

About the pianists

Vivian Cheng is a 13-year-old pianist who began playing piano at the age of five. In New York, her teacher is Russian virtuoso Arkady Aronov. In Raleigh, Vivian was a student of John Ruggero.

In 2002, Vivian is the level V 2nd place winner of the 22nd Bartok-Kabalevsky-Prokofiev International Piano Competition. She won the Winston-Salem Symphony Talent Search and has played with this orchestra. Vivian has received awards from the NC Federation of Music Teachers, the NC Music Teachers Assoc., and the Raleigh Piano Teachers Assoc. She performed in State Junior Festival Day as a state scholarship winner. In June 2001, Vivian presented her first full solo recital at age 10 at Peace College. In October 2001, Vivian performed her first piano concerto with Raleigh Civic Symphony, playing Mozart Concerto #17. Vivian has taken master classes and private lessons with renowned pianists Andre-Michel Schub, Walter Hautzig, and David Dubal.

Vivian attends classes and lessons at the Manhattan School of Music in New York each week. She also enjoys dancing and playing soccer. When she grows up, she would like to be a concert artist.

Teddy Robie is a distinguished senior piano major at The Juilliard School, which adjoins Lincoln Center in Manhattan. At Juilliard, he studies piano performance with concert pianist Jerome Lowenthal. He attended Walnut Hill High School for the Arts, in Natick, MA.

While living in Raleigh, he studied with John Ruggero. Teddy has played with the Raleigh, Durham, and Winston-Salem symphony orchestras, and has won several piano competitions in North Carolina.

a John Q. aside:

As an undergraduate piano major, I studied briefly with my neighbor and concert pianist, Ruth Slenczynska. One of her teachers was the great French pianist, Alfred Cortot – who was also a teacher of Jerome Lowenthal. Also, after hearing Teddy play for the first time, I started lessons with John Ruggero. He's a wonderful teacher. Now, if I can just find the dedication, practice time (and talent) demonstrated by Vivian and Teddy.

Piano Recital Vivian Cheng, soloist Teddy Robie, accompanist

Tuesday, January 6, 2004 at 8:00pm

"La leggierezza" in F minor from Three
Concert Etudes, S. 144 Franz Liszt
1811-1886

Sonata no. 21 in C major, Opus 53 Ludwig van Beethoven
"Waldstein" 1770-1827

Allegro con brio
Adagio molto
Rondo Allegretto moderato

Partita No. 1 in B flat major, BWV 825 Johann Sebastian Bach
Praeludium 1685-1750

Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Menuet I and II
Gigue

Sonata No. 3 in A minor, Opus 28 Sergei Prokofiev
1891-1953

Intermission

Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Opus 11 Frédéric Chopin
Allegro maestoso 1810-1849

Romance: Larghetto
Rondo: Vivace

Food and drink, before and after recital, by Hideaway Cafe.
Yamaha Disklavier Pro piano supplied by Zenph Studios, Inc.
Audio recording by Mark Manring.

Please deactivate **mobile phones, pagers, and beeping watches** during the performance. Three restrooms are available: two downstairs and one upstairs.

Program Notes, by John Q. Walker

Liszt La leggierezza (1848)

A virtuosic showpiece by the master of the showpieces. *Les Trois Études de Concert* appeared in 1848 with the titles *Il Lamento* (A flat), *La Leggerezza* (F minor), and *Un Sospiro* (D flat) and these highly indicative titles are still in use today. The influence of Chopin may be discerned in all three, but in general they are longer, rather more elaborate and less concise than Chopin's etudes. The latter two pieces have become quite well known. This piece is a whirlpool of chromatic figuration marked *delicatamente* and *dolcissimo* which also reaches a grand climax before fading to a quiet close in F Major. Approx. 6 minutes.

Beethoven Piano Sonata no. 21 (1803-1804)

Count Ferdinand Ernst Gabriel von Waldstein was the young Beethoven's first great patron in Bonn - and his name will live for ever as the dedicatee of Beethoven's Waldstein Sonata. The piano was developing quickly in the early 1800s. The thin tone of early pianos was giving way to more powerful new instruments. They could make a soft slow note sustain for a long time, or produce ear-splitting chords that could fill a big hall. Beethoven, always a ground-breaker, relished the opportunities the new pianos gave him for the passionate and startling music that was becoming popular.

This sonata shows how eagerly Beethoven embraced this new technology. The opening chords chug out as if a music motor has been kick-started. The large-scale first movement exploits the wide dynamics now possible, often with bewildering contrasts.

The original 2nd movement was so long that Beethoven's publishers put it out separately. Beethoven replaced it with a four-minute quick movement that introduces the flowing Rondo finale. Approx. 25 minutes.

Bach Partita no. 1 (1727)

The six Partitas appeared singly in the years 1726 to 1731, and then were published as a unit, all at Bach's expense. At the age of 46, despite having already composed hundreds of cantatas, the Well-Tempered Clavier, and the St. Matthew Passion, among

other works, the Partitas were Bach's first published body of works. You may have noticed "BWV 825" in the title. BWV stands for the German phrase "Bach Werk Verzeichnis," literally Bach's work numbering. This is the scholarly numbering for all of Bach's compositions.

Each is a suite made up of popular Baroque instrumental dances of contrasting styles and rhythms. This first partita may be the most instantly accessible of the group. According to pianist Richard Goode, on the whole it "sort of sounds like Mozart. There is a kind of crystalline, euphonious and limpid grace about this partita."

The inspiration for the Partitas was Bach's need for teaching material. Can you imagine nowadays a piano teacher writing their own teaching material? Yet I realize I have two of John Ruggero's excellent piano teaching books on my bookshelves! Approx. 19 minutes.

Prokofiev Piano Sonata no. 3 (1917)

Like Mozart, Prokofiev was a composing prodigy, writing works by the age of five. He attended the university at a young age, and scandalized the staid faculty with his "modern" compositions. He kept notebooks of musical snippets he liked - little chunks of melodies, harmonies, and chords. He composed this exciting sonata "from old notebooks" - he'd built up a supply of parts which found their home in this one-movement work. His nine piano sonatas are considered the finest from the 20th century.

I'm a nut for this sonata. Once I discovered it, I couldn't wait to play it. I learned it myself in the early 1980's, struggling page by page for a year with the enormous technical difficulties. And then I watched Vivian learn it in a matter of weeks. Sigh. Approx. 8 minutes.

Chopin Piano Concerto no. 1 (1830)

Chopin wrote two early piano concertos, for his own stage performance. This was the second concerto he wrote, but the first that was published. The 1st movement is passionate, emotionally charged, and proud; the 2nd is restrained and singing; and the 3rd, a dance, is incredibly difficult (as if the previous two movements weren't hard enough). Approx. 25 minutes.