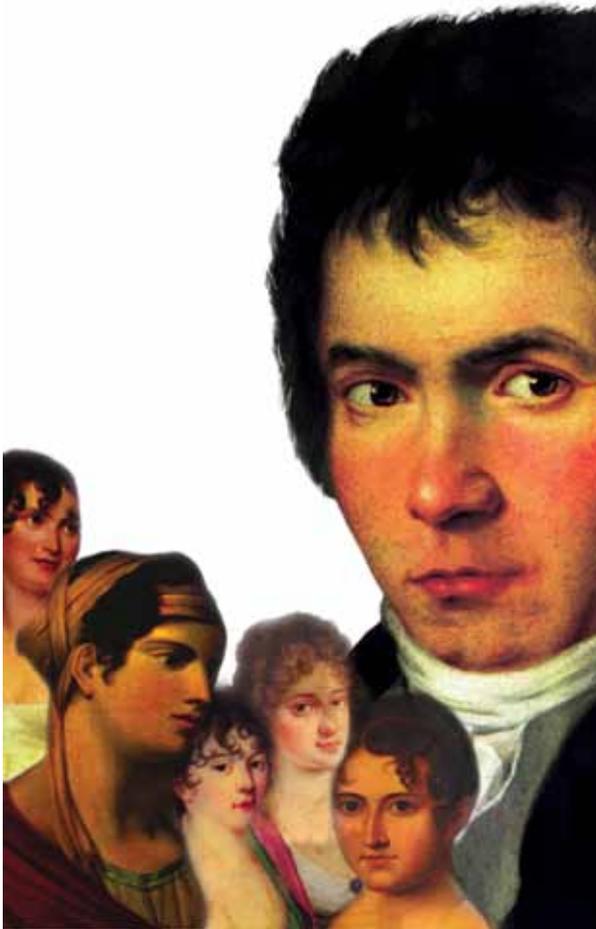


Ensemble *for the* Romantic Century

PRESENTS

Beethoven Love Elegies

Beethoven's search for the perfect wife



The Stables Theatre at Edith Wharton's The Mount
Lenox, Massachusetts
July 16 – August 3

Thanks to

Susan Winokur and Paul Leach
for making this series possible



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Beethoven Love Elegies

Beethoven's search for the perfect wife

The Stables Theatre at Edith Wharton's The Mount
Lenox, Massachusetts
July 16 – August 3, 2014

Written by **Eve Wolf**
Directed by **Donald T. Sanders**
Set and Costumes by **Vanessa James**
Lighting by **Beverly Emmons**

Eve Wolf, Executive Artistic Director
Max Barros, Co-Artistic Director
James Melo, Musicologist
Donald T. Sanders, Director of Theatrical Production

CAST

Kire Tosevski	Ludwig Van Beethoven
Deborah Grausman	Josephine Von Deym, Leonore
Colin Gold	Wegeler, Court Banker Braun
Doria Bramante	Frau Von Bernhard, Giulietta Guicciardi
Johnny Segalla	Ferdinand Ries, Florestan, Carl Czerny
Rachel Lee Priday	violin
Sebastian Bäverstam	cello
Eve Wolf	piano
Chad Sloan	baritone

**The text of Beethoven Love Elegies is constructed entirely
from the words of Ludwig van Beethoven
and his contemporaries.**

Music by Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

ACT I

Fidelio: Overture—recording

“Neue Liebe, neues Leben”, op. 75, no. 2 (New Love, New Life)

“Der Kuss”, op. 128 (The Kiss)

Variations on Mozart’s “Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen”,
op. 66, for cello and piano (A Girl or a Little Wife)

“Seufzer eines Ungeliebten und Gegenliebe”, WoO 118, no. 1
(The Sigh of the Unloved One and Love)

Piano Sonata in C-sharp minor, op. 27, no. 2 (“Moonlight”)

15 MINUTE INTERMISSION

ACT II

“Bußlied”, op. 48, no. 6 (Song of Atonement)

Fidelio: “Gott! Welch’ dunkel hier”—recording
(God! What Darkness Here)

Piano Trio in D major, op. 70, no. 1 (“Ghost”)
-- Allegro vivace e con brio

Piano Trio in D major, op. 70, no. 1 (“Ghost”)
-- Largo assai e espressivo
-- Finale: Allegro

Fidelio: “Komm Hoffnung, lass’ den letzten Stern”—recording
(Come Hope, Let the Last Star)

“An die Hoffnung”, op. 94 (To Hope)

ABOUT ERC

Ensemble for the Romantic Century (ERC), now in its fourteenth season, was founded by pianist Eve Wolf in 2001 to create an engaging and innovative approach to chamber music concerts. Co-directed by Eve Wolf and her fellow-pianist Max Barros, ERC's creative team includes James Melo, musicologist; Donald T. Sanders, director of theatrical production; Vanessa James, production designer; and Beverly Emmons, lighting designer, as well as some of the finest actors and musicians active today.

ERC's theatrical concerts interweave dramatic scripts based on letters, memoirs, diaries, and other literature with music, reinforcing the music's historical context through its connections with history, politics, philosophy, and the other arts to create a compelling new performance experience. ERC has, to date, created 40 original theatrical concerts and has partnered with such institutions as The Jewish Museum of New York; the Archivio Fano at the Teatro La Fenice in Venice, Italy; the Festival de Musique de Chambre Montréal; the Massachusetts International Festival of the Arts (MIFA); the French Institute-Alliance Française (FIAF), New York; the Italian Academy for Advanced Studies at Columbia University; the Italian Cultural Institute of New York; and the City University of New York (CUNY). In 2010, *Seduction, Smoke and Music: The Love Story of Chopin and George Sand*, a theatrical concert written and conceived by ERC, Barrett Wissman, and IMG Artists was performed in Italy at The Tuscan Sun Festival with Jeremy Irons as Chopin and Sinéad Cusack as George Sand, and ballet stars Irina Dvoroenko and Maxim Beloserkovsky of the American Ballet Theater.

