

PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

a life more beautiful

PREVIEW
NOTES

Richard Goode, *piano*

Tuesday, November 2 – 7:30 PM

Perelman Theater, Kimmel Center

PROGRAM (selection of notes)

Moments Musicaux, D. 780 (Sel.)

Franz Schubert

Born: January 31, 1797, Himmelfortgrund, Vienna, Austria

Died: November 19, 1828, Vienna, Austria

Composed: 1823-1828

Duration: 28 minutes

The title Six Moments musicaux (D. 780) was not Schubert's own and is perhaps inappropriate. One might reasonably conclude that these are not really "moments" of music at all, as some of the six pieces last more than five or six minutes. When considering that the original publisher's title was the horrible grammatical calamity *Momens musicaux*, the idea that Schubert might have come up with or even approved the title becomes wholly unbelievable. However, by July 1828, when the 6 Moments musicaux were published, Schubert was in no position to argue such matters -- not only was he absolutely destitute, he was also fighting a losing battle for his very life. The Moments musicaux were composed during 1827 and 1828, the third and last pieces, which were written during 1823 and 1824, excepted. Each is composed in a sectional form and many are dances of some kind. No. 1 in C major is a minuet in the absolute abstract, meaning that, just as with a Chopin waltz, the music transcends all human footwork. The trio section rolls forward on wheels of seamless triplets

Sonata in A Minor, D. 845

Franz Schubert

Composed: 1825

Duration: 35 minutes

Only three of Franz Schubert's completed piano sonatas were published during his lifetime: the G major work of 1826 (D. 894) and the two sonatas composed during the spring and summer of 1825, D. 850 in D major and the Piano Sonata in A minor, D. 845, sometimes called No. 16. The A minor Sonata was the first of the three to pass through a printing press, in early 1826, and the effect of its publication was quick and pronounced. Through the mid-1820s, Schubert had been

known almost exclusively as a composer of lieder since those were by and large the only pieces of his that publishers cared to purchase. With the release of the A minor Piano Sonata, D. 845 Schubert was suddenly the darling of many critics, and some of his fellow musicians began to think of casting him in the unenviable role of Beethoven's successor. The Piano Sonata in A minor, D. 845 stands as far from the sonatas composed during Schubert's teenage years as one might imagine. Something of the terse, granite-faced quality of the previous A minor Sonata (D. 784 of 1823) is present in the opening movement, Moderato, of D. 845, but now there is also a hint of the starry-eyed otherworldliness -- an absolute disdain for reality -- that mark the final sonatas of 1828 as things truly special.

Papillons, Op. 2

Robert Schumann

Born: June 8, 1810, Zwickau, Germany

Died: July 29, 1856, Endenich, Bonn, Germany

Composed: 1829-1831

Duration: 15 minutes

The concept for *Papillons* was apparently suggested to Schumann by Jean Paul Richter's novel *Flegeljahre* (Age of Indiscretion); originally, each of the 12 pieces had a title that made reference to that well-known literary work. The extent of the novelist's influence on Schumann is, of course, difficult to determine. Schumann removed the titles before publication, wanting, as was typical throughout his creative life, to conceal the sources of inspiration. Precisely why the work was ultimately titled *Papillons* (Butterflies) has never been explained; yet the title was obviously Schumann's invention, and the suggestion of airiness and flight is clearly borne out by the music. *Papillons*, in keeping with its origin as music for a fictitious festival or ballroom scene, is a set of dance pieces, many of them waltzes. Even at this early stage in his compositional career -- *Papillons* is only the composer's second published work -- Schumann's craft can hardly be called commonplace.