

Sunday, October 22, 2017, 3pm
Hertz Hall

Olli Mustonen, *piano*

Robert SCHUMANN (1810–1856) *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15
Von fremden Ländern und Menschen
Kuriose Geschichte
Hasche-Mann
Bittendes Kind
Glückes genug
Wichtige Begebenheit
Träumerei
Am Kamin
Ritter vom Steckenpferd
Fast zu ernst
Fürchtenmachen
Kind im Einschlummern
Der Dichter spricht

Ludwig van BEETHOVEN (1770–1827) Sonata No. 2 in A Major, Op. 2, No. 2
Allegro vivace
Largo appassionato
Scherzo: Allegretto
Rondo: Grazioso

INTERMISSION

Rodion SHCHEDRIN (b. 1932) *Notebook for Young People*
Arpeggio – Medieval Russian Chant –
Let's Play an Opera by Rossini – Chorus –
Thirds – Song of Praise – Chord Inversions –
Mourning Village Women – Fanfares –
Conversations – Russian Bell Chimes –
Tune of Peter the Great – Chase –
Twelve Notes – Etude in A

Sergei PROKOFIEV (1891–1953) Sonata No. 7 in B-flat Major, Op. 83
Allegro inquieto
Andante caloroso
Precipitato

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**Kinderszenen (Scenes from Childhood), Op. 15
Robert Schumann**

Friedrich Wieck of Leipzig was one of the most renowned piano pedagogues of his day, eagerly sought out for the discipline and efficacy of his teaching by many talented and ambitious students, including Robert Schumann, who placed himself under Wieck's stern gaze in 1829. Schumann showed such promise that Wieck took him into his household for full-time instruction, and there the 20-year-old musician worked up not only the obligatory scales and études but also an infatuation for Wieck's young daughter, Clara, whom her father was grooming for the life of a piano virtuoso. Love developed slowly but steadily between the couple—Clara was nine years younger than Robert—and was sufficiently advanced by the mid-1830s to cause Papa Wieck serious concern. Schumann by that time had abandoned hopes of a career as a concert pianist and turned instead to composing and editing the fledgling music journal *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, endeavors that Wieck judged offered slim prospects for producing an appropriate marriage partner for his daughter, who was just then beginning to establish her international reputation.

Early in 1836, Wieck shipped the still-underage Clara off to Dresden to get her away from Schumann, but Robert followed his beloved there and won a declaration of mutual love from her. When Wieck learned of this development, he retrieved Clara to Leipzig and forbade her further contact with Schumann in person or even by letter; Wieck filled the void by spawning unfounded rumors of new liaisons intended to make the lovers distrust each other. Schumann, referring to the volatile emotions that troubled him throughout his life, later wrote to Clara about those days, when he was afraid not just of losing her but even his reason: "Being unable to learn anything about you, I wished, with all my might, to forget you. It was at that time that we had become strangers to one another. I was resigned. Then my old suffering burst out afresh, and made me wring my hands. Often at night I would implore God: 'Grant me at least one night of tranquility in which my mind would not give way.'"

Unable to communicate by word, the young lovers resorted to a code of tones. In the summer of 1836, Robert sent Clara a copy of his just-published Sonata in F-sharp minor, which he headed, "Piano Sonata dedicated to Clara by Florestan and Eusebius," a reference to the impetuous-mercurial and dreamy-romantic aspects of his character that he evoked in several of his early piano works. Prominent in the sonata's opening movement was a motive Schumann borrowed from a piano piece of her own that Clara had sent to him the year before (*Scène Fantastique: Le Ballet des Revenants* ["Ghosts"]), which in turn quoted from a *Fandango* that Robert had written in 1832. Clara and Robert remained faithful and determined through the following difficult months, depending on a trusted mutual friend to carry an occasional secret message between them, and Clara brazenly included Robert's new sonata on her Leipzig recital of August 13, 1837. Robert was there and he received Clara's message as she had intended. The following day, by surreptitious letter, he proposed that they become engaged: "Let me know by a simple 'Yes.'" She responded immediately: "Do you only ask for a simple 'Yes'? Such a little word—and yet so important—how could a heart so full of ineffable love as mine fail to pronounce this little word with all its soul? I do so, and my inmost heart whispers it to you for ever." Three years later, having weathered Friedrich Wieck's ceaseless barrage of litigation to keep them apart, they were married on the eve of Clara's 21st birthday.