Since 2007, ERC has been a musicological affiliate in residence at the Barry S. Brook Center for Music Research and Documentation at the CUNY Graduate Center, where ERC has established an annual series of interdisciplinary seminars. ERC's artistic contribution is recognized through professional performance grants from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA).

WHO'S WHO

KIRE TOSEVSKI (Beethoven) is originally from Sydney, Australia, where he studied traditional Stanislavsky and Michael Chekhov acting techniques, before attending the National Institute of Dramatic Art. After moving to New York in 2009 he trained at the Stella Adler Studio, graduating from the Evening Conservatory. Currently he is performing at the ArcLight Theater in Manhattan's Upper West Side, playing the role of Eilert Løvborg in the Ibsen classic *Hedda Gabler* (Treasure House Theatre). The upcoming *Beethoven: Love Elegies* represents his third time collaborating with ERC. He is also a proud member of Theatre East, a NYC-based company that is busy planning its fifth season. Select NYC theatre credits: *When Greenland Melted...* *The Robot Rose* (Nominated for Best Actor & Best Director, Strawberry One-Act Festival 2013), *Dracula: Forever Is A Long Time To Live* (ERC), *The Jungle Book* (Theatre East), *Anna Akhmatova: The Heart Is Not Made Of Stone* (ERC), *That Championship Season*; *Escape From Happiness*; *Some Girls*; (Stella Adler Studio). Select Sydney theatre credits: *Blood Wedding* (Geesian Theatre), *Twelfth Night* (Peninsula Theatre Company) and *Cabaret* (Regals Musical Society). Also a freelance theatre director, his credits include the plays *Eastern Standard*, *La Ronde*, *Jesus Hopped The A-Train* and *Creditors*.

DEBORAH GRAUSMAN (Josephine von Deym, Leonore) is thrilled to be a part of *Beethoven Love Elegies*. Select theater credits include: *The North American Tour of Fiddler on the Roof* (Chava) starring Topol, Harvey Fierstein, and Theodore Bikel, *Off-Broadway: A Stoop on Orchard Street* (Seama), *The Flood* (Prospect Theater Company), *Regional: Master Class* (Sharon) at Shakespeare & Company, *Peter Pan* (Wendy) at Media Theater—Philadelphia Theater Critic Award nomination for Best Leading Actress in a Musical. New York concert appearances: *Raising the Roof—The 50th Anniversary of Fiddler on the Roof* (Town Hall), *An Evening with Alan Menken* (Merkin Hall), *Muse Match* (54 Below), *Showstopper Divas—The Broadway Songbook* (Stage 72). Deborah's voice can be heard in national commercials for McDonald's, Clearasil, Nintendo DS, and American Express. Film credits include: *The Mend* and *Back to Plan A*. Graduate of Duke University and founder of Berkshire Musical Theater Workshop, Deborah has also produced many benefits including *Broadway in the Berkshires* (Shakespeare & Company) and *A Taste of Fall* (C-CAP).

COLIN GOLD (Wegeler, Count Banker Braun) is proud to make his debut with ERC. A recent graduate with Merit of the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts inaugural Masters in Acting program. Selected Cred-

its include *A Christmas Carol* (both Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park & Hartford Stage), *Tartuffe* (Shakespeare & Co.), *Blithe Spirit* & *Dr. Cook's Garden* (Lake Winnepesaukee Playhouse) and the honor of workshopping two world premiere productions with the Theater Royal of Bath for their Spanish Golden Age festival directed by Laurence Boswell. Previously studied at The Hartt School in Connecticut.

DORIA BRAMANTE (Frau von Bernhard, Giulietta Guicciardi) is an award winning actress and singer from the coastal woodlands of New Hampshire. A graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, Doria has had the opportunity to perform professionally with theater companies all over the world. She recently returned from Italy having played Ophelia at Milan's leading avant-garde house, Teatro Franco Parenti. Additionally, she spent two consecutive years sailing the entirety of the Adriatic Sea with tall ship theater vagabonds of the Caravan Stage Company. Other credits include: Miranda in *The Tempest* (Will Geer Theatricum Botanicum, LA), Regan in *King Lear* (Shakespeare Santa Monica with Apollo Dukakis), Emily Webb in *Our Town* (Seacoast Repertory Theater), and just co-starred with Rae Dawn Chong in her TV pilot, *The Celebrant*. Beyond her mission as a theater artist, Doria has produced and directed a documentary on the Bhutanese Refugees, *The Refugees of Shangri La*, which has been featured on NPR and in *Smithsonian Magazine*. She just returned from Nepal this month, having been a guest of the US Embassy and the United Nations in order to screen her film abroad.

