Tuesday, July 30, 8pm  
Florence Gould Auditorium, Seiji Ozawa Hall

PAUL LEWIS, piano

**HAYDN**  
Sonata No. 34 in E minor, Hob. XVI:34  
Presto  
Adagio  
Finale. Molto vivace (Innocentemente)

**BRAHMS**  
Three Intermezzos, Opus 117  
No. 1 in E-flat (Andante moderato)  
No. 2 in B-flat minor (Andante non troppo e con molto espressione)  
No. 3 in C-sharp minor  

{Intermission}

**BEETHOVEN**  
Seven Bagatelles, Opus 33  
No. 1 in E-flat (Andante grazioso quasi allegretto)  
No. 2 in C (Scherzo. Allegro)  
No. 3 in F (Allegretto)  
No. 4 in A (Andante)  
No. 5 in C (Allegro ma non troppo)  
No. 6 in D (Allegretto quasi andante)  
No. 7 in A-flat (Presto)

**HAYDN**  
Sonata No. 52 in E-flat, Hob. XVI:52  
Allegro  
Adagio  
Finale. Presto

This program continues a multi-year survey at Tanglewood, begun last summer, featuring Paul Lewis in piano works by Haydn, Beethoven, and Brahms.  
This evening’s concert is supported by a generous gift from an anonymous donor.

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NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

This program by Paul Lewis joins two classic sets of piano miniatures bookended by two sonatas of Joseph Haydn, who in mid-career moved from writing for harpsichord to the piano, that instrument itself being midway in its development.

JOSEPH HAYDN (1732-1809) wrote sixty-some keyboard sonatas. The Sonata No. 34 in E minor, Hob. XVI:34, comes from 1784, when he was still an employee of the Hungarian Esterházy princes, his life largely confined to composing and performing in palaces while his reputation spread around Europe. He wrote only seven keyboard sonatas in minor keys. As that shows, minor was special in the Classical period, largely reserved for fraught and sometimes troubled pieces, those not so common in a time when most music was on the optimistic unto high-spirited side.

The E minor sonata begins in a quietly urgent mood but soon turns to flowery effusions in G major that last until the end of the exposition. The development likewise begins in minor then turns to major. The recapitulation stays in E minor, ending with a driving fortissimo passage before a quiet, ambiguous ending. The second-movement Adagio follows a similar pattern: an opening section pensive in tone despite its G major, then flowery passages that calm to another ambiguous conclusion. The brief rondo finale amounts to a contest between E minor and E major. Call the sonata, then, a kind of miniature drama between two contrasting characters: will the minor or the major prevail? In the event, the piece resolves to an uncertain and abrupt ending in E minor.

Feeling his age, declining in creativity, and burying a row of friends brought JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897) to an emotional crisis in the early 1890s. He called the Three Intermezzi, Opus 117, “cradle-songs of my sorrows.” There is little sense that these pieces, each of them individual, are expected to be heard as a unit, though as in this program they are often done that way. Perhaps their main point of unity is that at times they have an almost uncanny beauty and poignancy. The first Intermezzo, in E-flat major, is the most like a lullaby, with a lovely and ingenuous melody that repeats over and over as if with gathering emotion. All of these intermezzi are in a simple ABA outline; the middle of No. 1 is a gentle stretch marked “always pianissimo but very expressive.” Intermezzo No. 2 in B-flat minor is a soft
babbling texture marked “sweetly,” with no sense of meter and little sense of pulse—and no real cadence until the last chord. The sweetly contrasting B section has a waltz-like lilt. Stark, dark, and murmuring, No. 3 in C-sharp minor could be a lullaby only as prelude to a sad dream. The opening unison is steadily elaborated; after a lacy and hopeful B section the piece ends as plaintively as it began.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827) wrote his Seven Bagatelles, Opus 33, in 1803. The title word means “a thing of little importance.” In comparison to his other efforts at that time, moving into his Second Period and about to write works including the mighty Eroica Symphony, they would seem to live up to that implication. They have the character of little notions with a dose of irony, but really that hardly implies their rich pianistic and expressive range. The pieces range from about a minute and a half to about four minutes. None is notably difficult; they are geared for amateur pianists to play for friends or alone. For all the irony, the material is substantial. There is a feeling that any of them might have been the basis of a sonata if Beethoven had been so inclined. In fact, music that had been intended for a bagatelle near the end of his life was, on the suggestion of a friend, turned by Beethoven into the sublime E major piano sonata, Opus 109.

Even in a loose set of pieces like this, not expected to be performed together but amenable to that if desired, Beethoven sets a tone at the outset that is going to be indicative of the whole. The opening Andante grazioso in E-flat major is more or less a parody of the old precious galant style, in the general mode of a piece for children with a lilting right hand and simple accompaniment in the left. In the middle there is a turn to faux-serious with a stretch of E-flat minor. No. 2 in C major is titled “Scherzo,” meaning a lighthearted piece in a fast three-beat. Here is where the set starts being less simple than expected. After a flippant first theme that defies the listener to find the downbeat, there is a sudden and surprisingly passionate section in a driving A minor. After a return of the opening theme, the Trio section has dashing figures in thirds that test the fingers of amateur players.

