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CONCERTS

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JAEDEN IZIK-DZURKO

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2024



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BIOGRAPHY



Winner of the 2024 Leeds International Piano Competition and recipient of the Dame Fanny Waterman Gold Medal, 25-year-old Canadian pianist Jaeden Izik-Dzurko has been celebrated by audiences, critics and composers alike for his communicative power, refined technical command and artistic maturity. A few months before his triumph in Leeds, Jaeden became the first Canadian Grand Prize Laureate in an instrumental edition of the Concours musical international de Montréal (CMIM) in May 2024.

Born and raised in Salmon Arm, British Columbia, Jaeden earned his Bachelor of Music degree at The Juilliard School with Yoheved Kaplinsky and his Master of Music degree at the University of British Columbia with Corey Hamm.

BIOGRAPHY (cont.)

An experienced recitalist, Jaeden has made prominent debuts at the Auditorio Nacional de Música in Madrid, Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts in Illinois, Vancouver Recital Society, Münchner Künstlerhaus, and Salle Cortot. Recent concerto performances include those alongside the Bilbao Orkestra Sinfonikoa, Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, Orquesta Sinfónica de Madrid, Orquesta Sinfónica del Principado de Asturias, Orquesta Sinfónica de Tenerife, Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra, Real Orquesta Sinfónica de Sevilla, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, and the RTVE Symphony Orchestra. His playing has been broadcast on American Public Media's Performance Today, BBC Radio 3's In Tune, BBC4 TV, Catalunya Ràdio, CBC Radio's In Concert, WQXR's Young Artists Showcase, and medici.tv.

Highlights in the 2024/2025 season include performances with the Oviedo Filarmonía, Orquesta Ciudad de Granada, Orquesta Sinfónica de Navarra, and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, and solo recital debuts at the Fundación Juan March in Madrid, Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris, St. George's Bristol, Sociedad Filarmónica de Bilbao and Wigmore Hall. He will tour Korea in Spring 2025 and appear in recitals and with orchestras throughout Europe through the Steinway Prizewinner Concerts Network as the winner of both the CMIM and Leeds. October 2024 marks the release of Jaeden's debut EP by Warner Classics, featuring a selection of his performances from the Leeds Competition. He currently studies with Jacob Leuschner at the Hochschule für Musik Detmold and Benedetto Lupo at the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia.

PROGRAMME

Etudes

G. Ligeti (1923 - 2006)

No. 5, *Arc-en-ciel*

No. 6, *Autumne à Varsovie*

Sonata No. 1 in F# minor, Op. 11

R. Schumann (1810 - 1856)

I. Introduzione: Un poco Adagio - Allegro vivace

II. Aria (A major)

III. Scherzo: Allegrissimo - intermezzo: Lento

IV. Finale: Allegro, un poco maestoso

INTERMISSION

Sonata No. 1 in D minor, Op. 28

S. Rachmaninoff (1873 - 1943)

I. Allegro moderato

II. Lento

III. Allegro molto

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.

PROGRAMME NOTES

Études - György Ligeti

György Ligeti composed a cycle of 18 études for solo piano between 1985 and 2001. They are considered one of the major creative achievements of his last decades, and one of the most significant sets of piano studies of the 20th century, combining virtuoso technical problems with expressive content, following in the line of the études of Frédéric Chopin, Franz Liszt, Claude Debussy, and Alexander Scriabin but addressing new technical ideas as a compendium of the concepts Ligeti had worked out in his other works since the 1950s.

There are 18 études arranged in three books or Livres: six Études in Book 1 (1985), eight in Book 2 (1988–1994), four in Book 3 (1995–2001). Ligeti’s original intention had been to compose only twelve Études, in two books of six each, on the model of the Debussy Études, but the scope of the work grew because he enjoyed writing the pieces so much. Though the four Études of Book 3 form a satisfying conclusion to the cycle, Book 3 is in fact unfinished, in that Ligeti certainly intended to add more, but was unable to do so in his last years, when his productivity was much reduced owing to illness. The Études of Book 3 are generally calmer, simpler and more refined in technique than those of Books 1 and 2.

In *Arc-en-ciel*, the music rises and falls in arcs that seem to evoke a rainbow. This étude is dedicated to Louise Sibourd. *Automne à Varsovie* refers to the Warsaw Autumn, an annual festival of contemporary music. Ligeti referred to this étude as a “*tempo fugue*”. A study in polytempo, it consists of a continuous transformation of the initial descending figure – the “lamento motif” as Ligeti called it – involving overlapping groups of 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, ending up at the bottom of the keyboard. This étude is dedicated to Ligeti’s Polish friends.

Notes from Wikipedia

PROGRAMME NOTES

Sonata No. 1 in F# minor, op. 11 - Robert Schumann

The opening pages of Schumann's Op 11 Sonata are clearly labelled as an *'Introduzione'*, though their fully formed melodic character lends them the aspect of a self-contained entity. Even when the theme of the introduction returns at the centre of the ensuing *Allergro*, its reappearance acts as an interruption to the music's developmental flow, rather than being an integral part of it. It is true that the introduction focuses on the motif of the falling fifth which is to form the *Allergro's* starting point, but its isolation from the main body of the movement is emphasized by its most unusual feature: the gentle melody that unfolds shortly

after its beginning is the theme of the sonata's slow movement. This startlingly original piece of long-range anticipation is by no means a gratuitous gesture: the falling fifth also features prominently in the slow movement. At the end of the introduction Schumann carries out one of his characteristic experiments in piano sonority, the falling fifth emerging *pianissimo* out of a blurred swirl of sound.



