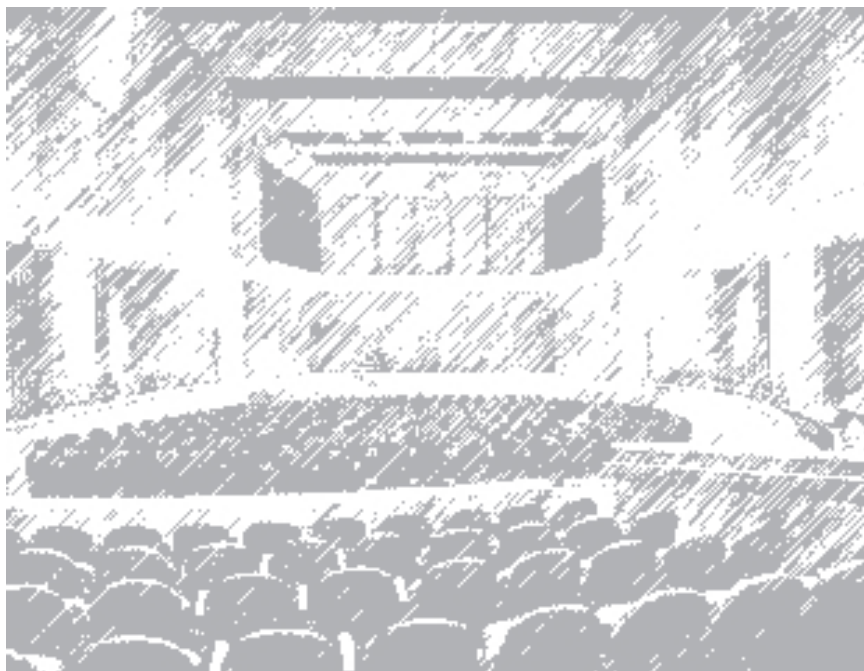


Kennesaw State University  
School of Music



Senior Recital

**Beth Anne Ake, piano**



Sunday, May 1, 2016 at 3:30 p.m.  
Community Bible Church, Kennesaw, Georgia  
One Hundred Thirty-third Concert of the 2015-16 Concert Season

# program

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750)

trans. Alexander Siloti (1863-1945)

***Prelude in B minor***

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

trans. Wilhelm Kempff (1895-1991)

***Siciliano***

TAN DUN (b. 1957)

***Eight Memories in Watercolor, opus 1***

1. Missing Moon
2. Staccato Beans
3. Herdboy's Song
4. Blue Nun
5. Red Wilderness
6. Ancient Burial
7. Floating Clouds
8. Sunrain

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

***Adagio in B minor, K540***

FRANZ LISZT (1811-1886)

***Après une Lecture de Dante***

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree  
Bachelor of Music in Performance.

Ms. Ake studies piano with Robert Henry.

## program notes

### ***Prelude in B minor*** | Johann Sebastian Bach

Transcribed by Alexander Siloti

Alexander Siloti (1863-1945) was a well-known Russian composer, conductor, and virtuoso pianist in his day. He studied with Pyotr Tchaikovsky, Anton and Nicolai Rubinstein, and Franz Liszt, and personally saw to it that his younger cousin, Sergei Rachmaninoff, received the musical training his genius deserved. The great pianist, Vladimir Ashkenazy wrote to Charles Barber, “I very well remember—during my student days at the Moscow Conservatory—that the name Alexander Siloti was spoken with the utmost reverence.” And yet today, outside of Russia, Siloti is all but forgotten as a pianist and composer. His ingenious transcriptions of the works of other famous composers comprise the bulk of his legacy. Even these would have been forgotten if it had not been for Emil Gilel's performance of one such transcription after it had fallen out of print. Upon hearing this performance, Dr. Charles Barber sought out and published a comprehensive volume of the exquisite Siloti transcriptions.

The *Prelude in B minor* is drawn from Bach's prelude *BWV 855a*, originally published in a set of keyboard harpsichord pieces dedicated to Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, one of J. S. Bach's many sons. The original work was written in E minor with the running sixteenth note melody played in the left hand. The same prelude later appeared in a revised form and coupled with a fugue in J. S. Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* book I.

Siloti took Bach's *Prelude in E minor* and transposed it down a fourth to the key of b minor. He also switched the roles of the left and right hands, placing the running sixteenth note melody in the right hand with rolled chords in the left, transforming the work into a lush, romantic gem. The work is dedicated to Kyriena Siloti, Alexander's daughter. According to Kyriena, her father desired that the prelude be played once with an emphasis on the sixteenth note melodic figurations, and then repeated in order to highlight a hidden melody of whole and half notes.

