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Piano Series Recital

Chih-Long Hu

SATURDAY, 7:00 P.M.
NOVEMBER 9, 2024
CAPISTRANO CONCERT HALL

Sonata in B-flat Major, D. 960
 Franz Schubert
 (1797-1828)

Molto moderato
 Andante sostenuto
 Scherzo: Allegro vivace con delicatezza
 Allegro ma non troppo

INTERMISSION

Sonata No. 2 in B-flat Minor, Op. 35
 Frédéric Chopin
 (1810-1849)

Grave - doppio movimento
 Scherzo
 Marche - funebre
 Finale

Homage à Frédéric Chopin (2009)
 Maria Niederberger

Liebesleid (Love's Sorrow)
 Liebesfreud (Love's Joy)
 Fritz Kreisler
 (1875-1962)
 arr. by Sergei Rachmaninov

A native of Taiwan, pianist **Chih-Long Hu's** performance career was launched after receiving honors including the Taipei National Concert Hall Arising Star, the Chi-Mei Artist Award, and prizes from the Mauro Monopoli International Piano Competition in Italy, the Concours International De Piano D'Escaldes-Engordany in Andorra, the Takamatsu International Piano Competition in Japan, and San Jose International Piano Competition in California.

An active performer, Hu performs extensively appearing as a concerto soloist, recitalist, and chamber musician. His recent performance highlights include concerto performances of Rachmaninov's Paganini Rhapsody, Beethoven's Emperor Concerto, Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue, solo and chamber recitals in China, Taiwan, Japan, Singapore, Ireland, France, Canada, and throughout the U.S. Hu's performances have been broadcast in "Performance Today" through NPR stations across the U.S.

His CD albums "Formosa Caprices", "Complete Rachmaninov Etudes-Tableaux", and "Goldberg Variations" have received critical acclaims. Recipient of the UT Chancellor's Excellence in Teaching Award and named "Teacher of the Year" by Tennessee Music Teachers Association, Knoxville Music Teachers Associations, and Appalachian Music Teachers Association, Hu is committed and passionate in teaching. He strives to cultivate and inspire curiosity in meaningful expressions and to help his students discover their individuality through the music.

Hu holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in piano performance from the University of Michigan, a Master's degree from Taipei National University of the Arts, and a Bachelor's degree in civil engineering from National Taiwan University. Hu is currently the Sandra G. Powell Endowed Professor of Piano and the coordinator of Keyboard Studies at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.

These poetic words of Chopin's artist friend touched and inspired me. I set the first lines as if writing a vocal line. The resulting melodic idea became the theme for my second impromptu.

Impromptu III: "Joy Mingling with Sorrow"

My third impromptu resembles a collage: it incorporates vast stylistic shifts. The movement incorporates quotes, fragments, and ideas taken from Chopin's *Ballade*, Op. 47 in A-flat Major (1841), that I have set in sharp, deliberate, (sometimes humorous) contrast with my contemporary musical language.

With this "mixed media" approach, I intended to create something like a time twirl. I have consciously chosen to focus on Chopin's music in order to zoom in and out from his time to our own. There are also passages where our styles are interwoven. In my imagination, this varied process mirrors our modern life, where we are continuously surrounded and informed by music of different eras, styles, and cultures.

- Maria A. Niederberger

NEXT ON THE PIANO SERIES

Saturday, November 23 – Jon Nakamatsu

7:00 p.m. – Concert Hall

works by Bach, Beethoven (Sonata in D Major, Op. 28), Mendelssohn, Liszt (Three Petrarch Sonnets), and Chopin

www.csus.edu/music

It was a privilege to compose *Homage à Frédéric Chopin* for my colleague Chih-Long Hu, who is one of the finest young pianists I know. At his request, I wrote this set of three impromptus for the ETSU "Chopin 200" series in honor of his 200th birthday (1810-2010). Dr. Hu premiered the work on his faculty recital on October 23, 2009, on the campus of East Tennessee State University.

The term "impromptu" is a musical expression that derives from the word "improvisation." It suggests a free-flowing music that is not bound by traditional form. Each of my impromptus brings into focus a segment or element of Chopin's days or work and connects it to my own life in this composition.

When I composed *Homage*, I did not intend to imitate Chopin's style. Chopin was a leading force in musical innovation in his time, and I think that there's no better way to celebrate his legacy, as to have his story and sounds inspire new music.

Impromptu I: "Tears from Heaven"

"His composition of the evening was indeed full of drops of rain which resounded on the tiles of the monastery, but they were transformed in his imagination and his music into tears falling from heaven on his heart." - French novelist George Sand, 1838, *Valdemosa, Spain*

During the unusually rainy summer of 2009 in Johnson City, when I composed the first impromptu, I thought about Chopin's rainy retreat in Spain. Tears express human emotion, both sad and happy. While Chopin's repeated notes (tears) in his Prelude No. 6, Op. 28 sound pained and languid, mine stem from a joyful and happy frame of mind.

Impromptu II: "With Whom Shall I Speak?"

"With whom shall I speak of the unique genius (Chopin), whom heaven took from the earth; whom I mourn often, being no longer able to visit him nor savour his divine harmonies?" - French painter Eugene Delacroix (1798-1863)