

# PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

a life more beautiful

PREVIEW  
NOTES

EINAV YARDEN, *piano*

Friday, November 30 – 7:30 PM

*Benjamin Franklin Hall, American Philosophical Society*

**PROGRAM** (*Selection of Program Notes*)

**Drei Fantasiestücke, Op. 111**

**Robert Schumann**

*Born: June 8, 1810, in Zwickau, Germany*

*Died: July 29, 1856, in Bonn, Germany*

*Composed: 1851*

*Duration: 12 minutes*

Following Schumann's move to the Rhine to become the musical director of the Düsseldorf Music Society, times remained hard for him. By 1851, when Schumann wrote this collection of three pieces, he had already been struggling with mental illness, and despite several initial successes, he increasingly encountered resistance from musicians and the public. He thus worked all the more intensively at home on his new works. "R. has composed three piano pieces of a very serious, passionate character, which greatly please me," Clara Schumann wrote in her diary in September 1851.

**Fantasia in C Major, Hob. XVII:4**

**Franz Joseph Haydn**

*Born: March 31, 1732, in Rohrau, Austria*

*Died: May 31, 1809, Rohrau, Austria*

*Composed: 1789*

*Duration: 7 minutes*

In March 1789, Haydn wrote to his publisher Artaria & Co.: "In a moment of great good humor I have completed a new Capriccio for fortepiano, whose taste, singularity, and special construction cannot fail to receive approval from connoisseurs and amateurs alike." The work in question was the one we know as the Fantasia in C Major. Based on an Austrian folksong, *Do Bäuren hat d'Katz valor'n* ("The farmer's wife has lost her cat"), this madcap 3/8 *Presto* is a work of scintillating virtuosity, full of quasi-orchestral effects.

**Piano Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 27, No. 1**

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

*Born: December 16, 1770, in Bonn, Germany*

*Died: March 26, 1827, in Vienna Austria*

*Composed: 1800-01*

*Duration: 15 minutes*

Beethoven was 31 years old when he was writing Op. 27. He had been living in Vienna for eight years and was firmly established as one of the best pianists around. Despite his success, Beethoven's deafness was becoming more and more apparent, and frustration turned to into dark depression. Playing the piano was one of the few ways he had left to communicate as he wished. He had already been experimenting with variations on traditional forms in his first four sonatas, but in Op. 27, perhaps trying to free himself from any impediment to his expression, Beethoven throws convention into the wind and marks both pieces *quasi una fantasia*.

**Fantasia in C Major, Op. 17**

**Robert Schumann**

*Composed: 1836-38*

*Duration: 30 minutes*

In a letter to Clara Wieck, Robert Schumann wrote of his great *Fantasia* in C Major: "You can only understand the *Fantasia* if you go back to the unhappy summer of 1836 when we were separated." Indeed, even from a composer as emotionally soul-bearing as Schumann, it is difficult to imagine a piece more imbued with passionate and unresolved longing. The *Fantasia* was composed during a particularly long separation from Clara when their future together was, at best, uncertain. Dedicated to Franz Liszt, the *Fantasia* began its life—publicly, at least—as a musical tribute to Beethoven.