On February 11, 1838, Robert wrote to Clara that he had been composing "wonderful, crazy, solemn stuff. I sometimes feel simply bursting with music. Perhaps it was an echo of what you once said to me, 'that sometimes I seemed to you like a child,' but I suddenly got an inspiration, and knocked off about 30 quaint little things, from which I have selected 13 and called them *Kinderszenen* ("Scenes from Childhood"). They will amuse you." Though Schumann added that these pieces are "as easy as possible," they are decidedly not pedagogical exercises for young fingers but rather expressive, adult-view vignettes of memories and reflections of childhood. "They all explain themselves," Schumann

told Clara, but added a title to each one (after the music was composed, his usual practice) to suggest its emotional content: “Von fremden Ländern und Menschen” (“Foreign Lands and People”); “Kuriose Geschichte” (“Curious Story”); “Hasche-Mann” (“Playing Tag”); “Bittendes Kind” (“Pleading Child”); “Glückes genug” (“Perfect Happiness”); “Wichtige Begebenheit” (“Important Event”); “Träumerei” (“Dreaming”); “Am Kamin” (“By the Fireside”); “Ritter vom Steckenpferd” (“Knight of the Hobby Horse”); “Fast zu ernst” (“Almost too Serious”); “Fürchtenmachen” (“Frightening”); “Kind im Einschlummern” (“Child Falling Asleep”); and “Der Dichter spricht” (“The Poet Speaks”).

Sonata No. 2 in A Major, Op. 2, No. 2 Ludwig van Beethoven

During his first years after arriving in Vienna from his native Bonn in November 1792, 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, 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.

Beethoven was also working to establish himself as a composer at that time, and his three Piano Trios, Op. 1, gained him notice in 1793, but it was not until three years later that the publisher Artaria brought out the 26-year-old musician’s Op. 2, a set of three sonatas for solo piano. The works were written well before that

time, however, and had been widely circulated in manuscript copies. The Op. 2 sonatas were dedicated to “Mr. Haydn, Doctor of Music of Oxford University” upon their publication, and are often cited as Beethoven’s admiring homage to his distinguished older colleague. Beethoven, however, declined to list himself as a pupil of Haydn in Artaria’s edition, a common custom for emerging professionals of the day, and he once told his amanuensis Ferdinand Ries that “though he had taken some lessons from Haydn, he had never learned anything from him.” Though they were slipping apart personally by the time of the Op. 2 sonatas, the two composers maintained a mutual respect—Haydn invited Beethoven to play one of his own concertos at his concert of December 18, 1795, a sign that Haydn still considered him his protégé; Beethoven always admitted an indebtedness to Haydn’s music and in his later years he acquired and carefully preserved an autograph of one of the *London* symphonies.

The Sonata No. 2 in A Major is the sunniest work of the Op. 2 set, though even here Beethoven’s quintessentially dramatic expression is much in evidence. The opening movement’s principal theme contains an entire storehouse of pregnant motives: two falling figures, one based on an arpeggio in even notes, the other, a fragment of a scale, passes by in a flash; an arch-shaped lyrical phase; long staccato scales, both rising and falling; and scurrying ribbons of triplets. After this cache of A-Major materials to open the work, the movement takes an extraordinary detour for the second theme into the stormy region of E minor, just the sort daring expressive and structural iconoclasm that made Beethoven’s works such powerful engines of the burgeoning musical Romanticism. The development section manages to treat all of the main theme motives, save the ribbons of triplets. The recapitulation provides a nonsensical reiteration of the exposition’s music in appropriately adjusted keys. The Largo, based on a hymnal strain buoyed upon a lovely staccato bass line, looks forward to the peerless slow movements of Beethoven’s full maturity in its serenity and floating timelessness. The Scherzo, delicate and witty, is nicely juxtaposed with the

legato, minor-mode music of its central trio. The finale is a spacious rondo that achieves a fine tension between the impetuous mood of the rocket-arpeggio that occupies its first two beats and the controlled, elegant music that immediately follows. The movement never settles unequivocally for one expressive state or the other, exhibiting the balance of ambiguity and fulfillment that often marks the finest works of art.

