

Wednesday, November 2, 2011, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Lang Lang, *piano*

PROGRAM

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) Partita No. 1 in B-flat major, BWV 825 (c.1726)

Præludium
Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Menuets I and II
Gigue

Franz Schubert (1797–1828) Sonata in B-flat major, D. 960 (1828)

Molto moderato
Andante sostenuto
Scherzo: Allegro vivace con delicatezza
Allegro, ma non troppo

INTERMISSION

Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849) Twelve Études, Op. 25 (c.1837)

No. 1 in A-flat major: Allegro sostenuto
No. 2 in F minor: Presto
No. 3 in F major: Allegro
No. 4 in A minor: Agitato
No. 5 in E minor: Vivace
No. 6 in G-sharp minor: Allegro
("Study in Thirds")
No. 7 in C-sharp minor: Lento
No. 8 in D-flat major: Vivace
No. 9 in G-flat major: Allegro assai ("Butterfly")
No. 10 in B minor: Allegro con fuoco
No. 11 in A minor: Lento — Allegro con brio
("The Winter Wind")
No. 12 in C minor: Allegro molto con fuoco

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Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)
Partita No. 1 in B-flat major, BWV 825

Composed around 1726.

With the condescending pronouncement, “Since the best man could not be obtained, mediocre ones would have to be accepted,” City Councilor Platz announced the appointment of Johann Sebastian Bach in 1723 as Cantor for Leipzig’s churches. Platz’s “best man” was Georg Philipp Telemann, then the most highly regarded composer in all Germany, and the local disappointment at not being able to pry him away from his post as Hamburg’s music director was only one of the many difficulties that Bach faced during his first years on the job in Leipzig. Bach’s new duties centered on directing the music for the Sunday worship at the town’s four churches, principally St. Thomas, where the service usually stretched to four hours and required copious amounts of music, a sizeable portion of which the new Cantor was required to compose. Bach was responsible to the city’s ecclesiastical Consistory in fulfilling these duties, which he had to balance with his teaching at the church’s school, run by the town council. He was also charged with providing some of the music for Leipzig University’s chapel, administered by that institution’s board of governors. His dealings with none of these bodies were eased by his volatile, sometimes even belligerent temper, and his relations with his superiors were almost constantly strained. The most serious of these animosities erupted in a petition to the land’s highest authority, Augustus “the Strong,” Elector of Saxony, asking him to adjudicate a dispute over his assignments and pay with the University authorities, who were much concerned with Bach’s paucity of formal education. Bach lost.

Much of Bach’s early activity in Leipzig was carried out under the shadow of the memory of his predecessor, Johann Kuhnau, a respected musician and scholar who had published masterly translations of Greek and Hebrew, practiced as a lawyer in the city, and won wide fame for his keyboard music. In 1726, probably the

earliest date allowed by the enormous demands of his official position for new sacred vocal music, Bach began a series of keyboard suites that were apparently intended to compete with those of Kuhnau. In addition to helping establish his reputation in Leipzig, these pieces would also provide useful teaching material for the private students he was beginning to draw from among the University’s scholars, who were less hampered by bureaucratic exigencies than their superiors in recognizing Bach’s genius. (Several of his secular cantatas were written for commissions from the University students.) The Partita No. 1 in B-flat major (BWV 825) issued in that year was the first of his compositions to be published, with the exception of two cantatas issued during his short tenure in Mühlhausen many years before (1707–1708). Bach funded the venture himself, and even engraved the plates (to save money) with the help of his teenage son Carl Philip Emanuel, who was then learning that exacting craft. (Copies could be had directly from the composer, cash in advance.) Bach published an additional Partita every year or so until 1731, when he gathered together the six works and issued them collectively in a volume entitled *Clavier-Übung* (“Keyboard Practice”), a term he borrowed from the name of Kuhnau’s keyboard suites published in 1689 and 1692. The Partitas of what became Part I of the *Clavier-Übung* were well received; Johann Nikolaus Forkel, in the first full biography of Bach (1802), reported that “the works made in their time a great noise in the musical world. Such excellent compositions for harpsichord had not been seen or heard before, so brilliant, agreeable, expressive and original are they. Anyone who could play them well could make his fortune in the world thereby, and even in our times, a young artist could gain acknowledgment by doing so.” Bach continued his series of *Clavier-Übung* with three further volumes of vastly different nature: Part II (1735) contains the *Italian Concerto*, the ultimate keyboard realization of that quintessential Baroque orchestral form, and an *Overture (Suite) in the French Manner*; Part III (1739), for organ, the *Catechism Chorale Preludes*, several

short canonic pieces and the “St. Anne” Prelude and Fugue; and Part IV (1742), the incomparable *Goldberg Variations*.

