PIANIST PAUL BERKOWITZ PRESENTS WORKS BY MOZART, POULENC, AND SCHUBERT

Paul Berkowitz opens the Department of Music’s 2021-2022 concert season with a special performance of solo piano works, including a rare collection of pieces by Francis Poulenc.

Santa Barbara, CA (October 8, 2021) — The UC Santa Barbara Department of Music will present Paul Berkowitz, Professor of Piano, in recital on Friday, October 29, 2021 at 7:30 pm in Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall on the UC Santa Barbara campus. The program will open with two rondos by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (D Major, K 485 and A minor, K511) and will feature Francis Poulenc’s 15 Improvisations, a virtually unknown and unheard collection of pieces written between 1932 and 1959. An internationally-renowned interpreter of Schubert, Professor Berkowitz will close the program with Schubert’s Sonata in G Major, D894 (Op. 78), a piece that was included in his recordings for Meridian Records of all the Schubert sonatas and other major piano works. Professor Berkowitz’s recital marks the Department of Music’s first major live, in-person performance since the COVID-19 pandemic shuttered concert halls across the globe in March 2020.

The program will open with two short one-movement rondos by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, his Rondo in D Major, K 485 and Rondo in A minor, K511. “The D-major Rondo K.485 is a quick bright, classical movement with the peculiarity that every appearance of a theme, in every key – expected and unexpected – is the same theme heard at the very beginning of the piece or, occasionally, a variant of it,” remarked Professor Berkowitz. “The A-minor Rondo K.511 is a very different matter: while not long either, it is one of the more profound of Mozart’s works for piano, its main theme of a reflective and melancholy nature in a rare (for Mozart) minor key, and which develops through chromatic counterpoint to an intense and elaborate coda to conclude.”

The rarely heard collection of 15 Improvisations written between 1932 and 1959 by the 20th-Century French composer Francis Poulenc will serve as the focal point of the recital. “These works are virtually unknown and unplayed outside France,” noted Professor Berkowitz. “They are a major personal discovery for me, not dissimilar to when I discovered the sonatas of Schubert when I was a teenager. The collection as a whole, which Poulenc encouraged to be seen as a

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set by his cumulative numbering, was one of the few works for piano he remained happy with in later life, and represents a significant contribution to the literature for piano. In years to come, when asked what I managed to do over the Covid shutdown, my reply will be ‘I learned the Poulenc Improvisations.’"

The program will conclude with Franz Schubert’s Sonata in G Major, D894 (Op. 78), composed in 1826, and the last before his final three, posthumous sonatas of 1828. “The first movement is unusually broad, contemplative, meditative even, marked ‘Molto moderato e cantabile’ (Very moderate and singing),” shared Professor Berkowitz. “There follows nevertheless an Andante slow movement, then a minuet rather than scherzo, with a music-box landler for a Trio, and a bubbling Allegretto rondo to conclude. Although every movement contains a dramatic, stormy section, generally somewhere in the middle, the work as a whole seems a study in all the forms of happiness: serenity in the first movement, warmth in the second, a precious delicacy in the Trio of the third, and a vivacious, playful contentment and delight in the fourth. It feels like a good piece to go out on after the difficult period we’re just coming through now.”

PROGRAM

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
Rondo in D major, K.485 (1786): Allegro
Rondo in A minor, K.511 (1787): Andante

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)
Fifteen Improvisations for piano

10 Improvisations, FP 63 (1932-34)
1st Improvisation in B minor: Presto ritmico
2nd Improvisation in A flat major: Assez animé
3rd Improvisation in B minor: Presto très sec
4th Improvisation in A flat major: Presto con fuoco
5th Improvisation in A minor: Modéré sans lenteur
6th Improvisation in B flat major: A toute vitesse
7th Improvisation in C major: Modéré sans lenteur
8th Improvisation in A minor: Presto
9th Improvisation in D major: Presto possible
10th Improvisation in F major “Éloge des gammes” : Modéré sans trai

2 Improvisations, FP 113 (1941)
11th Improvisation in G minor: Assez animé
12th Improvisation in E flat major “Hommage à Schubert” : Mouvt de Valse

2 Improvisations, FP 170 (1958)
13th Improvisation in A minor: Allegretto commodo
14th Improvisation in D flat major: Allegretto

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Improvisation, FP 176 (1959)
15th Improvisation in C minor “Hommage à Édith Piaf”: Très vite

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
Sonata in G major, D.894 (Op. 78) (1826)
   Molto moderato e cantabile
   Andante
   Menuetto: Allegro moderato
   Allegretto

TICKETS
General ($15); Senior/Military ($13); Non-UCSB students with ID ($13); UCSB students with ID (FREE); Children under 12 (FREE). Tickets are available for purchase at music.ucsb.edu/news/purchase-tickets or by calling (805) 893-2064. Youth and UCSB student tickets may be reserved in advance by contacting the UCSB Associated Students Ticket Office at (805) 893-2064 or ticketoffice@as.ucsb.edu.

