

VERIZON HALL

MONDAY, DECEMBER 8

8 PM

MASTER MUSICIANS, RECITAL SERIES

Daniel Barenboim, piano

ALL-LISZT PROGRAM

Années de pèlerinage. Deuxième Année: Italie
Sonetto 47 del Petrarca (Benedetto sia'l giorno)
Sonetto 104 del Petrarca (Pace non trovo)
Sonetto 123 del Petrarca (I' vidi in terra)

Légendes

St. François d'Assise. La prédication aux oiseaux

Années de pèlerinage. Deuxième Année: Italie
Après une lecture du Dante (Fantasia quasi sonata)

—Intermission—

Paraphrases on Operas of Giuseppe Verdi

Miserere du *Trovatore*

Aida. Danza sacra e duetto final

Rigoletto. Paraphrase de concert



KIERANTIMBERLAKE
PROUD SUPPORTERS OF THE KIMMEL CENTER

ARCHITECTURE PLANNING ARTS RESEARCH
420 NORTH 20TH STREET PHILADELPHIA PA 19130
KIERANTIMBERLAKE.COM

CELLOPHANE HOUSE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART NEW YORK, NY

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

FRANZ LISZT

(b. Raiding, Hungary, 1811; d. Bayreuth, 1886)
Années de pèlerinages. Deuxième Année: Italie
Sonetto 47 del Petrarca (Benedetto sia'l giorno)
Sonetto 104 del Petrarca (Pace non trovo)
Sonetto 123 del Petrarca (I' vidi in terra)

Liszt's three *Sonetti del Petrarca* (Petrarch Sonnets) form part of his fascinating three-book collection of piano pieces, *Années de pèlerinage* (Years of Pilgrimage). The project spanned a 40-year period of his life, beginning when he was a traveling virtuoso in his twenties. Whereas the first book, *Première année, Suisse* (First year, Swiss), had been concerned mainly with evocations of nature, the second book, *Deuxième année, Italie* (Second year, Italy), dealt with works of art—both literary and visual—that Liszt had encountered on his travels in Italy with Countess Marie d'Agoult between 1837 and 1839.

The *Petrarch Sonnets* take their inspiration from three of the best known sonnets in Petrarch's *Canzoniere*: *Benedetto sia'l giorno* (No. 47), *Pace non trovo* (No. 104), and *I' vidi in terra angelici costumi* (No. 123). Liszt had originally set the poems as songs for high tenor voice (first sketched in 1838, revised 1842–46), then transcribed the songs for piano solo (1846), then revised the pieces again for the *Années* (1858). He even returned to the songs many years later, making “simpler” versions for medium tenor or baritone.

Taken as a group, the various musical settings of these sonnets provide fascinating insight into Liszt's transcription procedures. Formally, the piano pieces, with some divergences from the songs, loosely follow the structure of Petrarch's sonnets with introduction, interludes, and coda. In *Sonetto 47* Liszt reflects on Petrarch's lines about the joys and pangs of love that resulted in his poetic outpourings. A brief prelude—at first surging, then declamatory—introduces the flowing

main theme, which the composer asks to be played “with intimate feeling.” Occasionally passion flares, but the overall impression is one of dreamy contemplation.

Sonetto 104 erupts in an agitated ascent that introduces the main melody, which Liszt presents three times in different guises (the various versions of the piece differ significantly in form). The basically lyrical melody is subjected to occasional tempo changes and pianistic outbursts that suggest the sonnet's images of a restless search for peace. A recitative-like passage introduces the coda, which dies away quietly.

In *Sonetto 123* Liszt projects a serene mood to represent the angelic grace of the poet's love. The rippling middle range accompaniment figure returns periodically, overlaid with singing melody. An ethereal central appearance of the main melody in high register contrasted with its return to a lower register suggests the sonnet's images of heaven and earth. The ending hovers yearningly in the air.