JOHNNY SEGALLA (Ferdinand Ries, Florestan, Carl Czerny) Actor, singer, puppeteer, Berkshire County native & 2011 graduate of Russell Sage College. Segalla has performed with Berkshire Theater Group, Barrington Stage Co., Berkshire Playwright's Lab, Shakespeare & Company's Fall Festival of Shakespeare & Sharon Tri-Arts. He recently appeared as Prince Florizel in Kevin G. Coleman's "The Winter's Tale." Memorable roles include: Bottom (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Chip Tolentino (*25th ...Spelling Bee*), Snoopy (*You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*), Sky Masterson (*Guys & Dolls*), Gaston (*Beauty & the Beast*). Since 2013 he has toured New England as an actor/teaching artist with the Grumbling Gryphons Traveling Children's Theater, who are best known for dramatizations of classic world myths, folktales, and "The Ghost Net: an Environmental Musical of the Sea." Segalla's puppet designs have been commissioned for Berkshire School, the Theater Institute at Sage, anti-bully programs and individual entertainment. Segalla also works as a counselor/acting coach for children and adults with special needs, autism, and other spectrum disorders. Check out the Gateways Inn for his occasional vocal performances of jazz standards, show tunes, and contemporary music. "Thanks to all the lovers and dream-

ers who've made this fantastic journey possible.”

RACHEL LEE PRIDAY (Violinist) Acclaimed for her lyricism and compelling stage presence, violinist Rachel Lee Priday has appeared as soloist with leading international orchestras, including the Chicago, Saint Louis, Houston, Seattle, and National Symphonies, the Boston Pops, and the Berlin Staatskapelle. Recent highlights include performances of Paganini's Violin Concerto No. 1 with the Buffalo Philharmonic, as well as extensive interdisciplinary collaborations with Ballet San Jose and conductor George Daugherty. Born in 1988 in Chicago, she made her orchestral debut at the Aspen Music Festival at the age of nine, and performed at the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at the United Nations. Previous solo engagements have included appearances with the Colorado Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, and Aspen Sinfonia at the Aspen Music Festival. Rachel's frequent recital appearances have brought her to such venues as the Mostly Mozart Festival, the Kansas City Harriman-Jewell Discovery Series, Ravinia's "Rising Star" series, the Matinee Musicale series in Cincinnati, and the Dame Myra Hess Memorial series at the Chicago Cultural Center. In Europe, she has performed on the Louvre recital series in Paris, the Verbier Festival, the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Festival, and with the Graz Philharmonic. She has been a featured artist at the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra's "Chamber Music Marathon" and the Moritzburg Festival in Germany. She holds a B.A. in English literature from Harvard University, and a master's degree from New England Conservatory through its joint dual degree program with Harvard College.

SEBASTIAN BÄVERSTAM (Cellist) Praised by *The Strad* for his "...powerfully expressive style," cellist Sebastian Bäverstam is a winner of the 2009 Concert Artists Guild International Competition. His recent performance at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall was noted in *The Strad* for its "consummate instrumental mastery," with critic Dennis Rooney declaring "...the emergence of a mature artist." This remarkable recital led to Mr. Bäverstam's subsequent selection by Musical America as its "New Artist of the Month" for June 2011. A winner of the Boston Symphony Orchestra's Concerto Competition, Mr. Bäverstam performed the Shostakovich Concerto with the BSO at Symphony Hall. In 2007, he was called on to substitute for Lynn Harrell with the Cape Cod Symphony on only six hours notice. He delighted the audience playing Schumann's Cello Concerto and was praised by the Cape Cod Times for his "insightful musicianship and poetic feeling." Other recent concerto performances include the Albany Symphony Orchestra, Symphony of Northwest Arkansas, Boston Landmarks Orchestra University of Chicago Symphony, Boston Civic Symphony, Brockton Symphony Orchestra, Concord Symphony Orchestra and the

Chernikov Symphony Orchestra, among others, and he has toured China, Venezuela and Brazil as soloist with the New England Conservatory Youth Philharmonic Orchestra. Other recent recital highlights are Merkin Concert Hall, St. Vincent College (PA), the Honest Brook Music Festival (Delhi, NY), as well as concerts in New York, Boston, Connecticut and Switzerland. A dual citizen of the United States and Sweden, Sebastian Bäverstam has participated in master classes with Frans Helmerson, Orlando Cole, Pieter Wispelwey, and Bernard Greenhouse, among others, and he recently earned his undergraduate degree with Paul Katz at the New England Conservatory in Boston.

EVE WOLF (Pianist, Executive Artistic Director, Writer) founded Ensemble for the Romantic Century in 2001 with the mission of creating an innovative and dramatic concert format in which the emotions revealed in memoirs, letters, diaries, and literature are dramatically interwoven with music, thus bringing to life the sensations and passions of a bygone era. Her performances in Tchaikovsky: None But the Lonely Heart last summer in the Berkshires were praised as “vividly and achingly played.” For the past thirteen seasons, Ms. Wolf has written scripts for more than twenty-five of ERC’s theatrical concerts and has performed in most of the ensemble’s forty-plus original productions. Some highlights include Wolf’s scripts for Van Gogh’s Ear at the Festival de Musique de Chambre de Montréal; Fanny Mendelssohn: Out of her Brother’s Shadow commissioned by the Jewish Museum of New York; and The Dreyfus Affair and Peggy Guggenheim Stripped Bare by her Bachelors. In 2009 she performed before a sold - out audience at the Sale Apollinee of the Teatro La Fenice in Venice in the Italian production of her script, Toscanini: Nel mio cuore troppo di assoluto. During the 2010-11 season, Wolf was the featured soloist in the theatrical concert Beethoven Love Elegies, for which she wrote the script. She also wrote the scripts for Jekyll & Hyde (2013), in which she was a featured soloist, and Frankenstein: Every Woman’s Nightmare (2013). Praised for her compelling performances, Wolf has appeared in Europe and the United States as a chamber musician and soloist. She received a BA in Art History from Columbia University and an MA in Piano Performance from New York University. She teaches at the Curtis Institute of Music and Columbia University-Teachers College, and is a professional mentor at The Juilliard School.

