

DEPARTMENT OF  
**MUSIC**  
AT PRINCETON

**Program in Performance Senior Recitals 2023**

Friday, May 5th 2023, 2:00 PM

Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

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***Time Travel***

**A Piano Senior Recital by  
Richard Qiu '23**



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***The use of photographic, video, or audio equipment is strictly prohibited. Please turn off or mute electronic devices for the duration of the performance.***

*(That being said, if you take a couple of photos or short audio clips and videos, that's fine. Keep it quiet, and don't be a distraction to anyone here. Thanks!)*

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## PROGRAM

### Part I - Minor

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- Johann Sebastian Bach**  
(1685-1750) Fantasia and Fugue in A minor, BWV 904  
Composed: ~1725  
Duration: 8 minutes
- Ludwig van Beethoven**  
(1770-1827) Piano Sonata No.27, Op. 90 in E minor  
Composed: 1814  
Duration: 5-9 (1st/2nd mvt) minutes
- Fanny Hensel**  
(1805-1847) Notturmo in G minor, H. 337  
Composed: 1838  
Duration: 5 minutes

INTERMISSION: 10 minutes

### Part II- Major

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- Frédéric Chopin**  
(1810-1849) Berceuse, Op. 57 in Db Major  
Composed: 1844  
Duration: 5 minutes
- Franz Liszt**  
(1811-1886) Liebesträume No. 3 in Ab Major, S.541  
Composed: 1850  
Duration: 6 minutes
- Enrique Granados**  
(1867-1916) Goyescas, H.64 No. 1: Los Requeiebros  
Composed: 1911  
Duration: 10 minutes
- Nikolai Kapustin**  
(1937-2020) I. Prelude. Allegro Assai, from Eight Concert  
Etudes, Op. 40  
Composed: 1984  
Duration: 3 minutes

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## Time Travel

Today's concert is in composition year order, spanning over 250 years of classical music repertoire in the span of one hour. It is a culmination of my many years playing pieces from various music periods and expanding the breadth of what I can play on the piano. Was it hard to work on all of these styles? Heck yes. Baroque to Romantic to Jazzy music is quite a difference, and I sure hope you can tell, or else I'm in huge trouble with my musicality!

Time travel also represents how quickly the exhilarating and tumultuous Princeton undergraduate experience goes by, and so I encourage you all to reflect on your journey thus far here while listening to each note of this wide variety of pieces. I mean, that is how you can create meaning through classical music that has no words: storytelling! These four years have been quite awesome, and there are even more great moments to come. :)

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## PROGRAM NOTES

Note from Richard: These program notes focus on my experiences and thoughts about these pieces, along with some history and lighthearted moments sprinkled in between, which isn't quite "traditional" but more fun! You know how I've done them from the one I wrote for Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 24. More importantly, enjoy the performance :)

### **Johann Sebastian Bach: Fantasia and Fugue in A minor, BWV 904 (1725)**

Bach needs no big introduction. A master of the Baroque period, he laid a foundation for counterpoint and harmonic progressions through the 1,000+ works he created in his lifetime. Yes, 1000+. Musicians then had to compose a lot of music to survive!

Anyways, do we know anything about BWV 904? Not really. End of program notes. Jk.

So what should you look out for in this piece? In the fantasia, the improvisatory style and a phenomenal chromatic bass line with all the voices working in call-and-response to each other. In the fugue, the chromaticism and a double fugue. The double fugue is especially tough to work with, and it takes a lot to balance those themes out... at the same time. Fugues and their four voices are always fun to work with, so take a listen to each line as they are introduced and weaved in between each other! I chose this piece for a Bach competition many years ago but brought it back for this concert because I'm laz... I mean, I wanted to do it again with all the piano knowledge I have now! Also, a huge shoutout to my harpsichord teacher, Professor Young, for helping me shape this piece on the harpsichord, which has informed my piano playing.