The term “partita” was originally applied to pieces in variations form in Italy during the 16th century, and the word survived in that context into Bach’s time. The keyboard Partitas of the *Clavier-Übung*, however, are not variations but suites of dances, a form that in France occasionally bore the title of *Partie*, meaning either a movement in a larger work or a musical piece for entertainment. The French term was taken over into German practice in the late 17th century as *Parthie* to indicate an instrumental suite, and Bach’s “Partita” seems to have been a corruption of this usage. (He had earlier used the title for three of his works for unaccompanied violin.) Bach referred to these pieces as *galanteries* or “entertainment pieces,” and loosened the usual German succession of dances (*Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Gigue*) to include such alternate movements as *Rondeau, Capriccio, Burlesca, Aria* and *Gavotte*. Each of the six Partitas opens with a movement of different character: *Praeludium, Sinfonia, Fantasia, Overture, Preambulum* and *Toccata*. The dances that follow these prelude movements differ from one work to the next, but satisfy the demand for stylistic variety and formal balance. Charles Sanford Terry wrote, “Bach’s keyboard suites contain not far short of 200 movements. They exhibit extraordinary fertility of invention, vivid imaginative power and complete technical mastery of the forms they employ.”

The Partita No. 1 begins with a *Praeludium* of tender lyricism and placid temperament. The first two of the Partita’s dance movements are dynamically energetic, the *Allemande* vigorous and marching, the *Courante* agile and mercurial. Elaborate ornamentation encrusts the melody of the introspective *Sarabande*. If the Divinity had a music box, it would play the pair of *Menuets* that follow. The *Gigue* is a musical sleight-of-hand, with its staccato theme emerging from a curtain of ceaseless figuration.

“The first part of the *Clavier-Übung* represents the culmination of Bach’s treatment of the

keyboard suite,” wrote Karl Geiringer, “which under his masterly hands assumed a unique grandeur and significance.”

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
Sonata in B-flat major, D. 960

Composed in 1828.

In the hall of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna on March 26, 1828, immediately after completing his magnificent C major Symphony (justifiably dubbed “The Great” by later generations), Franz Schubert gave the only public concert entirely of his works held during his lifetime. The event, prompted and sponsored by his circle of devoted friends, was a significant artistic and financial success, and he used the proceeds to celebrate the occasion at a local tavern, pay off some old debts, acquire a new piano, and buy tickets for Nicolò Paganini’s sensational debut in Vienna three days later. Despite the renewed enthusiasm for creative work that that concert inspired in him, and encouraging signs that his music was beginning to receive recognition outside of Vienna, Schubert’s spirits were dampened during the following months by the perilous state of his health. His constitution, never robust, had been undermined by syphilis, and by the summer of 1828, he was suffering from headaches, exhaustion and frequent digestive distress. In May, he received invitations from friends to summer in both Graz and Gmunden in order to refresh himself with the country air, but he had to refuse his hosts because he lacked money to pay for the transportation. He settled instead for a three-day excursion in early June with the composer-conductor Franz Lachner to nearby Baden, where he wrote a Fugue in E minor for organ, four hands (D. 952, his only work for organ), which he tried out with his companion on the instrument in the 12th-century Cistercian abbey at neighboring Heiligenkreuz on June 4th. Between his return to the city a few days later and August, he composed the Mass in E-flat, made a setting in Hebrew of Psalm 92 for

the City Synagogue of Vienna, created a number of short pieces for piano, wrote all but one of the thirteen songs published after his death in the collection *Schwanengesang*, did extensive work on what proved to be his last three piano sonatas (D. 958-960), and began his C major String Quintet.

