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to presenting professional performances
of classical music in our community.

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presents

THE POSSIBILITY OF PIANO

Todd Yaniv, Pianist

Sat. Nov. 4 2017, 7:30 p.m.
St. Paul's United Church, Stirling

THE PROGRAMME

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849):

Polonaise in A flat major, Opus 53 (1842)

Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943):

Prelude in g sharp minor, Opus 32 No. 12 (1910)

Prelude in G major, Opus 32 No. 5 (1910)

Étude-tableau in c minor, Opus 39 No. 1 (1916)

Franz Liszt (1811-1886):

Funérailles, from *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* (1849)

Intermission

Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915):

Poème, Opus 32 No. 1 in F sharp major (1903)

Sonata No. 3 in f sharp minor, Opus 23 (1897-8)

I *Drammatico*

II *Allegretto*

III *Andante*

IV *Presto con fuoco*

THE ARTIST

Todd Yaniw, Piano



Critics describe performances by award winning pianist Todd Yaniw as “hair-raising”, while praising him for his “atmospheric contrast of poetry and power.” Yaniw made his debut with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra at age 13. Appearances followed at the Eastman Theatre in Rochester, New York, St. Martin-in-the-Fields and St. James’s Piccadilly in London, England, the Monte Carlo Opera House, Monaco, and in Jamaica, China and Italy. Canadian performance venues include the Banff Centre, Edmonton’s Winspear Centre, the Ottawa International Chamber Music Festival, Toronto’s Arts & Letters Club, the Festival of the Sound in Parry Sound, the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, and Toronto’s Koerner Hall. Invited to perform concertos with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and those of Edmonton, Kitchener-Waterloo, Windsor, and Guelph, Yaniw also toured the Canadian maritime provinces as a soloist. Todd Yaniw appeared in Stirling last fall as a soloist and the collaborative pianist with DRIVESHAFT for QSCM’s inaugural concert. A frequent guest of the CBC and Toronto’s Classical 96.3 FM, Yaniw was a featured subject in the CBC’s NEXT series. His debut CD, “Todd Yaniw: Scriabin, Beethoven, Rachmaninov, Chopin” was released on the Chestnut Hall Music label in 2006. Dr. Todd Yaniw recently completed his doctorate at the University of Texas in Austin and holds multiple performance prizes.

QSCM Upcoming

May 22-25 , 2018
QSCM presents
The ALL TERRAIN TOUR
featuring
The 6ix4tet

The “Six-Quartet” is a fresh new string quartet named after the part of Toronto known as “The Six” where they all met, discovered a shared commitment to new Canadian music and began playing together, debuting professionally at the Canadian Music Centre Feb 2017. QSCM brings this highly eclectic ensemble to the towns and villages of Hastings and Prince Edward with the music of Haydn, Mozart, Brahms, Shostakovich and Canadian Composer Andy Slade.

Details at

www.qscmusic.com

For biweekly updates about upcoming events.
and discussion of all things classical music
subscribe to the QSCM newsletter.

The St. Paul’s Yamaha C2 piano at St. Paul’s
is maintained and tuned by Owen Greyling
GreyCo Piano (613) 384-8222

PIANO MASTERCLASS LECTURE

Dr. Todd Yaniw

**SUNDAY NOV. 5 St. Paul's United
Church, 1 p.m.**

Please join Dr. Todd Yaniw Sunday afternoon in an informal Masterclass lecture, featuring local piano students. All attending will be invited to ask questions and discuss all aspects of piano playing and classical music making in informal discussion with Dr. Yaniw.

There is no charge to attend this event.

QSCM OUTREACH

To encourage the enjoyment and appreciation of classical music in our community, QSCM volunteers create educational experiences for all. These include school visits, master classes and social opportunities where people of all ages and backgrounds can talk about the music with our artists. Please join us after the concert tonight at St. Paul's for refreshments.

QSCM is committed to making classical music affordable and accessible to all. Community support and the work of our volunteers make this possible. If you wish to contribute as part of our volunteer team, contact us at

info@qscmusic.com

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849):

Polonaise in A flat major, Opus 53 (1842)

George Sand, Chopin's most famous lover, came up with the sobriquet "héroïque" for this work. While Chopin was reluctant to label his music with such titles, the description is quite appropriate. The polonaise is a Polish dance form that came to be associated with the nobility, always in three beats. Chopin is probably the most famous writer of the form; the Op. 53 Polonaise, the "Héroïque," is one of his most famous works.

Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943)

Preludes & Étude-tableau

Rachmaninov was inspired by Chopin to write 24 preludes in all of the major and minor keys; the Prelude Opus 3 No. 2, the Preludes Opus 23 and Preludes Opus 32 comprise the complete set. The Études-tableaux (Opus 33 and 39) and the Preludes overlap in terms of musical depth and technical difficulty, much like Chopin. I treat the Preludes and Études-tableaux in the same manner; each piece's individual character is more important than whether or not it is an étude or prelude. Some of the Preludes and Études-tableaux were inspired by stories or Rachmaninov's reactions to paintings or events, but these three, like most of them, remain mysteries.

