
10th

SEASON

1989 - 1990

**ANTON
NEL**

• PIANO •

Sunday, January 21, 1990

Vancouver Playhouse



Meet the Artist...

Anton Nel

Twenty-seven year old Anton Nel was born in Johannesburg, S. Africa, and began piano lessons at the age of 10. Two years later he gave his first concert playing Beethoven's First Piano Concerto. By the age of 13 he knew that he wanted to make music his life. He earned various degrees and diplomas from the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg where he studied with one of South Africa's leading pianists and pedagogues, Adolph Hallis.

Anton moved to the United States in 1983 where he studied at the University of Cincinnati under Bela Siki and Frank Weinstock. Since winning First Prize in the Walter W. Naumburg International Piano Competition he has embarked on a major performing career in the U.S. giving many recitals and orchestral performances, including highly acclaimed appearance with the Chicago, Cincinnati and Seattle Symphonies and the Brooklyn Philharmonic. His recital engagements have included the cities of Boston, Los Angeles, Chicago and New York's Alice Tully Hall on three separate occasions.

Prior to winning the Naumburg Competition, Anton was a prizewinner in the 1982 Pretoria International Piano Competition in S. Africa, the Leeds International Piano Competition in England, and the Joanna Hodges International Piano Competition in California. He is in much demand as a chamber musician and has participated in the festivals of Ravinia, Aspen, Peninsula and Mt. Gretna. He has performed with such musicians as cellist, Zara Nelsova, oboist, Ray Still, and flutist, Carol Wincenc (who was heard on this series in 1982). He has performed in London and has recorded *Carnival of the Animals* with the Academy of London for Virgin Records. As part of the Naumburg prize he will record four Haydn Sonatas on the Musical Heritage label.

Anton is currently an Associate Professor of Piano at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. Prior to this appointment he was Professor of Accompanying at the University of Texas at Austin.

Tonight's Vancouver debut performance by Anton Nel is being recorded for broadcast at a later date by CBC Stereo's "Arts National" (105.7).

PROGRAM

Estampes (1903)

**Claude Debussy
(1862 – 1918)**

Pagodes

Soirée dans Grenade

Jardins sous la pluie

Debussy was at the height of his powers when he wrote the three *Estampes* in 1903 and, not surprisingly, they were immediately recognized as master-works. *Pagodes* is an Oriental fantasy based on the exploitation of pentatonic scales, and *Soirée dans Grenade* a Spanish nocturne in habanera rhythm, while *Jardins sous la pluie* quotes two French songs. "It is for the listener to say," writes Oscar Thompson, "whether... through it all runs a hint of regret for vanished happiness; or... only a lively exercise for the fingers, fashioned in what by this time had become definitely a Debussy style."

**15 Variations and a Fugue
on an Original Theme,
Opus 35 'Eroica Variations' (1802)**

**Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770 – 1827)**

Keyboard variations were something of a favourite form for Beethoven; by the time he composed the *Eroica Variations* in 1802 he had written some 15 other essays in the genre. The well-known theme appears first in Beethoven's "conservative" ballet *Prometheus* and was, of course, to go on to a symphonic life in the *Third Symphony*. The treatment of the tune is far more radical in the piano variations: a virtuoso edifice is constructed out of what one critic called a "ludicrous" bare bass line, capped with a theatrical and energetic cumulating fugue.

Intermission

Piano Sonata #2 (1936)

**Paul Hindemith
(1895 – 1963)**

Mässig schnell

Lebhaft

Sehr langsam; Bewegt (Rondo)

Hindemith consciously tried to de-mystify the role of the composer and loved to put into practice his theories regarding craft, productivity and self-discipline. No more telling demonstration exists than his matter-of-fact composition of a batch of three neo-classical piano sonatas in the mid-1930s. The second is perhaps the most popular, and is comprised of an initial allegro (very much in sonata form) and a short scherzo followed by a two-in-one slow movement/rondo finale.

Valse Impromptu S. 213 (1850)

**Franz Liszt
(1811-1886)**

Harmonies du Soir S. 244 (1851)

Hungarian Rhapsody #6 S. 242 (1847)

Anton Nel will conclude his programme this evening with a group of three Liszt works focusing on three different aspects of Liszt's compositional personality: the salon idiom of the *Valse Impromptu*; his serious virtuoso style in the eleventh of the *Transcendental Études*, "*Harmonies du Soir*"; and, as a scheduled encore, that war horse of war horses, the sixth *Hungarian Rhapsody*.

The Vancouver Recital Society's Hamburg Steinway is maintained and serviced by Johann B. Krebs.

The Vancouver Recital Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Government of British Columbia through the Ministry of Tourism, Recreation and Culture; the City of Vancouver; the Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation and the Hamber Foundation.

The Vancouver Recital Society is most grateful for the generous assistance of its honorary auditors, Collins Barrow.



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Please help us to continue bringing the very best—the cream of young musical talent from around the world, with your **tax deductible** contribution. Donations payable to the Vancouver Recital Society may be mailed to P.O. Box 35605, Postal Station E, Vancouver, B.C. V6M 4G9.

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Sunday, February 18, 1990 at 8:00 pm

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Six Bagatelles, Op. 126 Beethoven

Sonata in C major, Op. 53 (Waldstein) Beethoven

Sonata in G major, D. 894 Schubert