



WHITE ROCK
CONCERTS

SINCE 1956

2023-2024 SEASON

DIABELLI VARIATIONS

WITH STEWART GOODYEAR, PIANO

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2023

emv:

VANCOUVER CHAMBER CHOIR

HANDEL'S MESSIAH

December 8, 2023 @ 7:30pm
The Orpheum

Vancouver Chamber Choir & Pacific Baroque Orchestra with soprano Sherezade Panthaki, alto Allyson McHardy, tenor Nicholas Scott, and bass Jonathon Adams, conducted by Alexander Wilmann

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BIOGRAPHY - STEWART GOODYEAR



Proclaimed “a phenomenon” by the Los Angeles Times and “one of the best pianists of his generation” by the Philadelphia Inquirer, Stewart Goodyear is an accomplished concert pianist, improviser and composer. Mr. Goodyear has performed with and been commissioned by many of the major orchestras and chamber music organizations around the world. Last year, Orchid Classics released Mr. Goodyear’s recording of “*Callaloo*”, his suite for piano and orchestra, and his piano sonata. His recent commis-

include a Piano Quintet for the Penderecki String Quartet, and a piano work for the Honens Piano Competition. Goodyear’s discography includes the complete sonatas and piano concertos of Beethoven, as well as concertos by Tchaikovsky, Grieg and Rachmaninov, an album of Ravel’s piano works, and an album, entitled “For Glenn Gould”, which combines repertoire from Mr. Gould’s US and Montreal debuts.

His Rachmaninov recording received a Juno nomination for Best Classical Album for Soloist and Large Ensemble Accompaniment. Mr. Goodyear’s recording of his own transcription of Tchaikovsky’s “The Nutcracker (Complete Ballet)”, was chosen by the New York Times as one of the best classical music recordings of 2015. His discography is released on the Marquis Classics, Orchid Classics, Bright Shiny Things and Steinway and Sons labels. His newest recording, Adolphus Hailstork’s Piano Concerto with the Buffalo Philharmonic under JoAnn Falletta, was released in March 2023 on the Naxos label.

BIOGRAPHY (continued)

His composition for solo cello and piano, “The Kapok”, was recorded by Inbal Negev and Mr. Goodyear on Avie Records, and his suite for solo violin, “Solo”, was commissioned and recorded by Miranda Cuskson for the Urlicht Audiovisual label.

Highlights for the 2023-24 season include his performances at Summer for the City (Lincoln Center, NY), Southbank Centre (UK), Schleswig-Holstein Festival, his recital debut at Wigmore Hall, his debut with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and his return with the Milwaukee Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, as well as his Carnegie Hall debut with the Royal Conservatory Orchestra.

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The 20th Christmas Reprise

Saturday, Dec. 23, 2023
Queens Avenue United Church
7:30 pm

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PROGRAMME

Mending Wall

(Canadian premiere)

Stewart Goodyear (1978)

Partita No. 5 in G major, BWV 829

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Praeambulum

Allemande

Corrente

Sarabande

Tempo di Minuetto

Passepied

Gigue

INTERMISSION

Diabelli Variations, Op. 120

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

(33 Veränderungen über einen Walzer von A. Diabelli)

Theme, *Vivace*

Variations:

1. *Alla Marcia maestoso*

2. *Poco allegro*

3. *L'istesso tempo*

4. *Un poco più vivace*

5. *Allegro vivace*

6. *Allegro ma non troppo e serio*

7. *Un poco più allegro*

8. *Poco vivace*

9. *Allegro pesante e risoluto*

10. *Presto*

11. *Allegretto*

12. *Un poco più moto*

13. *Vivace*

14. *Grave e maestoso*

15. *Presto scherzando*

16. *Allegro*

PROGRAMME (continued)

Variations, continued:

17. *Allegro*

18. *Poco moderato*

19. *Presto*

20. *Andante*

21. *Allegro con brio – Meno allegro, Tempo I*

22. *Allegro molto, alla ‘Notte e giorno faticar’ di Mozart*

23. *Allegro assai*

24. *Fughetta (Andante)*

25. *Allegro*

26. *(Piacevole)*

27. *Vivace*

28. *Allegro*

29. *Adagio ma non troppo*

30. *Andante, sempre cantabile*

31. *Largo, molto espressivo*

32. *Fuga. Allegro*

33. *Tempo di Menuetto moderato*

(ma non tirarsi dietro)

OUR NEXT CONCERT



CELLISSIMO!

with Cameron Crozman

Saturday, January 27, 2024

*With the John Avison Orchestra
Leslie Dala, conductor*

PROGRAMME NOTES

Mending Wall - Stewart Goodyear

I have always been inspired by people when I compose a work, becoming constantly inspired as I observe or hang out with them. When I wrote my “*Callaloo*” suite for piano and orchestra, for example, I was taken with crowds of people coming together to celebrate life. The past pandemic was a profound challenge to compose. As the mandate was to separate ourselves to keep each other safe, the quarantine was unbearable even if it was necessary. When I was commissioned to write a work for Wigmore Hall that spoke of the lockdown experience, I was taken with the incessant rhythm of stabilizing a barrier that brings two people together and apart at the same time, collaborating to make sure that this barrier is stable enough to keep them separate. Robert Frost’s poem of coming together through isolation left an indelible imprint as I musically depicted every image that the poet described. Throughout the one-movement symphonic poem, there is a repetition of figures and rhythms that reflect this task of building this wall, the mood moving from drudgery to hypnotic, and then finally with a warmth as Mr. Frost asks the purpose of this wall. I was especially taken with the description of the two people in the poem, one being “all pine” and the other being “apple orchard”.

