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PREVIEW
NOTES

Robert Levin, piano

Thursday, March 17 • 8:00 PM — *American Philosophical Society*

Background

Pianist Robert Levin is one of America's leading keyboard players and a prominent musicologist and Mozart scholar. He studied piano with Louis Martin and composition with Stefan Wolpe and Leon Kirchner and, while still a teenager, worked with the legendary teacher Nadia Boulanger in Paris. He later studied at Harvard University and, upon graduation, joined the faculty of the Curtis Institute as head of the theory department. He now occupies the chair of Dwight P. Robinson, Jr. Professor of the Humanities at Harvard University.

All-Mozart Program & Discussion

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Born: Jan. 27, 1756 in Salzburg, Austria

Died: Dec. 5, 1791 in Vienna, Austria

Prelude and Fugue in C Major, K. 394

Composed: 1782

Last PCMS performance: PCMS premiere

Duration: 10 minutes

Mozart closely studied the fugues of the Bach family—not just those of Johann Sebastian but also those of his sons. He composed this piece for his wife, who had fallen in love with the fugues of Bach and Handel.

"Adagio variée" K3 Anh. 206a = K6 Anh. A 65

Composed: 1772

Last PCMS performance: PCMS premiere

Duration: 5 minutes

Though its authorship has been disputed, Levin has said that he sees nothing to rule out this "lyrical, agitated, virtuosic, and ecstatic" adagio as an authentic Mozart work.

Suite "In the style of Handel," K.399

Composed: 1782

Last PCMS performance: Charles Rosen in 1998

Duration: 11 minutes

This lesser-known work is modeled on the Partita form. Only partially completed, it consists of just three movements. Levin completed the Sarabande, one of four additional movements Mozart would have added.

Sonata in F Major, K.533/494

Composed: 1788

Last PCMS performance: Jeremy Denk in 2009

Duration: 23 minutes

Considered Mozart's most contrapuntal keyboard work, the Allegro has a very sparse texture and Mozart's use of dissonance is freer than in many of his other pieces. Occasionally, he seems to be writing chamber music for one instrument—exchanging material between the hands and creating a dialogue much as we might find in a string quartet

Sonata in D Major, K. 576

Composed: 1789

Last PCMS performance: PCMS premiere

Duration: 15 minutes

This, Mozart's last piano sonata, is said by some to be the most technically difficult of his 18 sonatas. It is sometimes called "Trumpet" or "Hunt" because of its horn-call opening.