

A full moon is visible in a dark, cloudy night sky. The moon is bright and circular, surrounded by soft, wispy clouds. The overall color palette is dark blue and black, with the moon providing a focal point of light.

Night Wind

Misha Galant

piano

St Thomas' Church Winchelsea

Saturday 18th March 2023

Winchelsea Arts



MISHA GALANT

Misha Galant began piano lessons at the age of six with his mother, Olya Katsman, and continues to study with her to this day. Throughout high school, he also received guidance and coaching from Sharon Mann and Yoshikazu Nagai of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

He is a graduate of Columbia University, where he studied piano with Joseph Kalichstein through the Columbia-Juilliard Exchange while also pursuing degrees in Data Science and Russian Literature. He currently studies with Dr. Viktor Valkov at the University of Utah and, before the war in Ukraine, studied with Professor Tatiana Zelikman of the Gnesin Russian Academy of Music in Moscow. Dr. Yu-Jane Yang of Weber State University in Ogden, UT has also been instrumental in Misha's musical growth throughout high school and college.

Misha gave his first full solo recital at age 12 and made his orchestral debut at age 13, performing Chopin's *Piano Concerto No. 1* with the Oakland East Bay Symphony. He has since performed with such orchestras as the Fort Worth Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, Utah Symphony, and the California Youth Symphony, joining the latter on tour in Austria and Italy for performances of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*.

He has also won numerous awards at piano competitions, including multiple prizes in 2015 at the first Cliburn International Junior Piano Competition and at the Eastman Young Artists International Competition, the latter resulting in a four-year, full-tuition scholarship offer to attend the Eastman School of Music.

He was inducted into the MTAC's selective Young Artist Guild, through which he performed frequently as a recitalist around California from 2015-2020, and, was chosen as one of two Gilmore Young Artists in the United States for 2020.

Additionally, Misha is an avid chamber musician and enjoys performing benefit concerts for retirement communities and charities.

At the start of 2022, when war broke out, Misha was staying in Winchelsea while taking part in the Hastings International Piano Concerto Competition. He gave a fundraising recital at St Thomas's. The church was packed and over £6,000 was raised for Ukraine.

Beyond his musical and academic endeavours, Misha enjoys hiking and mountain running and swam for the Columbia University swimming team.

JOSEPH HAYDN 1732 - 1809

Sonata in C major, Hob. XVI: 50 (1794)

Allegro

Adagio (F major)

Allegro molto

Haydn wrote 107 symphonies, 83 string quartets, 45 piano trios, 62 piano sonatas, 14 masses and 26 operas, and much more beside. Hoboken's catalogues lists 750 works. Haydn's musical career began as a boy treble at St Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna. His voice was so fine that he is said to have narrowly escaped becoming a castrato. Between 1762 and 1790 Haydn worked for Prince Nicholas Esterházy, at whose court he became known as "Papa" Haydn, the term by which his friend W A Mozart addressed him.

A prankster as a boy, Haydn's abiding love of humour can be traced into many of his works, e.g., *The Farewell Symphony*, No.45, as well as the finale of the *Sonata in C major*. The musicologist and Haydn scholar Richard Wigmore has written of the sonata's finale: "A candidate for the most subversively comic piece that even Haydn ever wrote. A scherzo in all but name, it continually baffles with its lopsided phrases (the quirky main theme consists of five plus two bars), outrageous sudden silences and disorienting feints to absurdly remote keys that, unlike Haydn's usual practice, remain arbitrary and unexplained to the end."

The sonata is dedicated to Therese Jansen Bartolozzi (1770-1843), an eminent pianist whose father had moved to England from Aachen. She was given tickets to the first series of Haydn's London concerts, during his triumphant visit to London between 1791 and 1792.

ALEXANDER Scriabin 1872 - 1915

Prelude & Nocturne for Left Hand, op. 9

Poème Satanique, op. 36

Fantaisie in B minor, op. 28

Born in Russia, Scriabin was a complex figure, dabbling in theosophy as was fashionable at the time. (Other devotees included Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.) Scriabin was also interested in synaesthesia, in his case colours seen in or through music.

He wrote extensively for the piano throughout his career, producing works of great emotional power as well as of considerable challenge for the performer, notably in the *Fantaisie in B minor*, written in 1900.

In 1891 Scriabin hurt his right hand, hence he temporarily favoured his left hand for which he composed his *Prélude et Nocturne pour la main gauche seule*, op. 9 in 1894. Both pieces became very popular and are now a part of the piano left hand canon.

The pianist Simon Nicholls has written, "In the *Poème satanique*, Op 36, Liszt's influence on Scriabin is at its clearest; the sensual chromaticism of the *Mephisto Waltz No 1* is evoked here". Later, speaking to his friend and associate Sabaneev, Scriabin characterized this work as 'the apotheosis of insincerity. It is all hypocritical, false.'" Let the listener decide.

INTERVAL

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH 1685 - 1750

Organ Sonata No. 4 in E minor, BWV 528

II. Andante [Adagio]

Transcription by August Stradal (1860 - 1930)

J S Bach needs no introduction today, thanks in part to Felix Mendelssohn who led the rediscovery of Bach during the nineteenth century. Bach's compositions for organ are recognised among his greatest works. Stradal was a Bohemian piano virtuoso, teacher and author, who studied with Bruckner, Leschetizky and Liszt. Stradal transcribed works for piano at a time when many homes had pianos, although his expressive transcriptions are far beyond the ability of most amateur pianists.

NIKOLAI MEDTNER 1880 - 1951

Sonata in E minor, op. 25 no. 2 in E minor,
Night Wind (1911)

Medtner was born and studied in Russia, where he was admired as a leading composer and piano virtuoso. He survived the 1917 revolution but left Russia in 1924 to give international concert tours. Medtner was a close friend of Rachmaninov, who dedicated his *Fourth Piano Concerto* to him. He eventually settled in London. For the last 30 years of his life, he was almost unknown and lived in poverty with his wife in Golders Green. He has since been rediscovered.

Night Wind is the seventh of Medtner's fourteen piano sonatas. Inspired by Fyodor Tyutchev's 1832 poem, "Of what do you howl, night wind...?", the sonata is dedicated to Rachmaninov. The sonata is a single movement epic, about 35 minutes long, in two major parts: an Introduction and Allegro sonata-form, followed by a Fantasy and a shadowy but active coda.

The late Geoffrey Tozer, an Australian pianist, said, "It has the reputation of being a fearsomely difficult work of extraordinary length, exhausting to play and to hear, but of magnificent quality and marvellous invention."

Programme notes by R J Manuell

Next at Winchelsea Arts:

Saturday 20th May at 7.30pm

A concert celebrating nature - marking the annual return of the swifts to Winchelsea

Hastings Philharmonic Orchestra

Conductor Marcio da Silva



Pastoral music from Germany, France and England to celebrate the miracle of nature and the strong influence that the swifts' annual visit has on the town of Winchelsea. The birds which arrive at the end of April each year return to the same nesting holes where they have bred before, following their journey from southern Africa. Their nightly acrobatic displays in the churchyard have become legendary. The Hastings Philharmonic Orchestra return to Winchelsea too, to perform these seminal works:

L. van Beethoven *Symphony No. 6 The Pastoral*

G. Fauré *Pelleas et Melisande*

R. Vaughan-Williams *Five Variants of Dives and Lazarus*

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