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About the Music

J.S. Bach's works have invited transcription and arrangement more than any other classical music; during the early 20th century, pianists were particularly interested in unearthing works of Bach that had been ignored or forgotten. While Dutch pianist Egon Petri's arrangement of three minuets remains obscure, Myra Hess's transcription of the final chorale prelude from Cantata 147 was responsible for its eventual popular appeal. I admire Hess's and Dinu Lipatti's iconic recordings of it, though their tempos were decidedly late Romantic (slow) in conception; a brisker tempo – in line with Bach's likely intention – allows the chorale "Jesus remains my joy" to emerge with exuberance rather than solemnity. For reference, I encourage the audience to listen to Ton Koopman's luminous recording of this cantata with the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra.

John Cage's *Dream* consists of three repetitions of a single undulating line in Phrygian mode. Neither major nor minor, Phrygian is perhaps the mode best aligned with ambiguity, reflection, and dreams. Cage indicates that notes can be freely sustained with the fingers or the pedal at will, and so this work presents an opportunity to explore the subtlest sounds on the instrument: the audible "beats" of dissonant frequencies, the buzz of the dampers returning to the strings, the play with duration and sonority. *Dream* was premiered with choreography by Merce Cunningham at Black Mountain College in 1948.

Beethoven's Sonata No. 30 (of 32) is arguably his most beautiful. The third of the five "late" sonatas written years after he had completely lost his hearing, it blurs the lines of form, harmony, and rhythm as it ushers the listener along a journey that verges on hallucination. This is Beethoven on another planet – as iconoclastic in his time as Cage was in his – and it has captivated me since I first heard it on an LP of former UA faculty member Russell Sherman. Sherman's version was free and freewheeling, so when a student commented last week that my performance of the sonata was "the freest" he had ever heard, I took it as a compliment, though perhaps it was not intended as one!

As a child I spent many nights after my parents and siblings had gone to bed listening to an LP box set of Artur Schnabel playing the polonaises of Chopin, recordings I have enjoyed revisiting in the past months. The "Military" and "Heroic" Polonaises perhaps need no introduction; the "Tragic" is lesser known though clearly the grandest in scope and pianistic demands (the octave tour-de-force of the "Heroic" aside). But to me and to many pianists I know, the Polonaise-Fantaisie is the most beguiling and challenging, a distillation of the virility of the Polish dance through the melancholy poetry of Chopin's last years.

– John Milbauer

Poster & Program Cover Art

The younger and better of only two known photographs of Frédéric Chopin (1849)

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Chopin



JOHN MILBAUER

FACULTY ARTIST SERIES RECITAL

THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 2018

HOLSCLAW HALL

7:00 P.M.

 THE UNIVERSITY
OF ARIZONA

COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS
Fred Fox School of Music

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John Milbauer, piano

*Faculty Artist Series Recital
Thursday, March 1, 2018
Holsclaw Hall
7:00 p.m.*

PROGRAM

The first half will be performed without pause.

- Wer Gott vertraut, hat wohlgebaut, BWV 433**Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)
- Three Menuets**..... J.S. Bach/Egon Petri
(1881-1962)
- Sarabande from French Suite in G Major, BWV 816**..... J.S. Bach
“Jesu bleibet meine Freude” from Cantata 147J.S. Bach/Myra Hess
(1890-1965)
- Dream (for J.K.L.)**John Cage
(1912-1992)
- Sonata No. 30 in E Major, Op. 109**.....Ludwig van Beethoven
- I. *Vivace, ma non troppo* (1770-1827)
 - II. *Prestissimo*
 - III. *Gesangvoll, mit innigster empfindung (Songful, with inner feeling)*

INTERMISSION

- Polonaise in A-flat Major, Op. 53 (“Heroic”)** Frédéric Chopin
Mazurka in C Major, Op. 24, No. 2 (1810-1849)
Mazurka in C-sharp Minor, Op. 63, No. 3
Polonaise in A Major, Op. 40 No. 1 (“Military”)
- Polonaise-Fantaisie in A-flat Major, Op.61**
Mazurka in F Minor, Op. 63, No. 2
Polonaise in F-sharp Minor, Op. 44 (“Tragic”)

*Please join us for a reception in the Green Room
hosted by the Fred Fox School of Music
with the assistance of students
from Dr. Milbauer’s studio.*

HOLSCLAW HALL IS PROUD TO FEATURE THE
Peter & Debbie Coogan Steinway

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About the Artist



Steinway Artist John Milbauer has recently performed in Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Spain, Switzerland and Japan as well as throughout the United States. Highlights of the past season include Ravel’s Concerto in G with the Boston Pops and Keith Lockhart in Boston’s Symphony Hall, an interactive media/music collaboration with MIT’s media lab, Poulenc’s *Aubade* with San Diego Winds, recitals with Stephanie Houtzeel of the Vienna State Opera, and residencies with the Conservatorios Nacionales Superiores de Sevilla and Jaén in Spain. Current projects include performances of Milbauer’s “Which Side Are You On?” program based on themes of protest, immigration, and workers’ rights. A 2017

review in Sevilla said “John Milbauer, in this extraordinary program, reminds us that we all can be refugees, exiles, and immigrants.” France’s *Republique du Centre* has called him “a virtuoso of the first magnitude” while *American Record Guide* wrote, “Milbauer employs a full expressive range, performs with astounding delicacy, and conveys unspeakable wonder through an intimate touch and astonishing versatility.” A laureate of the Orléans Concours in France for piano music of the 20th Century, he has performed concerts devoted only to chance music and enjoys playing music that employs electronic sounds, prepared piano, extended techniques, and graphic notation; in a similar vein, he has contributed a chapter on the performance of the music of John Cage to *The Pianist’s Craft* series. A versatile musician, Milbauer has performed with the Mills Brothers, violinist David Garrett, and Pink Martini.

Milbauer studied music, classics, and government at Harvard College before earning degrees from the Eastman School of Music, The Juilliard School, Manhattan School of Music, and, as recipient of a Fulbright grant, the Liszt Academy in Budapest. He was awarded the Eastman Performer’s Certificate and the Wolodarsky Prize from the Banff Centre, was nominated for the Gina Bachauer prize for outstanding pianist at Juilliard, and was a finalist in the Kosciuszko Foundation Chopin Competition in New York. His teachers include Jerome Lowenthal, Ferenc Rados, György Sebök, and Rebecca Penneys. Currently professor of piano and coordinator of the keyboard area at the University of Arizona Fred Fox School of Music, Milbauer has been co-director of the Chautauqua Piano Program with Nicola Melville since 2012, helping to transform it into one of the premier summer piano programs in the Americas. An avid backpacker, Milbauer has led more than a dozen backcountry tours through Grand Canyon, most recently a solo hike on the Tanner and Beamer Trails.

