

PORTRAIT

TERRY EDER

PIANO

BEETHOVEN

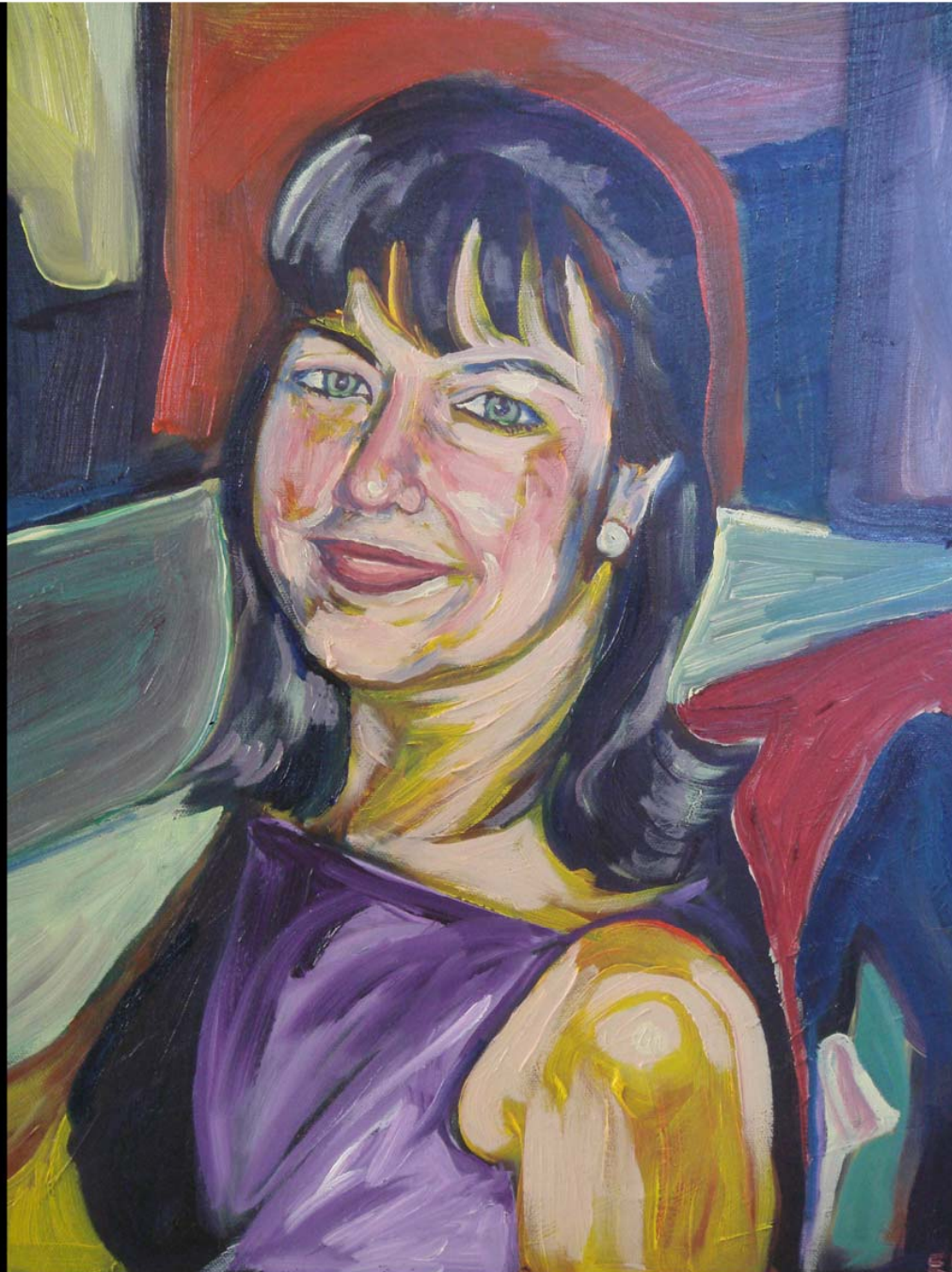
BARTÓK

CHOPIN

DEBUSSY

DOHNÁNYI

KODÁLY



PORTRAIT

L. VAN BEETHOVEN
(1770-1827)

SONATA NO. 30 IN E MAJOR, OPUS 109 [3:49]
1 VIVACE MA NON TROPPO/ADAGIO ESPRESSIVO [3:49]
2 PRESTISSIMO [2:28]
3 ANDANTE MOLTO CANTABILE ED ESPRESSIVO [12:42]
GESANGVOLL, MIT INNIGSTER EMPFINDUNG

