

8th SEASON
1987 – 1988



TZIMON BARTO

• PIANO •

Sunday, November 15th, 1987

Vancouver Playhouse



Meet the Artist...

Tzimon Barto

Twenty-three year old Tzimon Barto began piano studies at the age of five, wrote his first opera at the age of eight and began to conduct at the age of fourteen. Not long after his initial conducting studies he was presented with the "most outstanding conductor" award by Gunther Schuller at the Tanglewood Institute. Mr. Barto attended the Juilliard School where he studied with Adele Marcus and he is the first musician to have graduated from the school with triple honours, in piano, conducting, and accompanying. In 1984 he received the Lila Acheson Wallace Endowment for his conducting activities with the American Opera Center in New York.

Mr. Barto's European debut as both pianist and conductor was at the Spoleto Festival in 1985, after which he was re-invited by the festival's founder and director, Gian-Carlo Menotti, to conduct a new production, "The Saint of Bleeker Street", in honour of the composer's 75th birthday.

Tzimon Barto made his German debut as pianist in a performance of the Brahms Second Piano Concerto with the Bamberg Symphony under Horst Stein, and a few months later, upon 24 hours' notice, he substituted with the same concerto in Paris with the Orchestre National de France; this hugely successful performance was broadcast nationally by Radio France.

Last summer Mr. Barto made his professional U.S. debut at Tanglewood with the Boston Symphony under Christoph Eschenbach. Last fall he conducted the Australian Philharmonic Orchestra in Melbourne for the premiere season of the Spoleto Festival of Three Worlds and later in the season he returned to Australia as soloist with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra under James Conlon. In January, Mrs. Artur Rubinstein, on hearing the young musician's debut recital in London, immediately engaged him for concerts celebrating the occasion of her late husband's 100th birthday in Monte Carlo, as well as in Israel and Tokyo.

This season Mr. Barto will be heard in many major musical capitals of Europe in recital and with orchestras, both as pianist, and conductor.

Tzimon Barto has signed an exclusive recording contract with EMI/Angel Records, with the first recording scheduled for release this season.

COLUMBIA ARTISTS MANAGEMENT INC.

Personal Direction: Thomas Thompson and Gregg Gleasner
165 West 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019
Steinway Piano

PROGRAM

**Twenty-eight variations on a Theme of Paganini,
Opus 35 (1862-3)**

**Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)**

It's doubtful that when Paganini wrote his celebrated *Caprices* he gave any particular thought to #24. But given its catchy tune and, more significantly, its almost primal scheme of chord changes, the piece has had an irresistible appeal for composers from Liszt to Lutoslavsky.

Since Brahms had no particular feeling for the Paganini legacy (or his trained seal school of virtuosity), it's almost surprising that he, of all people, would use the theme — unless he was curious to re-explore the same territory that the despised Liszt had surveyed two decades earlier (and had the effrontery to dedicate to Clara Schumann!).

In any case Brahms' sets of variations, presented as two books of "studies", are music of transcendent technical difficulty harnessed to what one writer called "a continuously weighty and solid" musical argument.

**Harmonies du soir & Mazeppa from Etudes
d'exécution transcendante S.139 (1851)**

**Franz Liszt
(1811-1886)**

Like the *Ricordanza* (heard on the previous VRS concert) *Mazeppa* and *Harmonies du soir* are part of Liszt's monumental collection of *Transcendental Etudes*. *Harmonies du soir* is a lyrical mood piece while *Mazeppa* is a miniature tone poem for keyboard which (with the help of ghost composer Joachim Raff) Liszt later expanded into a symphonic poem.

Intermission

**Piano Sonata #5 Opus 53 (1907)
Allegro impetuoso con stravaganza**

**Alexander Nikolaevich Scriabin
(1871-1915)**

When confronted with Alexander Scriabin's lifelong commitment to symbolism, Theosophy and metaphysics, it may be tempting to dismiss him as yet another turn of the century crank. But the remarkable qualities of his musical invention and the unquestionable power of his work (especially his keyboard works) demand our respect.

On one hand we can easily agree with the comment that "not until Schoenberg with his twelve-tone technique do we find a composer so consistent in his compositional technique". On the other hand, the verve, drama and scope of his music (the markings in the fifth sonata range all the way from *languido* to *estatico*!) easily convince us, as Faubion Bowers writes, "how inevitably and logically music could advance... without a break from conventionality into modernity, from 19th century intensity and discursiveness into 20th century condensation and economy."

Formally (and for that matter, harmonically) the *Fifth Sonata* is astonishingly complex: a vestigial skeleton of traditional sonata form is to be found, but for the most part the listener will more readily perceive a rich, even contradictory collage of moods and purposes through the extended single-movement work.

**Andante spianato B.88 and
Grande Polonaise Brillante B.56, Opus 22 (1831;1834)**

**Fryderyk Franciszek Chopin
(1810-1849)**

In Chopin's tiny catalogue of works for anything other than piano solo, the *Andante spianato/Grand Polonaise* is a particular anomaly: a solo piano introduction followed by a solo piano with orchestra polonaise. As Humphrey Searle remarks, "Opus 22 is something of a hybrid. The polonaise was written first, in 1830-1, before Chopin's arrival in Paris: the Andante dates from 1834, and thus belongs to his mature period — by this time he had written the *Studies*, Opus 10 and the B minor *Scherzo*, among other works. Chopin performed the *Andante spianato and Polonaise* at one of his last public appearances in Paris, on 26 April 1835, and won great success with the polonaise, although he had realized by now that the Parisian public did not really appreciate his mature music."

Program notes by David Duke.

This concert is being recorded for broadcast at a later date on CBC Stereo's "Arts National" (FM 105.7).

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The Vancouver Recital Society gratefully acknowledges the support of
the City of Vancouver.

Looking Back...

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Manuel Barrueco
Joshua Bell
Boris Berman
Yefim Bronfman (1981, 1984)
Angela Cheng
Paul Coker
José Feghali
Yuval Fichman
Annie Fischer
Nelson Freire
Harris Goldsmith
Matt Haimovitz
Ofra Harnoy
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Antonio Meneses
Shlomo Mintz
Lisa Nagatani
Emile Naumoff
Ken Noda
Peter Oundjian
Jon Kimura Parker (1984, 1985)
Miklos Perényi
Michala Petri
Ted Piltzecker
Santiago Rodriguez
Shauna Rolston
Charles Rosen
Mikhail Rudy
Andras Schiff (1981, 1983)
Howard Shelley
André-Michel Shub
Robert Silverman
Joseph Swensen
Mitsuko Uchida
Carol Wincenc
Mira Zakai

Looking Ahead...

Coming in the Spring:

Sergio & Odair Assad, Duo Guitarists Feb. 28/88
Paul Neubauer, Violist Mar. 20/88
Yefim Bronfman, Pianist Apr. 24/88

For tickets & information call the VRS office at 736-6034.