

ARTISTIC VISION

"This return to the Virtuosi stage brings back good memories of the last time I performed here during the 2006-2007 season with my three senior students. It was a memorable and significant concert for me because it was dedicated to *The Art of the Piano*. If you were at that concert, you may remember that we presented many variations on the one piano - for one, two, four and six hands. Tonight we continue the exploration with the use of two pianos.

We begin with **Liszt**, who wrote the *Concerto in A major* in 1839 to 1840 during his virtuoso period. He put away the manuscript for a decade at which time he began revision upon revision. Finally, in 1857, Liszt dedicated the work to his student Hans von Bronsart who gave the first performance with Liszt conducting. Tonight, this concert is particularly significant because it highlights a milestone in the maturity and artistic development of my own son, Daniel. I will play the orchestral portion of the concerto, while Daniel performs as soloist.

At the time this program was being printed, Daniel had chosen the **Prokofiev** *Sonata No. 7 Op. 83* as his strongest solo piece. Over the last few months his repertoire has continued to broaden in preparation for a series of auditions and events such as the Brandon Festival and the Canadian Music Competition. It is an exciting time in his growth as an artist. He is hard-pressed to articulate which works and composers he finds most enticing, preferring to swallow whole and with passion everything that comes within his grasp. Tonight you can be assured that this emerging artist is intent on presenting a final program that reflects his exacting artistic standards.

My solo will feature what I consider the greatest works by **Chopin**. *The Ballade No. 4 in F minor, Op. 52* was composed in 1842 in France and was dedicated to the wife of Baron Nathaniel de Roths-

child who had invited Chopin to play at her Parisian estate where she introduced him to the aristocracy and nobility. The piece is considered by many to be the most musically and technically demanding of Chopin's compositions. Pianist John Ogden once said of the Fourth Ballade: " *It is the most exalted, intense and sublimely powerful of all Chopin's compositions... It is unbelievable that it lasts only twelve minutes, for it contains the experience of a lifetime.*" When Chopin completed the *Barcarolle* in 1846, he was already quite ill so it is all the more remarkable in its relative scope. He included it on the program of a concert February 16, 1848, his last appearance in Paris. The *Scherzo No. 2 in B flat minor, Op. 31 (1838)* is considered the most well known of the four scherzi. Robert Schuman compared it to a poem by Lord Byron - "So tender, so bold, so full of love and scorn."
(Alexander Tselyakov)

