



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

**Anna Damerau Shanks, piano**

Friday, November 15, 2024

7:00 PM

PepsiCo Recital Hall

**Program**

Sonata in F Minor, K. 466  
Sonata in C Major, K. 159

Domenico Scarlatti  
(1685-1757)

Piano Sonata No. 11 in A Major, K. 331  
*I. Andante grazioso (Theme and Variations)*  
*II. Menuetto (Minuet and Trio)*  
*III. Alla turca – Allegretto (Turkish March)*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
(1756-1791)

*Intermission*

Piano Sonata No. 8 in C Minor, Op. 13 (*Sonata Pathétique*)  
*I. Grave – Allegro di molto e con brio*  
*II. Adagio cantabile*  
*III. Rondo: Allegro*

Ludwig van Beethoven  
(1770-1827)

Selections from *Lyric Pieces*

Edvard Grieg  
(1843-1907)

- I. Arietta* from Book I, Op. 12, No. 1
- II. Til våren (To Spring)* from Book III, Op. 43, No. 6
- III. Halling (Norwegian Dance)* from Book X, Op. 71, No. 5
- IV. Efterklang (Remembrances)* from Book X, Op. 71, No. 7
- V. Bryllupsdag på Troidhaugen (Wedding Day at Troidhaugen)* from Book VIII, Op. 65, No. 6

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Music in Piano Performance. Mrs. Shanks (née 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

### *Sonata in F Minor, K. 466 and Sonata in C Major, K. 159*

Domenico Scarlatti, a prolific Italian composer and contemporary of J.S. Bach and Handel, composed in various genres, including opera, sacred choral works, keyboard exercises, and sonatas. He is most notably known for his considerable contribution to the keyboard repertoire, having composed 555 sonatas for keyboard instruments, primarily for harpsichord or the earlier form of the pianoforte. Most of Scarlatti's sonatas consist of a single movement and have a binary dance form with two main sections, which are repeated with added ornamentation following the conventions of the Baroque period.

Scarlatti's mastery of the harpsichord is evident in his keyboard sonatas, which range from simple to virtuosic, playful to poignant. The Sonata in F Minor, K. 466, is an example of one of Scarlatti's more lyrical keyboard sonatas, with its delicate ornamentation and a soaring, heartfelt melodic line. In contrast, the Sonata in C Major, K. 159, is energetic and exciting, with open fourths and fifths, which might imitate the sound of hunting horns. Though open to interpretation, the frequent trills in this sonata could represent the sound of the castanet, a percussive hand-held instrument commonly featured in Iberian music and dance, consisting of two shells that rapidly hit against each other to produce a clicking sound. Although Scarlatti was from Naples, his prolonged time in Spain influenced his music, adding a distinctive flavor to many of his works.

### *Piano Sonata No. 11 in A Major, K. 331*

From approximately 1775 to 1789, Mozart composed eighteen sonatas for solo piano. His Piano Sonata No. 11 in A Major, likely written in 1783 and published in Vienna in 1784, is one of his most recognizable piano sonatas. In the first movement, the opening theme is a simple, lyrical melody, followed by a series of variations on it. Each of these variations has differences in texture, tempo, and character. For instance, the first variation is delicate with a contrasting, grounded, confident section, while the third variation shifts from the playfulness of the second variation in the home key of A Major to a distinctly dismal mood in the parallel minor key. The final variation is the most exciting and exuberant, bringing the first movement to a joyful conclusion.

The second movement is a minuet and trio, a form commonly used during the Classical period. The differences in registers and texture during the minuet seem to differentiate between a man and a woman dancing together, with the man leading the opening measures and the lady following soon after. An elegant trio follows, imitating the sound of three instruments as they engage in a call-and-response, repeating thematic material in different registers before circling back to the final restatement of the minuet.

One of Mozart's most commonly performed works is this sonata's third movement, known as the "Turkish march" or "Rondo alla turca." During Mozart's time, Turkish culture became fashionable in Western Europe, as they perceived it as "exotic." In this third movement of the sonata, Mozart imitates the sounds of the percussive instruments such as drums, bells, and cymbals, which were associated with Turkish Janissary bands, the military bands of the Ottoman Empire. The mode frequently changes from minor to major and ends with an extended section in the major key, imitating various percussive instruments as the band marches on with triumph.

### *Piano Sonata No. 8 in C Minor, Op. 13 (Sonata Pathétique)*

Beethoven composed the *Sonata Pathétique*, dedicated to Prince Karl von Lichnowsky, in 1798 when he was twenty-seven. This sonata belongs to the later part of Beethoven's compositional Early Period (1795-1800), when he ventured beyond the conventional classical style of Mozart and Haydn but not yet to the extent of Beethoven's latter compositional periods. The *Sonata Pathétique*, published in 1799, was an immediate success. Schindler, one of Beethoven's contemporaries, noted that this sonata "sells more than any other pieces." To this day, of his thirty-two piano sonatas, the *Pathétique* remains one of the most commonly performed works.

