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President's Piano Series

Abbey Simon

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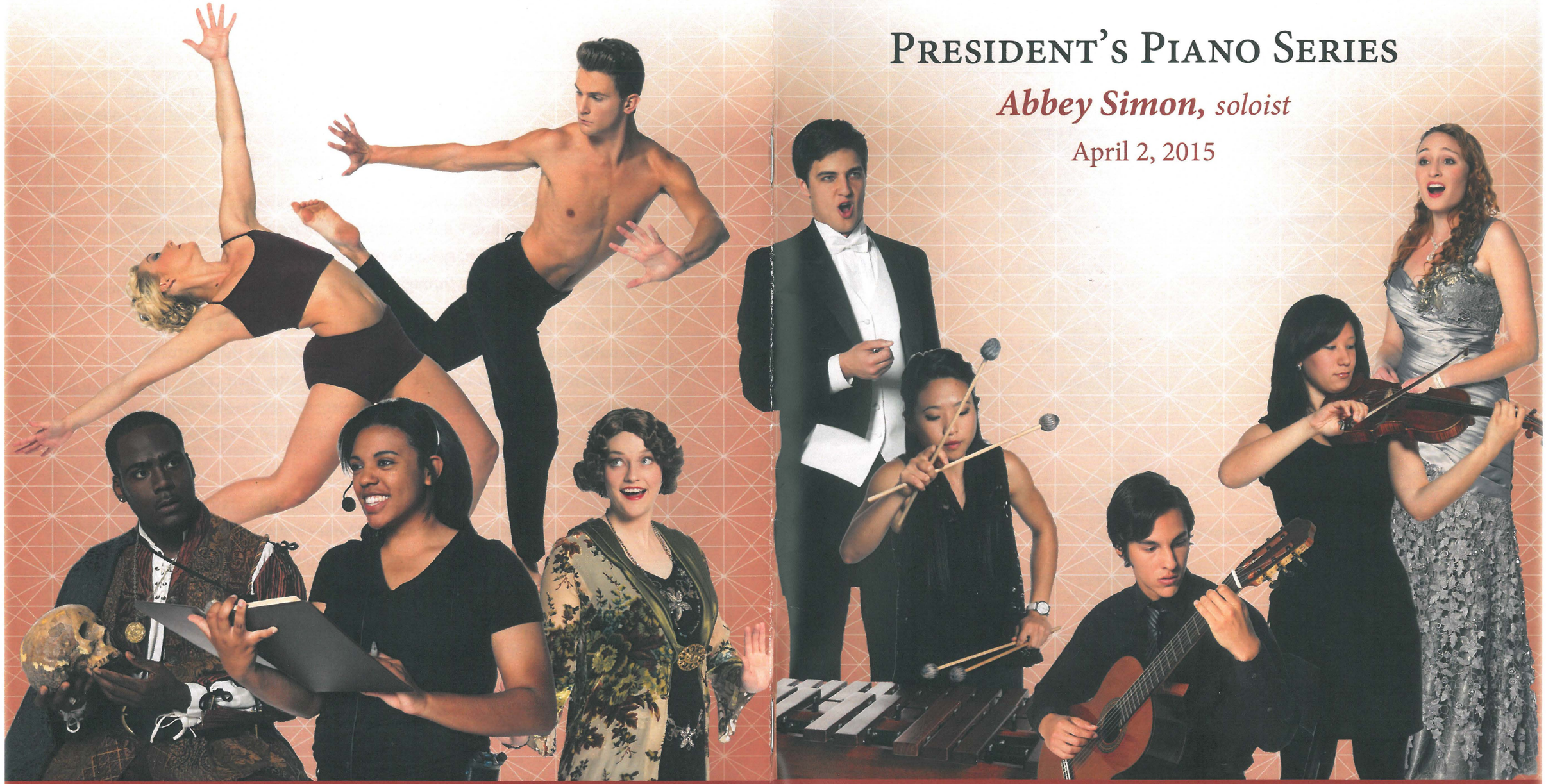
President's Piano Series