CHAD SLOAN (Baritone) Lauded by Opera News as “...a show stealer” and the Washington Times as “...a supple, natural singer...”, American baritone, Chad Sloan, has sung with Kentucky Opera, Louisville Choral Arts Society, Dayton Opera, Tanglewood Music Center, Anchorage Opera, New York City Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Atlanta Ballet, Atlanta

Opera, Aspen Opera Theater, and Tacoma Opera. He was recently heard as soloist in Britten's *War Requiem* with Lawrence University, as a soloist in The Juilliard School's concert celebrating the life and work of Elliott Carter, Willy in Lee Hoiby's *This Is the Rill Speaking* with Opera Memphis and featured along side eighth blackbird in University of Chicago's *Contempo* series. 2014/2015 season highlights include *Carmina Burana* with Fox Valley Symphony, a return to the *Contempo* series with eighth blackbird at University of Chicago and singing the role of Papageno in Arizona Opera's production of *Die Zauberflöte*.

DONALD T. SANDERS (Director, Director of Theatrical Production) has been Director of Theatrical Production for ERC since 2005. He directed *Tchaikovsky: None But the Lonely Heart* at Shakespeare & Co last summer. In 2011 he directed the ERC production of *Seduction, Smoke and Music* at the Tuscan Sun Festival starring Jeremy Irons and Sinéad Cusack and its reprise at the Napa Valley Festival del Sole in 2012. Other notable ERC productions include: *Fanny Mendelssohn: Out of Her Brother's Shadow* at New York's Jewish Museum; *Toscanini: Nel Mio Cuore Troppo di Assoluto* at Venice's Teatro La Fenice Sale Apolline; and *Van Gogh's Ear* at New York's Florence Gould Hall and the Festival de Musique de Chambre Montréal. He has directed productions at the New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater (*The American Pig: an Anti-Imperialist Vaudeville*, *Naked Lunch*, *33 Scenes on the Possibility of Human Happiness*, *Thomas Cole*, *A Waking Dream*, *Edith Wharton's Old New York*) as well as off-Broadway productions of the plays of Arnold Weinstein, Eric Bentley, Kenneth Koch and the music works of William Russo. He is a founder of New York Art Theatre Institute (NYATI). He is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Bristol, England and the Yale School of Drama. Since 1993 he has been Executive Artistic Director of The Massachusetts International Festival of the Arts (MIFA), where he presents artists such as Mikhail Baryshnikov, Vanessa Redgrave, England's *Out of Joint*, *Complicite*, and Shakespeare's Globe Theater, and France's *Comédie Française*. In 2002, Sanders was made a Chevalier dans L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres of the Republic of France.

VANESSA JAMES (Set & Costumes) is a designer of sets, costumes and lighting for theatre, and an Emmy award-nominated art director for film and TV. She has been Designer in Residence for ERC since 2004, designing productions in New York City, Cortona, Italy, La Fenice in Venice, the Napa Festival in California, and Shakespeare & Company in the Berkshires. Her designs in paper and plastic are archived in the library of the Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She is currently a professor of theatre at Mount Holyoke College, MA, and the author of two books:

The Genealogy of Greek Mythology, and Shakespeare's Genealogies.

BEVERLY EMMONS (Lighting) has designed for Broadway, off-Broadway, regional theater, dance, and opera. Her Broadway credits include *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Jekyll & Hyde*, *The Heiress*, Stephen Sondheim's *Passion*, and *The Elephant Man*. Her lighting of *Amadeus* won her a Tony award. She has worked at the JF Kennedy Center, the Guthrie Theatre, Arena Stage, and the Alley Theatre. Off-Broadway, she has worked with Joseph Chaikin and Meredith Monk, as well as for Robert Wilson (*Einstein on the Beach*), and others. Her designs for dance include works by Martha Graham, Trisha Brown, Alvin Ailey, and Merce Cunningham. She has been awarded seven Tony nominations, 1984 and 1986 Bessies, a 1980 Obie for Distinguished Lighting, and several Maharam/American Theater Wing Design Awards. She has curated TheLightingArchive.org and LightingDB.nypl.org, two websites making historical lighting documents accessible to students and scholars on the Internet.

MAX BARROS (Co-Artistic Director) has won wide acclaim as one of South America's foremost pianists. Born in California and raised in Brazil, Mr. Barros was presented with the "Soloist of the Year" Award by the São Paulo Music Critics Association. He is also a dedicated champion of Brazilian music, having premiered and recorded several works by the nation's foremost composers. He recorded Amaral Vieira's Piano Quintet with the Ensemble Capriccio and has recorded for Naxos the complete piano concertos by Camargo Guarnieri with conductor Thomas Conlin and the Warsaw Philharmonic, which won a "Discovery" prize from the magazine *Diapason* in France. Mr. Barros has toured South America with the *Virtuosi di Praga* and has been a guest artist with the American String Quartet and the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble. He is well known for his stylistic and historically informed interpretations, and his extensive research into the performance practice of early keyboard instruments has allowed him to bring fresh insights to his performances on the modern piano. Together with Stephanie Chase he has recorded the complete trios of Boccherini and Stephen Storace on period instruments. In 2008, Mr. Barros made his debut at the Caramoor Festival performing Guarnieri's *Concertino* for piano and orchestra with the St. Luke's Orchestra under Michael Barrett. He has recently recorded Guarnieri's complete *Ponteios* for Naxos and is in the process of recording the composer's complete solo piano music in six volumes.