The term "pathétique" (Fr. for "pathetic") derives from the Greek "pathetikos," meaning "sensitive" or "feeling," which, in turn, comes from the Greek word "pathos," meaning "suffering" or "emotion." In the sixteenth century, the French definition of "pathétique" described something emotionally stirring and moving, while the modern definition acquired a more negative meaning as something miserable

and pitiful. Beethoven's *Sonata Pathétique* seems to reflect the earlier definitions of the word. His sonata is emotionally varied, with periods of intense, dramatic feelings of suffering and desperation and other periods of sweetness, calmness, and, at times, playfulness.

A dramatic introduction opens the first movement, featuring dotted rhythms in the style of the French overture and improvisatory-like scalar runs. The first theme soon follows with its incessant tremolo octaves in the left hand and a quick succession of notes covering a wide range in the right hand. The second theme is more melodic with the right hand crossing over the left hand to lead a longer phrase, alternating between the lower and higher registers. A series of key changes, thematic sections, and transitions occurs, evoking sundry emotions and concluding with a restatement of the fiery first theme and assertive final chords.

The second movement presents a warm and serene atmosphere, imitating the rich sonority of a cello. The main theme, with its long melodic phrase, repeats with variations found in the inner voices, first featuring sixteenth notes and then sixteenth triplets. Beethoven's third movement is a rondo, a form with a principal theme that returns several times with contrasting themes in between. Like the first movement, this also is driving and passionate, with a few moments of gentleness while still maintaining the overall excitement and energy of the movement.

### **Selections from *Lyric Pieces***

Between 1867 and 1901, Grieg composed sixty-six short piano pieces published in ten volumes. Many of these pieces reflect the culture and nature of Grieg's homeland, Norway. Grieg depicts folk dances, fairytale characters, nature scenes, and feelings such as homesickness, gratitude, and melancholy. His *Lyric Pieces* are a valuable treasure in the piano repertoire since they range in difficulty, with many of them being accessible to intermediate-level students and others demanding advanced technical skill and musicianship.

Grieg's first miniature piece from his *Lyric Pieces* is titled "Arietta," a short aria with a simple, sweet-sounding melody and charming harmonies. The piece ends in an unusual, enigmatic way as the opening thematic material is restated and fades away as though one could hear its continuation. The piece "To Spring" paints a scene of a Norwegian spring. Icicles begin to melt as water droplets fall from the trees and roofs of homes, creating a calming rhythm. A rainstorm approaches and darkens the sky, changing the mood of the piece from bright to gloomy, but soon, the glorious sun penetrates the grey clouds and pushes them out, warming and lighting the earth in all its glory. Small flowers such as the coltsfoot and pasqueflowers emerge from the soil, and birds cheerfully return home after their migration.

The third piece from the set for this recital is a Norwegian dance, the Halling, an energetic folk dance originating from Hallingdal, a south Norwegian district and valley. This traditional dance can involve couples but most often features impressive and vigorous dancing of men who show off their strength and agility. Grieg's piece is rhythmical and exciting, featuring accents and frequent use of fourths and fifths, intervals commonly found in folk music. The men and women, depicted in the lower and upper registers of the piano, take turns showing off their dancing abilities as they celebrate a joyous communal event. Grieg's "Remembrances" is the last piece in the tenth volume of *Lyric Pieces*. The composer brilliantly decides to conclude these miniature pieces with a waltz heavily based on his first piece, the "Arietta." Set in the same key, "Remembrances" begins with the sweet Arietta melody, only this time in triple meter. As the waltz progresses, the harmonies blur as if the ballroom glamour were fading and perspective shifting to a memory or dream, the effect being reinforced by frequent modulations and lack of a grounded home key. Perhaps the "Arietta" tells of something from the distant past that is being revisited in memory and cherished amid the poignancy of years.

One of Grieg's most well-known and beloved piano works is "Wedding Day at Troldhaugen," depicting a cheerful wedding celebration. Grieg composed this work in honor of his silver wedding anniversary (twenty-five years), which he celebrated at his home, Troldhaugen, in the city of Bergen. The piece has three main sections and a coda. The first section is a march of family and friends joining in a joyful procession in preparation for the wedding feast and greet the bride and groom. Following the march is a duet between the newlyweds who share words of love and their lifelong commitment to each other. The rocking rhythm in this section might represent the rocking of a boat carrying the married couple. The march soon returns and ends with an exciting, jubilant coda.