

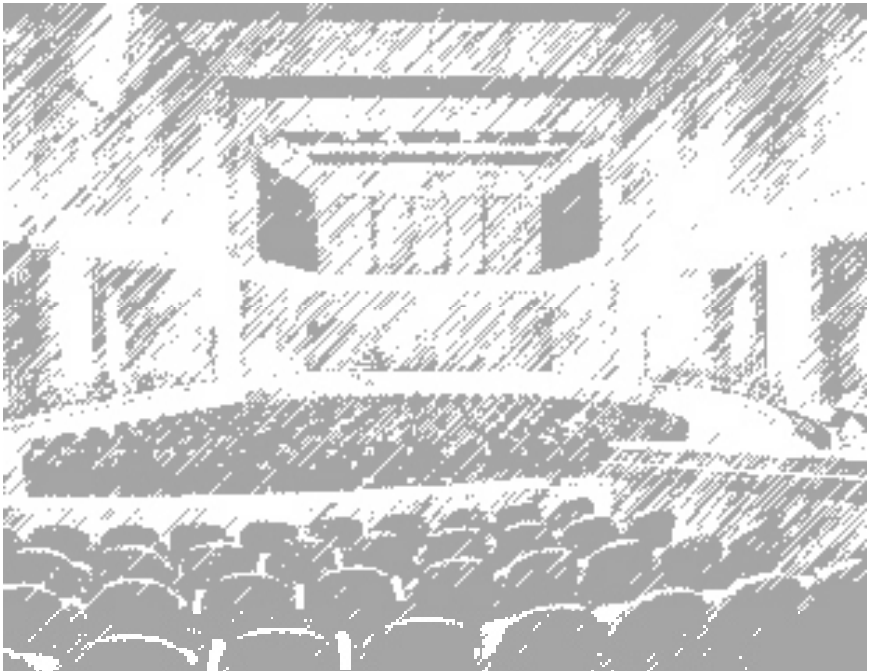
Kennesaw State University
College of the Arts
School of Music



presents

Senior Recital

Steven Bicknell, piano



Thursday, December 5, 2013

6:00 p.m

Dr. Bobbie Bailey & Family Performance Center, Brooker Hall
Fifty-eighth Concert of the 2013-14 Concert Season

Program

ALEXANDER TCHEREPNIN (1899-1977)

Bagatelles, Op. 5

1. Allegro marciale
2. Con vivacità
3. Vivo
4. Lento con tristezza
5. Dolce
6. Allegro con spirito
7. Prestissimo
8. Allegro
9. Allegretto
10. Presto

JOHANN SEBASTAIN BACH (1685-1750)

French Suite No. 3 in B minor, BWV 814

- Allemande
- Courante
- Sarabande
- Anglaise
- Menuet and trio
- Gigue

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN (1732-1809)

Sonata in B minor, Hob. XVI: 32

- I. Allegro Moderato
- II. Menuet and trio
- III. Presto

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1810-1849)

Ballade No. 3 in A-flat Major, Op. 47

Ballade No. 1 in G minor, Op. 23

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree
Bachelor of Music in Performance.

Mr. Bicknell studies piano with Dr. Soohyun Yun.

Program Notes

Bagatelles, Op. 5

ALEXANDER TCHEREPNIN

Alexander Tcherepnin comes from a strong Russian lineage. His Father, Nikolai, studied under Rimsky-Korsakov and taught Prokofiev. Tcherepnin begins to depart from the romantic Russian style in favor of the newer sounds of Prokofiev and Shostakovich, and he describes the bagatelles as "absolutely anti-impressionistic and anti-eclectic, rather like Prokofiev, but with chromaticism." The bagatelles are a wonderful set of ten short character pieces. Each one has its own personality, from the playfully whimsical to the mysterious and magical. These are works of his youth and, while keeping to tonality, he experiments with all kinds of dissonances. One dissonance that he seems particular fond of is the interval of a 2nd, or its inverse, the 7th. There are entire sections where the hands are one note away from each other, sounding like one melody that is out of tune, like with the first two bagatelles, and most noticeably in No. 7. At the opening of the fourth bagatelle, he lingers on a major 7th, one of the most tension-filled intervals which begs to be resolved, and in the seventh bagatelle, he builds a chord traveling from bottom to the top of the keyboard in major 7th intervals, sounding as something that Schoenberg would have written. Tcherepnin encapsulates the dance-like nature of the bagatelle in each piece, not in the sense that one can dance to them, but rather with an ethereal quality that makes it seem as if the music itself dances.

