

Lammermuir Festival

Autumn Special

Online from 11 September 2020, 1:00pm | Holy Trinity Church, Haddington

Roman Rabinovich piano

Domenico Zipoli Suite in G Minor, Op. 1, No. 18

Joseph Haydn Piano Sonata in E-flat Major, Hob. XVI:52

Ludwig van Beethoven Piano Sonata No. 23 in F Minor,
Op. 57 ('Appassionata')

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Domenico Zipoli Suite in G Minor, Op. 1, No. 18

1. Preludio
2. Corrente
3. Sarabanda
4. Giga

Domenico Zipoli is a composer who, though his name might be unfamiliar, actually made a significant contribution to keyboard music. After studies in Florence and Naples with Alessandro Scarlatti, he was appointed as the organist at the Jesuit church in Rome. It was there that he published the *Sonate d'intavolatura* (1716), a collection of works for both organ and harpsichord, in which this suite is included. Zipoli subsequently joined the Society of Jesus and ended up sailing to South America to work in the Paraguay mission. Many of his works survive in manuscript across Latin America. Still, it was the Roman print that was to be his most enduring work, being issued in London in 1725 by John Walsh whose catalogue included music by Handel among others, as well as in Paris as late as 1741.

Zipoli's suites have a kind of whimsical naïveté, taking simple musical materials and chaining them together into more extended ideas through lengthy sequences, and being unafraid of venturing through some relatively adventurous tonal regions. This G minor suite is perhaps the best of the set, with an elegant prelude prefacing three more visceral dances. After an effervescent courante, the sarabande demonstrates Zipoli's ability at writing a good tune, and has real resonances of Handel. The concluding jig is a short but action-packed ride, with its broken chords forcing the player to attempt to maintain a sense of perpetual motion.

Joseph Haydn Piano Sonata in E-flat Major, Hob. XVI:52

1. Allegro moderato
2. Adagio
3. Finale: Presto

Unlike Mozart and Beethoven, the other two pillars of the Viennese Classical school, Joseph Haydn was no keyboard virtuoso. His reputation as a composer is founded more on his string quartets and symphonies. However, he is known to have worked dutifully at the piano, and he composed around sixty sonatas for the instrument that made a significant contribution to the genre, as it developed in the eighteenth century.

The **Sonata in E-flat Major, Hob. XVI:52** (sometimes referred to as 62, based on the alternative catalogue compiled by H.C. Robbins Landon) was to be Haydn's final sonata, and one of a group of three that he composed inspired by his encounters with the new Broadwood pianos during his visits to London. The sonatas were dedicated to Therese Jansen, a pupil of Clementi's, who was highly regarded in London in the 1790s. This sonata is by quite some way the longest and most ambitious of the set, incorporating some

unconventional tonal juxtapositions. The extensive first movement opens with a Baroque fanfare, before launching into the first subject proper. Haydn really calls on the pianist to show their mettle, in some rapid passagework that takes the performer almost across the entirety of the keyboard, before the more delicate second subject explores piano's upper register. The slow central movement is remarkable, in that it is in E major — an unusually remote key for an eighteenth-century sonata. Once again, Haydn plays with the enhanced dynamic and textural variation made possible by the new pianos. The final Presto returns to the home key with a bang, with a repeated-note drumbeat figure that lends itself well to Haydn's developments, being broken up by lightning-fast arpeggios, before the final capitulation brings the sonata to an emphatic conclusion.

Ludwig van Beethoven Piano Sonata No. 23 in F Minor, Op. 57 ('Appassionata')

1. Allegro assai

2. Andante con moto

3. Allegro ma non troppo – Presto

Although the title *Appassionata* was only given to the sonata after Beethoven's death, Beethoven's twenty-third piano sonata was a work that he himself considered his most 'tempestuous' until the *Hammerklavier*. It was published as the sole work of his Opus 57, signifying the status that the solo piano sonata had begun to occupy in Beethoven's mind (previously, sonatas had tended to be published together as groups).

