

Secret Artists Series

*Chitose
Okashiro
September 18 '98*

Thanks !!

Chitose Okashiro

September 18, 1998

Brendle Recital Hall

8:00 p.m.



Wake Forest University

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Chitose Okashiro

*Wake Forest University expresses its deep appreciation to
Mrs. Marion Secrest and her husband, the late Dr. Willis Secrest,
for generously endowing the Secrest Artists Series.*

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A native of Japan, Chitose Okashiro received early musical education at the renowned Toho Gakuen High School of Music and her bachelor's degree from Toho Gakuen University in Tokyo. Her extensive background in musical ear training places her in a rare strata of aural sensitivity from which she is able to create unique and original musical expressions.

Ms. Okashiro won numerous honors in Japanese competitions, including The Overseas Delegation Prize. While performing at The Aspen Music Festival in 1986, she met her future teacher at The Juilliard School, Herbert Stessin. In 1989 she was the major prize winner at The Japan America Association's Piano Competition in New York.

In 1990 Ms. Okashiro graduated with a master's degree from the Juilliard School, and in 1992 she completed the Professional Studies Program at the Manhattan School of Music under Karl Ulrich Schnabel. She was named The 1993 Pro Piano Artist of The Year, was a major prize winner at The 1993 International Chopin Competition, and won The Young Artists International Competition.

Ms. Okashiro has gained worldwide acclaim for interpretative and expressive skills that show themselves in a very exciting and diverse musical palette of color and inventiveness. She regularly appears in recital and concerto performance throughout Japan and North America and is hailed in the press with comments such as:

"a young artist of genius in the true sense of the word" (*Art of Record, Japan*)

"I'm still innocent enough to sit in open-mouthed awe at something like Chitose Okashiro's consummate technical mastery" (*American Record Guide*)

"unusually colorful and richly varied readings...shade her sound in the manner of a Renoir pastel" (*CD Review of the Week*)

"an appealing colorist" (*New York Times*)

"crystal-clear tonal beauty" (*Friend of Music*)

"a lot of magic is created" (*New York Concert Review*)

"played with Okashiro's surprising technical acumen and tasteful use of rubato, the end is ravishing. She's so incredibly poetic, even in the terrifying fast pieces, that one can't help being bowled over...unreal...terrific" (*In Tune*)

Ms. Okashiro records exclusively for the Pro Piano Records label and is currently at work on her sixth release which features piano transcriptions of Wagner's "Tristan und Isolde," "Tannhauser," and "Der Ring des Nibelungen." She is active not only as a recording and performing pianist but also as a superlative record producer. Her focus as a producer is to recognize a performer's musical personality with care and sensitivity; then to find a way of stimulating experience lends her an introspective opportunity to examine herself, the pianist, through the eyes of her own self, the producer. The resultant metamorphosis enlarges her own pianistic individuality as it becomes stronger and more distinctive. All her various activities nourish themselves from the musical intellect which resides within her and do their part to help her grow as a more complete and well-rounded artist.

Ms. Okashiro has also written a thesis for publication in Japan. The subject of her research and its focus concern *The Aesthetics of Editing*. Within said thesis resides a thorough presentation of the artistic aspects of the world of classical record editing and its intellectual landscape as first utilized, implemented and perhaps founded by Glenn Gould.

Program

Sonata in B-flat Major K. 570

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Allegro

1756-1791

Adagio

Allegretto

Four Preludes from Books I and II

Claude Debussy

Des pas sur la neige (Footsteps in the Snow)

1862-1918

Ce qu'a vu le vent d'Ouest (What the West Wind Saw)

La fille aux cheveux de lin (The Girl with Flaxen Hair)

Feux d'artifice (Fireworks)

Three Etudes

Alexander Scriabin

Op. 8 No. 2 in F-sharp Minor

1875-1915

Op. 8 No. 4 in B Major

Op. 8 No. 12 in D-sharp Minor

« ~ Interval ~ »

Symphonic Etudes Op. 13 and Op. Posth.

