

Sunday, April 1, 2012, 3pm
Hertz Hall

Jonathan Biss, *piano*

PROGRAM

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) Sonata No. 5 in C minor, Op. 10, No. 1 (1798)

Allegro molto con brio
Adagio molto
Finale: Prestissimo

Leos Janáček (1854–1928) In the Mists (1912)

Andante
Molto adagio — Presto
Andantino —
Presto — Meno mosso

Beethoven Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor
(*Sonata quasi una Fantasia*), Op. 27,
No. 2, “Moonlight” (1801)

Adagio sostenuto —
Allegretto —
Presto agitato

INTERMISSION

David Ludwig (b. 1972) Lunaire Variations (2011–2012)

- I. Nostalgia: “a sighing crystal...”
- II. Trepan: “shrieks cut through the air”
- III. Parody: “mocking moon”
- IV. Moonspot: “a fleck of moonlight”
- V. Serenade: “scrapes on his viola”
- VI. Barcarole: “moonbeam rudder”
- VII. Chorale: “a scent of ancient times”

Played without pause.

Beethoven Sonata No. 26 in E-flat major, Op. 81a,
“Les Adieux” (1809–1810)

Les Adieux: Adagio — Allegro
L’Absence: Andante espressivo —
Le Retour: Vivacissimamente

The program is subject to change.

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Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)
Sonata No. 5 in C minor, Op. 10, No. 1

Published in 1798.

In November 1792, the 22-year-old Ludwig van Beethoven, bursting with talent and promise, arrived in Vienna. So undeniable was the genius he had already demonstrated in a sizable amount of piano music, numerous chamber works, cantatas on the death of Emperor Joseph II and the accession of Leopold II, and the score for a ballet, that Maximilian Franz, the Elector of Bonn, his hometown, underwrote the trip to the Habsburg Imperial city, then the musical capital of Europe, to help further the young musician's career (and the Elector's prestige). Despite the Elector's patronage, however, Beethoven's professional ambitions quickly consumed any thoughts of returning to the provincial city of his birth, and, when his alcoholic father died in December, he severed for good his ties with Bonn in favor of the stimulating artistic atmosphere of Vienna.

During his first years in Vienna, Beethoven was busy on several fronts. Initial encouragement for the Viennese junket came from the venerable Joseph Haydn, who had heard one of Beethoven's cantatas on a visit to Bonn earlier in the year and promised to take the young composer as a student if he came to see him. Beethoven, therefore, became a counterpoint pupil of Haydn immediately after his arrival late in 1792, but the two had difficulty getting along—Haydn was too busy, Beethoven was too bullish—and their association soon broke off. Several other teachers followed in short order—Schenk, Albrechtsberger, Förster, Salieri. While he was busy completing fugal exercises and practicing setting Italian texts for his tutors, he continued to compose, producing works for solo piano, chamber ensembles and wind groups. It was as a pianist, however, that he gained his first fame among the Viennese. The untamed, passionate, original quality of his playing and his personality first intrigued and then captivated those who heard him. When he bested in competition Daniel Steibelt and Joseph Wölfl,

two of the town's noted keyboard luminaries, he became all the rage among the gentry, who exhibited him in performance at the *soirées* in their elegant city palaces. In catering to the aristocratic audience, Beethoven took on the air of a dandy for a while, dressing in smart clothes, learning to dance (badly), buying a horse, and even sporting a powdered wig. This phase of his life did not outlast the 1790s, but in his biography of the composer, Peter Latham described Beethoven at the time as “a young giant exulting in his strength and his success, and youthful confidence gave him a buoyancy that was both attractive and infectious.”

Among the nobles who served as Beethoven's patrons after his arrival in Vienna was one Count Johann Georg von Browne-Camus, a descendent of an old Irish family who was at that time fulfilling some ill-defined function in the Habsburg Imperial city on behalf of the Empress Catherine II of Russia. Little is known of Browne. His tutor, Johannes Büel, later an acquaintance of Beethoven, described him as “full of excellent talents and beautiful qualities of heart and spirit on the one hand, and on the other full of weakness and depravity.” He is said to have squandered his fortune and ended his days in a public institution. In the mid-1790s, Beethoven received enough generous support from Browne, however, that he dedicated several of his works to him and his wife, Anne Margarete, including the Variations on *Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen* from Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* for Cello and Piano (WoO 46), the three Op. 10 Piano Sonatas, the B-flat Piano Sonata (Op. 22) and the three String Trios of Op. 9. In appreciation of these dedications, Browne presented Beethoven with a horse, which the preoccupied composer promptly forgot, thereby allowing his servant to rent out the beast and pocket the profits.