### **Ludwig van Beethoven: Piano Sonata No.27, Op. 90 in E minor (1814)**

Beethoven also needs no extensive introduction: he's a revolutionary composer of the classical period, especially of the piano sonata in this case. But by this sonata, Beethoven has lost the majority of his hearing. How he composed this wonderful sonata while practically deaf is beyond me, and it's pretty embarrassing for me to still not exactly understand this sonata with two perfectly functioning ears! That's why piano takes forever to master :)

What's interesting to notice is that Beethoven gave very explicit yet vague tempo markings in this sonata. The first movement is marked *Mit Lebhaftigkeit und durchaus mit Empfindung und Ausdruck*, which means "With liveliness and with feeling and expression throughout," while the second movement is marked *Nicht zu geschwind und sehr singbar vorgetragen*, which means "Not too swiftly and conveyed in a singing manner."

That's a lot of words. Do I know exactly how to approach them? Kind of. The tempi vary across pianists when recording this work, but I find what feels best for me and this piece. Hopefully, it works!

Look out for the restless character of the 1st movement for this sonata and the consistent return of the E Major (not minor!) theme woven with lyrical melodies and quick forte-piano changes in the sonata-rondo form of the 2nd movement. This sonata is one of Beethoven's most exquisite, shorter than most, yet its short length is compact and filled with luscious melodies and sudden bursts of energy that calm into a well-rounded finish.

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## PROGRAM NOTES

### **Fanny Hensel: Notturmo in G minor, H. 337 (1838)**

Fanny Hensel, known as the sister of Felix Mendelssohn, is a female composer and concert pianist who wrote over 450 works and worked closely with her brother, Felix, on his compositions and performances. Felix regularly submitted his compositions to Fanny for her critique and modified material questionable to her ears.

Why haven't we really heard of her or other female composers? Well... history and gender roles. Because of the social conventions and stigmas concerning women of the time, female composers found it challenging to publish music, especially with a male-dominated music scene back then and their quite fragile egos who most certainly didn't give women the same opportunities to publish, perform, and record their works, leading to a lack of exposure of their compositions to major audiences. In fact, six of Hensel's works were published under her brother's name in his Opus 8 and 9 collections. However, Fanny was among the first female composers to push on and publish their works, and she established a precedent of accepting women into this artistic profession.

So why did I choose her Nocturne? For one, I think compositions from female composers should be played more frequently in the classical music world, so I took this opportunity to include her in my program to show how beautiful her compositions have been. This Nocturne brings many moving lines that weave between the left and right hands, along with a rich, deep sonority in the ominous G minor. I was touched by the many flourishes and beautiful up-and-downs of this piece, along with its relatively peaceful ending into G major, a breath of fresh air that transitions perfectly into the major half of this program. Enjoy this beautiful composition!

### **Frédéric Chopin: Berceuse, Op. 57 in Db Major (1850)**

The 2nd half of the program begins... with a lullaby. Quite cute but also a general reaction most non-classical musicians have with classical music: Zzzzzzzzzzzzzzz... (Boooooo.)

But this isn't a lullaby that you should fall asleep to; at least, I hope you don't! The soothing Db major is an excellent key for this piece because it has such a rich sonority, and it shows through each variation in this piece. This is another piece I have brought back from my high school piano days, as I felt it soothes my soul in this chaotic reality.

Interestingly, Chopin barely changed the left-hand notes and kept the same chords: Db and Ab7. That doesn't mean that the left hand can doze off... instead, it has a huge role in supporting the right hand and indicating the intensity of this piece. Much of the attention is on the right hand and its phenomenal free-flowing variations on the main theme you hear in the first few measures. There are many fast notes in the right hand that act as embellishments and glitter to make this piece sparkly, yet the melody still shines through with Chopin's beautiful writing. This piece is calming and not as glamorous as some of Chopin's other compositions, such as his Ballades and Scherzos. But this Berceuse is just as romantic as all his compositions, and it brings a sense of peace and stillness when played, and that's all I wanted to have to begin this 2nd half of my program.

So sit back and relax! You're in a chill zone for the next five minutes.

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## PROGRAM NOTES

### **Franz Liszt: Liebesträume No. 3 in Ab Major, S.541 (1850)**

Alert! Alert! Overplayed piece alert!