### ***Siciliano*** | Johann Sebastian Bach

Transcribed for piano by Wilhelm Kempff

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the transcription of music for piano became an art unto itself. In an age before the invention of phonographs or

recording devices, reliving a favorite piece of music required playing it oneself. Since many families during this time period would have owned a piano, the piano transcription became a popular means of experiencing the melodies of the concert-hall in the comfort of one's own home. As a result many composers arranged or transcribed large orchestral works for the amateur pianist to perform at home, and composers borrowed each others compositions and reimagined them for the keyboard.

Wilhelm Kempff (1895-1991) was one of the great pianists of the twentieth century. He is less well known as a composer, but many of his transcriptions, especially those of Johann Sebastian Bach, live on.

The *Siciliano* is taken from the second flute sonata by J. S. Bach, BWV 1031, written for flute with harpsichord accompaniment. Kempff arranges the work for solo piano by putting the flute melody in the top of the right hand and splitting the arpeggiated and chordal accompaniment between the left and right hands. The slow, lilting melody in g minor floats above an ostinato accompaniment and pedal bass.

### ***Eight Memories in Watercolor* | Tan Dun**

Chinese composer, Tan Dun (b. 1957), wrote *Eight Memories in Watercolor* in 1978 as his opus one, while studying at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. The Cultural Revolution had just ended, China had just opened its doors and he found himself immersed in studying western classical music and modern composition techniques. And yet he missed the Chinese folk music of his homeland. In his own words, "I longed for the folksongs and savored the memories of my childhood. Therefore, I wrote my first piano work as a diary of longing." *Staccato Beans*, *Herdboy's Song*, *Blue Nun*, and *Sunrain* were inspired by folk melodies from Tan Dun's childhood. Tan Dun composed original melodic material for the remaining pieces; *Missing Moon*, *Red Wilderness*, *Ancient Burial*, and *Floating Clouds*.

Filled with pentatonic folk melodies, and soft, impressionistic coloration, each movement tells a different story of longing, regret, childhood playfulness, danger, anger, loss, or happy dancing.

In 2003, Lang Lang premiered the set of eight pieces at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington D. C. Prior to the premier the composer worked closely with Lang Lang to revise the pieces in order and structure, changing several of the titles.

Since writing *Eight Memories in Watercolor*, Tan Dun has become known for his scores for movies such as *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and *Hero*. He wrote music for the Beijing Olympics in 2008, and has written an opera, several symphonic and chamber works, and compositions utilizing unique instruments of organic materials like paper, stone and water.

### ***Adagio in B minor* | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) was widely considered one of the greatest composers of the classical era. As a child prodigy, he traveled with his sister and father performing and improvising works on the piano and violin for the royalty of his day. He began composing while still a child of five and, although he lived a short life of 35 years, was one of the most prolific composers of his era. He wrote over 600 works, including 41 symphonies, numerous operas, 27 piano concertos, and 5 violin concertos. His extensive repertory for the solo piano included 18 piano sonatas, as well as numerous other small pieces.

Mozart composed his *Adagio in B minor* in 1788 towards the end of his life. Although formally the piece resembles a sonata, thematically it feels more like a fantasia with its long melodic lines and dramatic harmonic shifts. Interestingly the coda ends in the parallel major key of B Major, leading some to suggest that the key is ambiguous. The development section is very short and Mozart quickly modulates through several different key centers.

Mozart's choice of the key of b minor is worth noting. The composer's key choices throughout his works is actually very limited. Unlike Bach who composed the well-tempered clavier for every possible key, it seems that Mozart had his favorites and he seems to have gravitated towards sunny major keys. Of his eighteen piano sonatas only two are in minor keys; k. 310 in A minor, and k. 457 in C minor. Mozart very rarely used b minor, reserving it for mysterious and exotic works. Alfred Brendel wrote of the special quality of Mozart in the minor tonality, "The pieces in the minor do more than just present a dark backdrop to Mozart's brilliance ... I know of no other composer fundamentally transformed while writing minor keys." Although the work is primarily in b minor, the exposition modulates to the relative major, D Major, and the development cycles through several different tonal centers before returning to b minor for the recapitulation. Instead of ending the piece in b minor, Mozart closes in B Major, making the *Adagio in B minor* Mozart's only work to end in B Major.

There is some indication that Mozart's *Adagio in B minor* could have been a portrait of Mozart's father, Leopold Mozart. Mozart composed this work the year after Leopold's death and he sent it his sister, Nannerl, as a gift. Although Mozart had a tenuous relationship with his father, it is possible that Mozart wrote this piece, full of harsh dissonances, in a sad, minor key to process his grief upon losing his father and portray musically his father's enigmatic nature. Written in a unique key with copious dissonances, sforzandos and unexpected modulations, the history of this piece could lend a depth to its performance and shed light on the unusual choices of keys and tonalities utilized by Mozart in this work.