The three Sonatas of Op. 10 were begun during the summer of 1796 and completed by July 1798, when the Viennese publisher Joseph Eder issued them as a set. The first sonata of the set, in the tragic-heroic key of C minor epitomized by Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, opens with a craggy motive driven across much of the keyboard

by violent dotted rhythms, which is immediately countered by a smooth, soothing idea of closely packed chords. The tension inherent between these sharply contrasted thematic cells is little exploited, however: most of the movement deals with the smooth shape and steady rhythms of the second motive, with the craggy opening phrase reiterated only to mark the end of the exposition and the arrival at the development and the recapitulation. Indeed, even the movement's formal second theme is nothing more than a domesticated, major-key transformation of the opening motive. The *Adagio* is a slow rondo, with the two returns of the tender main theme separated by highly decorated episodes. The finale is a tightly compacted sonata form anchored by an agitated main subject with wide leaps and a perky second theme of scalar motion.

Leos Janáček (1854–1928)
In the Mists

Composed in 1912. Premiered on January 24, 1914, in Brno by Marie Dvořáková.

Janáček's ambition was bigger than his Brno. Born in 1854 to a teacher and choirmaster in Hukvaldy, in the mountains east of Brno, the Moravian capital, Janáček received most of his general and musical education in Brno, with some advanced study in Vienna, Leipzig and Prague. During the 1870s, he taught and directed choral groups in Brno and began composing. In 1881, he founded the Brno Organ School, and soon thereafter took up the study of the region's indigenous folk music, which helped to shape the style and ethos of his own creative idiom. Janáček came to understand that music inextricably wrapped around the language, customs, stories and beliefs of his homeland could become a rallying point for Moravian and Czech culture, and might well raise him from a small town music master to a national figure. In 1884, he founded a journal to chronicle the operatic activities of the newly established Provisional Theater in Brno, and four years later composed a work, *Sárka*, based on a Czech legend of a

vengeful warrior maiden, to add to its repertory. He could not, however, obtain permission for a performance from the libretto's author, Julius Zeyer (who had already promised the text to the established composer Zdeněk Fibich), and *Sárka* was not to be staged until 1925. Janáček had better luck with the one-act opera *The Beginning of Romance*, premiered in Brno in 1894, but that work remained unknown elsewhere. That same year he began an opera based on a tragic story of village life titled *Jenůfa* and toiled over it for the next decade. *Jenůfa* was warmly received at its Brno premiere in 1904, and Janáček longed to have it produced in Prague, but it was rejected by the theaters of the Bohemian capital. He continued to teach and compose, mostly choral numbers, folksong arrangements and some modest pieces for orchestra and for piano, while dreaming of recognition on a national, perhaps even international, scale. By 1908, he had completed his fourth opera, *Osud* (“Fate”), but plans for its production in Prague collapsed; it would not be staged until 30 years after the composer's death. He immediately began another opera, *The Excursions of Mr. Brouček*, but, like *Jenůfa*, progress on it was slow and prospects for its performance were dismal. In 1912, when his ambitions as a composer had largely been thwarted, when his marriage offered little comfort, when he was having problems with severe rheumatism and apprehensively facing his 58th birthday, Janáček channeled his remorse and frustration into a set of four disquieting piano pieces that he titled, perhaps in contemplating his own uncertain future, *In the Mists*.

In the Mists is music of strong, unsettling emotions: the phrases are fragmented, or of irregular lengths; the harmony is unstable; the rhythms proceed fitfully; ferocious outbursts collapse into brooding introspection; the episodes of aural beauty or melodic continuity—the Debussian chord streams of the first movement, or the folk tune of the third—seem ironic rather than restful, and only heighten the apprehension of the surrounding music. “*In the Mists* does not contain a single moment of cheerful respite,” Jaroslav Vogel wrote in his 1981 biography of the composer. “It is one long struggle

between resignation and newly felt pain—pain which gains the upper hand at the end. In my opinion, the title *In the Mists* should be interpreted as meaning not so much memories of childhood or impressions of nature, as the expression of Janáček’s mental state at the time, in view of the petty indifference shown by the world to his work in general and to *Jenůfa* in particular.”

Beethoven

Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor (*Sonata quasi una Fantasia*), Op. 27, No. 2, “Moonlight”

Composed in 1801.