At the end of August, Schubert felt unwell, complaining of dizziness and loss of appetite, and his physician advised that he move for a time to a new house outside the city recently acquired by the composer's brother Ferdinand. Though Ferdinand's dwelling was damp and uncomfortable and hardly conducive to his recovery, Franz felt better during the following days, and he was able to participate in an active social life and attend the premiere of a comedy by his friend Eduard von Bauernfeld on September 5th. Schubert also continued to compose incessantly, completing the three piano sonatas on the 26th, and performing them at the house of Dr. Ignaz Menz the following day. The C major Quintet was finished at that same time; it and the sonatas were the last instrumental works that he completed. On October 31st, Schubert fell seriously ill, his syphilitic condition perhaps exacerbated by the typhus then epidemic in Vienna, and he died on November 19, 1828, at the age of 31. He had originally intended that the three sonatas be dedicated to Johann Hummel, a pianist, composer, student of Mozart and important supporter during his last years, but when Diabelli published them in 1838 as *Schubert's Last Compositions: Three Grand Sonatas*, Hummel was already dead, so the pieces were instead inscribed to another champion of Schubert's music, Robert Schumann.

"All three of the last sonatas are works in which meditation, charm, wistfulness, sadness and joy are housed in noble structures," wrote George Marek. Though each follows the traditional four-movement Classical pattern of opening sonata-allegro, lyrical slow movement, scherzo (minuet in the C minor Sonata) and lively finale, this is music less concerned with the titanic, visionary, long-range formal structures of Beethoven (whom Schubert idolized) than with the immediately perceived qualities of melody,

harmonic color, piano sonority and the subtle balancing of keys—what Hans Költzsch in his study of Schubert's sonatas called "the nascent present." This characteristically Schubertian predilection is particularly evident in the development sections of the opening movements, which eschew the rigorous thematic working-out of the Beethovenian model in favor of a warm, even sometimes dreamy, lyricism whose principal aims are to examine fragments of the movement's melodies in different harmonic lights and to extract the instrument's most ingratiating sonorities. The B-flat Sonata, generally regarded as Schubert's greatest achievement in the genre, opens with a movement of breadth and majesty based on one his most ravishing melodies. The *Andante*, music such as it is given to only the greatest masters to compose, seems almost freed from earthly bonds, rapt out of time. "It is," concluded Alfred Einstein, "the climax and apotheosis of Schubert's instrumental lyricism and his simplicity of form." The playful *Scherzo* that follows serves as the perfect foil to the slow movement. The finale balances a certain seriousness of expression with exuberance and rhythmic energy.

Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849) Twelve Études, Op. 25

Composed around 1837.

Chopin's first set of twelve Études was published as his Op. 10 in 1833 (with a dedication to Franz Liszt), though the individual pieces had been written two and three years earlier, around the time that the young composer left Warsaw for Vienna and Paris. The étude originally grew from the need for study pieces focusing on one aspect of keyboard technique, but Chopin's examples lifted the genre from that of a simple pedagogical vehicle to a richly expressive concert form with a single, sustained mood. The Études are the first works in which Chopin's fully formed genius is evident. His second set of Études, Op. 25, appeared in 1837, with a dedication to the Countess Marie d'Agoult, Liszt's

mistress and mother of Cosima, later Richard Wagner's second wife. The English pianist and writer on music Robert Collet explained why the Études are among the most characteristic and perfect of Chopin's creations: "Here, Chopin's more obvious limitations, his lack of sense of the monumental, either seem to be unimportant or to be positive virtues; in these works, he never attempts anything basically unsuited to his natural genius. They are in some ways the most universal of his works; to an unusual degree, they transcend barriers of time and nationality.... It is difficult to think of any music of the decade around 1830 that has dated less."

