

Lincoln Center presents

2011/2012 Great Performers Season

Sunday Morning, February 26, 2012, at 11:00

Sunday Morning Coffee Concerts

Inon Barnatan, *Piano*

BACH **Partita No. 1 in B-flat major**

Praeludium
Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Menuett I and II
Gigue

SCARLATTI **Four Sonatas**

Sonata in G major, K.13: Presto
Sonata in D major, K.29: Presto
Sonata in A major, K.208: Andante è cantabile
Sonata in A major, K.113: Vivo

CURRIER ***Scarlatti Cadences* (1997)**

MENDELSSOHN **Prelude and Fugue in E minor, Op. 35, No. 1 (1835–36; 1827)**

MENDELSSOHN **Rondo capriccioso in E major, Op. 14 (1830)**

This program is approximately one hour long and will be performed without intermission.

Please join the artist for a cup of coffee following the performance.

BNY Mellon is a Proud Sponsor of Great Performers.

This performance is made possible in part by the Josie Robertson Fund for Lincoln Center.

Yamaha Piano
Walter Reade Theater

*Please make certain your cellular phone,
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Upcoming Sunday Morning Coffee Concerts in the Walter Reade Theater:

Sunday Morning, March 18, at 11:00

Parisii Quartet

IBERT: String Quartet

RAVEL: String Quartet in F major

Sunday Morning, April 1, at 11:00

Andreas Brantelid, Cello

Shai Wosner, Piano

DEBUSSY: Sonata

KODÁLY: Sonata

BRAHMS: Cello Sonata No. 1

Sunday Morning, April 29, at 11:00

Claire Chase, Flute

Jacob Greenberg, Piano

BACH: Sonata in E major

BEETHOVEN: Serenade in D major

REICH: Vermont Counterpoint

BACH (trans. Sciarrino): Toccata and Fugue in D minor

For tickets, call (212) 721-6500 or visit LincolnCenter.org. Call the Lincoln Center Info Request Line at (212) 875-5766 to learn about program cancellations or request a Great Performers brochure.

Visit LCGreatPerformers.org for more information relating to this season's programs.

We would like to remind you that the sound of coughing and rustling paper might distract the performers and your fellow audience members.

In consideration of the performing artists and members of the audience, those who must leave before the end of the performance are asked to do so between pieces, not during the performance. The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not allowed in the building.

Notes on the Program

by Kathryn L. Libin

Partita No. 1 in B-flat major, BWV 825

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Born March 21, 1685, in Eisenach, Germany

Died July 28, 1750, in Leipzig

The achievements of Johann Sebastian Bach have inspired awe with each generation that has “discovered” his music anew, from Mozart’s circle in Vienna in the 1780s to Mendelssohn’s performances of his music at the Gewandhaus in Leipzig, to the many interpretations of the present day. It is worth remembering, however, that in Bach’s own time his celebrity was not based upon the hundreds of choral and instrumental works that we now cherish, but on his legendary virtuosity as a keyboard player. The growth of this virtuosity is not nearly as well documented as it is with other composers, like Mozart and Mendelssohn, who were prodigies known to the public at an early age. Sebastian Bach, born into a family of professional musicians, no doubt received some training from his father; but he was orphaned by age ten, and only seems to have begun keyboard studies when he went to live with his older brother, Johann Christoph Bach, an organist. There is no evidence that he ever received formal training in composition. Instead, he seems to have taught himself his craft by improvising fugues and other counterpoint at the organ, copying out music by other composers, and listening to great performers whenever possible.

Bach’s earliest jobs were organ positions at churches in north Germany, where he accompanied services. He joined the establishment of the duke of Weimar as court organist in 1708; when he joined the court of Prince Leopold of Cöthen in 1717, his responsibilities expanded. Prince Leopold loved music, and as his principal musician Bach played organ and harpsichord in concerts,

and composed a great deal of instrumental music. Bach also had a musical wife, Anna Magdalena, and a growing family for whom he provided a number of didactic keyboard works. By 1725 the most popular harpsichord genre was the partita, which combined dance pieces with “galanteries,” such as the burlesca and capriccio. Bach’s six partitas were completed by 1731, when he published them as the first volume of his monumental *Clavier-Übung*, or “Keyboard Practice.” Each of the partitas begins with a substantial movement, but each presents a different title and style; the Partita in B-flat major opens with a tuneful and elegant *Praeludium*. The B-flat Partita does not include a galanterie, but unfolds in a sequence of dance movements familiar from the suites, brought to an extraordinary level of grace and technical mastery. Momentum builds through the *Allemande* to the joyful triplet rhythms of the *Courante*, but then the poised *Sarabande* and dignified *Menuetts* intervene; insouciant virtuosity returns in the *Gigue* to close the Partita.

