

FACULTY ARTIST SERIES

**BEETHOVEN:
COMPLETE PIANO
SONATAS**

ALEXANDER KOBRIN, PIANO

September 1, 2023—May 1, 2024
Hatch Recital Hall



EASTMAN
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
UNIVERSITY of ROCHESTER

PROGRAM

Friday, September 1, 2023

Hatch Recital Hall

7:30 PM

Piano Sonata No. 1 in F Minor, Op. 2, No. 1 Ludwig van Beethoven

Allegro

(1770-1827)

Adagio

Minuetto: Allegretto

Prestissimo

Piano Sonata No. 2 in A Major, Op. 2, No. 2

Allegro vivace

Largo appassionato

Scherzo: Allegretto

Rondo: Grazioso

Piano Sonata No. 3 in C Major, Op. 2, No. 3

Allegro con brio

Adagio

Scherzo: Allegro

Allegro assai

Alexander Kobrin, piano

PROGRAM

Sunday, October 1, 2023

Hatch Recital Hall

3:30 PM

Piano Sonata No. 4 in E-flat Major, Op. 7 Ludwig van Beethoven
Allegro molto e con brio (1770-1827)
Largo con gran espressione
Allegro
Rondo: Poco allegretto e grazioso

Piano Sonata No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 10, No. 1
Allegro molto e con brio
Adagio molto
Finale: Prestissimo

Piano Sonata No. 6 in F Major, Op. 10, No. 2
Allegro
Menuetto: Allegretto
Presto

Piano Sonata No. 7 in D Major, Op. 10, No. 3
Presto
Largo e mesto
Menuetto: Allegro
Rondo: Allegro

Alexander Kobrin, piano

PROGRAM

Wednesday, November 1, 2023

Hatch Recital Hall

7:30 PM

**Piano Sonata No. 8 in C Minor, Op. 13,
"Pathétique"**

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Grave—Allegro di molto e con brio

Adagio cantabile

Rondo: Allegro

Piano Sonata No. 9 in E Major, Op. 14, No. 1

Allegro

Allegretto

Rondo—Allegro commodo

Piano Sonata No. 10 in G Major, Op. 14, No. 2

Allegro

Andante

Scherzo: Allegro assai

Piano Sonata No. 11 in B-flat Major, Op. 22

Allegro con brio

Adagio con molta espressione

Menuetto

Rondo: Allegretto

Alexander Kobrin, piano

PROGRAM

Friday, December 1, 2023

Hatch Recital Hall

7:30 PM

Piano Sonata No. 12 in A-flat Major, Op. 26 Ludwig van Beethoven

Andante con variazioni (1770-1827)

Scherzo: Allegro molto

Maestoso andate: Marcia funebre sulla morte d'un eroe

Allegro

Piano Sonata No. 13 in E-flat Major, Op. 27, No. 1

Andante—Allegro—Andante

Allegro molto e vivace

Adagio con espressione

Allegro vivace

Piano Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp Minor, Op. 27, No. 2

Adagio sostenuto

Allegretto

Presto agitato

Piano Sonata No. 15 in D Major, Op. 28, "Pastoral"

Allegro

Andante

Scherzo: Allegro vivace

Rondo: Allegro ma non troppo

Alexander Kobrin, piano

PROGRAM

Thursday, February 1, 2024

Hatch Recital Hall

7:30 PM

Piano Sonata No. 16 in G Major, Op. 31, No. 1 Ludwig van Beethoven

Allegro vivace

(1770-1827)

Adagio grazioso

Rondo: *Allegretto—Presto*

Piano Sonata No. 17 in D Minor, Op. 31, No. 2, "Tempest"

Largo—Allegro

Adagio

Allegretto

Piano Sonata No. 18 in E-flat Major, Op. 31, No. 3

Allegro

Scherzo: *Allegretto vivace*

Menuetto: *Moderato e grazioso*

Presto con fuoco

Alexander Kobrin, piano

PROGRAM

Friday, March 1, 2024

Hatch Recital Hall

7:30 PM

Piano Sonata No. 19 in G Minor, Op. 49, No. 1 Ludwig van Beethoven

Andante

(1770-1827)

Rondo: Allegro

Piano Sonata No. 20 in G Major, Op. 49, No. 2

Allegro ma non troppo

Tempo di menuetto

Piano Sonata No. 21 in C Major, Op. 53, "Waldstein"