B. BARTÓK
(1881-1945)

SIX DANCES IN BULGARIAN RHYTHM, FROM
MIKROKOSMOS VOLUME 6, NO. 148-153 [9:27]
4 NO. 148 [2:01]
5 NO. 149 [1:09]
6 NO. 150 [1:26]
7 NO. 151 [1:41]
8 NO. 152 [1:10]
9 NO. 153 [2:00]

C. DEBUSSY
(1862-1981)

10 L'ISLE JOYEUSE [7:08]

E. VON DOHNÁNYI
(1877-1960)

11 CASCADES, OPUS 41, NO. 4 [4:49]

F. CHOPIN
(1810-1849)

12 BARCAROLLE, OPUS 60 [9:26]

E. VON DOHNÁNYI

13 CLOCHES, OPUS 41, NO. 6 [5:56]

Z. KODÁLY
(1882-1967)

14 SZÉKELY'S LAMENT, OPUS 11, NO. 2 [2:19]

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Recorded at Patrych Sound Studios, 2009-2011; Piano: Hamburg Steinway CD-147
Co-Produced by Joseph Patrych and Terry Eder; Engineered by Joseph Patrych
Cover: Portrait in Oil by Kikki Eder; Booklet Notes by Terry Eder Total Timing 58:04

BEETHOVEN PIANO SONATA NO. 30 OPUS 109 IN E MAJOR

The first of the last three piano sonatas, was composed in 1820. Opus 109 exhibits a drastic change in sentiment and structure from the monumental and massive piano sonata that preceded it, the Hammerklavier, Op. 106. Opus 109, particularly in the outer movements, suggests a drawing room intimacy that is reminiscent of a private conversation, and a quality of inner spirituality. The first and second movements, played without pause, contrast greatly, and are each in compact sonata form. The first movement's form is so compressed, in fact, that the second theme immediately follows the statement of the first. As in the Waldstein Sonata, Opus 53, the opening theme consists of a harmonic progression of chords (here, broken chords), not what could be considered a tune one would sing, but certainly as beautiful as any melody. The gentle feeling evoked by the use of E Major contributes to the glistening quality of sound that permeates the musical material of the outer movements. The second movement, in e minor, is in 6/8 time. Its character is stormy and humorless, not at all the more usual minuet or light-hearted scherzo. The third and final movement is a glorious set of variations, utilizing some of the techniques seen in Beethoven's later variations, such as the use of sustained trills and increasingly shorter note values.

SIX DANCES IN BULGARIAN RHYTHM

Béla Bartók was one of the greatest and most prolific composers of piano music in the 20th century. His unique style is characterized by pungent harmonies, energetic rhythms, and a propensity to blend folk songs with abstract music. Bartók traveled widely, collecting and recording folk songs for transcription and incorporation into his music. His works often reflect the flavor and cadence of the Hungarian language, which emphasizes the first syllable of every word. Among a significant body of inventive works for the piano, the Six Dances in Bulgarian Rhythm were published as the last works of the six volume Mikrokosmos, a graded compendium of short pieces that exemplify different elements and techniques of piano playing and Bartók's style. The first volumes were written as a type of method to teach Bartók's son. Bartók's scores are filled with very particular notations, including articulation changes sometimes on every note, meticulous and minute dynamic changes, a plethora of accents, and rapid rhythmic irregularities, all constituting immense challenges to the pianist. The six Bulgarian dances contain unusual melodies and harmonies set within complicated rhythmic groupings. The first dance is organized in measures containing $4 + 2 + 3$ beats; that is, 9 beats per bar, broken up into groups of 4, 2 and 3 in succession. The second dance is characterized by rhythmic groups of $2 + 2 + 3$; the third has 5 beats per bar, divided into $2 + 3$; the fourth contains groups of $3 + 2 + 3$; the fifth is organized by $2 + 2 + 2 + 3$; and the last has groups of $3 + 3 + 2$. Somewhat wild and jazzy, these dances are both exuberant and poignant, and are entirely unique in the piano repertoire.

L'ISLE JOYEUSE

Written in 1904, L'Isle Joyeuse exemplifies Debussy's musical philosophy: that music should be made up of colors and rhythms, with the purpose of conveying sensations and emotions through evocative sounds. Debussy accomplished this by blending conventional tonality with an expanded harmonic vocabulary, using chromaticism, chords with added tones, and ambiguous harmonic structure, together with interesting rhythmic patterns. L'Isle Joyeuse is said to have been inspired either by an Antoine Watteau painting, or Debussy's love affair with Emma Bardac, or both. Its imaginative construction consists of motifs that reoccur unpredictably and in different contexts. Sections with different moods are pieced together with abrupt transitions, forming less of a structural unity than an unfolding expression of joy. L'Isle Joyeuse opens with an atonal and chromatic improvisatory cadenza, characterized by trills and rapid flourishes. Its main theme is quirky, characterized by grace notes, dotted rhythms and waves of 16th notes in groups of 3 and 6. The lovely lyrical contrasting theme is more conventionally set in A Major, but with the melody in triple meter placed against quintuplets in the bass. The climax is an ecstatic outburst of the lyrical second theme. Ingeniously, flourishes taken from the improvisatory introduction lead to the final cadence, which ends on the lowest note on the keyboard in a vehemently triumphal fashion.