Beethoven fell in love many times, but never married. (The thought of Beethoven as a husband threatens the moorings of one’s presence of mind!) The source of his infatuation in 1801, when he was thirty and still in hope of finding a wife, was the Countess Giulietta Guicciardi, who was 13 years his junior, rather spoiled and reportedly something of a vixen. She seems to have been flattered by the attentions of the famous musician, but probably never seriously considered his intimations of marriage; her social station would have made wedlock difficult with a commoner such as Beethoven. For his part, Beethoven was apparently thoroughly under her spell at the time, and he mentioned his love for her to a friend as late as 1823, though by then she had been married to Count Wenzel Robert Gallenberg, a prolific composer of ballet music, for two decades. A medallion portrait of her was found among Beethoven’s effects after his death. The C-sharp minor Sonata was contemporary with the love affair with Giulietta and dedicated to her upon its publication in 1802, but the precise relationship of the music’s nature and the state of Beethoven’s heart must remain unknown; he never indicated that the piece had any programmatic intent. It was not until five years after his death that the work’s mood and emotional intensity inspired the Romantic German poet and music critic Ludwig Rellstab (whose verses Schubert set in 1828 as the first seven numbers of his *Schwanengesang*)

to describe the Sonata in terms of “a vision of a boat on Lake Lucerne by moonlight,” a sobriquet that has since inextricably attached itself to the music.

In noting the experimental nature of the form of this work, Beethoven specified that it is a sonata “in the manner of a fantasy” (“*Sonata quasi una Fantasia*”). The Classical model for the instrumental sonata comprised three independent movements: a fast movement in sonata-allegro form; an *Adagio* or *Andante* arranged as a variations or a three-part structure; and a closing rondo in galloping meter. In the “Moonlight” Sonata, Beethoven altered the traditional fast–slow–fast sequence in favor of an innovative organization that shifts the expressive weight from the beginning to the end of the work, and made the cumulative effect evident by instructing that the movements be played without pause. Instead of opening with a large symphonic-style, sonata-form essay, the “Moonlight” initially falls upon the listener with a somber, minor-mode *Adagio* of the greatest introspection. Next comes a subdued scherzo and trio whose delicacy is undermined by its off-beat syncopations. The expressive goal of the Sonata is achieved with its closing movement, a powerful essay in full sonata form filled with tempestuous feeling and dramatic gesture about which John N. Burk wrote, “It is the first of the tumultuous outbursts of stormy passion which Beethoven was to let loose through the piano sonatas. It is music in which agitation and urgency never cease.”

David Ludwig (b. 1972) *Lunaire Variations*

Composed in 2011–2012. Premiered on March 30, 2012, in Aspen, Colorado, by Jonathan Biss.

David Ludwig, born in 1972 in Doylestown in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, is the descendant of a distinguished musical family—pianists Rudolf Serkin and Peter Serkin are his grandfather and uncle, and his great-grandfather was the renowned violinist Adolf Busch. Ludwig studied at Oberlin College (B.M.) and the Manhattan

School of Music (M.M.), and continued his post-graduate work at the Curtis Institute and the Juilliard School before earning a doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania; his teachers include Richard Hoffmann, Richard Danielpour, Jennifer Higdon, Ned Rorem and John Corigliano. In 2002, Ludwig was appointed to the faculty of the Curtis Institute, where he now serves as the Artistic Chair of Performance and Director of the Curtis 20/21 Contemporary Music Ensemble. He was Young-Composer-in-Residence at the Marlboro Music Festival from 1997 to 1999, and has also held residencies at Yaddo, Aspen Music Festival, Atlantic Center for the Arts, Académie Musicale de Villecroze, Pacific Music Festival, Isabella Gardner Art Museum in Boston, and the Atlantic Center Composers and Singers Program in Florence, Italy; he was Resident Composer with the Vermont Symphony from 2004 to 2007, and is now the permanent New Music Advisor for that orchestra. David Ludwig has received commissions from the Philadelphia Orchestra, Richmond Symphony, Curtis Institute, New York Youth Symphony, eighth blackbird, Concertante, choral conductor Judith Clurman, pianist Jonathan Biss, violinist Lara St. John, flutist Jeffrey Khaner and other noted ensembles and performers. His distinctions include the First Music Award, Independence Foundation Fellowship, Theodore Presser Foundation Career Grant, Fleischer Orchestra Award and two nominations for the Stoeger Award of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. He has also received grants from Meet the Composer, American Composers Forum, American Music Center and National Endowment for the Arts; in 2009, he was honored as a City Cultural Leader by the Choral Arts Society of Philadelphia.

