sonata in B minor, K. 87
Sonata in E major, K. 380
Sonata in E major, K. 135

Domenico Scarlatti
(1685-1757)

Sonata in C major, K. 330
Allegro moderato
Andante cantabile
Allegretto

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Dr. Holm

Two Mazurkas
F minor, op. 7, no. 3
C-sharp minor, op. 30, no. 4

Frédéric Chopin
(1810-1849)

Etude in C-sharp minor, op. 2, no. 1

Alexander Scriabin
(1871-1915)

Sonetto 104 del Petrarca
from *Années de Pèlerinage: Italie*

Franz Liszt
(1811-1886)

Dr. Bush

INTERMISSION

Impromptu in B-flat major, op. 142, no. 3

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Soirées de Vienne: Valse-Caprice No. 6

Franz Schubert / Franz Liszt

Prelude in G major, op. 32, no. 5	Sergei Rachmaninoff
Prelude in G-sharp minor, op. 32, no. 12	(1873-1943)
Prelude in D-sharp minor, op. 8, no. 12	Alexander Scriabin
Polonaise in A-flat major, op. 53, "Heroic"	Frédéric Chopin

Dr. Holm

**RECITAL HALL
LAIDLAW PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
Friday, April 19, 2013
7:30 p.m.**

Vladimir Horowitz and the Steinway Concert Grand, CD 503 # 314503

Vladimir Horowitz (1903-1989) is widely considered one of the greatest pianists of the 20th century. Born in Kiev, he was the youngest of four children. His mother was his first piano teacher and in 1912 he entered the Kiev conservatory. After a solo recital in 1920, Horowitz's fame grew and he soon began to tour Russia where he was often paid with bread, butter and chocolate rather than money due to the civil war hardships. In the 1922-1923 season, he performed 23 concerts of eleven different programs in Petrograd alone and in 1925, Ernest Urchs, Steinway's artists manager, discovered Horowitz, a "New Immortal," and brought him to New York for concerts.

At his debut in Berlin in 1926, many different piano companies were courting Horowitz to use and endorse their pianos. Horowitz did not know which one to pick or what to do. "Nobody told me." Horowitz visited Bluthner, Bechstein, Bosendorfer and Steinway. He liked the "projection and power of the Steinway, as well as the clarity and brilliance of its treble and sonorous, virile bass." "That's my piano," he said, and never played anything but a Steinway, anywhere, ever again. Steinway provided Horowitz with a piano and a tuner whenever he played.

In 1927, Horowitz became a Steinway Artist and in 1928 January, he was a soloist with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra in Carnegie Hall with a huge ad campaign with an endorsement of Steinway pianos, "The Instrument of the Immortals."

On January 8, 1931, Horowitz performed for Herbert Hoover at dinner. His program of Bach-Busoni, Hummel, Dohnanyi, and Chopin concluded with his "Carmen" paraphrase that he would play 50 years later for President Jimmy Carter in the first White House concert to be nationally televised.

When in 1933, Horowitz married Wanda Toscanini, daughter of the famous conductor, Steinway gave them a Concert Grand piano as a wedding present. It was replaced in 1943 with another **Concert Grand, CD 503 # 314503**, the piano which is heard in this evening's performance.

Despite rapturous receptions at recitals, Horowitz became increasingly unsure of his abilities as a pianist and battled with depression. On several occasions, the pianist had to be pushed onto the stage and several times, he withdrew from public performances 1936-1938, 1953-1965 (except one recital for President Eisenhower), 1969-1974, and 1983-1985.

In 1986, after 61 years away, the 82-year-old Horowitz returned to the Soviet Union with his wife Wanda and an entourage that included a 43-member CBS television crew. The Moscow recital was given on April 20 on a Sunday afternoon, as was his custom, since he felt the audience would be more well-rested and attentive. The recital was seen as an event of political, as well as musical significance. Most of the tickets for the concert were reserved for the Soviet elite and few sold to the general public. This resulted in a number of Moscow Conservatory students crashing the concert, which was audible to viewers of the internationally televised recital. The Moscow concert was released on a compact disc entitled *Horowitz in Moscow*, which reigned at the top of Billboard's Classical music charts for over a year. It was also released on VHS and, eventually, DVD formats. The concert was also widely seen on a Special Edition of *CBS News Sunday Morning* with Charles Kuralt, reporting from Moscow. Later that year, Horowitz was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor bestowed by the United States, by President Ronald Reagan.

Program Notes

The Horowitz in Moscow program performed on this evening's Steinway piano began with three sonatas by **Domenico Scarlatti** dating from the mid-18th century: the elegiac **K. 87 in B minor**, the stately, yet graceful **K. 380 in E major** and the light-heartedly brilliant **K. 135 in E major**. Horowitz was fond of playing Scarlatti and was one of the first pianists to do so famously on the modern keyboard instrument.