Notebook for Young People Rodion Shchedrin

Rodion Shchedrin, one of the handful of Russian composers of the generation after Shostakovich whose music has made an impact in the West, was born in Moscow on December 16, 1932. His father, a well-known musical theorist and writer on music, encouraged Rodion's interest in his piano lessons, but the boy's formal training was interrupted by the German invasion in 1941. Shchedrin resumed his musical education in 1948 at the Choir School in Moscow, where he began to compose, and he entered the Moscow Conservatory three years later to study piano with Yacob Flier and composition with Yuri Shaporin. By the time he graduated in 1955, Shchedrin had established a distinctive idiom with a string quartet, a piano quintet, and the Piano Concerto No. 1, which incorporate the styles of both folk music from various Russian regions (which he studied on the field trips required by the conservatory curriculum) and the simple urban street song known as the *chastushka*. The First Piano Concerto attracted sufficient attention that he was named to represent the USSR at the Fifth World Festival of Democratic Youth in Prague in 1954. The following year he composed *The Hump-backed Horse*, which became widely popular in its original form as a ballet, as well as in two orchestral suites and a film version. Shchedrin subsequently wrote about current trends in his country's music in official publications, received many awards (most notably the Lenin Prize in 1984), was made a People's Artist of the USSR in 1981, and visited the United States on cultural exchange programs in 1964, 1968, and 1986. He taught at the Moscow Conservatory from 1965 to 1969. He has since worked as a

free-lance composer, and now divides his time between Moscow and Munich. From 1973 to 1990, Shchedrin was Chairman of the Composers' Union of the Russian Federation; in 1990, he became the honorary chairman of the organization. His many distinctions include: USSR State Prize; State Prize of Russia; Dmitri Shostakovich Prize; Crystal Award (Switzerland); membership in the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts, Academy of Fine Arts of the German Democratic Republic, and International Music Council; honorary professorships at the conservatories of Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Beijing; 2002 Composer of the Year with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra; Russian Federation State Order; Russian State Order Second Class; and a 2011 Grammy nomination ("Best Classical Contemporary Composition") for his opera *The Enchanted Wanderer*.

Music for students and young people has a venerable history. In the 11th century, the Italian theorist Guido of Arezzo developed a system of syllables associated with the steps of the scale (do–re–mi) to aid in learning chants. Bach taught throughout his life, and some of his most significant and characteristic creations—*Two- and Three-Part Inventions*, *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, *The Art of Fugue*, *Orgelbüchlein*—had a frankly didactic purpose. Mozart wrote the Piano Concertos No. 14 and No. 17 and two four-hand sonatas (K. 381 and K. 521) for a gifted student. Beethoven composed two "easy" sonatas (Op. 49) in 1795–96 accessible to fledgling pianists. Closer to our time, Béla Bartók issued an entire piano curriculum based on Eastern European idioms in his *Mikrokosmos*; Paul Hindemith wrote a sonata for each of the orchestral instruments (he could play them all except for harp); Benjamin Britten composed *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, and Prokofiev *Peter and the Wolf*; the Hungarian master György Kurtág continues to work on a series of musical aphorisms collectively titled *Games* that he began as teaching pieces for his son in the 1960s; and in 1981 Rodion Shchedrin created his *Notebook for Young People*.

Though Shchedrin's formal teaching experience has been limited to a stint at the Moscow Conservatory in the late 1960s, he has long had

an interest in music education. He has composed pieces for young singers and instrumentalists, and in 2002 he established a festival and competition for teenage students with his wife, the famed ballerina Maya Plisetskaya, at a music school in Moscow named in his honor. The 15 miniatures comprising the *Notebook for Young People*, included among the required pieces for the contestants, vary in their technical requirements from one-finger exercises to near-virtuoso showpieces and present an equal challenge in their enormous range of style and expression. Some are studies for a specific keyboard technique (“Arpeggio,” “Thirds,” “Etude in A”), some present compositional devices (“Chord Inversions,” “Twelve Notes” [an homage to Schoenberg’s 12-tone theory]), some are overtly referential (“Let’s Play an Opera by Rossini,” “Mourning Village Women,” “Fanfares,” “Russian Bell Chimes,” “Chase”), some are specifically Russian in nature (“Medieval Russian Chant,” “Chorus,” “Song of Praise,” “Tune of Peter the Great”), and one (“Conversations”) is even downright funny.