Ludwig writes, “The *Lunaire Variations* was commissioned in 2011 by San Francisco Performances for Jonathan Biss. Jonathan is an incomparable artist and I am honored to write this work for him to play. He is also an incomparable friend, and I offer this piece with warm wishes for his continued incredible success.

“My *Lunaire Variations* originated in a project I have undertaken to write piano works

inspired by Arnold Schoenberg’s groundbreaking cabaret-melodrama *Pierrot Lunaire*. This year, 2012, is the hundredth anniversary of the premiere of Schoenberg’s work, and few pieces of music fire up my imagination as much as this Expressionist masterpiece. Each movement begins and ends with the same motive, descending and ascending, that, combined, contains all twelve notes. This exists both to unify the piece and to give a nod to Schoenberg’s influential concept of composing with twelve notes (one that he would discover well after writing *Pierrot*.) Though my piece is in no way a ‘twelve-tone’ work, Schoenberg’s musical fingerprints appear throughout.

“But it is ultimately the original text of *Pierrot* that influenced me the most in writing this piece, perhaps more so than Schoenberg’s music. *Pierrot*’s themes, which juxtapose the wispy and ethereal with the grotesquely macabre, are also themes that run through my work. And the fantastical characters of the piece, including the clown Pierrot himself, appear throughout my music as well. *Lunaire Variations* are variations not on a motive or melody or ground bass, but on the vivid imagery described within the words and music of *Pierrot*.

“Some of this imagery is otherworldly, as in the *Variations*’ first movement (*Nostalgia*), where Pierrot delicately sighs in yearning for a distant, fabled past, or in the sixth movement (*Barcarole*), where he journeys home on a lily pad steered only by moonbeams. Some of the imagery is grotesque, as in the second movement (*Trepan*), where Pierrot drills a hole in his rival’s skull to turn it into a makeshift tobacco pipe, or in the fifth movement (*Serenade*), where he decides to stop playing his viola and instead chooses to fiddle away on his rival’s bald spot. The middle fourth movement (*Moonspot*) offers some comedy: describing Pierrot’s struggle to scrub a fleck of moonlight off of his new coat. There is some pathos, too: the third movement (*Parody*) tells of a woman who has grown old waiting for her lover Pierrot to return, only to be mocked by the moon himself for waiting in vain. This range of emotion becomes focused in the last movement (*Chorale*), which is seen from

the point of view of a narrator who smells an ancient perfume and is reminded of a happier time (away from the dark themes of the rest of the piece!).”

Beethoven
Sonata No. 26 in E-flat major, Op. 81a,
“Les Adieux”

Composed in 1809–1810.

The year 1809 was a difficult one for Vienna, and for Beethoven. In May, Napoleon invaded the city with enough firepower to send the residents scurrying and Beethoven into the basement of his brother’s house—the bombardment was close enough that he covered his sensitive ears with pillows to protect them from the concussion of the blasts. On July 29th, he wrote to the publisher Breitkopf und Härtel, “We have passed through a great deal of misery. I tell you that since May 4th, I have brought into the world little that is connected; only here and there a fragment. The whole course of events has affected me body and soul.... What a disturbing, wild life around me; nothing but drums, cannons, men, misery of all sorts.” He bellowed his frustration at a French officer he chanced to meet: “If I were a general and knew as much about strategy as I do about counterpoint, I’d give you fellows something to think about.” Austria’s finances were in shambles, and Beethoven was placed in a precarious pecuniary predicament when the annual stipend he had been promised by several noblemen who supported his work was considerably reduced in value. As a sturdy tree can root in flinty soil, however, several significant musical works grew from those unpromising circumstances—by the end of that year, 1809, Beethoven had completed the “Emperor” Concerto, String Quartet in E-flat major (Op. 74), Op. 79 Sonatina and Op. 77 Fantasy for Piano, and Piano Sonatas, Opp. 78 and 81a (“Les Adieux”). Indeed, the Op. 81a Sonata was not only composed during the French invasion of Vienna in 1809—it was prompted by it.