Wolfgang Mozart's K. 330 Sonata in C major is the first of four piano sonatas composed in 1783 when the composer was 24. Like other Mozart sonatas, it presents three movements, fast-slow-fast, all with memorable melodies and ample ornamentation.

Like generations of pianists, Horowitz was enamored of the music of **Frédéric Chopin**, which ranges in scope from the most exquisite miniatures to a number of truly epic canvases. The Chopin **Mazurkas** are the most numerous of his compositions, spanning virtually his entire career, and are generally considered the most authentically "Polish" of his works. While there is an overall rhythmic plan associated with the mazurka, the form in Chopin's hands became a vehicle for a panoply of emotions and dynamic effects. The **Mazurka in F minor, op. 7, no. 3** is an early example of the characteristic rhythmic lilt of the Polish dance, while the **Mazurka in C-sharp minor, op. 30, no. 4** is more elusive in both the rhythmic and harmonic sense and remains one of the favorite examples in this idiom. Despite their relative brevity the mazurkas present numerous challenges for the performer, not least because they are the most sketchily marked of Chopin's compositions and require substantial acquaintance with the style for effective presentation.

The **Etude in C-sharp minor, op. 2, no. 1**, composed when **Alexander Scriabin** was only fifteen, has become a kind of miniature benchmark of the late Russian romantic style. Like Chopin, Scriabin composed numerous short works, though he is also associated with a series of ever more experimental piano sonatas and a fairly wide range of other instrumental pieces. Horowitz performed this etude on numerous occasions, often as an encore, and took great pains to articulate the highly sophisticated progressions and complex voicings the piece contains. It would be difficult to imagine a more effective small-scale example of the Russian *angst*.

Just as Horowitz was a pianistic icon of the twentieth century, there is no question that **Franz Liszt** was one of the pivotal figures of piano composition and performance in the nineteenth. Indeed, the wild ovations accorded Horowitz in many of his concerts seemed to reflect those

given Liszt himself. Liszt, however, was a pivotal composer as well as an unparalleled performer and produced an enormous number of works for the instrument which he popularized throughout Europe and in many respects brought keyboard facility to the point of seemingly superhuman spectacle and virtuosity. There was a more introspective side to this mercurial genius, however, and it is represented in a surprisingly large number of his compositions – none more effectively than the *Tre Sonetti di Petrarca* (Three Sonnets of Petrarch). These three works, a part of the Italian volume of the *Années de Pèlerinage* (Years of Pilgrimage), were based on three of the sonnets composed by the Italian poet Petrarch for his beloved Laura. The **Sonetto 104 del Petrarca** is the second of these pieces and is simultaneously the most dramatic and the most intimate of the three. Horowitz recorded this piece a number of times and included it on his historic Moscow recital, obviously enamored of its pianistic brilliance and emotional intensity – the combination of which renders it a kind of microcosm of Liszt's inimitable style.

Of the eight impromptus composed by **Franz Schubert** in 1827, the **op. 142, no. 3 Impromptu** is the only one in Theme with Variations form. Schubert follows Beethoven's model in opuses 111 and 120 by increasing subdivision and ornamentation through variations until there is a modulation (to G-flat major) immediately prior to the final variation.

Besides composing a large number of original piano works, **Franz Liszt** is equally known for his transcriptions for piano of classical symphonies, famous opera scenes and various well-known songs, especially those of **Franz Schubert**. Additionally, Liszt paraphrased well-known Schubert waltzes in a series of nine pieces entitled *Soirées de Vienne: Valse caprices* (1846-1852). **No. 6** features two waltzes by Schubert, in A minor and A major respectively, to which Liszt added numerous virtuoso passages in his unmistakable charming style.

Horowitz had played **Sergei Rachmaninoff's** Third Piano Concerto with the composer who immediately recognized the young pianist's great ability. Two of Horowitz's most commonly programmed solo pieces by Rachmaninoff were the dreamy **G major, no. 5** and the dramatically soulful **G-sharp minor, no. 12** from the 1910 set of **Preludes op. 32**. One of Horowitz's favorite encores, Scriabin's **Etude in D-sharp minor, op. 8, no. 12** from 1894 features wide leaps, rapid octave passages and frequent intervals of an eleventh.

Frédéric Chopin's famous **Polonaise in A-flat major, op. 53** was composed in 1842. When the 1848 Revoution broke out in France, Chopin's companion, the novelist George Sands, upon hearing this Polonaise remarked: "The inspiration! The strength! The vigor! There is no doubt that such a spirit should be present in the French Revolution. From now on this polonaise should be a symbol of heroicness!"



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