Sonata No. 7 in B-flat Major, Op. 83 Sergei Prokofiev

Prokofiev returned to Russia from his years in the West in 1933 and by 1939, when the Seventh Sonata was conceived, he had become the leading composer of his country with works written in what he called “a style in which one could speak of Soviet life.” *Lt. Kijé*, *Peter and the Wolf*, and *Romeo and Juliet* are among the best-known realizations of his populist art. Many of Prokofiev’s efforts during the early years of the Second World War continued in the same vein, including the Piano Sonatas Nos. 6, 7, and 8, all begun in 1939, but completed, re-

spectively, in 1941, 1942, and 1944; inevitably, they were dubbed the *War* sonatas. The Seventh Sonata was finished in May 1942 in Tbilisi, where Prokofiev was evacuated after the Germans had invaded Russia the preceding June. Sviatoslav Richter premiered the work in Moscow on January 18, 1943; two months later, Prokofiev received the Stalin Prize for the score.

The Seventh Sonata’s three movements, arranged in the Classical succession of fast–slow–fast, progress from the anxious, unsettled *Allegro inquieto*, through the lyrical slow movement (to be played “with warmth,” according to the score), to the hammering motorism and emphatic B-flat tonality of the finale. The opening movement juxtaposes two broad musical paragraphs: one, approximating a main theme, is given in pounding rhythms immediately at the outset; the other, a contrasting melody in slower tempo, springs from a motive reminiscent of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony. Once more, with developmental elaborations, these sections alternate, and the movement closes with a final return of the main theme to produce a five-part, symmetrical structure: A–B–A–B–A. The second movement follows a musical arch form, beginning and ending with a theme of surprising banality that utilizes some ripe, barbershop harmonies, while the middle portion rises to true passion. The finale has been called, because of its vigorous and incessant rhythmic nature, a *toccata*, the modern scion of the *moto perpetuo* pieces of the Baroque that were designed to show off the keyboardist’s digital dexterity. Prokofiev couches the old, virtuoso form in his characteristic harmonic acerbity and percussive pianism to create one of the most invigorating keyboard pieces of the 20th century.

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Olli Mustonen has a unique place on today's music scene. Following the tradition of great masters such as Rachmaninoff, Busoni, and Enescu, Mustonen combines the roles of his musicianship as composer, pianist, and conductor in an equal balance that is quite exceptional, often bringing them together in one fascinating triple-role performance.

During a career spanning 35 years, Mustonen has displayed his extraordinary musical insight in many of world's most significant music centers, whether in a triple role, as soloist or conductor, or as recitalist and chamber musician. His intelligence and inspiring presence have led him to develop close connections with some of today's most eminent musicians, and in appearances with orchestras such as the Berlin Philharmonic, New York and Los Angeles philharmonic orchestras, Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, and all the London orchestras.

Meanwhile his life as a composer is at the heart of his piano playing and conducting. Mustonen has a deeply held conviction that each performance must have the freshness of a first performance, so that audience and performer alike encounter the composer as a living contemporary. In this respect he recalls Mahler's famous dictum that tradition can be laziness, yet he is equally suspicious of the performance that seeks only to be different. This tenacious spirit of discovery leads Mustonen to explore many areas of repertoire beyond the established canon.

In recent years, Mustonen has conducted the world premieres of both of his large-scale orchestral works: Symphony No. 1, *Tuuri*, with the Tampere Philharmonic in 2012; and Symphony No. 2, *Johannes Angelos*, with the Helsinki Philharmonic in 2014. Under Mustonen's baton, the First Symphony has gone on to receive further performances with the Tchaikovsky Symphony, Melbourne Symphony, and Meiningen Court Orchestra, among others. Also in 2014, Mustonen conducted the world premiere of his Sonata for Violin and

Orchestra with the Melbourne Symphony; in the current season he conducts the work with Pekka Kuusisto and the Helsinki Philharmonic. In 2015 Mustonen conducted the world premiere of his Sonata for Cello and Orchestra, followed by a European premiere at the 2016 Amsterdam Cello Biënnale.