Clara Schumann wrote that the Étude No. 1 of Op. 25 (A-flat major) embodied the playing of Chopin himself: "Imagine that an Aeolian harp possessed all the musical scales and that the hand of the artist were to cause them all to intermingle in all sorts of fantastic embellishments, yet in such a way as to leave everywhere audible a deep fundamental tone and a soft continuously singing upper voice, and you will get the right idea of Chopin's playing." An "aeolian harp," incidentally, is a lyre-like object whose delicate strings are set in motion by the force of the wind to give forth faint, indiscriminate sounds, a sort of chordophonic analogue of wind chimes. No. 2 (F minor) was composed during a visit in 1836 to Dresden, where Robert Schumann heard Chopin play it and described the piece as "charming, dreamy and soft as a child singing in its sleep." No. 3 (F major) was once known as the "Cartwheel" because of its fast, repetitive rhythms and strong accents. No. 4 (A minor) is an exercise in agitated and persistent syncopation. No. 5 (E minor) is delicate and nimble, with many broad arches of melody that sweep up the keyboard and back down again. The *moto perpetuo* stream of parallel intervals in the right hand of No. 6 (G-sharp minor) has earned it the

nickname "Study in Thirds." No. 7 (C-sharp minor) begins with a deeply felt recitative and reaches great heights of emotional expression. The celebrated 19th-century virtuoso Hans von Bülow said that the Étude No. 8 (D-flat major), a fearsome study in parallel sixths, "might honestly be called 'the pianist's indispensable.'" As a remedy for stiff fingers before performing in public, playing it through six times is recommended for even the most expert pianists." The charming sobriquet of the Étude No. 9 (G-flat major)—"Butterfly"—denotes the music's aerial grace but diminishes its subtlety of sonority and ingenuity of figuration. Herbert Weinstock wrote, "The last three Études of Op. 25 are giants, tone poems large in extension, massive in concept, and wholly masculine in poetic content. They would by themselves make it essential to recognize Chopin as great." The furious, triplet-driven music of the outer sections of No. 10 (B minor) is thrown into bold relief by the movement's serene, lyrical central episode. Of the Étude No. 11 (A minor), known as "The Winter Wind," Eric Harrison wrote, "This is one of the greatest storm-pictures, natural or emotional, ever conceived; the introduction sees its approach and utters a prayer for safety. It has lulls, but increases in violence to the end." There is an almost Beethovenian urgency and grandeur in the Étude No. 12 (C minor). Weinstock advised that "it must not be played as one reasonably imagines the delicate, ailing Chopin to have played it, but as Chopin meant it to be played. It was for years, and with reason, known as the 'Ocean' Étude, and there is a vast tidal power in it. No neuroticism here, nothing covert or androgynous, but strength designed and controlled in the creation of a sovereign and conquering beauty."

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HERALED as the “hot-test artist on the classical music planet” by *The New York Times*, 29-year-old **Lang Lang** has played sold-out recitals and concerts in every major city in the world and is the first Chinese pianist

Philip Glaser

to be engaged by the Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic and all of the top American orchestras.

Testimony to his success, Lang Lang recently appeared in the 2009 *Time* 100—*Time* magazine’s annual list of the “100 Most Influential People in the World.” In 2008, over four billion people viewed Lang Lang’s performance in Beijing’s opening ceremony for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad, where he was seen as a symbol of the youth and the future of China. This status has inspired over 40 million Chinese children to learn to play classical—a phenomenon coined by *The Today Show* as “the Lang Lang effect.” Recognizing Lang Lang’s powerful cultural influence, in 2008 the Recording Academy named him their Cultural Ambassador to China. Most recently, Lang Lang has been chosen as an official worldwide ambassador for the 2010 Shanghai Expo, and played at the opening ceremony.

Continuing his presence on the world stage, Lang Lang was featured at the 2008 Grammy Awards, pairing up with jazz great Herbie Hancock for an astounding performance that was broadcast live to 45 million viewers worldwide. The two pianists continued their collaboration with an inaugural world tour in summer 2009.

