



AMELIA ISLAND
CHAMBER MUSIC
FESTIVAL 2023

22ND
SEASON



DANIIL TRIFONOV

Saturday, April 1, 2023

Amelia Plantation Chapel | 36 Bowman Road | Fernandina Beach, FL

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All venues for Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival in-person concerts are handicap accessible.

PROGRAM

April 1, 2023

Children's Album, Op. 39, TH141

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

(1840 - 1893)

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Morning Prayer | 9. The New Doll | 17. German Song |
| 2. Winter Morning | 10. Mazurka | 18. Neapolitan Song |
| 3. Playing Hobby-Horses | 11. Russian Song | 19. Nanny's Story |
| 4. Mama | 12. The Accordion Player | 20. The Sorcerer |
| 5. March of the Wooden Soldiers | 13. Kamarinskaya | 21. Sweet Dreams |
| 6. The Sick Doll | 14. Polka | 22. Lark Song |
| 7. The Doll's Funeral | 15. Italian Song | 23. The Organ-Grinder Sings |
| 8. Waltz | 16. Old French Song | 24. In Church |

Fantasie in C Major, Op.17

ROBERT SCHUMANN

(1810 - 1856)

Durchaus fantastisch und leidenschaftlich vorzutragen; Im Legenden-Ton
Mäßig. Durchaus energisch
Langsam getragen. Durchweg leise zu halten.

INTERMISSION

Fantasia in C Minor, K. 475

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

(1756 - 1791)

Gaspard de la Nuit (Artful Dodger of the Night), M.55

MAURICE RAVEL

(1872 - 1937)

Ondine
Le Gibet
Scarbo

Piano Sonata No. 5, Op. 53

ALEXANDER Scriabin

(1872 - 1915)

YAMAHA Grand piano generously provided by Keyboard Connection
- The Piano Place in Jacksonville

**Program subject to change*

PROGRAM NOTES

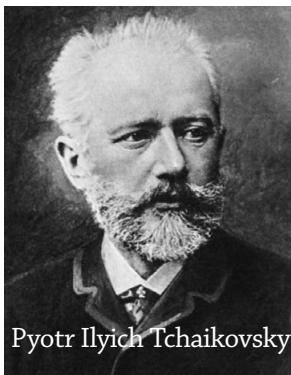
PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY **Children's Album, Op. 39, TH141**

"A while ago I thought that it might not be a bad idea to make a small contribution to the stock of children's musical literature, which is very modest. I want to create a series of little individual pieces just for children, and with an attractive title, like Schumann's."

— Tchaikovsky, in a letter to Nadezhda von Meck, May 1878

Subtitled "24 little pieces à la Schumann," this work bears the imprint of Schumann, whose *Kinderszenen* (Scenes from Childhood) is referenced here and whose piano music Tchaikovsky greatly admired. As the Romantic Period had been in full bloom for decades by 1878, creative titles were favored by many composers, especially for miniatures. Many of these short pieces of both the *Children's Album* and *Kinderszenen* can be found individually in various compilations for piano students.

While emulating Schumann, Tchaikovsky maintains his compositional autonomy, using various folk tunes, such as No. 11, "Russian Song," which is based on the Russian folksong "O My Poor Head," as



well as No. 13, *Kamarinskaya*, a folk song of the same name. Tchaikovsky displays his internationalism in this suite by his familiarity and ease with European folk music and styles.

Tchaikovsky dedicated the *Children's Album* to his nephew, Vladimir Davydov, "Bobik." In a letter to the boy's father on Christmas Eve, 1878, he wrote, "Tell Bobik that the music has been printed with pictures,

that the music was composed by Uncle Petya, and that on it is written *Dedicated to Volodya Davydov*. The silly little fellow will not understand what dedicated means...Even so, Bobik is an inimitably delightful figure when he's playing, and he might look at the notes, and think that a whole symphony is dedicated to him."

ROBERT SCHUMANN **Fantasia in C Major, Op.17**

"I think it is more impassioned than anything I have ever written – a deep lament for you."