Ok, but for real, Liebesträume No. 3 is a fantastic piece, and I have always wanted to play it on stage! Liebesträume translates to dream of love, and it couldn't be more perfect for this to be relevant in my life because I still only dream about it. :(

The 3rd piece in this series is based on the poem, "O Lieb, so lang du lieben kannst," which means "Oh Love, love as long you can." Yup, more about love. But it's about a pure, hopeful kind of love that rises and grows before dissipating and dying away, just like that feeling of losing a loved one. We hear the rich, beautiful beginning melody in the tenor line that jumps to the soprano line after a dreamy cadenza. The love grows and grows through the key change into C major and explodes with the melody in octaves. As we transition back to Ab major, the love continues to explode into your wildest dreams as you have the time of your life... all the way until the final cadenza as it falls back into a dreamlike state. Then the love slowly fades away, dissipating into the air as everything calms down when you realize it was just a beautiful memory or dream, lost as you return to reality.

Through the many hours spent on this piece, I understand why it is popular with many people, and I'm so glad to bring it to the stage today. It is, after all, a story of love and loss and a great example of time travel with your memories within 5 minutes. Even when Liszt likes to show off on his pieces (look at his cadenzas! Also, the Mephisto Waltz... that is a beast to play!), he knows how to pull our heartstrings in the right moments.

### **Enrique Granados: Goyescas, H.64 No. 1: Los Requeiebros (1911)**

Los Requeiebros translates to "The Compliments", but it also has a lot of flattery and well... flirtations. Ooooh. If there's a piece to show off and be cool and excessive in this recital, it's this one because it's in the name!

Enrique Granados was a Spanish composer who created the series of compositions "Goyescas," inspired by the paintings of Spanish artist Francisco Goya. How he imagined this over-the-top piece from one painting of a woman and a man, presumably a couple, standing next to each other while two old white women are looking at the woman's butt while sitting is fascinating. I guess they're fascinated and complimenting her?

This piece is based on the Spanish dance "jota," where a dancing couple would hold their arms high and click castanets with lively, bouncing steps. You can hear similar traits in this music, with the quick trills like castanets and the left hand having to "bounce" quite far on the piano to hit the bass notes back and forth. This piece moves brilliantly through many changes of speed and emotional color, with lots of flourishes and notes flying everywhere over the keyboard! Difficult? Yup. Show off? Heck yeah.

So how did I choose this piece? It came as a recommendation from my piano teacher, Dr. Kampmeier, during the Covid semesters, when I wanted to try something new in the late romantic/early impressionistic era. And so I tried it, and needless to say, this was a fantastic choice. Enjoy this mini 10-minute trip down to Spain!

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## PROGRAM NOTES

### **Nikolai Kapustin: I. Prelude. Allegro Assai, from Eight Concert Etudes, Op. 40 (1984)**

Ya like Jazz? Good. If you don't... too bad, deal with it. :/

Nikolai Kapustin was a Soviet composer and pianist of Russian-Jewish descent born in Ukraine. He initially trained in classical music before transitioning into jazz music and composing, hence the style you hear in this piece. I am genuinely so sad that he passed away three years ago at the height of Covid-19 (\*shudder\*), as his music is some of the best I have ever heard composed in the past 50 years.

So what brings this piece into today's concert? I was introduced to Kapustin through his 3rd concert etude for a contemporary music competition, and I was quite hooked. Yes, these pieces are extremely difficult technically, but they are so worth it when you finally get all the notes together as it flows through your hands pretty nicely... like Jazz. Woah. There isn't any real context or story behind this set of 8 concert etudes, but their styles vary quite widely between each etude!

This short 3-minute piece is relentless with its notes, constantly jabbing you back and forth while riding on a rollercoaster up and down in its syncopations and rising and falling arpeggios. It is quite wild yet fun to listen to, and so I hope you enjoy this piece a ton! Yay.

And just like that, boom. *END OF PROGRAM*. Well... at least that's what you think!

## BIOGRAPHY

Richard Qiu '23, from Newbury Park, CA, is a Princeton senior majoring in Economics with certificates in Music Performance for piano, Statistics and Machine Learning, and Technology and Society. Richard has 17 years of piano performance experience, with much of his time spent at the Colburn School of Performing Arts under Jeffrey Lavner before being taught now by Dr. Peggy Kampmeier from MSM at Princeton.

