

ANDRÁS SCHIFF COMPLETES HIS BEETHOVEN SONATA PROJECT WITH TWO HILL AUDITORIUM CONCERTS

ANN ARBOR, MI (March 9, 2009) — The **University Musical Society** (UMS) presents Hungarian pianist **András Schiff** in the final two-concert installment of his Beethoven Sonata Project, which features performances of Beethoven's complete piano sonatas over a two-year period, on **Thursday, April 9, at 8 p.m.** and **Saturday, April 11, at 8 p.m.** The final two concerts feature Beethoven's late sonatas, including the "Hammerklavier," widely considered one of the most important works of Beethoven's late period and one of the most challenging solo works in the entire piano repertoire to this day. For these triumphant finale concerts, Schiff returns to Ann Arbor's historic **Hill Auditorium** (825 North University Avenue).

For tickets or additional information, contact the University Musical Society at **734-764-2538** or online at www.ums.org. Tickets may also be purchased in person at the League Ticket Office (911 North University Avenue). UMS Ticket Office hours: Monday-Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., closed Sunday.

András Schiff was born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1953. He began piano lessons at the age of five with Elisabeth Vadász and continued his musical studies at the Ferenc Liszt Academy with Professor Pál Kadosa, György Kurtág, and Ferenc Rados. He also worked with George Malcolm in London. Recitals and special projects include cycles of the major keyboard works of J.S. Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, Schumann, and Bartók. In 2004, he began a series of performances in Europe exploring the 32 Beethoven piano sonatas in chronological order — a project recorded live for ECM New Series, released in eight volumes through April 2008. The Beethoven Sonata Project in its entirety continues this season at New York's Carnegie Hall, Los Angeles's Disney Hall, San Francisco's Symphony Hall, and Ann Arbor's Hill Auditorium. Individual recitals are also slated for Chicago, North Carolina, Ottawa, Philadelphia, Princeton, and Washington DC.

In 1999, Schiff created his own chamber orchestra, the Cappella Andrea Barca, for a seven-year series of the complete Mozart piano concertos, taking place at the Mozartwoche of the Internationale Stiftung Mozarteum in Salzburg. The group, consisting of international soloists, chamber musicians, and close friends, toured North America during the 05/06 and 06/07 seasons in a series of concerts at Carnegie Hall and Alice Tully Hall

to commemorate the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth. The six concerts included 12 of the Mozart piano concerti, chamber music, and symphonies.

Schiff has annual engagements with the Philharmonia Orchestra of London and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe as conductor and soloist. He is a regular visitor as conductor and soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra, Staatskapelle Dresden, Budapest Festival Orchestra, and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. He has conducted Bach's *Mass in b minor* and Haydn's *Creation* with the London Philharmonia and was conductor and soloist with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe on a critically acclaimed tour of New York, Chicago, and San Francisco.

Since childhood, Schiff has enjoyed playing chamber music and was artistic director of Musiktage Mondsee, an internationally praised annual chamber music festival near Salzburg from 1989 until 1998. He is presently joint artistic director of Ittinger Pfingstkonzerte, a chamber music festival he founded in Switzerland with Heinz Holliger in 1995. In 1998, Schiff started a similar series entitled Ommaggio a Palladio at the Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza. In the 07/08 season, he was pianist-in-residence of the Berlin Philharmonic.

Schiff has established a prolific discography, including recordings for Teldec (1994–1997), London/Decca (1981–1994) and, since 1997, ECM New Series. Recordings for ECM include the complete solo piano music of Beethoven and Janáček, a solo disc of Schumann piano pieces, and his second recording of the Bach Goldberg Variations. He has received several international recording awards, including two Grammy Awards for "Best Classical Instrumental Soloist (Without Orchestra)" for the Bach English Suites, and "Best Vocal Recording" for Schubert's Schwanengesang with tenor Peter Schreier. For the 49th annual Grammy Awards, Schiff was nominated for "Best Classical Album (Without Orchestra)" for the second volume of his Complete Beethoven Sonata recordings for ECM. In 2009, Schiff will release an all-Schumann disc on the EMI label.

Among other honors, Schiff was awarded the Bartók Prize in 1991 and the Claudio Arrau Memorial Medal from the Robert Schumann Society in Düsseldorf in 1994. In March 1996, he received the highest Hungarian distinction, the Kossuth Prize, and in May 1997 he received the Leonie Sonnings Music Prize in Copenhagen. He was awarded the Palladio d'Oro by the city of Vicenza, and the Musikfest-Preis Bremen for "outstanding international artistic work" in 2003. Recently, Schiff received two awards in recognition of his Beethoven

Performances: in June 2006, he became an Honorary Member of the Beethoven House in Bonn, and in May 2007 he was presented with the renowned Italian Prize, the Premio della critica musicale Franco Abbiati in recognition of his Beethoven Piano Sonata Cycle. In October 2007, he was honored by the Royal Academy of Music with the institution's prestigious Bach Prize, awarded each year to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the performance and/or scholarly study of the music of J.S. Bach.

In 2006, Schiff and music publisher G. Henle began a unique partnership to produce special joint editions of Mozart and Bach. Mr. Schiff is currently editing the complete Mozart Piano Concerti to include his specific fingerings and cadenzas where the original cadenzas are missing. In 2007, both volumes of Bach's Well Tempered Klavier were edited in the Henle original text with fingerings by Mr. Schiff. In 2001, András Schiff became a British citizen; he resides in Florence and London and is married to the violinist Yuuko Shiokawa.