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PROGRAMME NOTES

The *Allegro* is dominated by what Schumann called his ‘fandango’ idea. The only significant contrast is provided by a smooth theme in the major that emerges at the end of the exposition, fulfilling the role of a traditional second subject. Even here, though, the falling fifth motif, with its dotted rhythm surviving intact, is absorbed as an accompanimental figure.

Schumann describes the slow movement as an ‘*Aria*’, and it is in fact based on a song he had written as an eighteen-year-old student. When Liszt reviewed the sonata for the Paris Gazette musicale, he singled out the slow movement for special praise, describing it as ‘a song of great passion, expressed with fullness and calm’. The falling fifths that punctuate the melody are not found in the original song, and were clearly added in order to stress the unity of the sonata’s opening pair of movements.

Behind the framework of the third movement lies the notion of a through-composed *scherzo* with two *trios*. The second trio—or ‘*Intermezzo*’ as Schumann calls it—is written very much tongue-in-cheek. It abruptly abandons the agitated, adventurous style of the piece thus far in favour of what seems to be a parody of the old-fashioned school. There is a further surprise in store before the *scherzo* is allowed to return, in the shape of an orchestrally inclined recitative complete with a ‘*Papillon*’ that takes flight on the oboe before being angrily dismissed by the full band.

There are more orchestral sonorities in the finale: *tremolos* deep in the bass register while above them the texture gradually increases in weight, like a *crescendo* over a drum roll; a *staccato* passage near the close, marked *quasi pizzicato*; *tutti* chords punched out at top speed. If it lacks the coherence and dramatic sweep of the opening movement, the music’s élan and inventiveness carry the listener unflinchingly through to its triumphant F sharp major conclusion.

Notes by Misha Donat

PROGRAMME NOTES

Sonata No. 1 in D minor, Op. 28 - Sergei Rachmaninoff

Sergei Rachmaninoff's First Piano Sonata is one of his three "Dresden pieces." Along with the Symphony No.2 in E major and the aborted Maeterlinck opera *Monna Vanna*, it was composed while the composer and his family resided in the German city on the Elbe River. Rachmaninoff spent three winters in Dresden beginning in 1906, a period which was an intensely creative period for him. The city was an ideal place for the composer to work. In a letter, he admitted that he and his family lived as hermits, knowing no one and going nowhere, but he worked profusely. Each summer, though, he returned to his family estate in Ivanovka.

The First Piano Sonata was composed simultaneously with the Symphony No. 2. Originally, Rachmaninoff conceived it as a programme sonata based on the legend of Faust, a legend already treated multiple times by past composers. Indeed, his initial plan of three movements depicting the three main characters—Faust, Gretchen, and Mephistopheles—practically mimics Franz Liszt's *Faust Symphony*. The composer's fascination with the Faust drama dated back to his teenage years when he transcribed Tchaikovsky's *Manfred Symphony* for piano duet and in 1890 sketched his own musical telling of the Byron spin-off of Goethe's tragic play. However, the programmatic element of the sonata was dropped not long after work began. Yet, elements of this original intent may still be detected throughout the work.

Cast in a three-movement form, the sonata embodies the traditional Classical structure with two faster paced movements framing a more docile and lyrical central movement. Rachmaninoff completed the initial form of the sonata in May 1907, but after performing it in Moscow, assented to the opinion of his contemporaries to shorten the work. He removed some one-hundred measures and roughly ten minutes of music before the work achieved the final form in which it is known today. It received its official premiere in Moscow on October 17, 1908 by Konstantin Igumnov. The work's reception, however, was rather cool and posterity has not much improved its standing. Of Rachmaninoff's two sonatas for the piano, it is the least performed and recorded.

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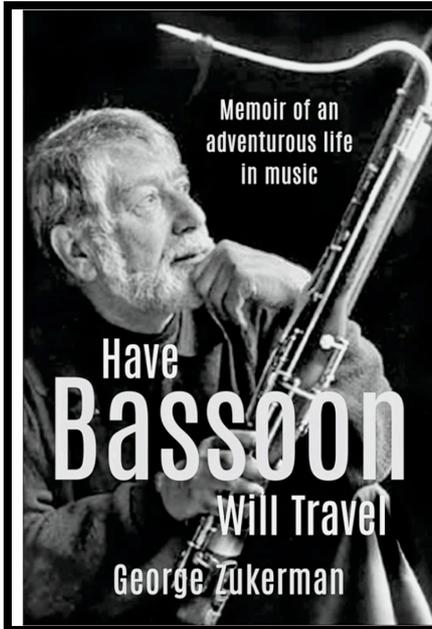
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George's memoir will delight his many admirers and is available locally through Black Bond Books and Book Warehouse.

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