Four Sonatas

DOMENICO SCARLATTI

Born October 26, 1685, in Naples

Died July 23, 1757, in Madrid

Domenico Scarlatti was one of the most innovative keyboard writers of his time, a brilliant player and improviser who worked out his ideas at the keyboard. Born in Naples to a musical family—his father, Alessandro, was a famous composer of operas—Scarlatti grew up surrounded by musicians and no doubt received the bulk of his musical training at home. Few eyewitness accounts of Scarlatti’s playing survive, since he never pursued a public career as a virtuoso; however, a visitor to Venice heard him play there in the first decade of the 18th century and thought it was as though “ten hundred devils had been at the instrument; he had never heard such passages of execution and effect

before." Scarlatti held important posts in Rome, including direction of the Vatican's Cappella Giulia, before taking an appointment at the royal chapel in Lisbon. There his prize pupil was the young princess Maria Barbara, whom he followed to Spain when she married Ferdinando, heir to the Spanish throne, in 1729. He remained a member of Maria Barbara's household, taking part in the refined musical entertainments of her court, until his death.

Scarlatti wrote both for the harpsichord and the early Cristofori-type fortepiano, producing well over 500 keyboard sonatas that spanned his career from the Rome period through his time with Queen Maria Barbara, which lasted around 30 years. Quite a few of the earlier sonatas are relatively undemanding and seem to have been written for teaching purposes; later sonatas, however, are strikingly virtuosic and sophisticated. Enclosed within the sonatas' outwardly simple, two-part frameworks are extraordinary novelties. Scarlatti was harmonically adventurous, enjoying remote key relationships and often startling shifts of key, and employing much chromaticism and dissonance. The sonatas are full of virtuosic technical problems to be solved, such as sweeping scales and arpeggios, rapid repetitions of notes, and hand crossings; he also experimented with tone color and sometimes imitated other instruments, especially the guitar.

Scarlatti Cadences (1997)

SEBASTIAN CURRIER

*Born March 16, 1959, in Huntington,
Pennsylvania*

Composer Sebastian Currier received his training at The Juilliard School and Manhattan School of Music, and has received such honors as the Berlin Prize, the Rome Prize, and a Guggenheim Fellowship, as well as winning an Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters,

and the 2007 Grawemeyer Award for his chamber work *Static*. His works have been performed by leading orchestras, including the Berlin Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony, the Gewandhaus Orchestra, and the New York Philharmonic. While he has composed for conventional forces such as the string quartet, Currier has also explored electronic media and video. He taught in the music program at Columbia University from 1999 to 2007.

Currier's short piano work, *Scarlatti Cadences*, was written for pianist Emma Tahmizian and received its premiere (paired with a complementary piano piece, *Brainstorm*) at the Van Cliburn Competition in 2005. Conceived in homage to the keyboard style of Domenico Scarlatti, Currier's piece employs the sonatas as a point of departure. He writes, "the outer sections take Scarlatti-like cadential formulas and expand upon them, creating delicate, sonorous and ephemeral textures, while the middle section emulates the percussive drive of many a Scarlatti sonata." The piece begins and ends with slow, contemplative sustained phrases and elegant fragments of melody in which trill figures play a significant role, both in lending melodic definition and in illuminating the texture with bright spots of color. At the center of the work are swift, propulsive rhythms that are nonetheless dance-like, employing such Scarlattian devices as brilliant repeated notes and rippling scales.

Prelude and Fugue in E minor, Op. 35, No. 1 (1835–36; 1827)

Rondo capriccioso in E major, Op. 14 (1830)

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

*Born February 3, 1809, in Hamburg
Died November 4, 1847, in Leipzig*

The young prodigy Felix Mendelssohn began his composition studies around the age of ten with an intensive immersion in

the counterpoint and chorales of J.S. Bach. His teacher, Carl Friedrich Zelter, had himself been steeped in Bach's music and trained his gifted students, including both Felix and his sister Fanny, to emulate the techniques of the great master. In the early 1820s the two children composed dozens of fugues; but while Fanny was discouraged from proceeding along this ambitious path, Felix expanded his training and became a formidable composer and performer of contrapuntal works. Beginning in 1821, at age 11, Mendelssohn began to write a series of four-part fugues, several of which quoted chorale tunes, for string quartet. The practice of fugal writing would remain an integral aspect of Mendelssohn's work.

Mendelssohn published his Preludes and Fugues, Op. 35, for piano in 1837, but the first fugue of the set, in E minor, actually originated years earlier. In spring 1827 Mendelssohn spent hours sitting at the bedside of a dying friend, August Hanstein, and occupied himself by writing a pair of sharply dissonant fugues in E minor. According to another friend and observer, the fugues reflected Hanstein's illness, with the restless *accelerando* depicting "the progress of the disease as it gradually destroyed the sufferer." After a *fortissimo* climax, the fugue turns to E major to "culminate in the chorale of release." In the final version combining the two fugues, this beautiful hymn over an organ-like "walking" bass line (Mendelssohn's own composition and not a borrowed chorale tune) adds a final note of exaltation before concluding with a quiet, dignified epilogue. In 1835, having decided to publish a homage to Bach's beloved *Well-Tempered Clavier*, Mendelssohn gathered together the E minor and other fugues and paired them with Bachian preludes. Thus the harp-like

arpeggiations and richly embedded melody of the E-minor prelude were meant to evoke Bach, even while engaging in the "three-handed" *étude* style favored by Romantic piano virtuosi.

