

## Program Note

### **Mozart Sonata No. 13 in B-flat major, K.333**

Mozart's Sonata in B flat K 333 serves as a showcase of taste and refinement, reflecting the influence of his mentor Johann Christian Bach. Mozart “borrows” from J. C. Bach's Sonata in G major Op. 17 No. 4 to craft the graceful and carefree 6-note descending scale figure that forms the opening theme of the first movement. This movement embodies the galant style with its short, balanced phrases and frequent use of coy two-note sigh motives. Even the subtle introduction of minor-mode tonal coloring in the development section feels effortlessly integrated, akin to a leisurely dismissal by a genteel hand, leading smoothly into the recapitulation. This movement seamlessly combines textbook sonata-form structure, Italianate vocal melodies, and sparkling keyboard ornamentation.

The emotional core of the sonata lies in the second movement *Andante cantabile*, resembling an operatic aria adapted for the keyboard. Its dignified lyrical reflection is adorned with frequent melodic decorations and unified by the recurring rhythmic motif of three repeated notes leading into each bar. This motif appears in both the treble melody and echoed in the bass, gaining prominence in the chromatic explorations of the development section.

The playful tone returns in the rondo finale marked *Allegretto grazioso*, featuring a breezy opening refrain. The influence of the showy concerto style is evident in the

contrasts between 'solo' and 'tutti' textures, highlighted by the movement's abrupt pause on a cadential 6-4 chord, setting the stage for a dramatic 'soloist' cadenza.

### **Godowsky Java Suite “XI. The Ruined Water Castle at Djokja”**

“Near the Kraton of Djokja, deserted, fallen into decay, stand the mouldy and crumbling remains of the once resplendent Water Palace, with its murmuring fountains and splashing cascades with its aquatic pranks and air-filling scents of exotic flowers. Where once was merriment, there is now the mystery and romance of vanished days, the sadness of evanescent pleasures.

The fountains and cascades murmur memories of yesteryears - yearning for past joys, mourning for departed love....” -Godowsky 1925



The Water Castle, originally constructed in the mid-eighteenth century as the Sultan's summer retreat near the Kraton in Djokja, is encircled by narrow canals and cascading waterfalls that spill over its walls. From the beginning, the architecture incorporates water-inspired motifs reminiscent of the arpeggiated patterns found in Ravel's *Jeux d'eau*.

Locally known as “Taman Sari,” derived from "taman" meaning "park" or "garden," and "sari" signifying flower or beauty, this abandoned structure, now covered in green algae and moss, or partially filled with soil and adorned with flowers, tobacco, and banana trees, serves as a reflection of Godowsky's philosophy. Perhaps influenced by his immersion in East Asian culture, which often draws parallels between the flow of water and the journey of life, Godowsky's contemplation reveals the essence of his hometown. Where once joyous gatherings took place, now lies the enigmatic allure of bygone eras, evoking the melancholy of fleeting pleasures. Throughout the movement, there is a continuous flow of sixteenth notes, symbolizing the uninterrupted stream of water, bridging every moment from beginning to end.

This performance is a tribute to my birthplace of Surabaya, which is on the Java island.

### **Rachmaninoff Piano Sonata No. 2, Op. 36 (1931 Revised version)**

The second piano sonata by Rachmaninoff is divided into three parts that are connected by recurring melodic themes. Despite being divided into distinct parts, the piece unfolds seamlessly as a cohesive whole. This unity is achieved through the gentle conclusion of the first movement, which seamlessly transitions into a bridging section at the beginning of the second movement, a motif that resurfaces at the end to seamlessly connect it to the finale.

The first movement starts with a striking piano passage, featuring a descending arpeggio followed by an echoing theme, characterized by a falling 3rd and a chromatic melody.

This theme evolves through cadenza-like sections, leading to a calmer second theme in a

major key, also based on the chromatic motif. The development section explores the chromatic aspects of both themes intensively, culminating in a powerful wall of sound comprised of massive piano chords, followed by the triumphant return of the initial material. Despite going back and forth with the major mode, the movement ultimately dissolves into a simmering, almost ominous minor-mode figuration in the high register.

The second movement begins with questioning phrases, conveying a sense of bewilderment and dejection, but finds solace in gentle pulses and bright bell-like tones. A poignant climax ensues, evoking deep emotions through harmonic sequences characteristic of Rachmaninoff. The mood shifts to a darkly reflective state, revisiting fragments of the first movement until the initial material resurfaces, accompanied by the return of the questioning phrases.

The finale abruptly interrupts the contemplative mood with a cascade of sound and sharp gestures, leading into a wild ride propelled by a solid wall of sound, punctuated by the repetitive tolling of the lowest B on the keyboard. Rachmaninoff's lyrical touch emerges with a warmly expansive second theme, later becoming the focal point of the movement's climax. The piece concludes in a flurry of activity reminiscent of the finale of Tchaikovsky's first piano concerto.