### ***Après une Lecture de Dante* | Franz Liszt**

Franz Liszt (1811-1886) is considered one of the greatest pianists of the nineteenth century. A native of Hungary, he was born into a musical family. Franz Liszt's career as a musician, revolved around his love of composing and performing on the piano, but also included conducting, orchestral composition, arranging, as well as music scholarship and teaching. Liszt is considered the father of the piano recital, as he is the first pianist to present a concert exclusively of solo piano works. It was in these first piano recitals that the piano was first turned sideways so that the audience could see the pianist's profile and fingers. The public adored Franz Liszt's virtuosic performances.

Although Liszt composed for orchestra and other instruments, his singular devotion to the piano is seen in his letter to a friend, Adolph Pictet:

“You do not know that if I should give up my piano it would be to me a day of gloom, robbing me of the light which illuminated all my early life. ...Perhaps the mysterious influence which binds me to it so strongly, prejudices me; but I consider the piano as of great consequence. In the compass of its seven octaves, it includes the entire scope of the orchestra and the ten fingers suffice for the harmony which is produced by an ensemble of a hundred players.”

The *Années de Pèlerinage* or Years of Pilgrimage consists of three books of character pieces written by Liszt from 1835-1877. Book two of *Années de Pèlerinage*, is entitled *Italie* and was written while Liszt was staying in Italy from 1837 to 1839. *Après une Lecture de Dante* was written as part of this second book of Liszt's *Year's of Pilgrimage*. Many of the *Années de Pèlerinage* works are inspired by works of literature. *Après une Lecture de Dante*, literally meaning After a Reading of Dante, is no exception. This massive work for solo

piano, nicknamed “Dante,” is undoubtedly inspired by Dante’s *Divine Comedy*. As Dante’s *Divine Comedy* opens with the descent into hell in the *Inferno*, so Liszt’s *Fantasia quasi Sonata* opens with a descent of octave tritones into chromaticism and fortissimo chords. The piece continues to be filled with tritones, chromaticism, bombastic chordal sections and virtuosic octave figurations, all painting a dark and passionate image of hell. Suddenly, paradise breaks through in the form of a slow, pianissimo melodic section followed by a beautifully ethereal section that creates a sparkling atmosphere around a simple descending chromatic line. The return of sneaky diminished chords, and tritones, leads us back to the final third of the piece which is filled again with chromaticism, and loud bombastic chordal passages. Slow and fast sections now alternate, until the final crescendo leads us to the triumphant close of the work, where diminished harmonies finally give way to a majestic D Major.

## biography

**B**eth Anne Ake, a Senior Piano Performance major, has been studying piano for 18 years. She currently studies under Dr. Robert Henry, Artist-in-Residence at Kennesaw State University. She was the winner of Kennesaw State University’s Concerto Competition in the Fall of 2013 and performed Mozart’s *Piano Concerto No. 23 in A Major* with the KSU Symphony Orchestra in the Spring of 2014. Beth Anne was named First Alternate in the Georgia MTNA piano auditions in the Fall of 2013 and received an Award of Excellence in the GMTA Spring 2015 auditions. She is the founding president of Kennesaw State University’s collegiate chapter of Music Teachers National Association. Beth Anne has received several piano scholarships at KSU, including multiple Atlanta Steinway Society Scholarships.

Beth Anne enjoys supplementing her performance degree by studying piano pedagogy and music education. Her main passion is teaching children the art of playing the piano. She has fostered her own small business, Funtastic Keys Piano Studio, over the past nine years, enjoying how teaching allows her to meld her love for children and music into a career.

Beth Anne was recently inducted into Pi Kappa Lambda, the exclusive, invitation-only, music honor fraternity. Beth Anne has accepted a graduate teaching assistantship at the University of South Carolina and will attend Carolina beginning in the Fall of 2016 to pursue a Master of Music degree in Piano Pedagogy.

# about the school of music

Welcome to our campus! The School of Music is an exciting place to live, learn and work. Housed in the College of the Arts, the School is infused with masterfully skilled and dedicated performing teachers who care deeply about their profession, our programs, our community and every student involved in music and the arts. Our facilities are aesthetically functional and well equipped, our professional staff first-class, and our motivation perfect; to prepare students to be accomplished, creative arts leaders - diversely trained, acutely challenged and well-practiced to ensure employability and empowerment to take the 21st-century music world by storm.


Our students come to us from the leading musical arts and honors organizations from across the southeast, and as a School of Music, we are dedicated to the purpose of furthering the arts and cultural offerings of our region and beyond.


Please take the time to meet our faculty, students and staff. Interact with them, talk shop with them - their enthusiasm is contagious whether on or off the stage. I look forward to a long and rewarding relationship, and with your involvement as an audience member and patron, there are no limits to what we can become. If we can be of assistance to you, simply ask.





Stephen W. Plate, DMA  
Director, School of Music  
Kennesaw State University

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