Allegro con brio

Introduzione: Adagio molto

Rondo: Allegretto moderato—Prestissimo

Piano Sonata No. 22 in F Major, Op. 54

In tempo d'un menuetto

Allegretto—Più allegro

Piano Sonata No. 23 in F Minor, Op. 57, "Appassionata"

Allegro assai

Andante con moto

Allegro ma non troppo—Presto

Alexander Kobrin, piano

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*A careful study of these works will transform us,
for Beethoven will become our teacher and
lead us to develop our own personalities and characters.*
— Edwin Fischer

Piano Sonata No. 19 in G Minor, Op. 49, No. 1 **Piano Sonata No. 20 in G Major, Op. 49, No. 2**

During 1802, Beethoven's brother Kaspar Anton Karl had begun to take on the role of secretary, especially in managing relations with publishers. This role also implied the delicate job of dealing with works from previous years that had remained unpublished for various reasons. Among them were the two sonatas, *Op. 49*: works with a pedagogical character, simple and without any virtuosic pretensions to great form, had been lying ignored among Beethoven's papers for more than five years when his brother Karl wrote to the publisher *Offenbach* to request their publication in November 1802. Probably because of the surprising difference with the composer's then well-established public image, *Offenbach* declined the offer, so Karl tried *Breitkopf & Härtel*, only to be rejected again. It was not until 1805 that the two sonatas were published in Vienna by Kunst- und Industrie-Comptoir, fueling the increasingly thriving market for musical amateurs. With this publication, Beethoven sought to attract a new audience, following the tradition of the late 18th-century Sonatinas of Clementi and Dussek, and retracing a path already attempted with the Bagatelles, *Op. 33*.

The two sonatas date from the period between 1796 and 1798, composed around the same time as the *Op. 7*, and the three sonatas *Op. 10*. As Barry Cooper argues, "whoever commissioned the works must have alerted Beethoven to the fact that the intended recipient was a player of only limited ability. *No. 2*, which is slightly shorter and easier technically, was written first, and *No. 1* may have been commissioned as a successor for the same pianist as she (presumably she) made progress on the instrument."

The *Sonata, Op. 49, No. 1* is the larger of the two and presents a more ingenious and original revision of traditional procedures. Written in G minor, a very rare tonality in Beethoven, the Sonata opens with an *Andante* in an elegiac tone that paradoxically proves to have a dreamy clarity. The ample space given to the second theme in B-flat major, and on which

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predominantly the development focuses, seems almost to suggest how Beethoven created a stratagem to handle this atypical G minor setting and incorporate into a serious and melancholy *Andante* for three voices a serene and optimistic arietta. The second movement is in *Rondo* form and takes advantage of the refrain structure to create a remarkable mesh of different tonalities that balance and unbalance between minor and major modes.

The *Sonata, Op. 49, No. 2* presents a small compass, which may be justified by the original concept of progressive difficulty of the two sonatas, having been composed first, or - as has been speculated - because it was conceived for the newly invented portable piano called the Orphica. Charles Rosen calls this sonata “a perfectly successful scholastic essay,” reducing its musical value to an uncommitted exercise in late 18th-century style. Yet it is precisely because of this simplicity of treatment that the value of this work is all the more important, for it offers a glimpse into Beethoven’s unrevolutionized use of gallant style and courtly tone, in a rare instance where technical difficulty and caressing the acoustic limitations of the instrument are not considered at all. In the *Allegro ma non troppo*, finely classical and built on a circumscribed canonical sonata form, Beethoven virtually inserts no dynamics and just a few signs of articulation. The result is thus a thumbnail picture of Mozart’s *Ancien Régime*, rendered utterly impersonal and lacking in theatrical verve. The following movement features a theme already among Beethoven’s most famous by the time *Op. 49* appeared on the market. Since the work was not initially published, he decided to take this *Tempo di Menuetto* and make it a movement of the *Septet, Op. 20 in E-flat Major* for strings and winds, which became one of his most successful works. Simple in tone and diffuse in serenity, this *Minuet* satirically disinterestedly closes the curtain on this unexpected postcard from the 18th century.