— Schumann, in a letter to his future wife, Clara Wieck, in 1836

Robert Schumann wanted desperately to be a pianist. However, his love of words and music perhaps diluted the early investment necessary to be a concert pianist which was made by his wife, Clara, who was more famous than he during their life together. Robert met teenage Clara while studying piano with her father, Friedrich Wieck, who forbade their relationship. Originally titled *Ruines*, the first movement of what would become the *Fantasy* bares the heightened longing of forbidden love.

Following the completion of *Ruines*, Schumann wrote two more movements and intended the work to be used in an effort to erect a monument to Beethoven in his birthplace of Bonn, Germany. It would take years for the monument to be built, and publishers rejected the "Obolen auf Beethovens Monument: Ruinen, Trophaen, Palmen, Grosse Sonate..", but the work was finally published in 1839 as *Fantaisie*. The son of a writer and bookseller, Schumann imbued virtually all his music with

PROGRAM NOTES *(continued)*

literary or poetic meaning. Schumann prefaced the Fantasy with a quote from Friedrich Schlegel:

"Resounding through all the notes
In the earth's colorful dream
There sounds a faint long-drawn note
For the one who listens in secret."

The first movement marked *Durchaus fantastisch und leidenschaftlich vorzutragen* (with fantasy and passion throughout) employs elements of classical sonata form but obviously without the emotional restraint favored by the classicists. In stark contrast, the second movement is an energetic march, alternating with various episodes – a nod to Classical rondo form. The accuracy demanded for this movement is staggering, with large leaps in fast motion. True to the Romantic's penchant for juxtaposition, the sublime third movement seems an intimate love poem, slowly moving through key centers till it returns to the home key of C major.

When Clara reached the age of majority in 1840, the couple married. In addition to birthing seven children, Clara, a composer in her own right, concertized throughout Europe, often premiering

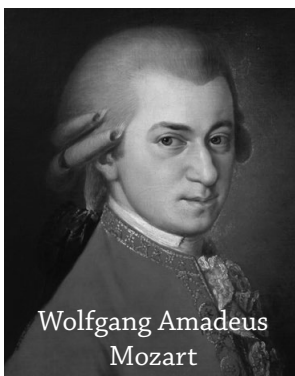
her husband's works, though she didn't perform the Fantasy until ten years after his death. Schumann began experiencing mental illness and was placed in an asylum at his own request in 1854 after a suicide attempt. He died there two years later.



Schumann dedicated the Fantasy to the famous pianist-composer Franz Liszt. In response Liszt wrote to Schumann on June 5, 1839: "The Fantaisie dedicated to me is a work of the highest kind – and I am really proud of the honor you have done me in dedicating to me so grand a composition. I mean, therefore, to work at it and penetrate it through and through, so as to make the utmost possible effect with it." Though Liszt never performed the work, he taught it to his students, which no doubt served to propagate it through generations of pianists.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART **Fantasia in C Minor, K. 475**

The undisputed star of the Classical period, Mozart demonstrated extraordinary dramatic talent as well as musical, writing more than 40 operas in his short life. Composers of his time wrote most of their instrumental music in the absolute forms of the day, i.e., sonatas, symphonies, etc. While Mozart contributed mightily to these forms, his flair for the dramatic reveals itself in much of his music, and certainly



in this Fantasia, written in the dark, expressive key of C Minor.

Written in 1784 when Mozart had been transcribing and studying the works of J.S. Bach as well as his son C.P.E. Bach, the C minor Fantasia's chromaticism and stark contrasts of mood reveal their influence. Mozart published the work along with his *Sonata in C Minor, K. 457* in 1785. It is easy to see why many believe that Mozart

thought of them similarly to Bach's preludes and fugues, an improvisatory-sounding piece followed by one constructed in prescribed form.

Mozart composed the *C Minor Fantasia* for Therese Trattner, one of his first and best piano students whose publisher/bookseller husband was Mozart's friend and landlord at one point. As the Trattners were well connected in Viennese society, Therese helped Mozart to arrange subscription concerts in which he performed his piano concertos, furthering not only his reputation as a composer but also a virtuoso pianist.

