

# PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

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PREVIEW  
NOTES

**Cynthia Raim, *piano***  
**Friday, October 18 – 7:30 PM**  
*American Philosophical Society*

## **PROGRAM**

### **Six Variations in F Major, Op. 34**

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

*Born: December 16, 1770, in Bonn, Electorate of Cologne*

*Died: March 26, 1827, in Vienna, Austria*

*Composed: 1802*

*Duration: 14 minutes*

The Variations in F Major, Op. 34, were dedicated to Princess Barbara Odescalchi, one of Beethoven's pupils and a very capable pianist. The set was begun in May, 1802, at about the same time Beethoven started work on the Variations in E flat, Op. 35. Both sets of variations were offered to Breitkopf & Härtel in October 1802. Overall, the set is an excellent example of the "improvisatory" side of Beethoven's variation technique. However, this characteristic of the piece does not necessarily indicate that variations are "written-out" improvisations, as opposed to compositionally "worked-out" ideas.

### **Children's Corner**

**Claude Debussy**

*Born: August 22, 1862, in Paris, France*

*Died: March 25, 1918, in Paris, France*

*Composed: 1906*

*Duration: 15 minutes*

Children's Corner was written for Debussy's three-year-old daughter, Claude-Emma (nicknamed "Chou-Chou"), and bears the following dedication: "to my dear Chou-Chou, with the tender apologies of her father for what is to follow." The composer's sentiments were presumably an acknowledgement of the inevitable loss of innocence that comes with growing up, but his words take on a darker, more prophetic, hue in hindsight -- Claude-Emma died from diphtheria only a year after Debussy's own death from cancer in 1918.

### **Seven Fantasies, Op. 116**

**Johannes Brahms**

*Born: May 7, 1833, in Hamburg, Germany*

*Died: April 3, 1897, in Vienna, Austria*

*Composed: 1892*

*Duration: 22 minutes*

The Fantasias, Op. 116, do not require the technical facility necessary to perform many of Brahms' earlier works, but an incisive musicality is paramount for a proper understanding of these musical miniatures. Composed mostly in the summer of 1892, the pieces were published that year by Simrock in Berlin. Nos. 1-3 were first performed at a concert of January 30, 1893; No. 7 received its premiere on February 18 of the same year. Contrary to his usual practice, Brahms gave the set a descriptive rather than a generic title.

### **Carnaval, Op. 9**

**Robert Schumann**

*Born: June 8, 1810, in Zwickau, Kingdom of Saxony*

*Died: July 29, 1856, in Bonn, Rhine Province, Prussia*

*Composed: 1833-1835*

*Duration: 28 minutes*

Though completed just eight years after the death of Beethoven, the 20 piano pieces of Robert Schumann's Carnaval (1833-1835) occupy a musical realm which seems far removed from older master's world. Carnaval's subtitle, "Scènes mignonnes sur quatre notes," is a reference to the work's arcane, symbolic pitch structure. Carnaval showcases virtually all of the young Schumann's personal and musical characteristics in one form or another; a number of the pieces are musical portraits of the composer's friends and important contemporaries.