Among the most important and durable of Beethoven’s many aristocratic Viennese patrons was the Archduke Rudolph, the youngest son of Emperor Leopold II and the brother of Emperor Franz. Rudolph first appeared in the composer’s life around 1803 as a piano student, an indication of the high regard that Beethoven had won among Austrian music lovers by even that early date in his career. Rudolph received instruction in both performance and composition from Beethoven, and he displayed a genuine if limited talent for music. (Questioned once whether Rudolph played really well, the diplomatic teacher answered with a hoarse chuckle, “When he is feeling just right.”) It was for his noble pupil that Beethoven created the “Triple” Concerto for Piano, Violin and Cello, in whose premiere Rudolph participated sometime in 1805 or 1806. When Beethoven was considering abandoning Vienna in 1808 to accept the offer of a position in Kassel from Jerome Bonaparte, brother of Napoleon and King of Westphalia, Rudolph joined with the Princes Lobkowitz and Kinsky in establishing an annual stipend for the composer to encourage him to remain in the city. Beethoven accepted their proposal, and made Vienna his home for the rest of his life, though the financial reverses and difficulties inflicted by Napoleon’s invasions forced Kinsky and Lobkowitz to suspend their payments after a short time—Rudolph fulfilled his part of the bargain until Beethoven died. In appreciation for Rudolph’s unflagging support, Beethoven dedicated some 15 of his most important works to him—including the Fourth and Fifth Piano Concertos, “Les Adieux” and “Hammerklavier” Sonatas, Op. 96 Violin Sonata, Op. 97 Piano Trio and *Grosse Fuge*—and wrote the *Missa Solemnis* to celebrate his election as Archbishop of Olmütz in 1819.

On May 4, 1809, as the French forces swept inexorably toward Vienna (so ill prepared to defend itself that some soldiers had to be armed with muskets and swords commandeered from the prop rooms of the city’s theaters and opera houses), the imperial family, including the 20-year-old Rudolph, was evacuated to

safety in the distant countryside. That very day, Beethoven began a piano sonata “written from the heart on the occasion of the departure of His Imperial Highness, Archduke Rudolph,” as he recorded on the title page; he headed the first movement “*Das Lebewohl*”—“The Farewell.” (When Breitkopf und Härtel published the score in July 1811, they changed Beethoven’s preferred German titles to more easily marketable French. The Sonata is still most widely known with its French sobriquets, though Beethoven did not like them.) The slow movement (*Abwesenheit—L’Absence*) was written before the French withdrew from Vienna on November 20th; the finale (*Das Wiedersehen—Le Retour*) was begun when Rudolf and his royal clan returned to the city, on January 30, 1810. Beethoven, fulfilling a promise made during the autumn to Breitkopf und Härtel to “let you have a few pieces for solo piano,” sent the “Les Adieux” Sonata to the publisher the following week, along with the Op. 78 Sonata and the little Sonatina in G major (Op. 79). The “Les Adieux” Sonata acquired its curious opus number—81a—because the Viennese hornist and sometime publisher Nikolaus Simrock had recently issued Beethoven’s early Sextet for Horns and Strings as Op. 81. Breitkopf subsequently took over the Sextet, and distinguished the two works in its catalog as Opp. 81a and 81b.

The comings and goings of 18th-century carriages were customarily signaled by blasts on the postilion’s horn, and the sound of the post horn was taken over into cultivated music as a symbol for parting. “Les Adieux” opens with just such a musical gesture, here enriched with the open-interval harmony of the old valveless instruments (“horn fifths”) and inscribed with the phrase “*Lebewohl*”—“Fare Thee Well.” An upward leaping motive immediately balances the descending horn fifths, and is transformed into the movement’s main theme when the arrival of the fast tempo marks the beginning of its sonata form. The descending scale notes of “Lebewohl” are recalled in the second theme, and are combined with the leaping motive in the compact development section. A full recapitulation and a reflective coda round out the movement. Beethoven summarized the emotional essence of the *Andante* with its title—*Absence*—and its performance instruction: “with much expression.” A sudden shift of mood and tempo (“as fast as possible”) indicates the start of the exuberant sonata-form finale (*Return* or, better, *Reunion*), which is based on a main theme of joyous naïveté and a second theme whose fast, rocking rhythms may be intended to evoke the swaying of the coach heading home.

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JONATHAN BISS is widely regarded for his artistry, musical intelligence and deeply felt interpretations, winning international recognition for his orchestral, recital, and chamber music performances and for his award-winning recordings. He performs a diverse repertoire ranging from Mozart and Beethoven, through the Romantics to Janáček and Schoenberg as well as works by such contemporary composers as György Kurtág and commissions from Leon Kirchner, Lewis Spratlan and Bernard Rands.

Mr. Biss made his New York Philharmonic debut in 2001, and since then has appeared with the foremost orchestras of North America, Europe, Asia and Australia. He is a frequent performer at leading international music festivals and gives recitals in major music capitals both at home and abroad.