Abbey Simon, *soloist*

April 2, 2015



CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF PERFORMING ARTS

Spring 2015

SPRING 2015 calendar highlights

february

February 5
The President's Piano Series
Eduardo Delgado, *soloist*

February 6
William Hall Visiting Professor in Recital
Jeralyn Glass, *soprano soloist*

February 19-21, 26-28
The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark
by William Shakespeare
Directed by *Thomas F. Bradac*

February 27
Faculty Recital
Rebecca Sherburn, *soprano*
with Louise Thomas, *piano*

march

March 5
The President's Piano Series
Dan Tepfer, *soloist*

March 13
The Chapman Orchestra: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
Daniel Alfred Wachs, *Music Director and Conductor*
Angel Vázquez-Ramos, *Music Director*
Michael Nehring, *Director*

april

April 2
The President's Piano Series
Abbey Simon, *soloist*

April 9-11
Concert *Intime*
presented by *Chapman student choreographers*

April 9-11, April 16-18
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead
by Tom Stoppard
Directed by *Gavin Cameron-Webb*

April 10
University Choir & University Singers in Concert
Stephen Coker, *Conductor*

April 24-26
Opera Chapman presents: *The Elixir of Love*
by Gaetano Donizetti
Peter Atherton, *Artistic Director*
Carol Neblett, *Associate Director*

may

May 2
Chapman University Wind Symphony
Christopher Nicholas, *Music Director and Conductor*

May 6-9
Spring Dance Concert
presented by *Chapman student choreographers*

May 8
University Women's Choir in Concert
Angel Vázquez-Ramos, *Director*

May 16
Sholund Scholarship Concert

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presents the

President's Piano Series
Grace Fong, artistic director

Abbey Simon

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KAWAI
THE FUTURE OF THE PIANO

LAW & LEWIS LLP

April 2, 2015 7:30 P.M.
Salmon Recital Hall

Program

Sonata in E Major, Opus 109 — Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

- Vivace, ma non troppo
- Prestissimo
- Andante molto cantabile ed espressivo (or)
- Gesangvoll, mit innigster Empfindung

Fantasies, Opus 116 — Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

- No. 1 Capriccio in D Minor
- No. 2 Intermezzo in A Minor
- No. 3 Capriccio in G Minor
- No. 4 Intermezzo in E Major
- No. 5 Intermezzo in E Minor
- No. 6 Intermezzo in E Major
- No. 7 Capriccio in D Minor

~Intermission~

Valses nobles et sentimentales (1911) — Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Ballade in F Minor, Opus 52 — Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

About the Artist

"In the front rank of the younger generation of pianists" has been a frequent comment by music critics in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, and the major cities of Europe, when speaking of the concert appearances or the brilliant American pianist, **Abbey Simon**. Leading conductors have given high praise to Mr. Simon, who is recognised as an important figure on the musical scene.

A New Yorker by birth, Abbey Simon received part of his academic education and his major musical training at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where he was accepted by Joseph Hofmann when he was eleven years old. Shortly after his graduation from Curtis, he won the coveted Walter W. Naumberg award, which carries with it a Town Hall debut in New York City. The debut recital was followed by recitals in new York's Carnegie Hall and extensive tours throughout the United States and Canada, which were interrupted only for enlistment in the United States army during the war.

After an audition, Dimitri Mitropoulos was moved to write of Abbey's playing :

> "I confess that rarely has a young artist given me such deep musical satisfaction and brilliant technique at the same time. The boy, for me, has tremendous possibilities to compete with the most outstanding musical personalities of America, because I believe that he possesses not only pianistic abilities, but he also has a musical mind and soul of the first rank."

This glowing endorsement led to appearances with America's major orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, The Boston Philharmonic, the San Antonio Symphony Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra of Washington D.C., the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Buffalo Symphony Orchestra, among others.

Mr Simon's first New York recital in Carnegie Hall was deemed of such unusual merit and received such critical acclaim that he was awarded and appearance with the National orchestral Association, under the leadership of Leon Barzin, for having given the most outstanding piano recital of the year in New York by an artist under the age of 30 !