The *Prelude in g sharp minor, Opus 32 No. 12* is famous for its haunting, pleading melodic writing that could just as easily been written for the cello. The accompanimental textures seem to suggest the harsh elements of a Russian winter. On the other hand, the textures in the *Prelude in G major, Op. 32 No. 5* are delicate and impart a hypnotic quality, supporting a beautiful and simple line. The *Étude-tableau in c minor, Opus 39 No. 1* is a maelstrom of power, with uneasy moments of relative tranquillity and even dark humour.

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

Funérailles, Harmonies poétiques et religieuses (1849)

In 1848, the Hungarian Revolution turned into an all-out war with Austria and eventually Russia. The revolution was crushed in 1849 and the country was placed under brutal martial law. Liszt's *Funérailles* is subtitled *October 1849* and refers to the fates of three of his friends, and his native Hungary. The Hungarian Prime Minister,

THE MUSIC

Count Lajos Batthyány, was executed on October 6. Prince Felix Lichnowsky was beaten to death by a mob, and Count László Teleki was forced to leave the country. Liszt was living in Weimar at the time, and he was openly criticized for not standing with his fellow Hungarians. To further pain him, Liszt's long-time friend Chopin died on October 17.

Funérailles begins with an ominous, repeating minor ninth figuration in the bass, with gloomy sighing chordal figures on top. This eventually builds up into an awful, oppressive soundscape that never has any resolution; it is essentially a dominant prolongation of punishing dissonance. After this grim introduction, a funeral march ensues. A *lagrimoso* second theme provides a stunningly beautiful respite.

Yet another section is clearly a nod to Chopin's Polonaise Op. 53, as admitted by Liszt himself. The octaves in the left hand provide a similar, if more militaristic and aggressive, character here; they support a simple but intensely heroic motif. The return of the funeral march, now fortissimo, marks the end of all hope for Liszt's ravaged homeland

Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915)

Poème, Opus 32 No. 1 in F sharp major (1903)

Sonata No. 3 in f sharp minor, Opus 23 (1897-8)

Scriabin, like Chopin, wrote mainly for the piano. He attended the Moscow Conservatory as a classmate of Rachmaninov's. Rachmaninov greatly admired Scriabin: after Scriabin's death in 1915, Rachmaninov toured Russia with programs that consisted solely of Scriabin's music. Scriabin's compositions range from the early, Chopin-inspired works, to the hugely complex and atonal soundscapes of his late years. In all of his output, one finds a very individual treatment of the piano.

The *Poème* presented here is the first of a set of two, sharing the same key as his Fourth Sonata (F sharp major); both date from 1903. It is difficult to define any time-posts in Scriabin's compositional style with much certainty, but it could cautiously be said that this period marks a noticeable change in approach. While the *Poème* has a simple, conventional form, the writing has a fantastic complexity, glowing intensely even at the edges of audibility, with a focus on micro-contrast rather than huge gestures.

THE MUSIC

The *Drammatico* that opens the Third Sonata (1897-8) is a huge, fateful gesture, suggestive of a fallen hero, written in conventional sonata-allegro form but at a slower pace than one often finds in an opening movement. The *Allegretto* is a more confident diversion, with a middle section that resembles lighter examples of Tchaikovsky and Schumann. An *Andante* serves as a slow movement, with a decadently ornate line; its form is curious, with a contrasting, darker section serving as the only distraction from what is essentially continuously developing variation. At its conclusion, the delicate supporting textures and figurations are extraordinarily complex, creating a very different, luminescent quality that makes the movement's beautiful theme seem quite bare in comparison. After a brief transition, the work plunges without pause into the finale. Marked *Presto con fuoco*, it is a firestorm of musical fragments, pianism, and raw emotion. The theme of the *Andante* returns triumphantly in F sharp major in the last moments, only to be crushed.

After composing this sonata, Scriabin called it "Gothic", saying that it gave the impression of a ruined castle. Years later, he came up with this alternate, more detailed program:

Drammatico: The soul, free and wild, thrown into the whirlpool of suffering and strife.

Allegretto: Apparent momentary and illusory respite; tired from suffering the soul wants to forget, wants to sing and flourish, in spite of everything. But the light rhythm, the fragrant harmonies are just a cover through which gleams the restless and languishing soul.

Andante: A sea of feelings, tender and sorrowful: love, sorrow, vague desires, inexplicable thoughts, illusions of a delicate dream.

Presto con fuoco: From the depth of being rises the fearsome voice of creative man whose victorious song resounds triumphantly. But too weak yet to reach the acme he plunges, temporarily defeated, into the abyss of non-being.

Notes by Dr. Todd Yaniv

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