Légendes

St. François d'Assise. La prédication aux oiseaux

In the last third of his life, when Liszt was living in Rome, he turned increasingly to sacred subjects in his compositions. Among the best of these are his *Two Legends* for piano of 1862–63: *St. Francis of Assisi: The Sermon to the Birds* and *St. Francis of Paola Walking on the Waves*. Just after completion, he transcribed the pieces for orchestra (not the reverse as has sometimes been reported), but the orchestra version remained unpublished until 1984. Liszt himself gave the first public performance of the piano version on August 29, 1865, in Pest, during a six-week sojourn in his native Hungary. He had, however, played the first privately for Pope Pius IX on July 11, 1863, and for some old friends on a trip to Karlsruhe, Germany, in August 1864.

Where the expertise of Temple University meets
the best of Philadelphia cultural resources.



www.temple.edu/boyer/musicprep

 Boyer College
of Music and Dance
TEMPLE UNIVERSITY*

Temple Music Prep
1515 Market Street, 5th fl.
Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-204-1512

SEE THE GRANDEUR HEAR THE PERFECTION FEEL THE POWER

BUY A PIPE IN AMERICA'S NEWEST, MOST MAJESTIC CONCERT HALL ORGAN



The Fred J. Cooper Memorial Organ ranks as the largest concert hall organ in the United States. With its nearly 7,000 pipes, four blowers, 300 levels of memory, 111 stops, pipe sizes ranging from about the size of a drinking straw up to two feet square by 32 feet high, this is truly the King of Instruments!

Show your support for this magnificent instrument by purchasing a pipe for yourself or your special someone. Pipes are available to name for as little as \$100. Join the Pipes for the People fund, and audiences will enjoy your gift for generations to come.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE FRED J. COOPER
MEMORIAL ORGAN OR TO MAKE A DONATION,
PLEASE CALL 215-790-5321
OR VISIT KIMMELCENTER.ORG/ORGAN.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Liszt was reportedly inspired to write the *Sermon to the Birds* when the sight of thousands of sparrows rising above Monte Mario reminded him of the delightful story of St. Francis preaching to a multitude of birds. According to a passage in the famous 14th-century anonymous text *Fioretti di San Francesco* (Little flowers of St. Francis), the saint stopped his companions in the roadway as he marveled at the profusion of birds. He walked into the field to preach to the birds that were on the ground, and “forthwith those in the trees came around him and not one moved during the whole sermon; nor would they fly away until the saint had given them his blessing.”

Liszt’s wonderful rendering of this scene ranks on a par with the celebrated musical bird depictions by Vivaldi, Couperin, Rameau, Saint-Saëns, Respighi, and Messiaen. Yet Liszt modestly asked forgiveness in his preface for his “lack of ingenuity” in capturing “the wonderful profusion of the text,” owing in part to the limitations of “an instrument so lacking in variety of accent and tone color as the piano”—this from one who could draw colors from a piano—playing or composing—as well as anyone in history! Liszt does not simply portray the chirping, twittering, and trilling of the birds, but actually “narrates” the story to a certain extent, as in his symphonic poems. Thus, after the exquisite opening sonorities of the birds by themselves, we are fully aware when St. Francis begins speaking, which Liszt marks as a recitative in the score (piano left hand), and when the birds respond in shortening snippets until the full force of the saint’s oratory takes over. Episodes come and go, in which we imagine the saint addressing different subjects and the birds commenting in a variety of ways. The saint seems to give a quiet chordal blessing and utter a few parting words of recitative before Liszt lets the birds have a peaceful last word.

Années de pèlerinages. Deuxième Année: Italie Après un lecture du Dante (Fantasia quasi sonata)

Liszt placed the “Dante Sonata,” as it is often misleadingly called, as the seventh and last piece of his second book of *Années de pèlerinage* (see above) when he published the collection in 1858. He had, however, composed this amazing non-sonata-like piece in 1839 while living in the village of San Rossore. He did not, as commentators often used to assert, write the piece in idyllic bliss on Lake Geneva in 1837. Apparently he did read Dante often with Countess Marie d’Agoult in the 1830s, and his “Fantasia quasi Sonata” was indeed inspired by specific passages in the *Divine Comedy*, but Liszt did not specify which ones, as he had with his literary inspirations for other pieces in the collection. Scholars have had to determine which lines, based on an annotated copy of the music owned by Liszt student Walter Bache.