For nearly a decade, Lang Lang has been giving back to children around the world through volunteer activities as diverse as mentoring rising young talented pianists, convening 100 piano students in concert, performing for sick children in hospitals, delivering classical music recitals in

underserved and remote communities, and donating his musical talents to raise awareness of other charitable causes. Lang Lang’s charitable efforts led to the recent launch of the Lang Lang International Music Foundation with the mission of inspiring the next generation of classical music lovers and performers by cultivating tomorrow’s top pianists, championing music education at the forefront of technology, and building a young audience through live music experiences. Through the strategic work of his new foundation, which is committed to children and music education, Lang Lang works with exceptional partners to inspire young people to believe that music can make life better. In May 2009, Lang Lang and his three chosen young scholars from the foundation—aged between 6 and 10 years old—performed together on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* on “Oprah’s Search for the World’s Smartest and Most Talented Kids.” Lang Lang is deeply committed to creating and participating in programs that bring sustained interest for music into the lives of children. As he noted after the Foundation launch event, “I have taken on a second career!”

In 2011, the Lang Lang Music World was launched, which is a multifunctioning arts complex located in Shenzhen and Chongqing, China, where children can go to receive piano education, participate in master classes and competitions, attend concerts and purchase Lang Lang-brand educational products. With the mission of sharing Lang Lang’s global view, experiences and knowledge in piano education, the Lang Lang Music World nurtures and provides exclusive opportunities for young talent through its unique platform.

Lang Lang continues to give master classes regularly throughout the world at the invitation of the most prestigious music institutions, including the Curtis Institute of Music, Juilliard School, Manhattan School of Music and Hanover Conservatory, as well as all the top conservatories in China where he holds honorary professorships. He has held music residencies, which include master classes for exceptional students, in Chicago, Toronto, San Francisco, London, Rome and Stockholm. In addition to

his numerous commitments, Lang Lang holds the title of the first Ambassador of the YouTube Symphony Orchestra. His role in this groundbreaking project, created by YouTube and Google, reflects his devotion to building new audiences and bringing classical music to young people worldwide.

In the 2010–2011 season, Lang Lang performed at the opening night of Christoph Eschenbach’s inaugural season with the National Symphony Orchestra as well as the opening of Carnegie Hall season with Vienna Philharmonic. The Salle Pleyel in Paris presented the “Lang Lang Festival,” which included a joint concert between Lang Lang and Roberto Alagna; the Southbank Center in London presented *Lang Lang Inspires*, which included the “Massed Piano Project,” on which he played with 100 young pianists on 51 pianos. In addition, he performed on the New Year’s Eve concert with the New York Philharmonic at the Lincoln Center, also held residencies in Milan, Madrid and Sydney.

In the 2011–2012 season, he is the Creative Director of the Ascent Series at the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and hold a residency. At the beginning of the season, he performed at the San Francisco Symphony’s 100th Anniversary Gala concert and the Last Night Proms at the Royal Albert Hall in London. In addition, he will be on tour with the Concertgebouw, Vienna Philharmonic and the New York Philharmonic.

His biography, *Journey of a Thousand Miles*, published by Random House in eleven languages, was released to critical acclaim. As part of his commitment to the education of children, he released a version of his autobiography specifically for younger readers, entitled *Playing with Flying Keys*.

Tens of thousands of people have enjoyed Lang Lang’s performances in open-air concerts in parks and venues around the globe, including Central Park in New York City, Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles, Ravinia Festival in Chicago, Theaterplatz in Dresden and Derby Park in Hamburg. Lang Lang participated in the opening concert at Munich’s Olympic Stadium with Mariss Jansons, marking the

commencement of the World Cup Games. In celebratory concerts for the closing of 2008 Euro Cup finals, Lang Lang played with the Vienna Philharmonic under the baton of Zubin Mehta in front of Schönbrunn Palace.

Continuing his work with world-famous conductors, Lang Lang has performed under the baton of Sir Simon Rattle with the Berlin Philharmonic at the Waldbühne, Daniel Barenboim with the Staatskapelle Berlin at the Philharmonie, and Seiji Ozawa for the New Year’s Eve gala opening of the National Center for the Performing Arts in Beijing.

In December 2007, Lang Lang was guest soloist at the Nobel Prize concert in Stockholm, an event attended by Nobel Laureates and members of the Royal Family. He returned as soloist for the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony and concert for President Barack Obama.