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Piano Sonata No. 21 in C Major, Op. 53, “Waldstein”

In the late summer of 1803, Beethoven received a piano as a gift from Parisian makers Sébastien and Jean-Baptiste Erard. It was a moment when his relationship with the keyboard instrument was changing after years of intense, predominantly piano writing. Eager to change course to his creativity, he had slowly moved away from composing piano sonatas, expressing in a letter to Johann André a desire to concentrate “only on oratorios, operas, etc.” Dissatisfaction with Viennese pianos, then, had in turn become apparent, as evident from the words written by Griesinger to Gottfried Härtel in December 1803: “Beethoven has always criticized the tone of the local instruments for being woody, and that they create the habit of a small, weak touch.” As argued by Tom Beghin, “Beethoven was interested in the *malleability* of the tone: the possibility to shape and create a true Beethoven at the keyboard, instead of having to pick and choose between louder and softer [Viennese pianos] tones.” Therefore, the arrival of his “französisches klavier” thus proves decisive for Beethoven, who, as Barry Cooper argues, “may well have induced him to compose something for it, especially if, as seems likely, piano sonatas were still being requested by local patrons.” His fascination with the new instrument and experimentation with new technical and timbral possibilities spills over into the *Sonata in C Major, Op. 53*, dedicated to Count Ferdinand von Waldstein.

Edwin Fischer, in describing this Sonata, claims: “The French call this sonata *L'aurore*, and the title suits it very well. The first movement in particular has the radiance of dawn, an “aura” which reminds us of Goethe’s *Ganymed*,” the young girl seduced by God (or Zeus) from the beauty of a spring morning. The balance between poetic interpretation and sonic experimentation is tenuous since what Beethoven seems concretely to be doing in the *Allegro con brio* is exploring the different possibilities of the new piano, especially the contrasts between the ribattuto chord in the lower register and the tremolo. Suffice it to say that Alfredo Casella, describing the first movement beginning, claims it “belongs rather to the order of noise than of music.” Indeed, the germinal idea on which the entire musical discourse comes is not melodic but rhythmic, interrupted only by the chorale of the second theme, which has qualities of wind instruments. As in Fischer’s image of dawn, the entire movement results centered on the process of becoming, maintaining an intrinsic organicity due to the constant presence of the germinal rhythmic cell.

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In an early version of the Sonata, Beethoven had organized the work into three separate movements, and as the second movement, there was a large *Andante in F*, later published without an opus number. According to the biographer Alexander Wheelock Thayer, “a friend told Beethoven that the sonata was too long. After quiet reflection, Beethoven convinced himself of the correctness of the criticism. Therefore, the *Andante* [...] was excluded and, in its place, an interesting introduction to the present rondo was composed.” With the addition of the ten-minute-long *Andante*, commonly known as “*Andante favori*,” the already monumental dimensions of the work were even more cyclopean. In contrast, the Introduction of the second version makes Waldstein more coherent in its unity and seamlessly connects the slow movement to the finale, as will later be the case with Op. 57. The incessant motion of the first and third movements, which seems almost to be a reflection on the continuity of time, is interrupted here by an ambivalent slowness: on the one hand, an incessant chromatic bass, which picks up in slow motion the idea of unbreakable time, and on the other an almost frightened theme with vivid hesitation. Even the solo theme is interrupted by explorations toward the treble part of the keyboard, like a question echoing in an empty place, unanswered. The search continues, mixing vocal line and accompaniment until it resolves directly into the effervescent joy of the *Allegretto moderato*.

The effect of continuity sought by the long original pedals, to create an impossible effect of *son continu* on the piano, creates a typically watery effect of continuous flow. Quite curious, then, is to note a connection with the Rhine River: as William Behrend pointed out in 1927, the thematic motif comes from a then-famous Rhineland folksong. In this movement, rustic elements are then included, such as the bordone effect given by the opening bass. The *Rondo* continues purely and in a joyful spirit, interrupted by two sections with darker tones and a return to a more martellato use of the keyboard. Excitement builds until it explodes in a final *Prestissimo*, where Beethoven condenses an enormous amount of experimental piano techniques, creating unprecedented sound effects. As Rosen argues, “Never again in his career did the composer try to find so many tone colors and technical inventions for the pianist in one work.”

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Piano Sonata No. 22 in F Major, Op. 54

“This sonata consists only of a *Tempo di Minuet* and a not very long *Allegretto*, both difficult to perform, both written in an original spirit and with unmistakably mature harmonic artistry (especially as regards expansion), but both also full of whimsical bizarreness.” In the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* of July 2, 1806, so opens the review of the *Sonata in F Major, Op. 54*, with an implicit prophecy about its destiny. Perhaps precisely because of the “wunderlicher Grillen,” already acknowledged by the reviewer, this Sonata never found acceptance among the general public or even among performers. Indeed, since it remained on the fringes of the repertoire or squeezed between two major and celebrated works (*Op. 53* and *Op. 57*) in the case of the complete cycles, Edwin Fischer claims that “this sonata is treated as a stepchild.” Indeed, beneath its enigmatic surface, this sonata “has a hidden poetry that will not reveal itself easily, but that will withstand a challenging examination,” as argued by Charles Rosen.