This season, Mr. Biss's return engagements include the Baltimore Symphony with Günther Herbig, the Boston Symphony with Jiří Bělohlávek, the Cleveland Orchestra with Fabio Luisi, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra with Robin Ticciati, the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic with Sakari Oramo and the Toronto Symphony with Peter Oundjian. He makes his debut with the Dresden Staatskapelle with Sir Colin Davis and his subscription debut with the Cincinnati Symphony under Ludovic Morlot.

Mr. Biss began the 2011–2012 season with a two-week residency with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra centered on programs that juxtapose Mozart concerti with works by Kurtág, directing the orchestra from the keyboard as well as performing chamber music. Mr. Biss, who last season toured the United States with the Academy

of St. Martin in the Fields and who has recorded Mozart with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, will perform Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 20, K. 466, with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra in three cities in Scotland in May. In January 2012, he joined Mitsuko Uchida in Salzburg for the Mozartwoche festival, performing Mozart's Sonata in F major (for piano four hands).

Last season, Mr. Biss made his much-anticipated Carnegie Hall recital debut with a program of works by Beethoven, Schumann, Janáček and a new work written for him by Bernard Rands. This season, Mr. Biss will perform solo recitals in Europe at London's Southbank Centre and in Berlin under the auspices of the Berlin Philharmonic, with recitals in the United States in New York City, Washington, D.C., Berkeley, Santa Barbara, Princeton, Omaha and Kansas. He will also perform chamber programs with the Elias Quartet at London's Wigmore Hall and in Belgium, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.

In January 2012 Onyx Classics released the first CD in a nine-year, nine-disc recording cycle of Beethoven's complete sonatas. Mr. Biss wrote about this recording project and also about his relationship with Beethoven's music more generally for a 19,000-word essay called *Beethoven's Shadow* that was published electronically by RosettaBooks as a Kindle Single and is available from Amazon online stores. *Beethoven's Shadow* has subsequently ranked as the bestselling music e-book title on Amazon in the United States and United Kingdom.

Mr. Biss's previous recordings include an album featuring two Schubert sonatas and two short Kurtág pieces from *Játékok* that was released in October 2009 on the Wigmore Hall Live label and named by NPR Music as one of the best albums of the year. It follows four acclaimed recordings for EMI Classics, including an all-Schumann recital album, which won a Diapason d'Or de l'Année award, and a recital album of Beethoven piano sonatas that received an Edison Award. With the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra he recorded Mozart's Piano Concertos Nos. 21 and 22 in a live performance. His first recording for EMI Classics was a 2004 recording on EMI's Debut series of works by Beethoven and Schumann.

In 2000, at age 20, Mr. Biss made his New York recital debut at the 92nd Street Y's Tisch Center for the Arts and his New York Philharmonic debut under Kurt Masur. Among the many conductors with whom he has worked are Marin Alsop, Daniel Barenboim, Herbert Blomstedt, James Conlon, Charles Dutoit, Bernard Haitink, James Levine, Lorin Maazel, Sir Neville Marriner, Andris Nelsons, Antonio Pappano, Michael Tilson Thomas, Christoph von Dohnányi and Pinchas Zukerman.

Mr. Biss represents the third generation in a family of professional musicians that includes his grandmother, Raya Garbousova, one of the first well-known female cellists (for whom Samuel Barber composed his cello concerto), and his parents, violinist Miriam Fried and violist/violinist Paul Biss. Growing up surrounded by music, Mr. Biss began his piano studies at age six, and his first musical collaborations were with his mother and father. He studied at Indiana University with Evelyne Brancart and at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia with Leon Fleisher. In 2010, Mr. Biss was appointed to the piano faculty of the Curtis Institute, and he performed with the Curtis Symphony in October 2011 in Philadelphia at the Kimmel Center.

Mr. Biss has been recognized with numerous awards, including the Leonard Bernstein Award (presented at the 2005 Schleswig-Holstein Festival), Wolf Trap's Shouse Debut Artist Award, the Andrew Wolf Memorial Chamber Music Award, Lincoln Center's Martin E. Segal Award, an Avery Fisher Career Grant, the 2003 Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award and the 2002 Gilmore Young Artist Award. He was an artist-in-residence on American Public Media's *Performance Today* and was the first American chosen to participate in the BBC's New Generation Artist program. For more information about Mr. Biss and to read his blog about his life as a musician, go to www.jonathanbiss.com or visit his fan page on Facebook.

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