The *C Minor Fantasia* has been described as Mozart's improvisation frozen in time. Beginning

with dramatic two-measure phrases in a descending sequence, the adagio opening section settles into a somber mood with accents announcing changes of harmony. Winding his way to a placid D major, Mozart plunges into the frantic allegro section beginning in A minor and continuing the downward sequential movement until it erupts in cascading arpeggios and torrential scales. The pleasant, well-behaved B-flat major section which follows inevitably leads to a new fury of downward motion by fifths. A slower arpeggiated transition returns to a restatement of the opening section which evaporates with a single measure of ascending C melodic minor scales.

MAURICE RAVEL

Gaspard de la Nuit (Artful Dodger of the Night), M.55

"Tell me where M. Gaspard de la Nuit may be found.' 'He is in hell, provided that he isn't somewhere else', comes the reply. 'Ah! I am beginning to understand! What! Gaspard de la Nuit must be...?' the poet continues. 'Ah! Yes... the devil!' his informant responds. 'Thank you, mon brave!...

If Gaspard de la Nuit is in hell, may he roast there. I shall publish his book.' "

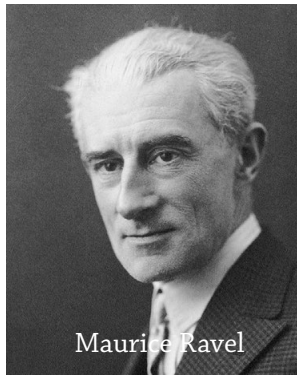
— Aloysius Bertrand, from the introduction of his book of poems, *Gaspard de la Nuit*, 1842

The name *Gaspard* derives from Persian, meaning the one in charge of the royal treasures, therefore Bertrand's "Gaspard of the night" indicates a keeper of darkness, a bursar of evil. Ravel subtitled the work "Three poems for piano after Aloysius Bertrand." The suite's three movements, "Ondine," "Le Gibet," and "Scarbo" are each based on a poem from the collection.

I.

" I thought I heard
A faint harmony that enchants my sleep.
And close to me radiates an identical murmur
Of songs interrupted by a sad and tender voice."

— Ch. Brugnot – *The Two Spirits*



Maurice Ravel

Listen! – Listen! – It is I, it is Ondine who brushes drops of water on the resonant panes of your windows lit by the gloomy rays of the moon; and here in gown of watered silk, the mistress of the chateau gazes from her balcony on the beautiful starry night and the beautiful sleeping lake.

Each wave is a water sprite who swims in the stream, each stream is a footpath that winds towards my palace, and my palace is a fluid structure, at the bottom of the lake, in a triangle of fire, of earth and of air.

Listen! – Listen! – My father whips the croaking water with a branch of a green alder tree, and my sisters caress with their arms of foam the cool islands of

herbs, of water lilies, and of corn flowers, or laugh at the decrepit and bearded willow who fishes at the line.

Her song murmured, she beseeched me to accept her ring on my finger, to be the husband of an Ondine, and to visit her in her palace and be king of the lakes.

And as I was replying to her that I loved a mortal, sullen and spiteful, she wept some tears, uttered a burst of laughter, and vanished in a shower that streamed white down the length of my blue stained-glass windows.

“Ondine” relates the tale of the water nymph Undine, who seduces unsuspecting men, recalling Debussy’s *Sirènes*, the mythological sirens. In Ravel’s telling, Ondine’s song begins with the left hand at a slow tempo while the right provides the shimmering, sinuous movement of water with triads and alternating single notes at breakneck speed marked *pianississimo* – a harbinger of the difficulty any attempting pianist will encounter in this work.

II.

“What do I see stirring around that gibbet?”

— *Faust*

Ah! that which I hear, was it the north wind that screeches in the night, or the hanged one who utters a sigh on the forked gallows?

Was it some cricket who sings lurking in the moss and the sterile ivy, which out of pity covers the floor of the forest?

Was it some fly in chase sounding the horn around those ears deaf to the fanfare of the halloos?

