

It was affixed, as were so many fanciful nineteenth-century subtitles, by enterprising publishers with a view towards sales. In form, it closely paralleled Franz Liszt's efforts in the direction of an extended, unbroken composition that develops from a germinal melodic cell or "motto," which passes through various metamorphoses in its course through the piece.

The work opens with the "motto" – the melodic-rhythmic pattern that pervades the entire composition – a long-short-short pattern on the same pitch. The second theme (E flat major) is in a lyrical vein but retains the rhythmic motto, while the third theme reverses the pattern. The Adagio consists of the "Wanderer" tune in C sharp minor, followed by seven variations, some quite brilliant. The motto rhythm becomes transformed in the third section (corresponding to a scherzo third movement) into a robust triple metre. The song-like Trio passage is derived from the second theme of the first movement. The finale, in addition to its exceptional technical demands, offers a rare instance of fugal writing in Schubert's music. The fugal subject, too, is based on the motto rhythm.

Bradley Wood from Christchurch is twenty years old and is currently a third year student at the University of Auckland studying towards a Bachelor of Music degree majoring in performance piano with Rae de Lisle. His early piano studies were with Bronwyn Bijl then had the opportunity to study under Maurice Till from 2009 until 2011. In 2010 he gained his ATCL and LTCL Diplomas with Distinction. He has performed with orchestras including the Christchurch Youth Orchestra, Nelson Symphony Orchestra and has upcoming performances with the Canterbury Philharmonia and the APO. In 2013 he was awarded the University's Janetta McStay Prize for Pianists. Bradley is the Auckland Philharmonia's Piano Scholar for 2014. He was one of only 16 pianists selected from 54 applications worldwide to be chosen to participate in the 2014 Kerikeri International Piano Competition.



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Bradley Wood

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23 June 2014

Programme



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Ballade No. 2 in B Minor, S.171 Franz Liszt(1811 - 1886)



In 1848, just before he took up the position of music director in Weimar, Franz Liszt composed a series of piano works in forms that had already been identified with Chopin; these include ballades, polonaises, a berceuse, mazurkas, and waltzes. Chopin and Liszt had been good friends for years, and at this time Chopin was gravely ill—he would die the following year, and Liszt’s works may perhaps be understood as an act of homage.

The Ballade No. 2 in B Minor is in a form that Chopin had made famous; Liszt’s Ballade preserves the spirit though not the form of Chopin’s ballades. It opens with a foreboding introduction, full of ominous chromatic rumblings in the left hand, and this gives way to a brief lyric episode. Liszt then does a curious thing, repeating the entire first section, but now in the key of B-flat minor, before launching into the main body of the piece, marked *Allegro deciso* and driven along great fanfares. In his study of Liszt’s music,

Sacheverell Sitwell describes this section as “concerned, as it were, less with personal sufferings than with great happenings on the epic scale, barbarian invasions, cities in flames—tragedies of public, more than private, import.” Something of the varied character of this music may be seen in Liszt’s performance markings, which span a huge range, from *tempetuoso* to *delicatamente*. The music eventually drives to a thunderous climax marked *grandioso*, then falls away to conclude on the lyric music of the opening section.

Piano Sonata No. 23 in F minor, Op.57 “Appassionata”

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 - 1827)

1. *Allegro assai*
2. *Andante con moto*
3. *Allegro ma non troppo - Presto*



Both the opening movement of the “Appassionata” Sonata in F minor, Op. 57, composed 1804-05, and its finale are in sonata form, and that tonal opposition is the principal dualism of the work. But Beethoven also plays powerfully with severe contrasts of dynamics, range, and articulation, and he is a master of expressive silences.

All of this is immediately apparent in the opening bars of the “Appassionata.” (The nickname is not the composer’s, but it accurately suggests the defining character of the piece.) It begins in ominous mystery, with a hushed traversal of the notes of the F-minor triad, full of latent energy and developmental potential while defining the tonic key as starkly as possible.

There are suggestive silences, unexpected harmonic bumps, great sonic holes between the widely spread right and left hands, and a kinetic explosion at the end. You will recognise the recapitulation when all of this returns, but now over a throbbing bass line that fills in the expectant silences with audible urgency.

The central movement is a contemplative theme in D-flat major – a key much alluded to in the first movement – and increasingly agitated variations. It ends with an enriched reprise of the theme, leading directly into the whirlwind finale, a physically gruelling dramatic challenge that raises the violence ante to bank-breaking levels in a furiously accelerated coda.

“If Beethoven, who was so fond of portraying scenes from nature, was perhaps thinking of ocean waves on a stormy night when from the distance a cry for help is heard, then such a picture will give the pianist a guide to the correct playing of this great tonal painting,” wrote Beethoven’s virtuoso pupil Carl Czerny about the finale of Op. 57. “There is no doubt that in many of his most beautiful works Beethoven was inspired by similar visions or pictures from his reading or from his own lively imagination. It is equally certain that if it were always possible to know the idea behind the composition, we would have the key to the music and its performance.”

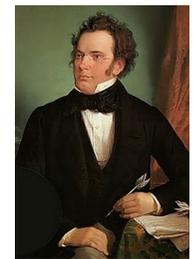
INTERVAL

Refreshments at the *Studio Cafeteria*



Fantasy in C major, D. 760 “Wanderer Fantasy” Franz Schubert (1797 - 1828)

1. *Allegro con Fuoco*
2. *Adagio*
3. *Presto*
4. *Allegro*



Schubert’s Fantasy in C Major, composed in late 1822, proved to be the most pianistically difficult and structurally advanced music he ever composed. Nearly everything he wrote for the piano was meant for his own use, but the Wanderer Fantasy was an

exception, written for a pupil of Hummel.

The subtitle “Wanderer” derives from a song of the same title, written by Schubert in his nineteenth year. The Fantasy’s slow movement incorporates the tune of the “Wanderer” song. The text, by the obscure poet Georg Philipp Schmidt, speaks of Byronic gloom, melancholia, loneliness, the search for happiness, estrangement, and of course, wandering – all subjects dear to the hearts of nineteenth-century Romanticists. Schubert set this text to music in 1816 and it became one of the most popular art songs of the entire nineteenth century. The title “Wanderer” was not assigned by Schubert, who called the work simply Fantasy in C major.