Program

Papillons, Op. 2 — Robert Schumann

Sonata No. 2 in A Major, Op. 2, No. 2 — Ludwig Van Beethoven
- Allegro vivace
- Largo appassionato
- Scherzo: Allegretto
- Rondo: Grazioso

About the Composers

Robert Schumann (1810-1856) wrote Papillons in 1831 when he was just 21. These butterflies are not migratory insects, but rather the butterfly-shaped masks worn at a masked ball. There are twelve episodes, or small pieces, in the 16-minute work. This work is an early example of Schumann's fascination with the masked ball that recurs in larger piano pieces such as Carnaval (1834-35) and Faschingsschwank aus Wien (1839).

There is some recent research suggesting that there may be programmatic influences throughout the work related to a novel that Schumann read and admired, Flegeljahre (The Awkward Age), by a German author with the pen name Jean Paul. However, the connection is less established for the first ten episodes versus the last two. The eleventh episode is in the form of a Polonaise as a dedication to the novel's main characters, Walt and Wina, who are Polish lovers. The theme of the Grossvater Tanz (Grandfather's Dance), a traditional German dance played at weddings and important celebrations, enters after a grand introduction and playful opening motif, and keeps popping back periodically.

The twelfth episode begins with the Grossvater Tanz, but receives a new partner - the theme of the opening episode. At just half way through, the episode starts to lose energy, depicting Walt's departure from the ball without Wina. The Grossvater Tanz ends, and a series of shortening melodic fragments from the first episode is juxtaposed against a repeated accented note resembling a clock strike. After a few more chords and a loss of even more volume, a final seven-note chord is played by both hands in the middle range, and for a moment time stands still. Over the next few seconds, each note of the chord is dampened with the successive lifting of each finger until only one note remains. Then, three final pianississimo staccato bass notes signal the end of the evening. Or, was it just a dream all along?

Ludwig Van Beethoven (1770-1827) composed since age 8, but only in 1795 at age 24 did he start publishing his works, which include three piano trios in Opus 1, and the three piano sonatas of Opus 2. There are many pieces that were later catalogued as works without opus from those formative years before he was ready to release his works into the world.

Beethoven's piano sonatas are a huge part of his entire works. Though Haydn and Mozart both wrote plenty of solo piano works, they are better remembered for symphonies, string quartets, operas, and oratorios than solo piano sonatas. Given Beethoven's long incubation period of 16 years between his first composition and his first opus, his first piano sonatas were more highly developed and less imitative than those of other great composers of the time.

Beethoven's early sonatas are mostly in four movements, including this one. It was very unusual for piano writing in the late 18th century, when three-movement sonatas were typically composed with two fast movements on either end, and a slow movement in the middle. Beethoven clearly modeled his sonatas on the form of the typical late Haydn symphony – which had an added playful third movement, typically a scherzo, just before the final fast movement. Always the revolutionary, Beethoven composed his later piano sonatas with sometimes just two or three movements, leaving behind the model that worked for him early on.

The great German pianist, conductor, and composer of the 19th century, Hans von Bülow considered the sonatas in Biblical terms. The Beethoven sonatas are the "The New Testament" of the piano literature, whereas the two volumes of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier are the "The Old Testament". I wonder if any in my audience feel I lingered far too long in the old testament before today?

About the Program and Performing Artist

This recital culminates a series of piano and organ recitals that I've given in the 2018-19 program year, which I plan to continue this fall.

The date I chose for my recital coincides with the feast of Pentecost, which was called Whitsunday (White Sunday) in ancient times. My recital has no religious connection, but I just like keeping alive those old church terms I've learned along the way!

For more information about Broc's concerts:
On the Web: https://brochite.com
On Facebook and Instagram: @BrocKeysPedals

Broc Hite is the Organist and Associate Director of Music at First United Methodist Church of Bella Vista since 2012. He also teaches piano privately and at the Shepherd Music School, based at Central United Methodist Church in Rogers. Prior to moving to Arkansas in 2010, he was the Organist and Music Director at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Fairfield, Connecticut.

He earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Piano Performance from Purchase College in Purchase, New York, studying under German Diez. He earned the Master of Music Degree in Piano Accompanying at The Juilliard School, studying under Margo Garrett and Marshall Williamson, and performance classes with Samuel Sanders and Jonathan Feldman. In conjunction with his other career in business, he achieved the Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Connecticut.

About First United Methodist Church of Bella Vista

The church recently celebrated its 40th anniversary and continues to serve the needs of its members and guests. Our traditional worship is in the sanctuary, which features a Casavant/Temple organ (1971/2008) with 2 manuals and 30 ranks of pipes, and a Steinway Model D piano (2004).
Becker Hall serves as the contemporary worship space on Sunday morning and is used throughout the week to host church and community activities. The hall has a Mason and Hamlin Model BB piano (1993).

More information about FUMCBV~
On the Web: http://lovelearnlead.com
On Facebook: @fumcbv

First United Methodist Church of Bella Vista
20 Boyce Drive, Bella Vista, AR 72715
fumcbv@lovelearnlead.com
www.lovelearnlead.com
facebook.com/fumcbv

First United Methodist Church of Bella Vista

Proudly Presents

A Whitsunday Piano Recital

Broc Hite, Piano

Sunday, June 9, 2019
12:10 pm
In Becker Hall