Was it some scarab beetle who gathers in his uneven flight a bloody hair from his bald skull?

Or then, was it some spider who embroiders a half-measure of muslin for a tie on this strangled neck?

It is the bell that tolls from the walls of a city, under the horizon, and the corpse of the hanged one that is reddened by the setting sun.

“Le Gibet,” or gallows, unfolds with the tolling of a distant bell, played by an insistent B-flat octave throughout this funereal movement. Exotic dirges weave through the bell-columns, portraying the ghastly scene of a hanging corpse in the desert’s sunset. Ravel fulfills his ambition to “say with notes what a poet expresses with words.”

III.

He looked under the bed, in the chimney, in the cupboard; – nobody. He could not understand how he got in, or how he escaped.

— Hoffmann – *Nocturnal Tales*

Oh! how often have I heard and seen him, Scarbo, when at midnight the moon glitters in the sky like a silver shield on an azure banner strewn with golden bees.

How often have I heard his laughter buzz in the shadow of my alcove, and his fingernail grate on the silk of the curtains of my bed!

How often have I seen him alight on the floor, pirouette on one foot and roll through the room like the spindle fallen from the wand of a sorceress!

Did I think him vanished then? the dwarf appeared to stretch between the moon and myself like the steeple of a gothic cathedral, a golden bell wobbling on his pointed cap!

But soon his body developed a bluish tint, translucent like the wax of a candle, his face blanched like melting wax – and suddenly his light went out.

The menacing little goblin is unearthed from the depths and mocks with rapid, scratching repeat notes in his signature motive, bouncing, rolling, pouncing, disappearing, and reappearing in flashes of pianistic black magic. After torturing his victim for several minutes, he vanishes into thin air.

“Scarbo” is every bit the terrifying tour de force Ravel intended it to be, both in character and technical challenge. A gifted pianist, composer, and

orchestrator, he claimed that in this movement he wished to create an orchestral transcription for piano as well as a caricature of Romanticism but conceded that “perhaps it [Romanticism] got

the better of me.” Upon completion of the work he noted, “Gaspard has been a devil in coming, but that is only logical since it was he who is the author of the poems.”

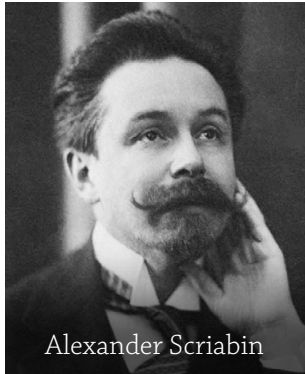
ALEXANDER SCRIABIN **Piano Sonata No. 5, Op. 53**

*I call you to life, O mysterious forces!
Drowned in the obscure depths
Of the creative spirit, timid
Shadows of life, to you I bring audacity!*

— Alexander Scriabin

Extracted from his *Poem of Ecstasy*, Scriabin included this epigraph with his fifth sonata, and his first to be a single movement. He is perhaps best known for his adherence to theosophy, which embraces Buddhist theories of evolution and reincarnation. Combined with his synesthesia, which caused him to “hear” colors, his philosophical leanings brought about musical projects in which color and light are inextricable elements. Astonishingly, all his ten sonatas, including this one, were written in sonata form. Program music does not negate the use of prescribed forms, but one might expect someone so enthralled with mystic philosophies and opposed to “pure” music to reject formal strictures.

The introduction of the fifth sonata thunders up to a languid, expressive theme in which one can hear Scriabin’s penchant for mysticism. Shortly thereafter the structure begins in earnest with a driving, energetic section which propels the sonata throughout. Areas of repose highlight his rich harmonic palette and



Alexander Scriabin

his gift for sublime unresolved tension. Swift chordal leaps and complicated polyrhythms contribute to the monumental technical/mental demands before the presto coda calls for a final push as it races to its conclusion -- leaving the listener wondering where all that energy went.

Finishing this work in only six days in December of 1907, Scriabin wrote: “...It is a big poem for piano, and I deem it to be the best composition I have ever written. I do not know by what miracle I accomplished it...”