JAMES MELO (Musicologist) has written extensively for scholarly journals and music magazines in Brazil, Uruguay, the United States, and Austria, and has been invited to participate as a panel discussant in conferences in Indiana, New York, and Canada. He has written program notes for several

concerts at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, and for over 70 recordings on the Chesky, Naxos, Paulus, and Musikus labels, among others. He is the New York correspondent for the magazine *Sinfónica* in Uruguay, reviewer of music iconography for the journal *Music in Art*, and senior editor at RILM (Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale) at CUNY. In March 2005, he chaired a session in the conference *Music and Intellectual History*, organized by the Barry Brook Center for Music Research and Documentation (CUNY), and presented a paper on the history of musicological research in Brazil. He received a grant from the Paul Sacher Stiftung in Basel, Switzerland, where he conducted research on the manuscripts of Anton Webern. Mr. Melo is the program annotator for the recording on Villa-Lobos' complete piano music and Camargo Guarnieri's complete piano concertos and complete solo piano music on Naxos. In 2006, he began collaborating with the Montréal Chamber Music Festival as musicologist and program notes writer. In March 2008, he chaired a session on music iconography in Brazil and Portugal in the conference *Music, Body, and Stage: The Iconography of Music Theater and Opera* at CUNY Graduate Center. He was the scriptwriter for *Seduction, Smoke and Music*, performed at The Tuscan Sun Festival in Cortona in the summer of 2011, with Jeremy Irons as Chopin and Sinéad Cusack as George Sand.

TAMMY "T-REX" ALEXANDER (Stage Manager) is currently a student at Berkshire Community College working towards her degree in Theatre. Her past experience includes Stage Managing at BCC for *Dead Man's Cell Phone* and *Rossum's Universal Robots*.

DEVON LENNON (Assistant Stage Manager) has participated in many plays, ranging from musical adaptations of popular movies, comedies, dramas, tragedies, Shakespeare, and musicals. Behind the scenes, he has experience in technical theater, prop management, and lighting.

MAIA ROBBINS-ZUST (Technical Production Director) Maia Robbins-Zust has a BFA in arts management from the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts and is an ETCP Certified Rigger and Entertainment Electrician. Currently she is Technical Director for Williams College's Department of Theatre. She also owns Berkshire Production Resources, a small production company that provides technical support for theatre companies in New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts. Maia & her company have worked with Barrington Stage Company, Boston Early Music Festival, Berkshire Theater Festival, Capital Repertory Company, Jacobs Pillow Dance Festival, Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, Shakespeare on the Sound, The Civilians, The Young Jean Lee Company and many others.

PROGRAM NOTES

Music is the mediator between the spiritual and the sensual life.

(Ludwig van Beethoven)

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) requires no introduction. Together with Mozart, he is unquestionably one of the most mythologized composers in the history of Western music, and the perpetual popularity of his music has given rise to a plethora of aesthetic adjectives to describe it: transcendent, heroic, universal, sublime, telluric, demonic, powerful. The man who composed such music was very practical, self-assured, demanding, sometimes rude, often eccentric, unkempt, and perpetually seeking the fulfillment of love through a meaningful and enduring relationship. Beethoven's life was marked by a number of sharp dualities, all of which had a profound effect on his creative process. Foremost among them was his pretense to an aristocratic birth, a deception that he allowed to take root among his Viennese colleagues, patrons, and admirers for many years. When he arrived in Vienna, he led people to believe that the particle "van" in his name was as indicative of a noble birth as the German "von". This was far from true. In fact, the Dutch "van" is a completely non-hierarchical particle, indicating nothing more than geographical origin or family lineage, without any hint of aristocratic blood. Beethoven allowed the Viennese public to believe that the two particles were equivalent in their meaning, and the truth was revealed only in 1818, when Beethoven was forced to acknowledge that his nephew Carl (for whose custody he was fighting) was not of noble birth. The court then decided to inquire about Beethoven's own birth, and he had no choice but to reveal that he, too, was not of aristocratic lineage.

This deception that Beethoven perpetrated for so long is significant in many respects, including his relentless pursuit of women who were far above his social class. Beethoven's behavior in this regard is puzzling on many levels. There is no doubt, for instance, that he had a highly superior understanding of his own worth as an artist, something about which very few people would raise any reservations. Even among his earlier critics, there was a tacit acknowledgment of Beethoven's tremendous artistic prowess and originality, and very soon his most ardent detractors were forced to give way to the recognition

that Beethoven's place in history was already secured. Because of this unshakable belief in his artistic superiority, Beethoven may have felt that his self-worth would be sufficient to erase social boundaries and open the doors for him to have access to the women he coveted. He was mistaken. For a young woman of high social and aristocratic position at that time, it would have been unthinkable to descend the social ladder so far as to marry someone like Beethoven, who had no noble lineage, no matter how great and admired he was as an artist. Besides, even if a young woman had been brave enough to breach all the limits of social hierarchy, her family would certainly have intervened, using all available resources to prevent such a marriage from taking place.

