



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

**Anna Damerau, piano**

November 17, 2022

7:00 pm

PepsiCo Recital Hall

**Program**

Prelude and Fugue in E-flat Minor, BWV 853

Johann Sebastian Bach  
(1685-1750)

Divertimento in A-flat Major, Hob.XVI:46

Franz Joseph Haydn  
(1732-1809)

I. *Allegro moderato*

II. *Adagio*

III. *Presto*

*Intermission*

Ten Preludes, Op. 23

Sergei Rachmaninoff  
(1873-1943)

*No. 1 in F-sharp Minor (Largo)*

*No. 2 in B-flat Major (Maestoso)*

*No. 3 in D Minor (Tempo di minuetto)*

*No. 4 in D Major (Andante cantabile)*

*No. 5 in G Minor (Alla marcia)*

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance. Ms. Damerau is a student of Dr. Tamás Ungár.

The use of recording equipment or taking photographs is prohibited.

Please silence all electronic devices including watches, pagers, and phones.

## Program Notes

### *Prelude and Fugue in E-flat Minor, BWV 853* Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in E-Flat Minor, BWV 853* is one of the most profound works from Book One of *The Well-Tempered Clavier* compiled in 1722. The preludes and fugues of each book of *The Well-Tempered Clavier* cover all keys starting with C Major and ending with B minor. Composers of the Baroque period would often make a significant distinction between all 24 major and minor keys, with each key representing an emotion, state of being, or event. Unlike with any of his other preludes and fugues, Bach chose to set this prelude and fugue in two separate keys of E-flat minor and D-sharp minor - keys that sound identical but are spelled differently on the score.

The prelude in the somber key of E-flat minor is stately and highly expressive, in the style of a sarabande, a courtly dance in triple meter. An unrelenting, grounded pulse is prevalent throughout the prelude, coupled with a flowing, ornate melody. The fugue in D-sharp minor consists of three voices that weave in and out of a magnificent polyphonic tapestry. The fugue continues the gravitas feeling of the prelude but sounds more ethereal and uplifting. The *Prelude and Fugue in E-Flat Minor* stirs the soul, reflecting Bach's deep faith. As the composer said, "Music's only purpose should be the glory of God and the recreation of the human spirit."

### *Divertimento in A-flat Major, Hob.XVI:46* Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Franz Joseph Haydn composed this piece around 1767, following his new position as Kapellmeister at the Esterházy court. Commonly known as the *Piano Sonata in A-flat Major*, Haydn's divertimento is a paradigm of his musical style. A divertimento (from It. *divertire* - "to amuse") is a musical genre intended for social entertainment.

Presented in the key of A-flat Major, the first movement features contrasting textures, rhythms, melodic themes, and ornamentations. For instance, there is a juxtaposition between the elegance of the opening theme and the lively passagework that follows. Haydn's second movement is one of my favorites. It is filled with memorable melodic lines, where every note sings, and the voices interact with one another in heartfelt dialogue. The rich harmonies and elegant ornamentation are equally captivating. The brisk passages, scale runs, and sequences provide an exciting atmosphere throughout the entire third movement. Although this movement is the most energetic of the three, it still retains the elegance and charm of the previous movements.

### *Ten Preludes, Op. 23, No. 1-5* Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

The *Ten Preludes, Op. 23*, published in 1903, are some of Rachmaninoff's greatest solo works for piano. A prelude (Lat. "before-playing") is a piece that precedes a longer work. During the Baroque era, composers often wrote preludes followed by fugues. In the nineteenth century, however, Frederic Chopin wrote a set of preludes which were small stand-alone pieces, not followed by a larger work. Other composers, including Sergei

Rachmaninoff, followed Chopin's example and compiled a collection of preludes. Although not originally his objective, Rachmaninoff wrote a total of 24 preludes, exploring all 24 major and minor keys. All his preludes (*Prelude in C-sharp Minor, Ten Preludes, Op. 23*, and *Thirteen Preludes, Op. 32*) were published at different times and were not as systematically ordered as those of Bach and Chopin. Nevertheless, Rachmaninoff's preludes follow a structure and order of their own. For instance, *Prelude No. 3 in D Minor* is followed by a prelude in the parallel key of D Major with a striking contrast in character.

The first prelude is set to a slow tempo and presents a pensive, doleful mood. Like a ray of light, the simple right-hand melodic line pierces through the insistent, trudging pattern of the left hand. Prelude No. 2 offers a notable contrast to the first prelude. It is a highly virtuosic and majestic piece that begins with an exuberant theme, followed by an expressive middle section before its return to the main theme and a whirling coda. Prelude No. 3 is an unusual and rather ominous minuet, with varied characters and flashes of excitement that dissipate into thin air by the end of the piece. In essence, Prelude No. 4 is a barcarole, with its meandering lyrical melody over a flowing accompaniment. This prelude is the quintessence of romanticism as a breathtaking climax appears before a final gradual descent to a state of contentment in the final chords.

Perhaps the most famous prelude from Op. 23 is *Prelude No. 5 in G Minor*, composed in 1901, around the time when Rachmaninoff was writing his second piano concerto. The prelude opens with a memorable theme in the style of a march. This theme is followed by an enrapturing, dream-like middle section ending with a transition that brilliantly returns to the opening theme and a final coda. Rachmaninoff's preludes offer a broad palate of rich harmonies, contrasting characters, and unforgettable melodies which carry a distinctive Russian sound so prevalent in his music.