Without question, Scriabin’s Sonata No. 5 and Ravel’s *Gaspard de la Nuit* are in the running for the most difficult works for pianists. Imagine performing them back-to-back.

— Lynne Radcliffe, 2023

ABOUT DANIIL TRIFONOV

Grammy Award-winning pianist Daniil Trifonov (dan-EEL TREE-fon-ov) – Musical America’s 2019 Artist of the Year – has established a reputation as a solo artist, champion of the concerto repertoire, chamber and vocal collaborator, and composer. Combining consummate technique with rare sensitivity and depth, his performances are a perpetual source of wonder to audiences and critics alike. With *Transcendental*, the Liszt collection that marked his third title as an exclusive Deutsche Grammophon artist, he won the Grammy Award for Best Instrumental Solo Album of 2018. As *The Times* of London notes, he is “without question the most astounding pianist of our age.”

In the 2021-22 season, Trifonov released *Bach: The Art of Life* on Deutsche Grammophon and embarked on recital tours of the U.S. and Europe, where his program was inspired by the album. He performed Brahms’s First Piano Concerto with both the Dallas Symphony under Fabio Luisi and Philharmonia Zurich under Gianandrea Noseda, as well as playing Mozart’s Ninth “Jeunehomme” Concerto on a European tour with Antonio Pappano and Rome’s Orchestra dell’Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia. Trifonov also performed all five of Beethoven’s Piano Concertos in various combinations with eight different orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic and Toronto Symphony. Finally, he gave the world premiere performances of Mason Bates’s new Piano Concerto, composed for him during the pandemic, with ensembles including the co-commissioning Philadelphia Orchestra and San Francisco Symphony.

In recent seasons Trifonov served as Artist-in-Residence of the New York Philharmonic—a residency that included the New York premiere of his own Piano Quintet—and curated and performed a seven-concert, season-long Carnegie Hall “Perspectives” series, crowned by a performance of his own Piano



Concerto. He has played solo recitals around the world since his Carnegie Hall debut in 2012-13, and his Deutsche Grammophon discography includes a live recording of his Carnegie recital debut; *Chopin Evocations*; *Silver Age*, for which he received Opus Klassik’s 2021 Instrumentalist of the Year/Piano award; and three volumes of Rachmaninov works with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Yannick Nézet-Séguin, of which one received a 2021 Grammy nomination and another won BBC Music’s 2019 Concerto Recording of the Year. In 2016 he was named Gramophone’s Artist of the Year and in 2021 he was made a “Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres” by the French government.

During the 2010-11 season, Trifonov won medals at three of the music world’s most prestigious competitions: Third Prize in Warsaw’s Chopin Competition, First Prize in Tel Aviv’s Rubinstein Competition, and both First Prize and Grand Prix in Moscow’s Tchaikovsky Competition. He began his musical training at the age of five, attended Moscow’s Gnessin School of Music, and continued his piano studies with Sergei Babayan at the Cleveland Institute of Music.

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If you have a love of music and an interest in exploring the arts, culture and community of Amelia Island, you will want to be a part of this dynamic group of young adults between the ages of 21 and 50.

Join for FREE. More details at <https://ameliachambermusic.org/young-patrons/>

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The Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival is a volunteer-driven organization with a small staff. The Festival would not exist without the skills, hard work and dedication of many volunteers. This is why we need your help.

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Without you the AICMF could not exist.*

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Saturday, April 15, 2023

Meet the Artist - Julie Coucheron

7:30 pm | Story & Song Bookstore Bistro

Sunday, April 16, 2023

Beer & G-Strings – Oslo-e-Mio!

5:00 pm | Sadler Ranch

Friday, April 28, 2023

Harlem String Quartet

5:30 pm | St. Peter's Episcopal Church

Saturday, May 13, 2023

Lisa Kelly & JB Scott Jazz Sextet

1:00 pm | Fernandina Beach Municipal Airport

Saturday, June 3, 2023

Christopher Rex Spring Institute Final Concert

5:00 pm | St. Peter's Episcopal Church



**Times and venues are subject to change. For tickets and more information please visit www.aicmf.org*