Frequently bringing his own works to the chamber music stage, Mustonen toured Germany in 2015 with his own Quartet for Oboe, Violin, Viola, and Piano, and performed the world premiere of his Piano Quintet at the 2015 Spannungen Festival in Heimbach, followed by further performances in Stockholm, Kaposvar, Bucharest, Amsterdam, Lofoten, and La Jolla, among others. In 2017 he was composer-in-residence at the Davos Festival in Switzerland.

As a conductor, Mustonen has worked with all the major Finnish orchestras and many more around the globe, including the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie, Camerata Salzburg, Verdi Symphony Orchestra Milan, NHK Symphony Tokyo, and Queensland and West Australian symphony orchestras. In 2017 he conducted two operas at the Opera Apriori International Festival in Moscow. In a play/conduct capacity, Mustonen works regularly with orchestras such as the Royal Northern Sinfonia and Jerusalem Symphony, and has appeared recently with the Atlanta Symphony, New Russia Symphony, Riga Sinfonietta, and Estonian National Symphony; this season includes the Norwegian Chamber, Lucerne Symphony, and Kyoto Symphony orchestras.

One of Mustonen's important musical friendships is with Rodion Shchedrin, who dedicated his Piano Concerto No. 5 to Mustonen and invited him to perform at his 70th, 75th, and 80th birthday concerts. Another important musical partner is Valery Gergiev, with whom he has appeared numerous times with the Mariinsky Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, and the Rotterdam and Munich Philharmonic orchestras. In 2011 Mustonen had the honor of closing the Moscow Easter Festival at the personal invitation of Gergiev, in a performance that was televised throughout Russia. Mustonen is also a frequent guest at the

Winter International Arts Festival in Sochi, having performed there often with the Moscow Soloists and the New Russia Symphony Orchestra with Yuri Bashmet.

As a recitalist, Mustonen has appeared in recent seasons at the Chopin Institute Warsaw, Diaghilev Festival Perm, Flagey Brussels, Beethoven-Haus Bonn, Dresden Festival, Symphony Center Chicago, New York Zankel Hall, and Sydney Opera House. The current season includes solo recitals in Tokyo and on tour in Germany. He has formed a duo with Steven Isserlis for more than 30 years. Together they performed Mustonen's Cello Sonata frequently and have recorded the work for BIS. This season they appear together at the Wigmore Hall and on a tour of Italy.

A strong exponent of Prokofiev's music, Mustonen has recently performed and recorded all of Prokofiev's piano concertos with the Finnish Radio Symphony under Hannu Lintu, released in two volumes in 2016 and 2017 respectively on the Ondine label. In 2017 Mustonen performed Prokofiev's Second Concerto with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. He is unusual in also offering the complete cycle of Prokofiev piano sonatas, in recent years bringing the project, in full or in part, to Helsinki Music Centre, Amsterdam Muziekgebouw, and

Singapore Piano Festival, on a tour of Belgium and the Netherlands, and to the Ruhr Piano Festival during his 50th birthday week. This season, Mustonen performs the complete sonata cycle at the Festival Cervantino in Mexico.

Also close to Mustonen's heart is the music of Beethoven, all of whose concertos he conducted and played with the Melbourne Symphony in 2010–12, and of Bartók, whose concerto cycle he performed with the BBC Scottish Symphony in 2012. Mustonen's repertoire also includes Respighi's *Concerto in modo misolidio*, which he has recorded with the Finnish Radio Symphony and Sakari Oramo on the Ondine label.

Olli Mustonen's recording catalogue is typically broad-ranging and distinctive. Prior to his recording of the complete Prokofiev piano concertos for Ondine, he released an acclaimed recording of his own cello sonata on the BIS label with Steven Isserlis. His release on Decca of preludes by Shostakovich and Alkan received the Edison Award and Gramophone Award for the Best Instrumental Recording.

Born in Helsinki, Olli Mustonen began his studies in piano, harpsichord, and composition at the age of five. Initially learning with Ralf Gothoni, he subsequently studied piano with Eero Heinonen and composition with Einouhane Rautavaara.