

# Musical Program

## Alban Berg (1885-1935)

Piano Sonata (Klaviersonate), Op. 1 (1910)

## Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Sonata No. 15 in D Major, Op. 28, "Pastorale" (1801)

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante in d minor
- III. Scherzo: Allegro vivace
- IV. Rondo: Allegro ma non troppo

## Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

Fantasy in f minor, Op. 49 (1841)

## INTERMISSION

## Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Sonata No. 3 in f minor, Op. 5 (1853)

- I. Allegro maestoso
- II. Andante: Andante espressivo; Andante molto)
- III. Scherzo: Allegro energico avec trio
- IV. Intermezzo: Andante molto
- V. Finale: Allegro moderato ma rubato

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**October 22, 2023**

**JJI, Solo Guitar**

# The Placitas Artists Series

Presents

**Jon Nakamatsu**

Solo Piano

Sunday, September 24, 2023



For tickets and other concert information, visit our website.

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## Notes on Today's Concert

Austrian composer **Alban Berg** was a student of Arnold Schoenberg's in Vienna from 1904 to 1911. Several years into this apprenticeship, he drafted what he intended to be a multi-movement piano sonata. After completing the first movement, he apparently confessed to his mentor that he felt a lack of inspiration for additional material. Schoenberg is rumored to have suggested that perhaps Berg had said all there was to say. The piece was soon published as this single-movement sonata. According to the authors of San Francisco Symphony Orchestra program notes, "...the most impressive achievement of Berg's Piano Sonata is its emotional impact. It's a fundamentally tragic piece, troubling in tone, a reflection of the anxiety, uncertainties, and alienation that fed into the Austrian Expressionism that would come to dominate all the arts at this time in Vienna." [Laphil.com, sfsymphony.org]

**Ludwig van Beethoven** composed 32 "mature" piano sonatas, in addition to three he had written and published by age 13. The no. 15, sometimes nicknamed the "Pastorale," was published in 1801 and dedicated to Count Joseph von Sonnafels. It is the last of the "early" sonatas that he composed between 1795 and 1822 and that were strongly influenced by those of Haydn and Mozart. This sonata is not as famous as the no. 14 (the "Moonlight Sonata"), but according to the description on musopen.org, "...it is admired for the intricacy and technicality hidden in the ease it portrays. Though the work itself was written at a time in which Beethoven was alarmed by his worsening hearing conditions, the work itself paints a serene mood."

**Frédéric Chopin** was Polish by birth, but left his native land at age 20, shortly before the Polish Russian War of 1830-31. Within a year he was settled in Paris and he spent most of the rest of his short life in France. According to Timothy Judd (thelistersclub.com), Chopin's Fantaisie "...is music of persistent melancholy and soaring elation. As its title suggests, it is dreamlike, rhapsodic, and improvisatory." Judd quotes from a letter Chopin wrote in October 1841: "Today I finished the Fantaisie—and the sky is beautiful, my heart sad—but that doesn't matter at all. If it were otherwise, my existence would perhaps be of no use to anyone." Judd suggests that the work, and particularly the funeral march that begins the first movement, are evidence of the composer's nostalgia for the land of his birth.

For **Johannes Brahms**, as with Beethoven, "the piano was the fundamental mode of musical expression." This from music critic George Gelles, who supplied the liner notes for Jon Nakamatsu's 2011 Brahms CD that includes this unusually large, five-movement sonata. Among Brahms' many works featuring piano, only three were actually labeled "sonatas." All of them were completed before the age of 21. Again quoting Gelles: "Elliptically avoiding conventional stages of artistic growth, Brahms from the first wrote works of an uncommon wisdom and of a maturity that is informed by the ineffable ... Have compositional style and substance ever enjoyed a more intimate marriage than in music by Brahms?"

Notes compiled by Jay Rodman from cited sources and Wikipedia.

## About Jon Nakamatsu

Since his dramatic 1997 Van Cliburn Gold Medal triumph, Jon Nakamatsu's brilliant but unassuming musicianship and eclectic repertoire have made him a clear favorite throughout the world both on the concert circuit and in the recording studio. His extensive recital tours throughout the United States and Europe have featured appearances at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, and in cities such as Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Paris, London, and Milan.

Nakamatsu maintains a very active touring schedule with orchestra performances, chamber collaborations, and solo recitals. He has been soloist with many leading orchestras including those of Dallas, Detroit, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Rochester, San Francisco, Seattle, Tokyo, and Vancouver. In February of 2010, he was the featured soloist for the highly acclaimed American tour of the Berlin-based Philharmonie der Nationen, performing Brahms' First Piano Concerto and Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto in twelve cities nationwide.

Among the numerous chamber ensembles with which Nakamatsu has collaborated are the Brentano, Tokyo, Prazak, St. Lawrence, and Ying String Quartets. He also tours frequently with the Berlin Philharmonic Wind Quintet.

Nakamatsu studied privately with the late Marina Derryberry from the age of six and worked with Karl Ulrich Schnabel. He also studied composition and orchestration with Dr. Leonard Stein of the Schoenberg Institute at the University of Southern California and pursued extensive studies in chamber music and musicology. Nakamatsu is a graduate of Stanford University with a bachelor's degree in German studies and a master's degree in education.

## Featured Artist of the Season



Dianna Shomaker is a Placitas treasure, a past board member and president of the Placitas Artists Series, and, above all, a consummate artist with incredible talent. We are pleased to announce Dianna as our *Featured Artist* for the 37<sup>th</sup> season. We encourage you to visit her September exhibit and view in person the stunning artwork she has donated for the annual art raffle to benefit Placitas Artists Series.



**Raffle:** *Joy of Summer* by Dianna Shomaker, valued at \$2,000, will be given away to the raffle winner. Raffle tickets available on our website, at the library, and at the concert.

## Our September Visual Artist

Dianna Shomaker, the PAS Artist of the Season, is guided primarily by intuition. She creates abstractions through a selection of media: oil, acrylic, or encaustic. The results have been rewarded with accolades and prizes regionally, nationally, and internationally and have been described as lyrical, organic, and fluid. Her philosophy is that art is magical for the viewer and for artist. It should speak to our capacity to wonder, to dream, and to delight in the mystery of its personal message. Currently, she shows at the Shomaker Studio & Gallery in Placitas and at a variety of art competitions. Her work also hangs in the Encaustic Art Museum in Santa Fe and in private collections in the U.S. and abroad. Dianna observes, "I paint because it beckons me down a pathway of exploration and understanding in this complex world. It is my continuing education. I consider a work successful when it provokes and teases me and hopefully the viewer, too; when it invites everyone into the unfolding drama on the canvas. Ultimately, I want it to be an enjoyable journey for all."