



arts on
Bergen



Arts on Bergen presents
James Adler, pianist & composer
Homages

Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at 12 - 12:45 pm EST

Three Short Pieces (composed in the age of Covid)

Seth Bedford “Summer of Stillness” (Inventions for piano solo),
July 2020

Abdulaziz Shabakouh “James Adler,” August 2020

James Adler “For Notorious,” September 2020

*Ruth Bader Ginsburg / Our Rockstar
of Blessed Memory
Rosh Hashana 5781*

Paul Turok Little Suite for Piano, Op. 9
Prelude – Arabesque – Toccata

Ludwig van Beethoven 32 Variations in C Minor, WoO 80
Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770-1827
In honor of and dedicated to the 250th anniversary of his birth

Sergei Rachmaninoff from Preludes, Op. 23
No. 4 Andante cantabile in D Major
No. 5 Alla marcia in G minor
No. 6 Andante in E flat major
No. 2 Maestoso In B Flat Major

James Adler, pianist and composer
Elegy Artist Management

James Adler is a Yamaha Artist.

About the Artist



Photo: Frank Gimpaya

James Adler is a pianist who “can create whatever type of music he wants at the keyboard” (*Chicago Sun-Times*) and a composer who writes “with uncommon imagination” (*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*).

Mr. Adler made his orchestral performing debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and has appeared in recital on the Orchestra’s Allied Arts Piano Series, and the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concerts Series. His appearances have brought him from Chicago’s Grant Park, to London’s Royal Albert Hall (broadcast by the BBC), to Thessaloniki, Greece, to New York’s Alice Tully Hall, Symphony Space, and the Paramount Theatre at Madison Square Garden.

His extensive list of compositions is headed by *Memento mori: An AIDS Requiem*. Performed worldwide, recorded by AmorArtis Chorale and Orchestra, and published by Alfred Music, *Memento mori* features a “range of expression [that] is expansive” and is “a unique, well-crafted, emotionally rich piece” (*American Record Guide*). Other compositions include *A Winter Triptych*, recorded by the Judson Memorial Church Choir and music director Henco Espag, released in March on Albany Records; *Reflections upon a September morn* (poetry by Walt Whitman); *Monday’s Child*, performed at The Cathedral of Saint John the Divine and at The Metropolitan Museum of Art; *Daughters of Music*, commissioned by Sigma Alpha Iota International Music Fraternity Fort Worth Alumnae Chapter and to be presented this summer at their National Convention; *Carols of Splendour*, premiered at Carnegie Hall; *It’s Gotta Be America*, commissioned for the Centennial Celebration of the Statue of Liberty; and *Canticle For Peace*, written for the opening of the 43rd session of the United Nations General Assembly. Mr. Adler is also the composer of *Concerto in G for Piano and Orchestra*, the children’s “pOpera” *Herbie and Carnie: A Dinosaga*, the *Classic Rag-time Suite* for orchestra, numerous solo, chamber, and choral works, and the award-winning film score for *The Hat Act*.

As performer and composer, Mr. Adler can be heard on recordings from Albany Records, Capstone, Navona, and Ravello Records. He is a member of the Department of Fine Arts at Saint Peter’s University and is a National Arts Associate of Sigma Alpha Iota.

About the Program

Summer of Stillness • Seth Bedford (1978-)

A multidisciplinary composer, conductor, performer and educator, Seth Bedford creates musical experiences for orchestras, bands, chamber musicians and children. His work often explores themes of mutual understanding, internationality, and community. He holds a degree in music composition from the University of Texas where he studied with Kevin Puts. Currently, he's the Head Director of the Odessa High School Orchestra, Odessa, TX.

Summer of Stillness is part of his one-minute pieces for Instagram, and also Facebook.

James Adler • Abdulaziz Shabakouh (1993-)

Abdulaziz Shabakouh is a Kuwaiti composer who has worked with Bucharest Philharmonic George Enescu, conducted by Horia Andreescu; the Zagreb Philharmonic orchestra, conducted by Dawid Runtz; and Prague Philharmonia, conducted by Emmanuel Villaume.

While scrolling down on Facebook, I reached a short piano solo piece composed by Seth Bedford. But what caught my attention was that the solo was written around 1 minute only! I talked with James about it, and how it's very difficult to write a full piano piece with only one minute: there should be a beginning, middle and end. For me it was a challenge. I knew with Mr. James, I'd never have had the idea of composing any thing as short as this one without listening to Seth's short piano solo, and because of this beautiful coincidence I decided to give it a title by the name of the man who inspired me: *James Adler*.

For Notorious • James Adler (1950-)

For Notorious was written a few days after the death of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg in her honor. The piece, in D-flat Major, is appropriately marked "Soft, Liltng – With some claws."

About the Program

Little Suite for Piano, Opus 9 • Paul Turok (1929-2012)

Paul Turok was born December 3, 1929 in New York City. As a student at Queens College, he was a composition pupil of Karol Rathaus and — at the University of California — of Roger Sessions. He also worked with Bernard Wagenaar at the Juilliard School of Music.

Little Suite is in three movements: Prelude, a brisk, almost-perpetual motion, based on a driving eighth-note figure; Arabesque, a trill-study; and Toccata, a crisp, fast-moving showpiece.

32 Variations in C Minor, WoO 80 • Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Ludwig van Beethoven was a German composer and pianist whose music ranks amongst the most performed of the classical music repertoire; he remains one of the most admired composers in the history of Western music.

32 Variations on an Original Theme in C minor, WoO 80, is a composition for solo piano written in 1806. The work consists of an eight-bar main theme and 32 variations. The variations differ in character, technical difficulty and dynamics. Although the work proved popular, Beethoven did not see fit to assign it an opus number (WoO meaning “work without opus”).

Preludes, Opus 23 • Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

Sergei Rachmaninoff was a Russian composer, virtuoso pianist, and conductor of the late Romantic period. His personal composition style is notable for song-like melodicism, expressiveness, and rich orchestral colors.

The ten *Preludes*, Opus 23, were composed as a set in 1901 and 1903. Unlike the traditional prelude form employed previously, Rachmaninoff's ten preludes last for several minutes each, expanding into complex polyphonic forms with musically independent sections. These pieces perhaps represent a culmination of the Romantic idiom.

Program notes provided by the composers and by Wikipedia.