Robert Schumann

1810-1856

Theme

Etude I (Var. I)

Etude II (Var. II)

Etude III

Posthumous Variation I

Etude IV (Var. III)

Etude V (Var. IV)

Etude VI (Var. V)

Posthumous Variation III

Etude VII (Var. VI)

Etude VIII (Var. VII)

Posthumous Variation IV

Etude IX

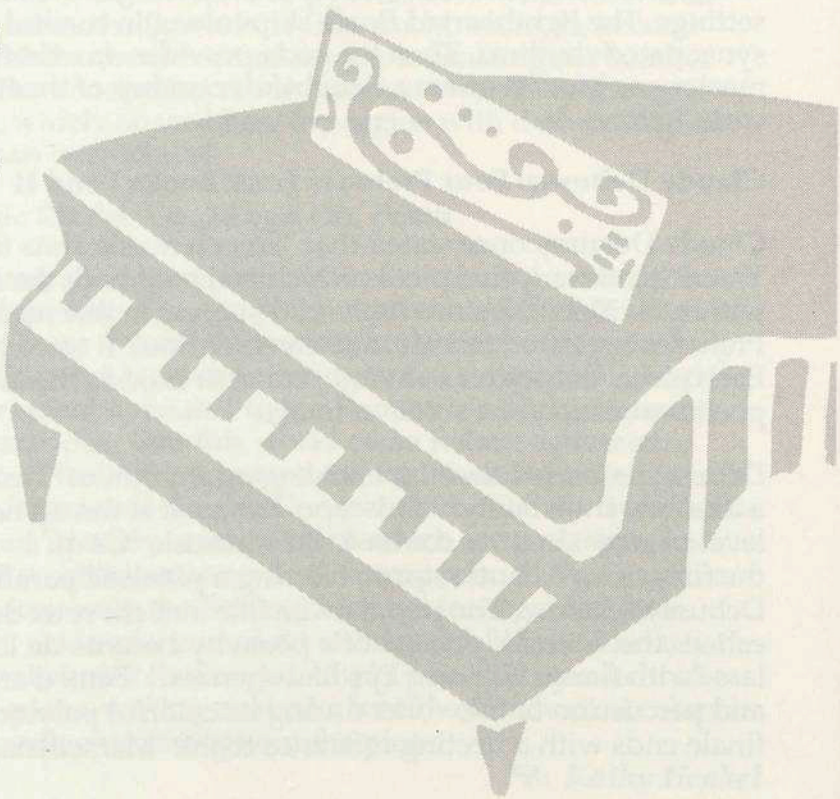
Etude X (Var. VIII)

Etude XI (Var. IX)

Posthumous Variation II

Posthumous Variation V

Finale



Program Notes

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Sonata in B-flat Major K. 570

Though Mozart wrote masterpieces in many genres, the piano remained central to his artistic life. He was only five when he created his first compositions for his favorite instrument. By the time he moved to Vienna twenty years later in 1781, his creative gifts had fully matured. During his first five seasons in the Austrian capital, Mozart was idolized as Vienna's star pianist. In the end, his imagination raced too far beyond his contemporaries, and the fickle public transferred its ephemeral allegiance to more approachable matinée idols. Dating from February of 1789, the piano Sonata in B-flat is a deceptively simple work that only a genius could have written. It opens with a charming theme in 3/4 time, which moves from hand to hand as Mozart interweaves it with new melodies. Some unexpected keys crop up during this refreshing sonata-allegro journey. The second movement sports a stately long-lined subject. Throughout this elegant rondo and its intervening episodes, rich harmonic and contrapuntal passages evoke both operatic and orchestral settings. The lighthearted finale skips along in tuneful spontaneity, spiced by lively syncopated rhythms. Then the coda provides an effortless display of contrapuntal mastery as Mozart offers a delightful roundup of themes and motifs which have come before.

Claude Debussy: Four Preludes from Books I and II

Claude Debussy once stated that "French music aims first of all to give pleasure." The richly descriptive pieces which make up both the *Images* and the *Preludes* bear witness to Debussy's own splendid success in this regard. His first book of Twelve Preludes appeared in 1910, and those of Book II were published three years later. Each piece focuses on a rhythm, color, or mood whose development becomes a poetic evocation of a scene or image.

Debussy intended that the unchanging rhythm of "Des pas sur la neige" conjure up a desolate snowbound landscape. Its musical thread never rises about the dynamic level of *piano*. In utter contrast, the virtuosic "Ce qu'a vu le vent d'Ouest" depicts the fury of an Atlantic storm, offering a pianistic parallel to the final movement of Debussy's *La Mer*. The popular "La fille aux cheveux de lin" takes its title from and echoes the delicate lyricism of a poem by Leconte de Lisle about a beautiful Scottish lass "with flaxen hair and lips like cherries." "Feux d'artifice" captures the sparkle and percussion of fireworks during its colorful polytonal course. This brilliant finale ends with a fleeting reference to the "Marseillaise."

