



**PCMS**  
CONCERTS.ORG

**PREVIEW  
NOTES**

**Emanuel Ax, piano**

**Wednesday, November 17 • 8:00 PM • Perelman Theater**

### **Background**

Emanuel Ax was born in Ukraine and moved to the United States at the age of 12, when he began studies at the Juillard School with Mieczyslaw Munz. He won the Avery Fisher Prize in 1979 and has gone on to a distinguished career as a soloist. He performs regularly with artists such as Yo-Yo Ma and has garnered great acclaim for his interpretations of the Romantics and his recordings of Haydn's piano sonatas, among many others.

### **Program**

#### **Four Impromptus, D. 935**

**Franz Schubert**

*Born: January 31, 1797 in Vienna, Austria*

*Died: November 19, 1828 in Vienna, Austria*

*Composed: 1827*

*Last PCMS performance: Jeremy Denk in 2000*

*Duration: 34 minutes*

Schumann thought that Schubert may have had something bigger in mind when he composed these impromptus, suggesting that the key sequence of the four pieces formed a sonata in all but name. Whatever Schubert's intentions may have been, the urgent, driving rhythms and decorative melodic style align these pieces with the first popular examples of the Impromptu genre, written in Hungary during the 1820s.

#### **Sonata in A Major, D. 664**

**Franz Schubert**

*Composed: 1819*

*Last PCMS performance: PCMS premiere*

*Duration: 21 minutes*

Composed in just three movements, this relatively early sonata features a leisurely and melodious opening movement that pays rhythmic homage to Beethoven's 7<sup>th</sup> symphony.

#### **Sonata in B-flat Major, D. 960**

**Franz Schubert**

*Composed: 1828*

*Last PCMS performance: Claude Frank in 2009*

*Duration: 38 minutes*

Schubert died less than two months after premiering this, his last sonata, and it is the one in which he explores human mortality most deeply. Alfred Brendel describes its journey as leading through "romantic regions of wonderment, terror and awe."