Lang Lang has become the face of numerous global campaigns. Steinway has recognized Lang Lang’s popularity with children by creating five versions of the “Lang Lang™ Steinway” designed for early music education. This is the first time in its 150-year history that Steinway has ever used an artist’s name to produce pianos. Lang Lang is also a global brand ambassador for Sony Electronics, with whom he anticipates achieving innovative and creative possibilities for the future. Lang Lang recently signed on to represent Aegon’s worldwide financial services, and he is proud to continue his relationship with Audi Automobiles as their Global Brand Ambassador.

Lang Lang began playing piano at age 3, and by age 5, he had won the Shenyang Competition and had given his first public recital. Entering Beijing’s Central Music Conservatory at age 9, he won first prize at the Tchaikovsky International Young Musicians Competition and played the complete 24 Chopin Études at the Beijing Concert Hall at age 13. Lang Lang’s break into stardom came at age 17, when he was called upon for a dramatic last-minute substitution at the “Gala of the Century,” playing a Tchaikovsky concerto with the Chicago Symphony. Following this gigantic debut, he performed successful concerts around the world.

Lang Lang has made numerous TV appearances, including *The Today Show*, *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*, *Good Morning America*, *CBS Early Show* and *60 Minutes*, among many others. He has been featured on every major TV network and in news and lifestyle magazines worldwide, including such diverse publications as *The New Yorker*, *Esquire*, *Vogue*, *The Times*, *Financial Times*, *GQ*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Die Welt*, *Reader's Digest* and *People*.

Lang Lang has performed for numerous international dignitaries, including the former Secretary-General of the United Nations Kofi Annan, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Presidents Barack Obama, George H.W. Bush, George W. Bush and William J. Clinton, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, President Hu Jin-Tao of China, President Horst Köhler of Germany, H.R.H. Prince Charles, Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, French President Nicolas Sarkozy and Polish President Lech Kaczynski. Most recently, he performed for President Obama and President Hu at the White House State Dinner.

In 2004, Lang Lang was appointed International Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Lang Lang has contributed and worked to raise funds and awareness for earthquake relief efforts in China and Haiti. These efforts included auctioning the red Steinway piano played during his 2008 New York Central Park concert, donating the net proceeds to the American Red Cross China Earthquake fund, and organizing a benefit concert at Carnegie Hall, donating the net proceeds to UNICEF's Earthquake Relief Fund in Haiti. As Chairman of the Montblanc de la Culture Arts Patronage Award Project, Lang Lang celebrates another aspect of arts commitment. He also currently serves on the Weill Music Institute Advisory Committee as part of Carnegie Hall's educational program and is the youngest member of Carnegie Hall's Artistic Advisory Board. He has been added as one of the 250 Young Global Leaders picked by the World Economic Forum and received the 2010 Crystal Award in Davos. In May 2011, Lang

Lang received an honorary doctorate of music from H.R.H. The Prince of Wales at the Royal College of Music.

Lang Lang is the featured soloist on the Golden Globe-winning score *The Painted Veil* composed by Alexandre Desplat and can be heard on the soundtrack of *The Banquet* composed by Tan Dun. All of his albums have entered the top classical charts as well as many pop charts around the globe. His recording of the first and fourth Beethoven piano concertos with the Orchestre de Paris and Maestro Christoph Eschenbach debuted at No. 1 on the *Billboard* classical chart. Lang Lang also appeared on *Billboard*'s new artist chart at the highest position ever for a classical artist. In 2007, he was nominated for a Grammy Award, becoming the first Chinese artist to be nominated for Best Instrumental Soloist. He was also honored by the Recording Academy with the 2007 Presidential Merit Award; past recipients have included Zubin Mehta and Luciano Pavarotti.

Lang Lang recently recorded the movie soundtrack of the Japanese blockbuster film *Nodame Cantabile*, the 24 Chopin Études for "Project Chopin" (the largest project in honor of Chopin's bicentenary) and *Nuit de Mai* with Plácido Domingo, and performed the opening sequence for *Gran Turismo*, the most successful videogame of our time.

In February 2010, Lang Lang joined Sony Music Entertainment as an exclusive recording artist; his first album with Sony features a live recording of his 2010 recital at Vienna's legendary Musikverein. For more information, visit www.langlang.com.