Alexander Scriabin: Three Etudes

As a composer, Scriabin stood in the forefront of rhythmic and harmonic innovators as our century dawned. His early compositions had been short salon pieces (nocturnes, preludes, mazurkas) in imitation of his childhood idol Chopin. In a relatively short time, Scriabin moved from being a late 19th century Romantic to an avant-garde presence on the European musical scene in the days preceding the big splash made by Stravinsky and Schoenberg. His unique style grew out of philosophical notions, and composing became for him a mystical, spiritual act. In his quest to transcend earthly melodies and harmonies, he created daringly unorthodox works. He abandoned key signatures and built chords on unusual intervals. The ambiguity of the tritone invaded his harmonic vocabulary. Tonality became blurred and time suspended, as his personal brand of post-Wagnerian chromatic mysticism pushed his music to the brink of atonal realms. Influenced by Chopin and Liszt, Scriabin completed the twelve etudes of Op. 8 in 1895 when he was 23 years old. Murmuring triplets color the flow of the first study, while the second—declamatory and capricious—abounds with cross-rhythmic challenges. Number four is a rhapsodic euphony. The concluding etude, number twelve, sports a stirring melody over thundering, widely spaced bass arpeggios with demanding left-hand jumps that span more than two octaves.

Robert Schumann: Symphonic Etudes Op. 13 and Op. Posth

Playing the piano may have been a pleasant pastime for the musical amateur, but for a young composer in the Romantic Age, the piano represented the ultimate means of personal expression. From crystalline stratospheric murmurings to deep cavernous tones and a dynamic range from thundering to the softest whisper, the theatrical potential of the instrument appealed to the Romantic artist's obsession with the dramatic and the mysterious. Into this world came Robert Schumann, whose magical transformation of feelings and emotions into sound resulted in one of the most treasured musical legacies of the era. Conceived in 1834, the Symphonic Etudes unfold as a succession of "studies," almost all of which are variations on a theme by Baron von Fricken, a wealthy amateur flutist composer. At the time, the 24-year-old Schumann was in love with the Baron's adopted teenage daughter Ernestine who, like Schumann, was a piano student of Friedrich Wieck. The artistic integrity of these highly original etudes challenged empty pianistic pyrotechnics then fashionable. The brilliant piano-writing evoked a wealth of orchestral colors in bold technical and timbral experiments throughout the piece.

** Kathy Henkel*

SECRET ARTISTS SERIES 1998-1999 SEASON

Hesperion XX (October 25, 1998) - A company of 19 - Consorts of voices, viols, wind instruments, specializing in European (especially Spanish) music before 1800. Featuring the brilliant vocal stylist, Montserrat Figueras.

8:00 PM in Brendle Recital Hall

The Doc Severinsen Big Band (November 20, 1998) - America's great trumpeter-showman, with the band made famous by its appearances on the "Tonight" show. Classics from the Big Band era and virtuoso solos.

8:00 PM in Wait Chapel

Radio Symphony Orchestra of Berlin (February 7, 1999) - conducted by Raphael Frühbeck de Burgos. Vladimir Spivakov plays Tchaikowsky's Violin concerto, plus orchestral works by Prokofiev and Stravinsky ("The Rites of Spring").

3:00 PM in Wait Chapel.

Muir String Quartet with David Shifrin, clarinetist (March 20, 1999) - A return appearance by the Muirs, featuring Brahms' Clarinet Quintet and string quartets by Haydn and Debussy.

8:00 PM in Brendle Recital Hall.

Claire Bloom (April 10, 1999) - The distinguished British stage, screen and television actress in one of her widely acclaimed solo evenings entitled "Portraits of Shakespeare's Women."

8:00 PM in Brendle Recital Hall.



Ushers are members of Alpha Phi Omega, a national service fraternity.

The use of recording devices is not allowed.

Tickets for all Secret Artists Series events are available without charge to all Wake Forest students, faculty and staff. They are sold, individually and by subscription, to the general public. To purchase tickets, call the University Theatre Box Office (758-5295). MasterCard and Visa accepted.

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