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Michael Arnowitt’s newest program explores the influence of the music of eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Asia on Western classical composition. The concert program features many pieces by great composers of the past, including Mozart’s lively Rondo alla turca (Turkish march), romantic music by Gustav Mahler based on 8th century Chinese Tang Dynasty poetry, and the French impressionist composer Debussy’s delicate Prélude, influenced by his experience seeing a gamelan group from Java at the 1889 World’s Fair in Paris. The program also presents colorful pieces from recent decades such as Study no. 4 in an Eastern Idiom: Tariga 1 by the English composer Peter Feuchtwanger, which offers an amazingly realistic evocation of the meditative, mesmeric sounds of the Iranian santur, and Fazil Santur's Black Earth, based on a moving traditional song for saz (a Turkish lute) written by Asik Velayat, a blind nomadic balladdeer. Several pieces of music on the program highlight the East’s influence on the West in the area of spirituality, including Alexander Scriabin’s cosmic and mysterious Sonata no. 9 “Black Mass,” music influenced by the composer’s interest in Indo-Tibetan mysticism, plus the beautifully transparent Rain Tree Sketch by Toru Takemitsu of Japan. A running thread of the program is how composers have threaded through the centuries artfully merged Eastern musical and cultural material into the mainstream of the romantic concert piano sound developed in the West. The music of this concert resonates personally with Arnowitt as he is himself part Western and part Oriental. Like the program’s title, Michael Arnowitt is a mixture of East and West.

**Beethoven & Arnowitt VII**

**Sonata no. 27 in E minor, op. 90**  
**Sonata no. 29 in B-flat major ("Hammerklavier"), op. 106**

For many pianists, performing all 32 Beethoven piano sonatas over the course of a single year is the ultimate challenge – and a remarkable musical and spiritual experience for both performer and audience. In 1989 Michael Arnowitt began his novel and unique presentation of the complete Beethoven sonatas, an odyssey that will last him not one year, but twenty-six. His concept is to traverse the 32 sonatas chronologically, matching up his age as he performs the various sonatas with Beethoven’s age as Beethoven composed them. The project began in 1989 with a youthful Arnowitt and Beethoven’s spirited early sonatas. As he has aged, Michael Arnowitt has gradually tackled Beethoven’s middle-period works, then the late, transcendental final sonatas, the last concert not scheduled for performance until the year 2015. In many ways, the series of eight concerts will be a study in the psychology of aging: audiences hear how Beethoven developed as a composer, how Arnowitt develops as a pianist, and the intersection of the two processes.

The current installment in the series, the seventh of eight, features three magnificent sonatas no. 27-29. The Sonata in E minor, opus 90 is deeply satisfying music of the sort Leonard Bernstein was referring to when he spoke of the feeling of “rightness” in Beethoven’s music. The Sonata in A major, opus 101, a favorite with musicians and audiences alike, brings us into the sensitive sound-world and musical textures of Beethoven’s spiritual late-period string quartets. Finally, the entire second half of the program is devoted to Beethoven’s greatest sonata, the “Hammerklavier,” a breakthrough piece where the composer surmounted an extended period of depression and writer’s block which accompanied his now nearly complete deafness. This sonata took Beethoven a full year to finish and upon its completion he wrote, “Finally I know now how to compose.”

**Duet with Jeffrey Chappell**

Pianists Jeffrey Chappell and Michael Arnowitt team up for this exciting duet concert. Featured compositions are Maurice Ravel’s classic Mother Goose Suite and a beautiful, rarely performed piano 4-hands version of the entirety of Johannes Brahms’ Symphony no. 4 in an arrangement believed to be by the composer himself. Written near the end of Brahms’ life, the Fourth Symphony is a masterwork both Chappell and Arnowitt have deeply loved since their childhood, and their joy in performing this eloquent symphony carries over to the audience.

In addition to these two major works, the pianists will each perform complementary solo pieces to allow the audience to hear more clearly the different personalities of the two performers. As a special optional treat, Michael Arnowitt has made two entertaining duet jazz arrangements based on classical music by Ravel and Brahms. Michael Arnowitt, from Vermont, Jeffrey Chappell, from the Washington, D.C. area, have collaborated in both 2-piano and 1-piano duet concerts since the early 1990’s.

**“If Music Be the Food of Love…”**

This new program by Michael Arnowitt is more than a concert – it’s a multi-sensory experience. Arnowitt, joined by musicians, performs pieces of music about food while simultaneously the audience is served the particular food dishes suggested by the music selections’ titles. The food tastes have been professionally catered by chef Susan Olander, or you can use a chef from your own area. The program can consist of a mixture of classical and jazz music or can be a jazz-only evening with a combo. Classical selections have included Henry Purcell’s If Music Be the Food of Love, a 1692 song based on the famous line from Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night, Rossini’s Almaviva, a light romantic piece from his collection Sons of My Old Age, Leonard Bernstein’s Plum Pudding, where the words of the song are literally the lines of a recipe from a French cookbook by Emile Dumont, excerpts from Bach’s Coffee Cantata, a humorous dialogue where a father schemes to cure his daughter of coffee addiction, plus music by Mozart, Rachmaninov, and Ravel. Jazz songs about food on this program have been drawn from tunes performed by Louis Armstrong, Bill Evans, Dizzy Gillespie, Bud Powell, and Charlie Parker, as well as an original by Michael Arnowitt celebrating his favorite restaurant.

The tasting dinner menu has included almond-stuffed dates wrapped with bacon, biscuit with pulled pork and barbeque sauce, snow peas with boursin cheese and a peppers garnish, spicy Thai sea scallop ceviche, melon hearts, éclairs, Swedish apple pastry, and plum pudding tarts. Arnowitt says, “at a standard music concert people primarily use their sense of hearing and secondarily their sight, but in this performance the audience will be simultaneously stimulated by their senses of taste, touch, and smell as they enjoy the food flavors and textures that inspired the composers to write these pieces of music.” This most pleasurable evening is a unique special event creatively combining two of humanity’s greatest loves: music and food.

“If music be the food of love... play on”  
— William Shakespeare, Twelfth Night

**Standard Programs**

For those who prefer a traditional piano recital without a particular theme, here are some excellent choices.

**Program A**  
Brahms - Sonata in E minor, op. 90  
Schumann - Scenes from Childhood  
Chopin - 4 Études, including the “Aeolian Harp” and “Double Thirds”  
J.S. Bach - Partita no. 3 in A minor  
Brahms - Andante moderato, slow movement from Symphony no. 4  
György Ligeti - selected Études  
Olivier Messiaen - The Robin

**Program B**  
Scarlatti - set of 4 miniature sonatas  
Debussy - Ondine & other Preludes from Book 2  
Beethoven - Sonata in A major, op. 101  
William Byrd - A Voluntarie for ladye nevell  
J.S. Bach - “My favorite fugues”  
(Rom the Well-Tempered Clavier)  
Rachmaninov - 3 études-tableaux  
Arthur Lourié - Nocturne

**Program C** (all-Russian program)

Rachmaninov - Liebesleid, Sonata no. 2  
Taneyev - Prelude in G# minor, op. 29  
Stravinsky - Russian Dance from Petrouchka  
Kapustin - 3 jazz-influenced pieces  
Lyadov - The Music Box  
Tchaikovsky - selections from The Seasons  
Lysanov - “Lezhinka”  
Sofia Gubaidulina - from Musical Toys  
Arthur Lourié - selected pieces

**Program D**  
The six keyboard partitas of J.S. Bach
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