Liszt gave the first public performance of his Dante work in November 1839, but we’ll never know its exact configuration because he revised the piece sometime after 1849 in Weimar, and the earlier manuscript no longer exists. It was at the time of revision that he attached the current title, a slight misreading of Victor Hugo’s title for a poetry collection: *Après un lecture de Dante* (After a reading of Dante). (Liszt used “du” instead of “de.”)

The “Dante Fantasia” is a ferocious one-movement work in several sections, sometimes bearing earmarks of sonata form, but more often showing programmatic concerns rather than abstract construction. Liszt’s motivation was to depict hell and paradise as described in Dante’s *Divine Comedy*. The ominous plunge at the beginning of the Fantasia surely shows the descent to hell, responding to Dante’s line “Abandon hope all ye who enter here.” Liszt draws on the dissonance and historical associa-

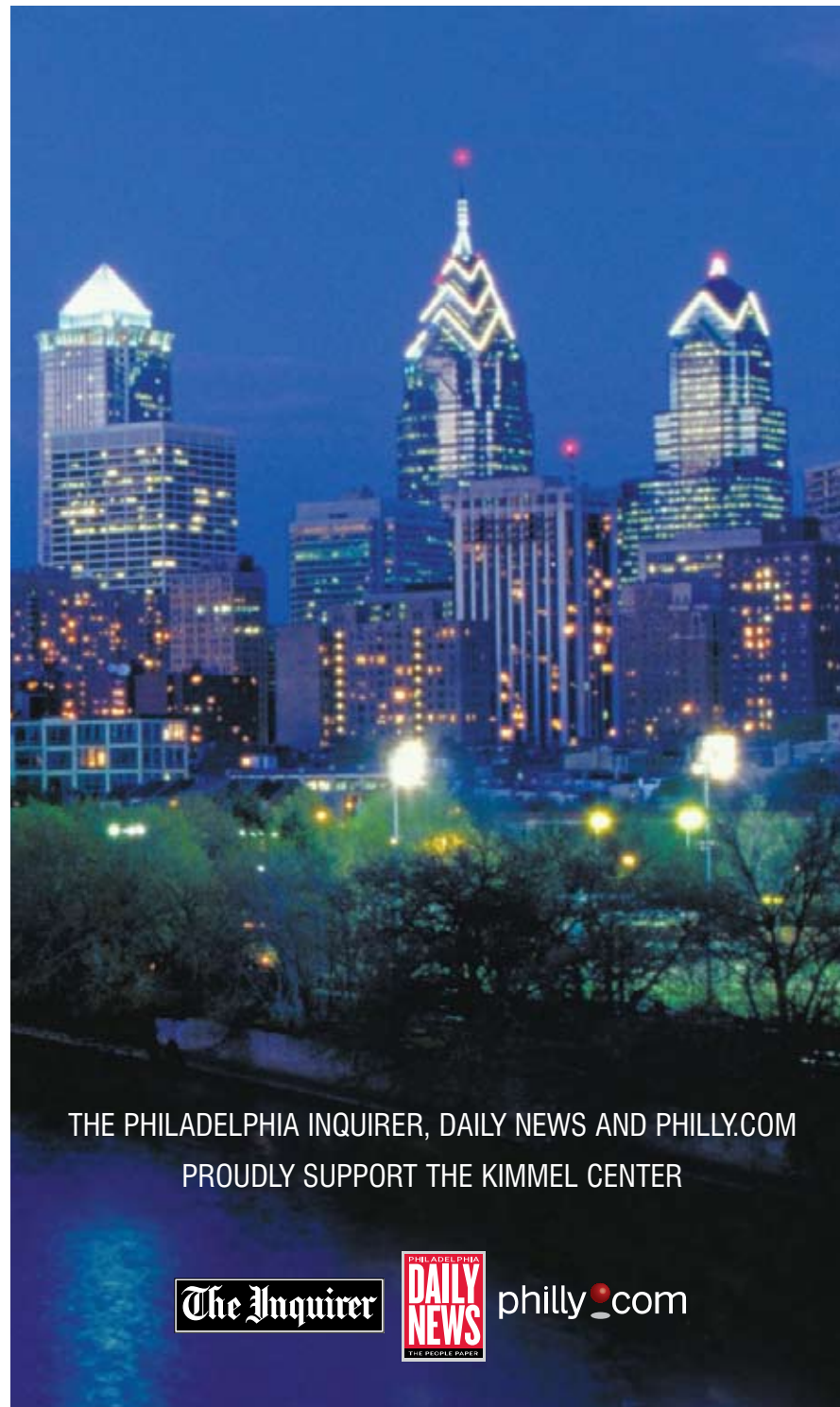


V THE VICTOR CAFÉ
A family business since 1918

Come see and be seen at South Philly’s historic dining landmark. Enjoy our fine Italian cuisine while our singers serenade you with selections from your favorite operas and musicals. Then enjoy our new candlelight lounge upstairs.

Live opera performed 7 nights a week • Reservations suggested

www.victorcafe.com - 215-468-3040 - 1303 Dickinson Street, Philadelphia



THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER, DAILY NEWS AND PHILLY.COM
PROUDLY SUPPORT THE KIMMEL CENTER

The Inquirer **DAILY NEWS** philly.com
THE PEOPLE PAPER

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

tions of the interval of a tritone—called the “Devil’s interval” since medieval times.

