

# PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

a life more beautiful

PREVIEW  
NOTES

**Emanuel Ax, piano**

**Wednesday, April 17 – 7:30 PM**

*Perelman Theater, Kimmel Center*

## **PROGRAM**

### **Sonata in C Minor, Op. 13, *Pathétique***

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

*Born: December 16, 1770, Bonn, Germany*

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

*Composed: 1797-1798*

*Duration: 18 minutes*

This was the earliest of Beethoven's piano sonatas to reach warhorse status. The work has three movements: the first is marked Grave-Allegro di molto e con brio; the second, Adagio cantabile; and the finale, Rondo (Allegro). Beethoven opens this composition with a meditative introduction, using this feature for the first time in a sonata. Posing a question, the music seeks resolution, which appears in the exposition proper, when the movement, driven by tremolando octaves in the left hand, quickens, and the theme transforms itself into deeply anxious utterance, introducing, once again, a questing, uncertain mood, possibly indicating a desire to transcend the feeling of uncertainty.

### **Three Pieces, Op. 11**

**Arnold Schoenberg**

*Born: September 13, 1874, Vienna, Austria*

*Died: September 20, 1957, Los Angeles, CA*

*Composed: 1909*

*Duration: 14 minutes*

The Three Piano Pieces were written in an extremely productive creative phase during which Schoenberg also composed the Five Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 16, and "Erwartung," Op. 17. Besides fundamental innovations in the handling of material (mainly in the solution of the form-building hierarchy of tonic thinking), important elements of musical tradition remain.

### **Sonata in A Major, Op. 2, No. 2**

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

*Composed: 1795*

*Duration: 22 minutes*

Beethoven dedicated this sonata to Joseph Haydn, with whom he had studied composition in Vienna. Like the rest of Op. 2, it is a broadly conceived work, spanning four movements and foreshadowing Beethoven's quasi-orchestral treatment of the piano.

### **Three Pieces**

**Arnold Schoenberg**

*Composed: 1894*

*Duration: 7 minutes*

The piano pieces from 1895 clearly show Brahms' influence. This is particularly evident in the last of the three pieces, which, as the longest, occupies the most important place within the triad. While the first two pieces stick to the lyrical tone of their beginning, the three-part "Presto" reveals a diversity of musical expression.

### **Six Little Pieces, Op. 19**

**Arnold Schoenberg**

*Composed: 1911*

*Duration: 5 minutes*

The first five pieces of Op. 19 were composed in a single day, February 19, 1911; the sixth followed on June 17. The musical equivalent of aphorisms, the longest of the set, No. 1, encompasses 18 measures while the shortest, Nos. 2 and 3, are only nine each.

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

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

***Composed: 1804-1805***

***Duration: 24 minutes***

From the writing of his Heiligenstadt Testament in 1802 up to the composition of the "Appassionata" in 1804-1805, Beethoven produced some of his most pivotal works, music that foreshadows and heralds the arrival of what is commonly identified as the "second" period of his creativity. Beethoven, it seemed, had turned inward and begun to produce music only he could fully understand. If he had resigned himself to the futility of his cosmic anger, he also determined to thrust his immense genius in the face of God and Man alike, accepting no limitations upon the magnitude or trajectory of his creativity. It was the Beethoven of these works who unleashed the "Appassionata" Sonata in 1805.