In his first tour of the major music centres of Europe, which included Rome, the Hague, Amsterdam, Paris and London, Mr. Simon was enthusiastically acclaimed by near-capacity audiences and by the European press. One critic summed it up thus :

> "One can try to describe the masterly playing of Abbey Simon, thereby having to exhaust all existing superlatives, but the mysterious beauty of his playing cannot be described by words. We have heard much music in that very hall, but one has to think back twenty years until Horowitz's debut, to remember an equal event."

Another critic wrote : "A pianist giant… especially, the name of Abbey Simon has to be remembered."

In Scandinavia, Mr. Simon was hailed by the press and the finest American pianist to have played in that part of Europe.

In London, Mr. Simon received another accolade when he was awarded the Elisabeth Sprague Coolidge Medal for having given the best performance in London by any artist on any instrument that year.

On his first tour of South America, Mr Simon had one of the most phenomenal successes by any artist, playing five recitals in Caracas, four in Lima, five in Buenos Aires, three in Montevideo, plus numerous provincial concerts and orchestral arrangements, resulting in immediate re-engagements for the following season in all places where he had played. He has since toured South America nine times !

Abbey Simon has been heard with most of the great orchestras of Europe under such eminent conductors as Sir John Barbirolli, Joseph Krips, Sir Malcolm Sargent, Walter Susskind, Colin Davis, Antal Dorati, Rafael Kubelik, George Szell, Wilhelm von Otterloo, Dean Dixon, Massimo Freccia, Eduard van Beinum, Carlo Maria Giulini, Ozawa, Mehta, Leinsdorf.

Mr. Simon has recorded under Phillips and HMV labels , and is now under exclusive contract to Vox Records for whom he has recorded the complete works of Ravel, as well as some of the piano repertoire of Schumann and Chopin. Of Ravel's Gaspard de la Nuit, which has been recently released, Stereo Review has written :

> "Pianist Abbey Simon has achieved in this recording, performances or the piano music of Ravel which I can only describe as being among the best I have ever heard (and I have heard some good ones !). What makes these remarkable even by comparison with the other "greats" is Simon's immensely authoritative feeling for the rhythmic structuring, which, when it is fully felt and expressed in Ravel, takes the music over into another dimension of meaning……These are as close to ideal performances as I ever expect to hear, and the recorded sound is well-nigh perfect."

CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF PERFORMING ARTS

Dear Alumni, Parents and Friends:

Thank you for joining us for the spring 2015 President's Piano Series. On behalf of our faculty, staff and students, I am grateful to all the members of our College of Performing Arts family for the support that allows us to continue to present great educational opportunities like the one you are about to see.

Tonight's performance is another example of our commitment to providing our students with experiences that take them outside the traditional classroom and that hone their artistic sensibilities. Our students graduate with more training, more experience and more professional opportunities to launch their careers in the performing arts and performing arts education.

Preparing this next generation of performers and artists takes the support of all of us who are passionate about the performing arts and who value its presence in our lives. As a supporter of the arts, you have a crucial role to play to ensure the success of the College of Performing Arts and the students who are at the heart of all we do. Your financial support allows the College of Performing Arts to provide the kind of educational and performing opportunities critical to our students' growth into artists like the one performing for you this evening. Please join our community of loyal alumni, parents and community partners devoted to developing the talents of the next generation of artists with a gift to the Fund for Excellence.

The Fund for Excellence enables College of Performing Arts initiatives that enhance our students' experience. Your gift to the Fund for Excellence has a tremendous impact on all of our programs by directly supporting:

- Production costs for the 200-plus live performances of dance, music, theatre and opera the College produces each year;
- Recruitment of professional visiting artists for performances on campus and master classes;
- Scholarships and travel funds for our student touring ensembles and conferences.

Each one of our students will benefit from your decision to support the College. No matter what level you choose to support the College of Performing Arts, you will be a part of a family of individuals who demonstrate, year after year, their commitment to developing the talents of young artists. I hope you join us not only because you value the arts, but because you want to invest in our next generation of artists.

I hope you enjoy this evening's performance, and I look forward to seeing you again at our performances throughout the year.

Sincerely,

Dale A. Merrill, Dean

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