The main theme of the “exposition” depicts the anguish of the souls in the Inferno: “Strange tongues, horrible cries, words of pain, tones of anger, voices deep and hoarse”—a tour de force for the pianist. A “chorale theme,” which nevertheless is interlaced with furious octaves, is said to portray Lucifer himself: “The banners of Hell’s Monarch do come forth / . . . As, when breathes a cloud / Heavy and dense, or when the shades of night / fall on our hemisphere.” The “slow movement,” or section, introduces a lyrical element, which turns out to be the chorale theme stripped of its fury, reflecting Dante’s reference to Lucifer as “The creature eminent in beauty once.”

Combining and developing all his motives, Liszt summons all his pianistic brilliance, then introduces toward the end a vision of paradise that transforms the Lucifer “chorale” into shimmering “heavenly” music. These strains become grand perorations that unleash an almost giddy presto section before finally culminating in majesty. Nevertheless, it is Liszt’s tempestuous vision of Dante’s Inferno rather than the grandeur of Paradise that lingers in the mind.

Paraphrases on Operas of Giuseppe Verdi
Misere du Trovatore
Aida. Danza sacra e duetto final
Rigoletto. Paraphrase de concert

Over the course of his long career, Liszt composed not only original works for the piano but also some 60 works based on popular operas of his day. He divided them into two categories: *paraphrases*, which allowed the composer freedom to create a fantasy based on themes from the opera, and *transcriptions*, which called for the composer to follow the original more closely. In either type, he was an acknowledged master, finding ways of encap-

sulating the magic of the vocal and orchestral sounds on the entirely different medium of the piano.

One of the most remarkable contributions Liszt made with his operatic arrangements was the advancement of piano technique. Brahms, often held up as an “anti-Lisztian,” opined: “Whoever really wants to know what Liszt has done for the piano should study his old operatic fantasies. They represent the classicism of piano technique.” This even extends to inventing new ways of notating the music so that themes he wanted to stress could appear in larger type than accompaniment or secondary ideas.