Under such circumstances, Beethoven's hopes of marrying high up the social scale were doomed to failure. On a more subtle level, there is also the question of how strongly he really desired to enter into a formal marriage of the kind that was the norm in Vienna in the early 19th century, which was, in many respects, a social and financial contract that carried a number of obligations with it. It is clear from Beethoven's letters and other personal writings that his creative process would have been profoundly disrupted if he had had to embrace the kind of life required of a married man at that time. He valued his music too highly, treasured his creative process too much to allow anything (even the love of a devoted wife) to interfere with it. This may seem paradoxical in the light of Beethoven's repeated attempts to marry, but we should not discount the possibility that a strong component of his motivation was the desire to achieve a higher social status by marrying a woman from the aristocracy. It is significant, for example, that the overwhelming majority of the dedications that Beethoven attached to his works in the first two decades of his life in Vienna were to titled aristocrats, while dedications to musicians are so few as to be irrelevant.

Beethoven's attitudes toward women could be very puzzling. The poet Franz Grillparzer (who delivered Beethoven's funeral oration) recounts an incident that happened when the composer was spending time in Heiligenstadt, the village where he wrote that very moving document directed to his brothers, the "Heiligenstadt Testament". According to Grillparzer, Beethoven was struck by the beauty of a daughter of a farmer named Flohberger. From that day on, he made

a point of passing the farm every day. He would stop at the gate to contemplate the buxom young woman hard at work, looking at her with the curious expression that he displayed when his feelings were aroused. The young woman (Fräulein Liese) eventually confronted him and scared him away temporarily, but next day he would return to look at her with the same determination. This incident highlights the inherent dichotomy and ambiguity in Beethoven's relationship to women: at the same time refined and almost coarse, idealistic and earthy, spiritual and sensual. These dualities would continue to shape Beethoven's emotional life until the end.

Many historians seem to think that not long after Beethoven wrote the celebrated letter to the "Immortal Beloved" (which is in fact a conflation of three separate letters written in the morning and evening of June 6, and the morning of June 7, 1812) Beethoven finally gave up any attempts at marriage. Personal writings from the time seem to suggest that he began to put all his hopes in his music, seeing his creative process as the realization of all his affective aspirations. On many occasions he reminded himself to "live only in my art", since he concluded that he had been unlucky in the life of the senses. This dichotomy between an idealized companion and his inability to find such a companion is another of the dualities that can be detected throughout Beethoven's life. Other instances include his courting of aristocrats as potential patrons while at the same time harboring disdain for such social hierarchies; or the fact that the more his personal life became unruly, disordered, and eccentric, the more his compositional process became fastidious, meticulous, and obsessive in its details.

There is plenty of documentary and anecdotal evidence that Beethoven's love life was constantly swaying between two extremes: long-lived passions that dominated him completely for several years, and passionate flare-ups that grew cold almost as soon as they arose. It is generally agreed that there were two or three women in his life who meant a great deal to him and with whom he was in love for quite a long time. It is significant that he treasured the letter he wrote to the "Immortal Beloved" until the day of his death, holding onto it as a kind of love talisman. To this day, no one is sure who the "Immortal Beloved" was, although recent articles by Maynard Solomon have proposed Antonie Brentano (1780-1869), the daughter of a

renowned Austrian diplomat, as a likely candidate. This theory has been disputed, partly because a few other candidates have come to light. Among the possible “Immortal Beloveds”, the case has been made in favor of Therese von Brunswick (1775–1861), Josephine von Brunsvik (1779–1821), Countess Marie Erdödy (1779–1837), and the singer Amalie Sebald (1787-1846). It is very likely that we will never know the truth, unless some unambiguous document surfaces that will settle all the doubts once and for all.

THE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Beethoven was fundamentally an instrumental music composer, as opposed to Mozart, for example, whose style was essentially informed by vocal music. (A similar parallel is that between Bach and Händel.) Of all the instrumental genres cultivated by Beethoven, the piano sonata was the one that became his technical and aesthetic laboratory throughout his life. In fact, Beethoven’s 32 piano sonatas are so central to his oeuvre that it is possible to trace his entire stylistic development by studying them alone. Very often, when Beethoven found himself on the threshold of new technical and structural developments, he turned to the piano sonata as the ideal medium for embodying those new ideas, which he would eventually transfer to other genres. The musical achievement represented by the sheer range of keyboard techniques, colors, articulation, dynamics, textures, and formal procedures found in Beethoven’s piano sonatas would be enough to enshrine him as one of the greatest Western composers. Not surprisingly, his 32 piano sonatas came to occupy a heralded position in the canonic repertoire of pianists all over the world. Already in the late 19th century there was a perception that these sonatas constituted a musical legacy of the greatest magnitude, prompting the great German conductor and pianist Hans von Bülow (1830-1894) to dub them the “New Testament of piano playing” (the “Old Testament” being Bach’s Well-Tempered Clavier).

Beginning very early in the 19th century, there developed a tradition of ascribing extra-musical and poetic titles to some of Beethoven’s sonatas, a practice that undoubtedly reflected the rich and highly nuanced aesthetic impact of these works. Almost Invariably, these poetic titles were added later by critics, publishers, and poets, and therefore do not indicate Beethoven’s original intentions. Nevertheless, these

titles have remained as veritable signatures of the works to which they were attached, so much so that there is a perpetual danger of believing that Beethoven was responsible for them. The “Moonlight” and the “Appassionata” sonatas are cases in point, since neither of the titles was given by Beethoven himself.