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS
The Department of Music is committed to the health and safety of our students, faculty, staff, and community members as we return to live, in-person events. Please review the department’s COVID-19 Health and Safety protocols at music.ucsb.edu/news/covid-19-information prior to attending this in-person event.

MORE INFORMATION
Please visit the event listing (music.ucsb.edu/news/event/2294) on the Department of Music’s website for more information.

ABOUT PAUL BERKOWITZ
Paul Berkowitz has recorded the complete Piano Sonatas of Schubert for Meridian Records to worldwide acclaim. He was described by the London Sunday Times as being "in the royal class of Schubert interpreters" and his CD recordings of the Last Three Schubert Piano Sonatas were included among the same newspaper’s Records of the Year. His recording of Schumann’s Kreisleriana was selected by BBC Radio Record Review as the best of all available recordings. He has also released a series of three CD recordings of Brahms Piano Music. BBC Music Magazine reviewed Vol. II (including tonight’s Op. 119) commenting, "...praise to Meridian, which has in the Canadian pianist Paul Berkowitz an artist who isn’t shy of taking on the kind of repertoire traditionally the preserve of more internationally high-profile artists. Rightly so, for he has a voice, a musicality, a bigness of pianism distinctively his own...his integrity is commanding, his stylistic authority convincing and his refusal merely to play the notes impressive."

Mr. Berkowitz recently recorded the Schubert Impromptus, Moments Musicaux, and other

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repertoire as the final two volumes of his 9-CD cycle of major works for piano by Schubert for Meridian, which he began in 1984. All earlier volumes have been re-issued along with the two new recordings as Schubert Piano Works, in nine volumes.

Mr. Berkowitz, a native of Montreal, Canada, is a graduate of McGill University and of the Curtis Institute, where he studied with Rudolf Serkin. He lived in Britain for 20 years appearing frequently at the Queen Elizabeth and Wigmore Halls and on the BBC, as a soloist with major orchestras in Britain and Canada and at music festivals in Belgium, Denmark, England, Scotland, France, Italy, and Spain. Mr. Berkowitz left the Guildhall School of Music in London, where he had been a professor since 1975, to join the music faculty at the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1993, where he is Professor of Piano and served as Chair of the Department of Music 2007-12. He has been invited to present master classes at major conservatories, universities, and festivals, and his students have won prizes in numerous competitions, including the BBC Young Musician of the Year (Thomas Adès), the International Piano Competition Palma d’Oro in Italy, the Bradshaw and Buono International Competition in New York, and the Los Angeles Liszt Competition and have gone on to have concert and academic careers of their own in Europe, North America and Asia.

ABOUT THE UC SANTA BARBARA DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

From an institution that began life dedicated to training the next generation of music educators, to what is now a multi-faceted department with a fully established research and professional graduate program with degrees in composition, ethnomusicology, musicology, music theory, and performance, the UC Santa Barbara Department of Music has produced many hundreds of graduates who have distinguished themselves both nationally and internationally. Alumni have gone on to teach on faculties of major colleges and universities in the United States and abroad, or in outstanding secondary school positions. Many graduates of the program have published extensively and become widely renowned, prize-winning scholars, while others are award-winning and frequently performed composers writing for television and film. Alumni are also establishing fine reputations as conductors of orchestras, opera, and choruses. Graduates of the instrumental programs have gone on to solo and orchestral careers with leading orchestras, and graduates of the voice program can be heard in opera companies around the world.

With over 150 events presented annually, the UC Santa Barbara Department of Music offers something for every music lover. The department boasts 26 unique performing ensembles, each with a quarterly concert calendar. Chamber music, large ensembles, opera, contemporary groups, world music, and jazz ensembles make up the department’s rich performance calendar, along with lectures, master classes, and presentations from the ethnomusicology, musicology, theory, and composition programs. For a complete listing of performances and lectures for the quarter, please visit the UC Santa Barbara Department of Music website at music.ucsb.edu.

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For additional information, photos, or to request an interview with an artist, please contact Adriane Cleary at adrianecleary@ucsb.edu.

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