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PREVIEW  
NOTES

**Garrick Ohlsson, piano**  
**Thursday, April 12 – 8:00 PM**  
*Perelman Theater*

**Background**

Since his triumph at the 1970 Chopin International Piano Competition, Garrick Ohlsson has established himself as a musician of magisterial interpretive and technical prowess. Renowned for interpretations that blend the gossamer and the athletic, Ohlsson possesses the rare ability “to segue between a light, fleet-fingered touch and meaty, powerful torrents of sound” (*New York Times*) – qualities that will serve him well as he undertakes a special all-Liszt recital in honor of the composer’s 200<sup>th</sup> birthday year.

**All-Liszt Program**

**Franz Liszt**

*Born: October 22, 1811 in Raiding, Hungary*

*Died: July 31, 1886 in Bayreuth, Germany*

**Fantasia and Fugue in G Minor, BWV 542**

*Composed: c. 1872*

*Last PCMS performance: PCMS premiere*

*Duration: 11 minutes*

The work begins with the somber *Fantasie*, a piece whose greatness in the Bach original for organ could hardly be surpassed. But Liszt manages to harness its profound and unsettling character, miraculously making it sound like Bach while suggesting his own unique voice.

**Sonata in B Minor**

*Composed: 1852-53*

*Last PCMS performance: Arnaldo Cohen in 2011*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

The only work that Liszt wrote in absolute sonata form was composed shortly after the Princess Carolyn Sayn-Wittgenstein, with whom the composer lived, convinced him to stop touring as a pianist and concentrate on composition. Alfred Brendel, among others, links the sonata to *Faust*.

***Les jeux d'eaux à la Villa d'Este***

*Composed: 1867-77*

*Last PCMS performance: Russell Sherman in 2003*

*Duration: 8 minutes*

Impressionism is clearly in evidence in *Les jeux d'eaux à la Villa d'Este* (*The Fountains of the Villa d'Este*), the most popular piece from Liszt’s third *Années de Pèlerinage* set and the brightest and most picturesque creation in the entire trilogy. One can see cascading droplets and streams of water

falling, spraying and splashing in the sunlight. The work also has its share of pianistic challenges, not least of which are the demands for coloristic effects and tonal subtlety.

***Feux follets***

*Composed: 1851*

*Last PCMS performance: 1851*

*Duration: 5 minutes*

The fifth of Liszt’s Transcendental Études, “*Feux Follets*” (Will-o’-the-wisps), is a delicate, fleet piece of playful, wayward character that tests the performer’s technique not just in terms of speed, but in dynamics and nuances of coloration.

***Les funérailles***

*Composed: 1849*

*Last PCMS performance: PCMS premiere*

*Duration: 11 minutes*

Finely crafted and deeply expressive, the seventh of the 10 *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* corresponds most notably with the death of Chopin. The powerful effect of this bleak, despairing work, with its simulated trumpet calls and tumultuous octave passages, is beyond question.

***Mephisto Waltz No. 1***

*Composed: 1859-62*

*Last PCMS performance: Dubravka Tomsic in 2000*

*Duration: 12 minutes*

The first Mephisto Waltz is actually the second of Two Episodes from Lenau’s *Faust* entitled “The Dance at the Village Inn.” It is by far the best known of the four waltzes and is invariably the piece that comes to peoples’ minds upon hearing the title “Mephisto Waltz.”