CASCADES & CLOCHES, OPUS 41, NO. 6

Ernst (Ernő) Von Dohnányi studied piano and composition in Budapest alongside Bartók. After teaching at the Berlin Hochschule from 1905-1915 at the invitation of Joseph Joachim, he taught in Budapest, directed the Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra and the Academy of Music and organized over 100 concerts a year. He also concertized extensively as a pianist. Political disfavor resulted in his departure from Hungary, and he eventually resettled in Tallahassee, Florida, where he taught at Florida State University. Some of his famous pupils were Annie Fischer, Bálint Vászonyi, Géza Ánda, Edward Kilenyi, Georges Cziffra and Sir Georg Solti. Dohnányi's compositional style was solidly rooted in the European tradition, and influenced by both Brahms and Liszt. His music is both romantic and virtuosic. The Six Pieces, Opus 41, date from 1945. Each has a unique character and adventurous harmonic language within a conservative underpinning. Cascades, Opus 41, No. 4, consists of a constant wash of notes, arpeggios, quintuplets and irregular groupings of notes, traveling up and down the keyboard. Cloches, Opus 41, No. 6, is in e flat minor (also the key of the somber and poignant Brahms Intermezzo, Op. 18, #6 - probably not a coincidence). Dohnányi originally wrote five pieces for Opus 41; he added this sixth after the death of his wife. The piece features a recurring low e flat octave in the bass, resounding as a clock striking or bell tolling throughout the piece. The clock goes amiss in the coda, eventually stopping dead in its tracks, perhaps a programmatic association. Both emotional and heroic, the piece is formed as a series of variations in the right hand over a recurring tenor melody.

BARCAROLLE, OPUS 60, IN F SHARP MAJOR

Chopin composed only one Barcarolle, Opus 60, in F Sharp Major. A barcarolle is an evocation of a boating song, and it contains a rhythm that portrays the rocking motion of a Venetian gondola. Unlike Chopin's miniature waltzes and mazurkas, his Barcarolle has a more extended form, containing virtually no repetition. The piece was written in 1845 and 1846, and was performed by the composer at his final recital in Paris, in 1848. The Barcarolle opens with a brief, questioning introduction before the entry of the subtle, lilting barcarolle rhythm in the bass. Over this rhythm wafts a lyrical, poetic narrative in the treble in double notes, often thirds or sixths. A contrasting middle section in A Major is characterized by unusual harmonic excursions. At the conclusion of the middle section, Chopin sustains the dominant chord with an improvisatory bel canto-like melody that leads us back to a resolution in the home key as the barcarolle figure returns, now in octaves in the bass and in the melody. After a jubilant climax, the piece winds down, with cascading filigree leading to a resounding conclusion. Throughout, Chopin's harmonic language is rich and complex, full of appoggiaturas and intricate counterpoint. The Barcarolle is widely thought of as one of Chopin's greatest works. Its intricacy, beauty, and harmonic complexity represent the culmination of Chopin's compositional technique.

SZÉKELY'S LAMENT, OPUS 11, NO. 2

Zoltán Kodály was a contemporary of Bartók and Dohnányi. He studied the German and Hungarian languages at the University in Budapest, and received a doctorate in linguistics. He is best known for his work concerning music education. As a child he studied violin, sang in a choir and composed music, although he only formally studied composition during his university years. Around the year 1905 he began traveling to remote villages to record folk songs. His interest was likely from the linguistic as well as musical point of view -- he wrote his thesis on "Strophic Construction in Hungarian Folksong." He met Bartók around this time, and the two collaborated in collecting and cataloguing folk songs. They also became friends and supporters of each other's compositions. The Piano Pieces, Opus 11, were written between 1910 and 1918. The pieces include quotations of folk song within a harmonic language that is at once romantic, dissonant, and impressionistic. Székely's Lament, Opus 11, No. 2, has only one "theme", the verse of a folk song, which is set forth at the opening in improvisatory fashion by the right hand over sustained chords in the deep bass. The song repeats in the left hand, accompanied this time by strange and wonderful syncopated chords in the treble. The third and final repetition is grand and emphatic, in octaves in both hands. An improvisatory and dramatic flourish ends the piece.