By all accounts Mendelssohn was not only a great virtuoso, but a pianist of polished elegance and refinement. Of his colleague's piano music Schumann wrote,

Mendelssohn's compositions are so irresistible when played by himself; the fingers are mere messengers and might as well remain concealed; his intention is that the ear alone shall receive and the heart then make its decision. I often think Mozart must have played in this manner.

Mendelssohn produced a substantial body of piano music, including many small, intimate pieces that he published as *Lieder ohne Worte* ("Songs without Words"), but also more large-scale virtuosic works. His Introduction and Rondo capriccioso, Op. 14, is an early virtuosic work whose fast *Presto* section dates from around 1828, but was revised with an added introductory *Andante* section in 1830. The *Andante* and *Presto* present contrasting meters of 4/4 and 6/8, as well as the parallel but contrasting keys of E major and minor. The expressive lyricism of the *Andante* puts it in the same category as Mendelssohn's *Lieder ohne Worte*, with sustained right-hand melodies over flowing accompanimental textures. The *Presto*, however, links directly with the swift, sparkling fairy world of his *Midsummer Night's Dream* music. Its youthful joy and exuberance made the work popular in Mendelssohn's own time, and it has lost none of its freshness.

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Meet the Artist



MARCO BORGREVE

Inon Barnatan

Pianist Inon Barnatan has rapidly gained international recognition for engaging and communicative performances that pair insightful interpretation with impeccable technique. Since moving to the United States in 2006, Mr. Barnatan has made his orchestral debuts with the Cleveland and Philadelphia Orchestras and the San Francisco and Houston Symphonies, and has performed at Carnegie Hall, the 92nd Street Y, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Alice Tully Hall. In 2009 he was awarded a prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant, an honor reflecting the strong impression he has made on the American music scene in such a short period of time.

Mr. Barnatan's 2011–12 season appearances include a U.S. tour with The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and West Coast recitals. He recently completed an eight-city European tour with cellist Alisa Weilerstein, preceded by concerto and chamber performances in Israel. He will also undertake a three-week concerto and recital tour of South Africa next November.

An avid chamber musician, Mr. Barnatan recently completed three seasons as a member of The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's CMS Two program. In 2008 he received the Andrew Wolf Memorial Award in Rockport, awarded every two years to an exceptional chamber music pianist. His rigorous U.S. festival schedule has included a broad range of concerts at Spoleto Festival USA, Aspen Music

Festival, and the Santa Fe, Seattle, and Bridgehampton chamber music festivals.

Mr. Barnatan's debut CD of Schubert piano works was released on Bridge Records in 2006. In 2012 he will release his second solo recording, *Darkness Visible*, featuring wide-ranging but thematically related works: Ravel's *Gaspard de la nuit* and *La valse*, Thomas Adés's *Darknesse Visible*, Debussy's *Suite bergamasque*, and Ronald Stevenson's *Peter Grimes Fantasy*.

Born in Tel Aviv in 1979, Mr. Barnatan started playing the piano at age three and made his orchestral debut at age eleven. In 1997 he moved to London to study at the Royal Academy of Music with Maria Curcio and Christopher Elton. Leon Fleisher has also been an influential teacher and mentor. For more information, please visit inonbarnatan.com.

Lincoln Center's Great Performers

Initiated in 1965, Lincoln Center's Great Performers series offers approximately 100 classical and contemporary music performances annually. One of the largest music presentation series in the world, Great Performers runs from October through June with offerings in Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Walter Reade Theater, Clark Studio Theater, Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse, and other various performance spaces throughout New York City, including the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola and Gerald W. Lynch Theater at John Jay College. In 2005, Great Performers expanded to include presentations in the Rose Theater and The Allen Room at the Time Warner Center at Columbus Circle. The world's outstanding symphony orchestras, vocalists, chamber ensembles, and recitalists are featured in Great Performers, as well as special

repertoire-focused festivals, themed series, and educational activities. During the 1998–99 season, Great Performers added a new dimension to the classical music experience through its New Visions series. In productions specially commissioned by Lincoln Center, New Visions offers innovative stage presentations and groundbreaking collaborations among the world's leading directors, choreographers, and classical performers.

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Inc.

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LCPA) serves three primary roles: presenter of artistic programming, national leader in arts and education and community relations, and manager of the Lincoln

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