Notes by Stewart Goodyear

DIABELLI VARIATIONS - Ludwig van Beethoven

“We present here to the world Variations of no ordinary type, but a great and important masterpiece worthy to be ranked with the imperishable creations of the old Classics - such a work as only Beethoven, the greatest living representative of true art - only Beethoven, and no other, can produce.”
- Anton Diabelli

There have been many brilliant essays on this famous set of variations. Most of these articles have adjectives like “mammoth”, “epic”, and “daunting”. If I had not performed the complete Beethoven piano sonatas in a one-day “Sonatathon”, I would probably also have believed that these variations are a monster undertaking.

PROGRAMME NOTES (continued)

Please do not misunderstand me... I am definitely not saying that this set of variations is easy but I also will not say they are difficult. Those two adjectives do not deserve to even be in a close league with this transcendent opus. The pianist goes through the ringer emotionally, intellectually and ultimately spiritually. However, dare I say it, the pianist and the listener must have fun on the journey. It must not seem “epic”, it must not feel “daunting”, it must not relay anything “mammoth”. It must feel like an experience of a lifetime, and not an experience that feels like a lifetime.

Performing the Sonatathon prepared me for Beethoven’s Diabelli Variations. A set of 33 as opposed to the Sonatathon’s set of 32, these Variations ask the pianist to be a fun, self-deprecating, mimicking, and shameless virtuoso as well as a thinking, lyrical lover of all things profound and heavenly. This set is a 45+ minute roller-coaster ride not dissimilar to performing and recording all the sonatas which require all sides of the interpreter.

It was fascinating reading about the history of *Vaterländischer Künstlerverein*, the anthology comprising 83 variations on a theme of Diabelli’s waltz. Anton Diabelli, a Viennese publisher, commissioned many composers to write one variation on his waltz. All the variations by these noted composers of Vienna would be collected and published in a large volume, released to promote Mr. Diabelli’s publishing company. Carl Czerny, it was said, was the first composer asked to write a variation and a large *coda* for the anthology. Other composers, who agreed to write one variation, were Hummel, Schubert and a very young Liszt. Altogether, fifty composers and their variations were in volume two of *Vaterländischer Künstlerverein*, and the first volume would be compiled of 33 variations by a fifty-first composer. We will get to him in a second...

Carl Czerny is famous today for being the father of modern pianism. In discussing his own compositions, Czerny divided his compositions into four groups: studies and exercises, easy pieces for students, brilliant pieces for concerts, and serious music. The variation and *coda* he wrote for Diabelli’s project clearly come from the third group; they are light-hearted, virtuosic, and very entertaining with fingers flying all over the keyboard. The *coda* that closes volume two ends with a customary flourish designed to bring the house down.

PROGRAMME NOTES (continued)

From the beginning of western music, there is this idea that “serious” music and music for “entertainment” should have nothing to do with one another. From the beginning, there have been artists who have tried to eliminate this barrier, whether it be gospel versus rhythm and blues, or folk music versus rock ‘n roll. Ray Charles and Bob Dylan, meet your predecessor Ludwig van Beethoven!

One can hear in his Diabelli Variations Beethoven completely demolishing Czerny’s four boxes of composition. Each variation defies a characterization that is merely a study, only a work of entertainment, or completely serious. If it is a “serious” piece of music, it is because it is seriously funny and seriously irreverent before it ultimately becomes seriously moving. If it is an “entertaining” piece of music, it is because Beethoven brings the listener in with humour, virtuosity and gestures recognizable to the pianistic world of entertainment before he opens up his private soul to him/her. Beethoven’s Diabelli Variations are therefore both a brilliant and profound piece for concerts, bridging the gap of popular versus artistic, virtuosic versus poetic, and earthly versus otherworldly.

What floored Mr. Diabelli in Beethoven’s supreme set of variations was his treatment of the publisher’s waltz. In a waltz that one might consider merely a trifle, Beethoven wrote an opus that brings out the very best in the theme, the piano, and the composer himself.

Notes by Stewart Goodyear

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

White Rock Concerts acknowledges that tonight’s concert is being held on the unceded traditional and ancestral territory of the Semiahmoo First Nation.

We are grateful for their stewardship of the land for thousands of years before us and for the Elders’ teachings that remind us we are all connected.


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 Heidelberg - Speyer/Strasbourg - Breisach - Riquewihr - Freiburg - Basel | June 6-17, 2024
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