Operatic fantasies and transcriptions were all the rage through most of the 19th century, partly as a way to disseminate the latest operas in the days before recordings. In addition, the phenomenon of the virtuoso composer/performer—the “rock stars” of their day—fueled the popularity of the genre, which was a lucrative business for publishers. Yet these arrangements began falling out of favor at the turn of the century, in part because of oversaturation, but also with the rise of musicology there came a new emphasis on “authenticity” and more “serious” works, which tarnished the reputation of such operatic “pot-pourris.” More recently, however, the best of them, with Liszt’s at the forefront, have regained a footing on the concert stage and have established their place on recordings.

Liszt made his paraphrase of the “Miserere” from Verdi’s *Il trovatore* in 1859, toward the end of his often difficult tenure as Kapellmeister at the ducal court of Weimar. His particular impetus was to add a third Verdi arrangement to his previously composed *Ernani* and *Rigoletto* paraphrases for pianist/conductor Hans von Bülow (also Liszt’s son-in-law) to play on a concert in Berlin on January 6, 1860.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

The “Miserere” appears in Act IV of *Trovatore* as choral background to a duet between Leonora and the condemned Manrico. Liszt begins with the dark, foreboding marchlike music that refers to the hero’s impending death before focusing on the Leonora and Manrico’s love music. The fate and love elements alternate throughout, receiving remarkable permutations and dazzling pianistic treatment, with the love music bringing about the grand conclusion.

During the last 15 years of his life, Liszt split his time among Rome, Budapest, and Weimar—spending countless hours in carriages and trains. He first saw Verdi’s *Aida* in Budapest on February 19, 1876, and was moved to make his *Aida* arrangement probably later the same year. Though he happened to call it a transcription, it is surely a paraphrase if we go by his definition of treating his materials freely.

Liszt bases his introduction on the almost marchlike but slightly exotic Danza sacra in Act I, Scene 2, which the Priestesses perform after singing their prayer to the god Phtha. Liszt then brings in the prayer melody as his the first of his two main themes. In the opera this theme returns as the Priests’ chorus in Act IV, where it accompanies the final duet of the lovers Aida and Radames, “O terra addio” (O earth, goodbye). Thus Liszt’s juxtaposition

of these two ideas throughout the paraphrase makes perfect sense. The Priests’ music becomes threatening just before he introduces the strains of the duet in utmost simplicity. Act IV’s split-level staging of the temple with the Priests and the vault below with the lovers is difficult to render on the piano, but Liszt’s many changes of mood and texture, help to create the illusion. After the final menace of the Priest’s music, Liszt ends ethereally, as did Verdi, as the dying lovers look toward heaven.

Liszt’s *Rigoletto* paraphrase was first performed by Bülow, as mentioned above, but it had actually been written somewhat earlier, possibly in 1855, and only touched up in 1859 for the January 1860 performance. Liszt draws on the famous quartet in the final act, “Bella figlia dell’amore,” sung by the Duke, Maddalena, Rigoletto, and Gilda, shortly after the famous “La donna è mobile” aria. The introduction highlights a phrase that Maddalena sings partway into the quartet, then takes up the main lyrical melody. In typical fashion Liszt contrasts bubbly and contemplative moods and presents myriad pianistic challenges, the last of which is a section of dazzling octaves in both hands at breakneck speed.

—Jane Vial Jaffe

SEE | HEAR | FEEL



Run your ad in Showcase and **SEE** the return,
HEAR from you customers, and **FEEL** the thrill of the Arts.
Contact Joe Ciresi at 215.790.5884 for a customized advertising package.

Introducing Pre-Theater Dinner
Above the Avenue of the Arts
Experience the Flavors of XIX
with a Three-Course Cafe Table Dinner

MONDAY – SATURDAY

5:30-9:30PM

\$30 PER PERSON

XIX
NINETEEN

Park Hyatt Philadelphia at the Bellevue, 19th Floor.
Broad and Walnut Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102
TELEPHONE 215.790.1919 FACSIMILE 215.732.8518
www.nineteenrestaurant.com