The main theme of No. 3 has a kind of goofy swagger that occasionally stumbles on some as-if missed notes. This is the shortest of the set, but it requires of the pianist as much expressive understanding as the more elaborate ones, or the joke will fall flat. No. 4 is an Andante in A major that is not so much ironic as having a sort of touching music-box primness, all of it written over drones in the bass. Its middle section is gently poignant.

No. 5 in C major is a study in glittering figuration that calls for nimble fingers; its middle section shimmers more darkly under a songful theme. Call No. 6 in D major songful again, but with a measured and formal quality—as if a student piece with some grown-up emotional overtones, ending with a meditative passage over a D pedal. The A-flat major, No. 7, is in effect another scherzo though not so titled, a short and jolly roundup to the set.
When JOSEPH HAYDN wrote the Piano Sonata No. 52 in E-flat major, Hob. XVI:52, in 1794, several things had happened in his life since the earlier Sonata in E minor that opened this program. He had been pensioned off by his Esterházy prince and was free to enjoy the wide fame he had acquired in his three decades as a palace servant. He was at that point visiting in England, where he had been invited to compose and perform new works, and where he found acclaim and wealth he could scarcely have imagined. Moreover, the striking character of the E-flat major sonata has to do with two further influences: the English pianos that were louder and more robust than any in his experience, and his encounter in Vienna with a pupil of his named Ludwig van Beethoven. The influence of Beethoven on this sonata is speculative, but it is easy to imagine that the fiery personality and imagination of the young genius had something to do with the conception of Haydn’s E-flat sonata. It is as if the aging Haydn wanted to show this upstart that he could come up with new ideas too.

The specialness of this sonata begins in the first bar: after a rich E-flat chord, the music immediately moves to A-flat major, throwing the harmony into a sort of beguiling obscurity. What follows is a parade of disparate ideas: a warmly surging theme, a return to the grand opening idea, a delicate high passage, and so on, until the music arrives at a little chirping interlude high on the keyboard, which gives way to a furioso passage. What it feels like is a dialogue among an almost Dickensian variety of characters, all of which have their say in the course of the piece and continue their dialogue in a long and far-ranging development. Another aspect of the work’s eccentricity: in a time when music was largely laid out in four-bar phrases, there is no four-bar phrase in the movement, and some phrases begin in the middle of a bar. It is as if the music were in all respects playfully off-kilter.

The eccentricity continues in the key choice of the second movement, E major, in those days a tonality rare in itself and unheard-of in a piece based in E-flat major. That whole movement essentially develops its solemn and touching opening theme. The rondo finale dissolves the previous foibles into dashing gaiety, everything a continuous development of the prancing main theme, and so ending in the best of spirits one of the most fascinating sonatas in the piano repertoire.

JAN SWAFFORD

Jan Swafford is a prizewinning composer and writer whose books include *Beethoven: Anguish and Triumph*, *Johannes Brahms: A Biography*, *The Vintage Guide to Classical Music*, and *Language of the Spirit: An Introduction to Classical Music*. An alumnus of the Tanglewood Music Center, where he studied composition, he is currently working on a biography of Mozart.

Guest Artist

Paul Lewis

Paul Lewis is internationally regarded as one of the leading musicians of his generation. His cycles of core piano works by Beethoven and Schubert have received critical and public acclaim.
worldwide and consolidated his reputation as a foremost interpreter of the central European classical repertoire. His numerous awards have included the Royal Philharmonic Society’s “Instrumentalist of the Year,” two Edison awards, and three *Gramophone* awards, to name but a handful. He was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the 2016 Queen’s Birthday Honours. He appears regularly as soloist with the world’s great orchestras, including the Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, London Symphony, London Philharmonic, Bavarian Radio Symphony, NHK Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the Royal Concertgebouw, Cleveland, Tonhalle Zurich, Leipzig Gewandhaus, and Philharmonia orchestras. The 2018-19 season sees the continuation of a two-year recital series exploring connections between the sonatas of Haydn, the late piano works of Brahms, and Beethoven’s Bagatelles and *Diabelli Variations*. Mr. Lewis’s recital career takes him to venues such as London’s Royal Festival Hall, Alice Tully and Carnegie Hall in New York, the Musikverein and Konzerthaus in Vienna, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and the Berlin Philharmonie and Konzerthaus. He is also a frequent guest at some of the world’s most prestigious festivals, including Tanglewood, Ravinia, Schubertiade, Edinburgh, Salzburg, Lucerne, and the BBC Proms. His multi-award-winning discography for Harmonia Mundi includes the complete Beethoven piano sonatas, concertos, and *Diabelli Variations*, Liszt’s B minor sonata and other late works, all of Schubert’s major piano works from the last six years of his life, solo works by Schumann and Mussorgsky, and the Brahms D minor piano concerto with the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Daniel Harding. Future recording plans include a multi-CD series of Haydn sonatas, Beethoven’s Bagatelles, and works by Bach. Paul Lewis is co-artistic director of Midsummer Music, an annual chamber music festival held in Buckinghamshire, UK, and the Leeds International Piano Competition. This past weekend, Paul Lewis performed Mozart’s A major piano concerto, K.414, with Andris Nelsons and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He made his BSO debut at Tanglewood in 2012 with Christoph von Dohnányi conducting. Tonight’s recital continues his exploration at Tanglewood of piano works by Haydn, Beethoven, and Brahms.