BEETHOVEN: The Sonata Obsession

Inspired by the UMS Beethoven Sonata Project with András Schiff, students of the U-M School of Music, Theatre & Dance are performing all of Beethoven's sonatas, both solo and collaborative, in a two-year exploration that comprises lecture/recitals and chamber concerts. The lecture/recitals have been scheduled to prepare listeners for each concert in the Schiff Beethoven Project series. Professor Steven Whiting will give the lectures; students will perform the sonatas. All concerts (except for the Schiff concerts) are free and open to the public. A complete schedule of spring events is included at the end of this release.

Quick Facts

The Saturday performance is sponsored by **The Medical Community**.

Media Sponsors **WRCJ 90.9 FM**, **WGTE 91.3 FM**, and **Observer & Eccentric Newspapers**.

András Schiff previous UMS appearances: These performances mark András Schiff's ninth and tenth UMS appearances. He first appeared in 1998 with the Budapest Festival Orchestra and Ivan Fischer, performing Bartók's Piano Concerto No. 2, and then in 2005 in recital at Rackham Auditorium. He performed four concerts in the 07/08 season (in October and April) to launch the Beethoven Sonata Project, and last appeared in October 2008 performing the fifth and sixth Beethoven Sonata Project concerts.

Additional information: www.kirshdem.com

Beethoven Sonata Project Concerts 7 & 8

ANDRÁS SCHIFF, piano

Thursday, April 9, 8 p.m.

Saturday, April 11, 8 p.m.

Hill Auditorium (825 North University Avenue, Ann Arbor)

Tickets: \$10-\$56

PROGRAM (Fri. 10/24)

Beethoven Sonata No. 27 in e minor, Op. 90 (1814)

Beethoven Sonata No. 28 in A major, Op. 101 (1816)

Beethoven Sonata No. 29 in B-flat Major, Op. 106 ("Hammerklavier") (1817-18)

PROGRAM (Sun. 10/26)

Beethoven Sonata No.30 in E Major, Op. 109 (1820)

Beethoven Sonata No. 31 in A-flat Major, Op. 110 (1821-22)

Beethoven Sonata No. 32 in c minor, Op. 111 (1821-22)

The Saturday performance is sponsored by **The Medical Community**

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*This is a **Classical Kids Club** concert. Designed to nurture and create the next generation of musicians and music lovers, the Classical Kids Club allows parents to purchase up to two tickets for \$10 each for students in grades 1-9 with the purchase of a \$20 adult ticket. Seating is subject to availability. UMS will reserve a limited number of Classical Kids Club tickets for each eligible performance. Tickets will be available two weeks before the concert at the League Ticket Office or by phone. Children must be present when picking up tickets.*

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UMS Ticket Office

734-764-2538

Outside the 734 area code, call toll-free **800-221-1229**.

(These numbers should be published.)

<http://www.ums.org>

Mail or fax orders to:

University Musical Society

Burton Memorial Tower

Ann Arbor, MI, 48109-1011

Fax: 734-647-1171

Special discounts for groups! Call 734-763-3100

Press information/Photos: Contact Jim Leija, 734-647-4020 [DO NOT PUBLISH]

Television crews and still-photographers are welcome to cover UMS events; however, please provide 48 hours notice so that we may secure permission from the artists and alert the production staff. Please contact Jim Leija at 734-647-4020 to arrange media coverage.

BEETHOVEN: The Sonata Obsession (Year 2)

A series of lecture/recitals presented by the U-M School of Music, Theatre & Dance and inspired by the András Schiff Beethoven Sonata Project. Spring events are listed here.

Piano Chamber Music

Saturday, March 28, 8pm

Stamps Auditorium at the Walgreen Center (1226 Murfin Avenue, Ann Arbor)

Sonata for Piano and Violin in G Major, Op. 96 (Ling-Ju Lai & Henrik Karapetyan)

Piano Trio Op. 97 ("Archduke") (SunAh Lee, Katharina Uhde, & Yeonjin Kim)

From Song & Dance to the Thickets of Fugue

Sunday, March 29, 2 pm

Britton Recital Hall, U-M School of Music, Theatre & Dance (1100 Baits Drive, Ann Arbor)

Sonata No. 27 in e minor, Op. 90 (Gjergji Gaqi)

Sonata No. 28 in A Major, Op. 101 (Hye-Won Jung)

Sonata for Piano and Cello, Op. 102, No. 1 (Yeonjin Kim & Gjergji Gaqi)

Sonata for Piano and Cello, Op. 102, No. 2 (Martin Torch-Ishii & Misuzu Tanaka)

Where's the Hammer?

Friday, April 3, 8 pm

Rackham Auditorium (915 East Washington Street, Ann Arbor)

Sonata No. 29 in B-flat Major, Op. 106 ("Hammerklavier") (Joel Hastings)

Fantasy, Cantata, Fragment

Sunday, April 5, 8 pm

Stamps Auditorium at the Walgreen Center (1226 Murfin Avenue, Ann Arbor)

Sonata No. 30 in E Major, Op. 109 (Hyunjung Kim)

Sonata No. 31 in A-flat Major, Op. 110 (Stijn DeCock)

Sonata No. 32 in c minor, Op. 111 (SunAh Lee)

Media Inquiries / Further Information:

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