The Piano Sonata in C sharp minor, op. 27, no. 2 is the second in a set of two related sonatas that Beethoven published in 1802, adding the subtitle “quasi una fantasia” to the first sonata in the set. This designation could apply equally well to the second sonata, known to posterity as the “Moonlight” Sonata. By adding the designation “quasi una fantasia”, Beethoven wished to call attention to some unorthodox features shared by both works, which distance them from the traditional patterns of the classical sonata. In the case of the “Moonlight” Sonata, it was the opening slow movement that appeared most original to Beethoven’s contemporaries, and even after more than two centuries it never fails to strike the listener with its unique character. Written in a style of profound introspection and lyrical contemplation, the movement is marked to be played *pianissimo* throughout (*sempre pp e senza sordino*) to which Beethoven added further directions: “Si deve suonare tutto questo pezzo delicatissimamente e senza sordino” (This entire piece must be played very delicately and with pedal). Beethoven’s pedaling indication clearly accommodates a high degree of flexibility in the use of the sustaining pedal in order to create the hazy and somewhat blurred atmosphere that he envisioned as part of the character of this movement. In Beethoven’s time, the rate of decay of the sound in the pianos available to him was much faster than in modern pianos, and it is conceivable that the entire first movement could be played with the sustaining pedal held down throughout (a technique that Chopin reportedly suggested for his *Berceuse* op. 57). In the modern, more powerful pianos, the same effect can be achieved through a more judicious use of the pedal to allow the strings to vibrate fully through sympathetic vibration, an effect that was new at the time and that Beethoven obviously wanted in this piece.

After this dreamy and intimate first movement, the minuet that follows (“*Allegretto*”) brings with it the elegance of a Viennese dance, inflected by Beethoven’s very careful use of accents and syncopation. Hearing this benign minuet and its lulling trio, it is impossible to

fathom the violent storm that arrives in the last movement. Liszt, in a moment of superb insight, called this central movement “a flower between two abysses”. While the abyss unveiled in the first movement is the depth of one’s contemplative soul, the abyss of the last movement is a veritable portrayal of a mind in the throes of some frenzied process. The keyboard is called upon to release all its pent-up energy in the form of mounting arpeggios that crash with great violence at their climaxes. These are followed by scale passages that are equally violent, full of crashing accents and breathless syncopations. Ironically, this unleashed fury is cast in the most ordered and rationally constructed formal model of the classical period: sonata form. Thus, in the layout of its three movements, the “Moonlight” sonata substantially revises the expected patterns of the classical sonata. It dispenses with the opening movement in sonata form, and replaces the traditionally light last movement (usually a rondo or theme and variations) with the true sonata form movement that would be expected as the first movement.

The “Moonlight” sonata received its name from a critical review by the poet Ludwig Rellstab (1799-1860), who was inspired by the beauty of a moonlit night on Lake Lucerne. The sonata was dedicated to the young Countess Giulietta Guicciardi, and the prominence of the note “G” (her initials) that opens the theme of the first movement has prompted some to seek in it a reference to Giulietta as one of the candidates for the role of “Immortal Beloved”. This is pure speculation, however, since we do not have enough documentation to decide the matter of the “Immortal Beloved” in one way or another.

The Piano Trio op. 70 no. 1, known as the “Ghost” Trio on account of the eerie quality of its slow movement, is universally regarded as one of the central works in the chamber music repertoire, and one of the most important forerunners of Romanticism in music. It was published in 1809 as part of a set of two piano trios, a format that was relatively unusual for the time. Often, composers would publish such works in sets of three (as Beethoven himself did in his piano trios op. 1), but by this time it is clear that Beethoven was moving away from orthodox models. It is important to point out that the traditional classical procedure of having three piano trios (or other types of chamber works) published as a set inevitably conditioned both the scope and character of the works, since none of the works in the group could

be excessively difficult or musically so complex that the buying public would be discouraged from purchasing the scores. With the onset of Romanticism, however, musical works were conceived with an eye to originality and uniqueness, so that single works became increasingly common as self-sufficient publications. The musical range, emotional scope, and technical complexity of the “Ghost” Trio place it at the very threshold of Romanticism, and would justify publication as a single work. However, this trio and its companion were composed while Beethoven was staying at the Jedlesees estate of Countess Marie von Erdödy, on the east side of the Danube, in what is now a suburb of Vienna. The two trios were also dedicated to her, a fact that undoubtedly influenced Beethoven’s decision to publish them together.

The “Ghost” Trio follows the traditional layout in three movements, which was all but fixed since Haydn’s time. However, Beethoven’s experimentalism is already evident in the technique of linkage between the second and third movements, a procedure that, once again, foreshadows Romantic practices. The first movement, which projects all the hallmarks of Beethoven’s middle period (heroic sonorities, driven rhythmic patterns, full piano textures, emotional drama, and extremely varied dynamic levels) is written according to the models of the classical sonata form, but here brought to a truly Romantic scale. All the relevant thematic material appears already in the first few measures, and the movement unfolds through a series of transformations and thematic development that by then had become the defining feature of Beethoven’s style. The source of the music for the second movement, as well as the nickname attached to it, have connections with Beethoven’s love for Shakespeare’s works. The music itself derived from sketches for an opera based on Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, on which Beethoven was working at the time. As for the nickname, its source was certainly Czerny’s 1842 statement that “the music of the second movement reminds me of the ghost of Hamlet’s father”. Very likely, the music in the sketches may have been intended for a scene with the three witches in *Macbeth*, in which case the association with ghosts and other supernatural beings becomes all the more pertinent. The overall tone of the work brightens up in the last movement, a far more optimistic piece that successfully dispels the unsettling atmosphere of the slow movement. Heard in succession, the three movements of the “Ghost” Trio create a superbly balanced structure in

which the emotional core of the composition is placed at the center, with two highly structured movements on either side.