French Suite No. 3 in B minor, BWV 814

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

A baroque suite is multi-movement work where the movements correspond to a dance. There is a set order of the dances, with some of them being standard and some optional. For the suite, the order goes *Allemande-Courante-Sarabande-Gigue*, with optional dances included between the sarabande and gigue. It is interesting to note that the performance practice of the time rarely meant playing a suite in its entirety. The performers would choose their favorite movements to play, which is vastly contrary to how the suites are performed today. J.S. Bach composed the French Suites between the years of 1722-1725. During this time he served as the music director for Leopold, Prince of Anhalt-Köthen. Bach's first wife died suddenly in 1720, but while working for the prince he met his second wife, Anna Magdalena Wilcke. They married soon after, and Bach began compiling his Notebook for Anna Magdalena Bach with the first sketches of the French Suites included.

The *Suite in B minor* retains the lyrical style of the French Suites, but does so with much tension. The allemande continuously turns and flows, driving towards the final cadences of each section. The courante is spirited and lively and also relentlessly drives forward to the end. There is also a sense of anger or frustration, with intermittent spouts of joy and triumph. In the sarabande, Bach captures a kind of serene beauty. He is able to string together long lines of notes that, in one sense, go nowhere, but by the end it feels as if one had just been transported to a far

away place. It is these characteristics that define the rest of the movements and the suite as a whole. There is an unerring determination that pushes the music forward, as well as the liveliness and passion that makes this suite a memorable work.

Sonata in B minor, Hob. XVI: No. 32
FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN

Franz Joseph Haydn was one of the greatest innovators in music of his day. He is called the “Father of the Symphony” and the “Father of the String Quartet” and wrote for nearly every medium of music. He wrote 62 piano sonatas in total (that we know of so far), and though he was less adventurous in this medium, his character and wit make these fun pieces to listen to.

Haydn was one not to underplay his sense of humor in his writing. In the very beginning *Sonata in B minor*, he gives us two separate characters between the hands. The right hand is sustained and ascending, while the left hand is bouncing and descending. While the two hands fight for control for the first theme, Haydn suddenly modulates from B minor to D major and completely changes the character of the piece from a conniving first theme to a spritely second theme. The capricious nature of the music is a trend throughout the sonata. The menuet and trio is contrasting by nature, but Haydn takes it to an extreme. The menuet is simple but sophisticated, as if it were to be played as background music at a salon. The trio grabs one’s attention in an instant, and when it is over it feels like it never came. Lastly, the presto is the culmination of the surprise and contrast of the previous movements. It is exciting and difficult to anticipate what going to come next; for instance, there are moments when the music comes to an abrupt pause and changes character. Haydn’s personality shines through to the definitive end.

Ballade in No. 3 A-flat Major, Op. 47
FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN

Frédéric Chopin was forced to leave Poland at the age of twenty due to political instability; however, he was never able to return. In spite of this, he was forever a patriot of his homeland and showed this in several ways. For one, he stylized the Mazurkas and Polonaises, two well-known Polish dances. He would also use folk tunes in many of his works. The inspiration for the Ballades came from the poems of the same name by Adam Mickiewicz, a Polish poet. Chopin never clearly stated which poems in particular he based his ballades off of, but for the *Ballade in A-flat Major* there is pretty strong evidence supporting the poem “Świtezianka,” which had been translated in Paris as “Undine.”

The poem recounts a love story about a hunter and a water spirit. The hunter, who is captivated by the spirit, comes to the lake every night to spend time with her. One night he asks for the spirit to stay with him, but she declines because she knows how easily men’s hearts are swayed. But this time before she departs, she makes him swear that he would never betray her. With the oath taken, she disappears into the lake. The spirit concocts a plan to see if the hunter would stay true to his oath by which she would change her appearance to that of another beautiful woman and attempt to seduce the hunter. The hunter is unable to resist her wiles and follows her into the lake, where she then drowns him in a whirlpool.

