

PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

a life more beautiful

PREVIEW
NOTES

Richard Goode, *piano*
Friday, March 27 – 7:30 PM
Perelman Theater, Kimmel Center

PROGRAM (Selection of Program Notes)

Sonata in D Major, Op. 28, Pastoral

Ludwig van Beethoven

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

Died: March 26, 1827, in Vienna, Austria

Composed: 1816

Duration: 20 minutes

Beethoven's Sonata No. 28 is a generally subdued work, like its immediate predecessor. Unlike that piece, however, it foreshadows the styles and trends of the future and, though sometimes overlooked, deserves the attention of pianists and listeners. According to Schindler, who was not always a reliable source, Beethoven described the first movement of this sonata as containing "impressions and reveries." The latter word appears to fit the generally dreamy and peaceful mood of this movement.

Sonata in E Minor, Op. 90

Ludwig van Beethoven

Composed: 1814

Duration: 13 minutes

The Piano Sonata No. 27 in E minor, Op. 90 (1814) is one of Beethoven's shorter sonatas, but its relatively modest proportions belie an emotional complexity that looks forward to his imminent valedictory works in the genre. By this time Beethoven had begun to provide tempo indications in German rather than Italian, perhaps acknowledging that his music had come to represent an especially personal, Romantic form of expression. The composer had for a time considered titling this work "Struggle Between Head and Heart" or "Conversation with the Beloved," the latter alluding to a love affair between Count Moritz Lichnowsky, the sonata's dedicatee, and an opera singer he later married.

Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 81a, Les Adieux

Ludwig van Beethoven

Composed: 1809-1810

Duration: 17 minutes

It is known that on May 21, 1809, Beethoven inscribed the words "On the departure of His Majesty the revered Archduke Rudolph" (originally in French) at the head of the score of his latest project, Op. 81a; but the first published edition of the sonata (1811) goes a step further, assigning to the sonata's three movements the titles "les adieux," "l'absence," "et le retour" (the farewell, the absence, and the return), respectively. According to some, this assignment of a movement-by-movement program was at Beethoven's express directions; but other sources maintain that Beethoven was absolutely beside himself with fury that his publisher took such a liberty with his music. Whatever the case may be, there can be no doubt that *Les Adieux* is real and touching evidence of one friend's care for another, and it comes as no real surprise that the piece is far better known for its titles than for its superb music.

Sonata in C Minor, Op. 111

Ludwig van Beethoven

Composed: 1821-1822

Duration: 26 Minutes

Without doubt, this is one of the greatest piano sonatas ever written. While there are quite a few of Beethoven's own that are more popular, perhaps only one or two of them rival this one in sheer profundity. This sonata's stormy first movement and its ensuing lengthy Arietta, which makes up the theme and variations second panel, take the listener into soundworlds previously unexplored by other composers, making this work one of the most influential musical creations ever. Not only did it help shape the course of piano music, it influenced the orchestral compositions of Franck, Wagner, Mahler, and many others.