Composed like the previous one shortly after the arrival of the Erard piano, this sonata seems to be an experiment in applying archaic traditions to modern modes and sonorities. Indeed, as Piero Rattalino suggests, “the constituent scheme of the sonata in two movements - and even with a *Minuetto variato* - is archaic: it was widely used around 1770, in the height of the Rococo style.” The eccentricities underlying this sonata are thus not revolutionary atypicality or attempts to distort the form, but on the contrary, archaisms that attempt to retrace paths with an ancient scent and outside the Beethovenian spectrum. However, the highly experimental compositional process anticipates a mixture of archaic and modern, consonance and dissonance, simplicity and complexity, typical of the late Beethoven.

The first striking feature of *Op. 54* is the absence of a movement in sonata form, in contrast to the composer’s path of experimenting with the possibilities of dilating this genre. On the contrary, the goal here seems to be to revise the entire architectural concept of the sonata, constructing a diptych, two-act *pièce de théâtre*. Surprisingly, the first movement presents the title *In tempo d’un Menuetto* and reveals a structure inspired by the 18th-century tradition of the minuet variato. What, within a common sonata, we would expect to find in the second or third movement opens the musical discourse here with “a dotted-rhythm upbeat, an assertive

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downbeat followed by a second-beat lift: it's a familiar opening gesture," as Tom Beghin argues. The tone is from the outset clear and defined, and all elements contribute to the detached purity of this short dance. As Rosen argues: "The sobriety is almost willfully ostentatious, the simplicity dogmatic, but each element of each phrase has exceptional grace." However, the beautiful, disenchanted picture is abruptly interrupted by the *Trio*, with octaves and sixths always marked and detached. Suddenly, the setting is rustic, at times rough, and these two appearances of the *Trio*, with their markedness, influence the reprise of the *Minuet*, which reappears each time richer with embellishments and diminutions.

The second and final act of this opus is an *Allegretto in perpetuum mobile* that has raised controversy among Beethoven scholars. Carl Czerny suggests this movement can serve "as an excellent étude." This idea links back to techniques typical of other Beethovenian endings, such as the last movement of the *Sonata, Op. 26*. Pianists such as András Schiff have criticized this view, pointing out how the poetry inherent in this *Allegretto* disappears in a mechanical performance. Perhaps we can say *in medio stat virtus*: the movement presents a perpetual motion with a mechanical character which, thanks to the new expressive possibilities of the French piano, reveals the poetic possibilities of musical gestures otherwise poor in their repetition. Tom Beghin concludes, "in *Op. 54* there is no yielding of agency: rather, human and machine are in balance with one another, and Beethoven maximizes the robotic qualities of both."

Piano Sonata No. 23 in F Minor, Op. 57, "Appassionata"

In describing the responsibility of handling such a controversial and celebrated sonata, Edwin Fischer argues: "When we study this magnificent work, we cannot fail to realize that we are confronted with one of the greatest peaks in the history of the sonata and that a player must have attained maturity to present a clear picture of it to the listener." What this clear picture is, however, is quite complex to understand, as the reception of such a work has layered prejudices and theories that condition its listening. Romain Rolland described the sonata as "a torrent of water in a bed of granite," continuing in poetically exegetical words: "this block from which the Cyclops' hammer can remove not a particle..., this athletic body, without drapery, without ornament, in which everything is muscle and frame covered with hard, solid flesh, without any trace of flabbiness..."

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And again, *Busoni* argued that in this work “temperament puts the mask of bodily (i.e., devoid of thought and feeling) unrestraint on thought and feeling.” And even the Russian revolutionary Vladimir Lenin claimed, as reported by Maxim Gorky, “I know nothing greater than the *Appassionata*. I would like to listen to it every day. It is marvelous, super-human music. I always think with pride – perhaps naïvely – what marvelous things humans can do.”