Beethoven breaks a multitude of rules here. The first movement is notable for avoiding the customary repeat of the exposition section — but Beethoven compensates for any structural imbalance that this might create, by adding a lengthy coda. The result of this is that the first movement seems more like a continuously evolving discourse that reaches its own conclusion organically, rather than a set-piece. Another of its key features is Beethoven's recurring, almost obsessive use of a short four-note motif that descends by a semitone. The increasingly dramatic effect that the constant repetition of this fragment has foreshadows the thematic unity that was to become a feature in Beethoven's subsequent sonatas. The central movement is a set of variations in D-flat, the relative major, and its melodic simplicity offers welcome relief from the preceding drama. However, the closing movement quickly returns to the turbulent mood, opening with a swirling theme in the left hand punctuated by full-voiced chords in the right. The form of this movement is difficult to describe succinctly, with Beethoven seemingly playing capricious games with the listener's expectations. After a turbulent development, just when we are expecting to hear the return of the opening theme in the home key, Beethoven brings it back in the subdominant (a strangely disorienting effect) — and then introduces an entirely new theme! At this point, the music almost seems to virtually fall apart, in total emotional and physical collapse. But it doesn't, and it makes for a genuinely thrilling finale. It's almost like Beethoven knew precisely what he was doing.

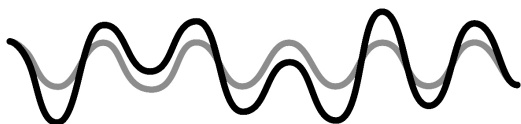
Roman Rabinovich has been highly lauded by *The New York Times*, *BBC Music Magazine*, the *San Francisco Classical Voice* and others. He has performed throughout Europe and the United States in venues such as Wigmore Hall in London, Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Centre in New York, the Great Hall of Moscow Conservatory, the Cité de la Musique in Paris, and the Terrace Theater of Kennedy Center in Washington DC. Rabinovich has participated in festivals including Marlboro, Lucerne, Davos, Prague Spring, Klavier-Festival Ruhr, and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. An avid chamber musician, he is also a regular guest at ChamberFest Cleveland.

Rabinovich has earned critical praise for his explorations of the piano music of Haydn. At the 2018 Bath Festival, he presented a 10-recital 42-sonata series, earning praise in *The Sunday Times*. Prior to that, in 2016 as Artist in Residence at the Lammermuir Festival, he performed 25 Haydn sonatas in 5 days, and over two seasons, in 2016 and 2017, he performed all Haydn's sonatas in Tel Aviv.

Dubbed 'a true polymath, in the Renaissance sense of the word' (*Seen & Heard International*, 2016), Rabinovich is also a composer and visual artist. Rabinovich's 2019-20 engagements include concerto appearances with Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France and Sir Roger Norrington, Meiningen Orchestra, Northern Sinfonia, Glacier Symphony and solo recitals highlights include International Piano Series at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Ruhr Piano Festival, Liszt Academy, Union College and ProMusica Detroit. The last two seasons saw Rabinovich's critically acclaimed concerto debut with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and Sir Roger Norrington, as well as with the Orquestra Sinfónica do Porto Casa da Música, the NFM Leopoldinum and Szczecin Philharmonic in Europe, and the Seattle Symphony, the Sarasota Orchestra, Des Moines Symphony, the Sinfonia Boca Raton and James Judd in the US.

Solo recital appearances include Lincoln Center's Alice Tully and Walter Reade Theatre, the Houston Society for the Performing Arts, the Washington Performing Arts Society, Vancouver Recital Society, Chopin Society in St Paul, MN, the Philip Lorenz Piano Series in Fresno, the Janáček May International Music Festival and the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama in Cardiff. As a chamber musician Rabinovich appeared with violinist Liza Ferschtman in, among others, the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, the Baden-Baden Festspielhaus and the BeethovenHaus Bonn.

Born in Tashkent, Rabinovich emigrated to Israel with his family in 1994, beginning his studies there with Irena Vishnevitsky and Arie Vardi; he went on to graduate from the Curtis Institute of Music as a student of Seymour Lipkin, and earned his Master's Degree at the Juilliard School where he studied with Robert McDonald.



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