The opening of the ballade begins like a conversation in an amorous setting. Chopin uses a sighing motif, the falling interval of a second, which persists throughout the introduction. Watery imagery is everywhere with large splashes of forte octaves and sparkling arpeggios. The second theme is uplifting, but quickly changes to a serious tone and leads to the first climax of the piece. Afterwards, the music meanders for a bit and then comes back to the sweet, second theme. A sudden modulation brings us back to the original key, marking the next section. Playfully and curiously, each phrase undulates between tonic, dominant and subdominant. As the section moves on, the music becomes more intense until it comes to a moment of desire and yearning, with deep waves of arpeggiation underlying the singing octaves above. The octave slurs bring back the second theme, but this time in a new key which helps give the feeling that something completely new is about to occur. What is to come next is an incredible transformation. Chopin instantly changes the mood; the melody remains unchanged, but the whirring sixteenth notes in the left hand are used to create a spinning sensation that the melody hovers above. The right hand takes over the sixteenth notes on G-sharp with a pattern spanning two octaves, keeping the rhythm going while the left hand takes over the melody. As the intensity grows, we reach another climax that spins out of control and crashes down to the bass, now frothing with the dissonance of the strong beats being a half step under the broken octaves. The melody has become segmented with the first half of the phrase beginning with the second theme which is then picked up by the opening theme. This continues as Chopin reiterates the idea, each phrase modulating upwards, then with major sweeping chromaticism, we are brought to the true climax of the piece, the coda.

The *Ballade in A-flat Major* is an evocative piece and is the only one written in a major key. He is able to capture the essence of love and passion of the story to create a beautiful work. Whether or not “Świtezianka” was his true inspiration for the ballade, the nobility, joy and struggle is seamlessly recreated from a poem to the piano.

Ballade No. 1 in G minor, Op. 23

As the first ballade Chopin ever wrote, the *Ballade in G minor* definitely makes a strong statement. It starts with a resounding C that slowly climbs up the piano. The final resting chord of the introduction is incredibly dissonant and after waiting for what seems like an eternity, the underlying notes are lifted, the sustained top note is left faintly lingering, and with a bass D, we are brought into the first theme.

There was no such thing as a musical “ballade” because this was an invention of Chopin’s. The piece ended up being a success, Robert Schumann praised the work and other composers, such as Brahms and Liszt, took up the form in their own ways. There is no set form to the ballades, each of the four that Chopin wrote are drastically different. One thing that could be said though is that they deal with the transformation of themes. The *Ballade in G minor* alternates between two themes, the first is dark and brooding while the second is sweet and lyrical. He does not necessarily go back and forth though, in between the themes there is bridging material used to create drama and excitement or release tension and leads into the next transformation. The *Ballade in G minor* is a journey with many ups and downs and shows us a very intimate side to Chopin’s personality.

Program Notes by Steven Bicknell

Biography

Steven Bicknell is a pianist residing in Acworth, GA. After spending his freshman year at Columbus State University (CSU), Steven has been working to attain a Bachelor of Music degree in piano performance at Kennesaw State University (KSU). Having had many opportunities to work with small and large ensembles, Steven played keyboard for the CSU and KSU Wind Ensembles and the KSU Symphony Orchestra. In addition, he has enjoyed playing contemporary music in small ensembles, including works by Copland and Hindemith, and he also premiered “Dreams and Nightmares” by Johnny Bezama-Carvajal. Highlights of 2013 include winning the GMEA competition and performing at the In-Service conference in Savannah, GA. He also received honorable mentions at the MTNA Young Artist Competition in Georgia and at the GMTA State Audition. Steven attributes his recent success to his teachers David Watkins, Betty Ann Diaz, Huu Mai, and Soohyun Yun. When he has earned his degree, Steven aims to have his own private studio and perform.

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KSU Community and Alumni Choir

Thursday, January 9
Symphony Orchestra and Wind Ensemble play the music of The Who

Friday, January 17
Faculty Recital: Adam Kirkpatrick, tenor and Benjamin Wadsworth, piano

Thursday, January 23
Studio of Jana Young Recital

Friday, January 24
Guest Artist Series: Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Robert Spano, conductor and Wu Han, piano

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