To succeed in peeling back this capillary network of judgments and prejudices about the *Sonata in F Minor* would be impossible, as well as proving to be a futile and perhaps harmful exercise in understanding the reception and impact of the work. However, a more critical and historically grounded approach can be sought. Beginning, for example, with the famous title *Appassionata*, an Italian feminine adjective meaning “passionate,” introduced in a four-hand version published by Julius André in 1831 and later confirmed in Crazz’s Hamburg edition in 1838. Given the stormy and deeply expressive character of the Sonata, the title was very successful. Moreover, it came to be associated with the legendary love affair with Thérèse Brunswick, or even with a secret love for her sister Josephine, given the dedication to her brother Count Franz von Brunswick. The romantic, romanticized, and legendary-scented image of Beethoven created in the 19th century has undeniably helped make some works even more famous and sharpen the myth of the composer. However, more recent, and accurate studies have refuted or at least questioned the basis of the relationship with the Brunswick sisters and left without the concrete object of desire for the musical narrative of the *Sonata*, *Op. 57*.

What is certain is the influence of theatrical and gestural rhetoric derived from the frustrating and incessant work on operatic music in the very same months that the Sonata was conceived and sketched out. Beethoven began his work on the opera *Vestas Feuer*, abandoned to attempt the *Leonora*, and finally wrote the first version of *Fidelio*. This troubled experience with operatic music has at least two possible impacts on the sonata: Beethoven’s study of music more associated with poetic and narrative content, such as that of opera, and the need to relate to a new audience, that of the theater, not reduced to the aristocratic or upper-class. The theatrical mood is already extremely vivid in the first movement, where the tragic character is immediately expressed by a dark-toned

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theme, with mysteriously ascending and descending arpeggios interrupted by the pleading gesture of a trill. Therefore, the scene presents the timid, fearful entrance of a character who immediately kneels pleadingly. The suspense is abruptly interrupted by a startling fortissimo, which gives rise to a frenzied and vast musical discourse, which will see its consolatory moment in the second theme in A-flat. The conclusion, again, is theatrical: the reprise of the initial gesture, in diminuendo towards the extreme pianissimo and the deeper sounds of the instrument.

The *Andante con moto* is a choral hymn with processional character, in what Fischer describes as “the solemn key of D-flat major.” The peaceful processional style exhibited in the lower register continues in the three variations to create a unity whose “gravity acts as a balm after the storms of the first movement,” as Harry Halbreich argues. However, this elegiac suspension resolves in the foreboding: two diminished chords, in pianissimo and fortissimo, that plunge directly into the finale.

As in the operatic theatre, the episode of emotional stasis is followed by dramatic excitement, here unabated in the *Allegro ma non troppo*. As Sergio Sablich points out, “The accumulation that this continuous precipitation of even-valued notes produces is of high expressive intensity, but at the same time creates a progressive emptying of emotional content, reduced to the outward semblance of exaggerated feeling.”

— Federico Ercoli

We acknowledge with respect the Seneca Nation, known as the “Great Hill People” and “Keepers of the Western Door” of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. We take this opportunity to thank the people whose ancestral lands the Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester currently occupies in Rochester, New York.

PROGRAM

Monday, April 1, 2024

Hatch Recital Hall

7:30 PM

Piano Sonata No. 24 in F-sharp Major, Op. 78 Ludwig van Beethoven
Adagio cantabile—Allegro ma non troppo (1770-1827)
Allegro vivace

Piano Sonata No. 25 in G Major, Op. 79
Presto alla tedesca
Andante
Vivace

Piano Sonata No. 26 in E-flat Major, Op. 81a
Das Lebewohl: Adagio—Allegro
Abwesenheit: Andante espressivo
Das Wiedersehen: Vivacissimamente

Piano Sonata No. 27 in E Minor, Op. 90
Mit Lebhaftigkeit und durchaus mit Empfindung und Ausdruck
Nicht zu geschwind und sehr singbar vorgetragen

Piano Sonata No. 28 in A Major, Op. 101
Etwas lebhaft, und mit der innigsten Empfindung: Allegro ma non troppo
Lebhaft, marschmäßig: Vivace alla Marcia
Langsam und sehnsuchtsvoll: Adagio ma non troppo con affetto
Geschwind, doch nicht zu sehr, und mit Entschlossenheit: Allegro

Alexander Kobrin, piano

PROGRAM

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Hatch Recital Hall

7:30 PM

Piano Sonata No. 29 in B Major, Op. 106, Ludwig van Beethoven
"Hammerklavier" (1770-1827)

Allegro

Scherzo: Assai vivace

Adagio sostenuto

Introduzione: Largo—Allegro— Fuga: Allegro risoluto

Piano Sonata No. 30 in E Major, Op. 109

Vivace ma non troppo—Adagio espressivo

Prestissimo

Gesangvoll, mit innigster Empfindung. Andante molto cantabile ed espressivo

Piano Sonata No. 31 in A-flat Major, Op. 110

Moderato cantabile molto espressivo

Allegro molto

Adagio ma non troppo—Allegro ma non troppo

Piano Sonata No. 32 in C Minor, Op. 111

Maestoso—Allegro con brio ed appassionato

Arietta: Adagio molto semplice e cantabile

Alexander Kobrin, piano

MEET THE ARTIST

Gold medal winner of the 2005 Van Cliburn Piano Competition, distinguished pianist, **Alexander Kobrin**, has received wide acclaim for his emotional, technically inspired performances, placing him at the forefront of today's performing musicians.



