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PREVIEW
NOTES

Yefim Bronfman, piano

May 10, 2022 @ 7:30pm

Perelman Theater, Kimmel Center

Program:

Sonata in B-flat Major, Op. 22

Ludwig van Beethoven

Born: December 17, 1770 in Bonn, Germany

Died: March 26, 1827 in Vienna, Austria

Composed: 1799-1800

Last PCMS performance: 2020

Duration: 24 minutes

Published by itself and a work of which he was particularly proud, Op. 22 is the only sonata Beethoven completed in 1800—the year in which he introduced his First Symphony. His conception combines big, quasi-orchestral gestures with an outright virtuoso attitude. The boldly articulated sonata form of the *Allegro con brio* first movement makes do without a coda but feels satisfyingly resolved. We encounter Beethoven's proto-Romantic lyrical grace in the *Adagio con molta espressione*. Startling contrasts between the minuet and its trio set the stage for the surprising developments of the amiably flowing finale.

Sonata in F Minor, Op. 57, *Appassionata*

Ludwig van Beethoven

Born: December 17, 1770 in Bonn, Germany

Died: March 26, 1827 in Vienna, Austria

Composed: 1804-06

Last PCMS performance: 2020

Duration: 25 minutes

Both the opening movement of the "Appassionata" Sonata in F minor, Op. 57, composed 1804-05, and its finale are in sonata form, and that tonal opposition is the principal dualism of the work. But Beethoven also plays powerfully with severe contrasts of dynamics, range, and articulation, and he is a master of expressive silences. The central movement is a contemplative theme and increasingly agitated variations. It ends with an enriched reprise of the theme, leading directly into the whirlwind finale, a physically grueling dramatic challenge that raises the violence ante to bank-breaking levels in a furiously accelerated coda.

Nocturne in D-flat Major, Op. 27, No. 2

Frédéric Chopin

Born: February 22, 1810 in Żelazowa Wola, Poland

Died: October 17, 1849 in Paris, France

Composed: 1836

Last PCMS performance: 2010

Duration: 6 minutes

The D-flat Nocturne does not have a middle section, but contrast is built into music. There are basically three strophes, each beginning with the same utterly characteristic single-note melody, which then grows more agitated, more mazurka-like, and fuller in texture. This Nocturne has a coda, extended with a few bars of duet writing for the right hand, which then floats in sixths off the end of the keyboard.

Sonata in B Minor, Op. 58

Frédéric Chopin

Born: February 22, 1810 in Żelazowa Wola, Poland

Died: October 17, 1849 in Paris, France

Composed: 1844

Last PCMS performance: 2017

Duration: 25 minutes

Characteristically in Chopin's music, certain melodic or figural wisps generate material whose kinship crosses sections and movements, and provides a kind of unity that lurks beneath the surface. Almost every passage of fast sixteenth notes here in the first movement can be related to the brief cascade at the very outset. Chopin's *Scherzo* is one of those glistening, feather-light creations that flashes by, interrupted by an introspective central section. The *Largo* begins and ends majestically, and treats the listener to some remarkable harmonic twists and turns along the way. Chopin's finale is a surging movement whose refrain gives a feeling of inexorable power.