Richard has participated in piano masterclasses with Jean Yves-Thibaudet, José Ramos Santana, Fabio Bidini, and Ory Shihor. He is the most recent winner of the 2022-2023 PUO Concerto competition and has performed with PU Sinfonia and PUO with the Bach Harpsichord Concerto in D minor and the Mozart Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor, respectively. He is a three-time Merit winner for the National Youngarts Foundation competition and has won multiple International Liszt Competition awards and Southern California Junior Bach Festivals. On campus, Richard is involved in harpsichord continuo with Early Music at Princeton (EMP), chamber music with Opus, and piano arrangements with Princeton's Pianists Ensemble (PPE). Yes, he does way too many things on campus, but it's ok... music is fun! Richard also studies harpsichord with Professor Wendy Young.

After graduation, Richard plans to work in strategy consulting at Accenture in San Francisco. He has found an interest in tech, operations, and hospitality and will try to work with these areas... assuming the economy is still in good shape. Oh boy. \*Knocks on wood.\* He sometimes wishes he went to NYC post-grad... but there's still lots of time lol.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I want to thank my parents and sisters for motivating me to stay in piano and continue to master this wonderful instrument. To my father, for working so hard to pay for these darn expensive lessons at the Colburn School of Performing Arts and continuing to support my piano endeavors! To my mother, who drove me on 2+ hour roundtrips to Colburn and back for 13 straight years and tirelessly critiqued me on my piano pieces every day. She kept me searching for more in piano performance and refined so many of my emotional and performance capacities with this instrument... well at least when I finally decided to listen to her. To my sisters, for being my primary motivation to do well in piano and life, as they raised the bar for everything I do and are my source of inspiration inside and outside of piano performance! Seriously, this bar is really, unfortunately, high. They also were my first piano teachers and the reason why I stubbornly chose piano over any instrument, as I loved hearing them play piano all the time.

Second, a huge thanks to my Princeton mentors. To Maestro Ochs of Sinfonia, for being the first to provide me an opportunity to solo for the first time with my harpsichord concerto I had prepared! Your kindness and joy through every rehearsal shine brightly, and I have enjoyed your enthusiasm for realizing every musician's potential here at Princeton. To Maestro Pratt of PUO, for providing me the opportunity to perform the Mozart Piano Concerto and encouraging me to jump into this kind of beautiful music. Your passion for conducting showed through every MPP class we've had, and how you described Mozart's music is quite magical and made me appreciate the beauty of every note I played.

To Professor Young, my harpsichord teacher, for being so enthusiastic about teaching everything about this instrument. From every moment of you telling me why the harpsichord helps with my piano performance, the careful articulations of this acoustically challenging instrument, to the calming moment of the wind breath, you have made early music so fun and worth trying in my time at Princeton! And finally, but certainly not least, to Dr. Kampmeier, my piano teacher at Princeton. I had never thought I could be taken any further into piano performance, yet every lesson brought something new to my piano skills, like the gestural moments and the complete analysis of my shoulder movements to my fingers for piano. Your willingness to teach a variety of pieces I had wanted to play and putting each at a conservatory level makes me so grateful to have you as my teacher who was always supportive through my piano journey. Your calmness and humility allowed me to relax in this environment and made piano practicing something I looked forward to for the past 4 years in this quite chaotic Princeton environment. Seriously, thank you!

Third, I wanted to thank my on-campus groups of EMP, Opus, and PPE, especially the extraordinary, talented musicians in these groups, for making music so collaborative and fun to play each time, whether it is the game medleys of PPE or vocal consorts of EMP to string quartets and woodwind quintets/sextets that I didn't think I'd play here at Princeton. It was truly amazing to work with you through these groups and meet chill people (hello, woodwinds!) that made hanging out with you all so fun. Also, the LCA moments have been so crazy and chaotic, but that's what makes the times here so memorable.

And finally, thanks to all of you for being here! I am honored to see you all seated today, ready to spend an hour listening and be moved by today's pieces. As I've learned over the many years, the most important part of preparing all of this music is being able to share it with others, and you all are the recipients of this beautiful gift that I am so happy to share with everyone. For the many friends and supporters here, thank you all for being such an important part of my Princeton career, and I wish you all the best! :)

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