The twelve Variations on “Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen” (A Maiden or a Wife), an aria from Mozart’s *Die Zauberflöte*, were published in 1798, at a time when Mozart’s operas were very much in vogue in Vienna. In general, the variations are strictly beholden to the ideals of grace and thematic embellishment that characterized such works throughout the Classical period. As a genre, the theme and variations form often eschews any deep structural probing, first of all because the genre itself is not amenable to sustained structural narratives. The mosaic-like layout of the theme and variations means that each variation is a self-contained miniature, with its own internal drive and technical procedure. As the work unfolds, the cumulative effect of the variations creates a discernible sequence which, in the case of Beethoven, represents a kaleidoscopic view of the original theme. The Variations on “Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen” offer a perfect example of the genre: melodic interest, musical variety, diversity of compositional techniques, and virtuoso technical display.

In the instrumental pieces included in this program, and especially in the two major works from Beethoven’s middle period—the “Moonlight” Sonata and the “Ghost” Trio—Beethoven created two consummate examples of an amalgam of musical structure, dramatic narrative, and psychological insight. These features are part of the reason for the enduring popularity of these works and their ability to draw us into some of the most personal musical journeys that we can experience.

THE SONGS AND FIDELIO

It has been remarked by several scholars that Beethoven was essentially a composer of instrumental music, a statement that is easy to confirm by comparing his towering achievements in this field with his far less influential forays into vocal music, *Fidelio* and the *Missa solemnis* notwithstanding. This observation carries no aesthetic or value judgment about the significance of Beethoven as a composer, but simply reflects matters of personal style and aesthetic outlook. It is fair to say that Beethoven himself realized where his best potential was, and he directed his creative energies more forcefully to those genres of

instrumental music that are now canonical in the Western repertoire: the symphony, the string quartet, the piano sonata, and several forms of chamber and concertante works.

Beethoven's songs, with the exception of the justly celebrated song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte*, op. 98, are arguably the least known part of his oeuvre. And yet, there is enough evidence that Beethoven approached the composition of songs as a very rewarding and artistically fulfilling endeavor. The songs selected for tonight's program offer a varied panorama of Beethoven's views on love and sensuality (*Der Kuss*), the relationship between a human being and the Almighty (*Busslied*), the pain of unrequited love (*Seufzer eines Ungeliebten und Gegenliebe*), and the sustaining sweetness of hope (*An die Hoffnung*). Collectively, the songs cover a wide spectrum of emotions and display the elements of sensuality and spirituality that were so much intertwined in Beethoven's life. When listening to Beethoven's songs, one would do well to keep in mind the conflation of these sensual and spiritual elements, which is encapsulated in the quote at the head of these notes. In his songs, Beethoven showed a keen ear for text setting as a vehicle for psychological insight, and in this regard he significantly distanced himself from Haydn and Mozart. While the latter two were still immersed in the style of folk-song settings that embalmed songs as a genre suitable only for domestic and amateur music-making, Beethoven's songs already adumbrate some of the more complex and subtle procedures of the Romantic lied, which would come to fruition in the works of Schubert. A glance at the poets that Beethoven chose to set in these songs suggests that he was well aware of contemporaneous developments in poetry, and in this regard he may be compared with Schubert, who was always attuned to the meaning of contemporary poetry.

Fidelio, Beethoven's only opera, engaged his creative energies with an intensity that is found in the creative process of but few of his other works. Altogether, there are 346 pages of sketches for the opera, and no fewer than 16 sketches just for Florestan's opening aria. All the textual and musical evidence confirms that Beethoven became fully—almost obsessively—absorbed in the composition of this work. Not only were the preparatory sketches voluminous, but Beethoven continued to work on the opera even after its premiere, making a number

of changes and revisions. The dramatic core of the opera is the portrayal of a devoted, sacrificing wife (Leonore) who takes desperate and risky measures to rescue her beloved husband (Florestan), wrongly imprisoned for political motives. In spite of Beethoven's heartfelt devotion to his only opera, the work was a failure upon its premiere at the Theater an der Wien on 20 November 1805. Part of the reason for the fiasco may have been the unfavorable political circumstances, with Vienna occupied by Napoleon's troops, an event that led the Austrian Emperor, his family, and the court to flee the city. However, not even Beethoven's most fervent admirers blamed the failure of the opera on external circumstances only. It was clear that the work had some inherent musical and dramatic flaws, which Beethoven sought to remedy in a number of revisions. In spite of all the problems that beset the opera from the beginning, it represents an important artistic and personal statement. In the opera, he embodied his most idealized view of marriage as the perfect union of two beings, one of whom represents Beethoven's conception of the ideal wife: humble but courageous, subservient but independent, devoted to her husband to the point of risking her own life, and altogether faithful beyond reproach. In fact, the title of the opera (*Fidelio*) is derived from Leonore's assumed name as she infiltrates the prison disguised as a man in order to rescue her wrongly imprisoned husband. In the context of tonight's program, the excerpts from *Fidelio* create a backdrop for the portrayal of Beethoven's own love life and the tragedy of his unfulfilled desire for a lifelong and faithful companion.

Love Elegies dramatizes many of the aspects of Beethoven's love life through a poignant, humorous, and emotionally intense script that merges with some of Beethoven's most personally expressive songs and piano works. In these pieces, as in so many of his other works, Beethoven lived a truer life than that afforded him by drab reality, and he embodied in them many of his beautiful elegies to love.

James Melo
Musicologist in Residence

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