

## About the pianist

**Mei-Ting Sun** is a 22-year-old pianist who began playing piano at the age of three. He was the first prize winner of the first Piano-e-Competition in 2002. Named one of the Musicians of the Year 1996 by the Village Voice for his performance of the Op. 10 Etudes of Chopin, the pianist has performed in many of New York's concert halls, including Alice Tully Hall, where his performance of Ravel's Concerto in G was praised by *The New York Times* as a "stunningly fluid reading."

Mr. Sun has been featured several times on WQXR Classical Radio as part of the "Young Artist Showcase" program and on NPR as part of the "Performance Today" program. He has been heard in recital in much of the USA, Japan, and China. Appearances in the 2002-2003 season included concert tours of Spain and China, the opening Gala at the Taubman and Newport Festivals, and a recital at *La Roque d'Anthéron* festival in France. Recent engagements include concerts in Japan and the grand opening concert of the new Shanghai Conservatory Hall in September, another concert tour in China during October, and two performances with the Richmond Symphony. Upcoming concerto engagements include the Winnipeg and Macau Symphonies, and the National Spanish Orchestra.

A native of Shanghai, Mr. Sun arrived in New York at the age of 9, and entered the Professional Children's School and the Mannes College of Music, where he studied Ear Training with Marie Powers, Theory with Robert Cuckson, and Piano with Edward Aldwell. He has since received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the Mannes College of Music, studying with Edward Aldwell. Currently he is a C. V. Starr Doctoral Fellow at the Juilliard School, studying with Robert McDonald.

## Winner of the First



presents

## Mei-Ting Sun pianist

Thursday, February 26, 2004 at 7:30pm

### Two Sonatas in C Major, K 420 and 421

Domenico Scarlatti  
1685-1757

### Kreisleriana, opus 16

Robert Schumann  
1810-1856

### 8 pieces inspired by E.T.A. Hoffmann

### Toccata, opus 7

Robert Schumann  
1810-1856

### *Intermission*

### Ten Preludes, opus 23

Sergei Rachmaninoff  
1873-1943

No. 1 in F sharp minor (Largo)

No. 2 in B flat (Maestoso)

No. 3 in D minor (Tempo di minuetto)

No. 4 in D (Andante cantabile)

No. 5 in G minor (Alla marcia)

No. 6 in E flat (Andante)

No. 7 in C minor (Allegro)

No. 8 in A flat (Allegro vivace)

No. 9 in E flat minor (Presto)

No. 10 in G flat (Largo)

Yamaha Disklavier Pro piano supplied by Zenph Studios, Inc.

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

International piano-e-competition

Minneapolis / St. Paul, Minnesota. United States of America. May 25 - June 5, 2004



Program Notes, by John Q. Walker

### **Scarlatti Sonatas (173x?)**

Domenico Scarlatti was one of the first composers of virtuoso works for keyboard. He lived at the same time as J.S. Bach. Although Scarlatti was Italian (and was the son of a famous Italian composer), he did most of his composing while living in Spain.

His keyboard works are called sonatas, although they they're not really sonatas in the classical sense of that term. They are shorter pieces with some of the prototype forms of the later sonata structures – such as the harmonic relationships and the use of recaps in the closings. The sonatas have strong rhythms and great technical brilliance, shown by the use of repeated notes, wide skips, and long arpeggios.

He often wrote sonatas in pairs, with one slow piece and one faster piece. The pair in C major that Mr. Sun has selected is unusual in that both have fast tempos.

### **Schumann Kreisleriana (1838)**

The eight pieces in the Schumann's Kreisleriana were written in four days, inspired by a character named Johannes Kreisler, in a book by the author E.T.A. Hoffman. The grotesque side of this fictional personality is portrayed in the fast pieces.

Of Schumann's first 23 opuses, all were for solo piano. Kreisleriana, his opus 16, is a group of short pieces, which is typical of Schumann's writing style at the time. Many of the pieces share a similar structure or theme – Schumann liked to call them variations without a theme. They usually vary between a fast and slow movement, and are written in rondo form.

Schumann ends many of the pieces slowly. Even the last piece, after a giant climax, fades away quietly.

### **Schumann Toccata (1830)**

The Toccata is a perpetual motion piece – it has a steady pulse of 1/16<sup>th</sup> notes throughout the piece. This is one of the most difficult short piano works composed before Liszt. The keyboard techniques used are actually quite uncomfortable for the performer – Schumann did not write comfortably for the hands, unlike the composition of Chopin or Liszt.

It is written in the sonata form: a large ABA structure with two theme groups in the exposition.

### **Rachmaninoff Preludes (1902)**

Rachmaninoff wrote most of his compositions for his own performance – he was one of the greatest virtuoso pianists of all time. His most famous prelude was the first one he wrote, the famous one in C-sharp minor – which he grew to dislike as he was requested to perform it in every recital. He wrote two more books of preludes, ten in opus 23 and thirteen in opus 32, for a total of 24 preludes in all. These books are rarely performed as a group (they're really difficult).

These opus 23 preludes can be discussed in groups. Numbers 1, 4, 6, and 10 are slow and lyrical. Numbers 2, 5, 7, 8, and 9 are fast. Number 2, in particular, is a glorious maestoso. Prelude number 5 is the most famous in the set. Numbers 7, 8, and 9 appear to be written in a cycle. Many consider number 9 to be one of the most difficult pieces written for the piano. Finally, prelude number 3 is a minuet – neither slow nor fast – which doesn't seem to fit with the other pieces.

### About the piano

This is a traditional nine-foot concert grand piano that is also full of lasers, solenoids, and computers. It can record and play back a pianist's keystrokes and pedal movements with exceptional precision. In addition, these functions can be fully controlled by computer software. You may have seen regular Disklavier pianos serving as player pianos in shops, hotels, and casinos. The rare "Pro" models employ many times the "number of bits" compared to the regular Disklavier models.

This piano was built new for the first "piano-e-competition," which took place in Minneapolis in June 2002. Its action has recently been regulated and its mechanisms have been calibrated to factory specs by Yamaha's finest US technician, Tom Kaplan. It is running the latest beta version of Disklavier Pro software, direct from the Yamaha factory in Japan. The Product Manager of Yamaha's Piano Division observed in a recent site visit that Zenph Studios was "their most advanced customer."