Mr. Kobrin is an active guest soloist with the world's leading orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, Tokyo Philharmonic, Orchestra Verdi, Russian National Orchestra, Belgrade Philharmonic, English Chamber Orchestra, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Dallas Symphony, Berliner Symphony, Swedish Radio Symphony, Birmingham Symphony, Warsaw Philharmonic, and the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

He has collaborated with such conductors as Mikhail Pletnev, Mikhail Jurovsky, Sir Mark Elder, Vassiliy Sinaisky, James Conlon, Claus Peter Flor, Vassiliy Petrenko and Bramwell Tovey.

He appears in recitals at major halls worldwide, including Carnegie Zankel Hall and Avery Fisher Hall in New York, the Kennedy Centre in Washington, Albert Hall and Wigmore Hall in London, Louvre Auditorium, Salle Gaveau and Salle Cortot in Paris, Munich Herkulesaal and Berliner Filarmonia Hall in Germany, the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire, Sheung Wan Civic Centre in Hong Kong, as well as Sala Verdi in Milan and many others. Other past performances have included recitals at Bass Hall for the Cliburn Series, the Washington Performing Arts Society, La Roque d'Antheron, the Ravinia Festival, the Beethoven Easter Festival, Busoni Festival, the renowned Klavier-Festival Ruhr, the Festival Musique dans le Grésivaudan, the International Keyboard Institute & Festival, annual concert tours in Japan, China, and Taiwan.

Mr. Kobrin has recordings on the Harmonia Mundi, Quartz, and Centaur labels, covering a wide swath of the piano literature, which have received rave reviews. Gramophone Magazine raved about his Cliburn Competition release on Harmonia Mundi, writing that "in [Rachmaninoff's] Second Sonata (played in the 1931 revision), despite fire-storms of virtuosity, there is always room for everything to tell and Kobrin achieves a hypnotic sense of the music's dark necromancy."

In addition to the Van Cliburn, Mr. Kobrin has garnered top prizes from numerous international piano competitions including the Busoni

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International Piano Competition (First Prize), Hamamatsu International Piano Competition (Top Prize), Scottish International Piano Competition in Glasgow (First Prize).

Mr. Kobrin frequently serves as a jury member for many international piano competitions, most recently, the First International Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli Competition in Brescia. Other competitions include the Van Cliburn in Fort Worth, TX, Busoni International Piano Competition in Bolzano, Hamamatsu International Piano Competition, the Blüthner International Piano Competition in Vienna, E-Competition in Fairbanks, AK, and the Neuhaus International Piano Festival in Moscow.

Mr. Kobrin is a dedicated teacher and is passionate about his contributions to education both in the U.S. and abroad. In September 2023, he will join the faculty of the Conservatorio Svizzera Italiana in Switzerland as a visiting professor. Since 2017, Mr. Kobrin has served on the faculty of the renowned Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY. From 2003 to 2010 he served on the faculty of the Russian State Gnessin's Academy of Music. In 2010 Alexander Kobrin was named the L. Rexford Distinguished Chair in Piano at the Schwob School of Music at Columbus State University, and from 2013 until 2017, he was a member of the celebrated Artist Faculty of New York University's Steinhardt School. Mr. Kobrin has also given masterclasses in Europe and Asia, the International Piano Series, and at the Conservatories of Japan and China. In 2020, he became co-director of Hiiumaa Homecoming Festival in Estonia.

Upcoming highlights include the Complete Beethoven Sonatas Project for Centaur Records and live performances at the Eastman School of Music during the 2023-2024 season.

Mr. Kobrin was born in 1980 in Moscow. At the age of five, he was enrolled in the world-famous Gnessin Special School of Music after which he attended the prestigious Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatoire. His teachers have included renowned professors Tatiana Zelikman and Lev Naumov.

Mr. Kobrin immigrated to the United States in 2010 and became its citizen in 2015. He currently resides in Rochester, NY with his family.

Mr. Kobrin is a Shigeru Kawai artist.



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