

62nd Concert Series 2015-2016



FRIENDS *of* MUSIC

is pleased to present

**Yefim Bronfman,**  
piano

Saturday, November 7, 2015 – 8:00 pm  
Sleepy Hollow High School, Sleepy Hollow, New York

**President:**

Betsy Shaw Weiner, Croton

**Vice President:**

William Altman, Croton

**Secretary:**

Rosella Ranno, Briarcliff Manor

**Treasurer:**

Marc Auslander, Millwood

**Board Associates:**

Keith Austin, Briarcliff Manor

George Drapeau, Armonk

Ann Harbeson, Bethesda, MD

Nyla Isele, Croton

Edwin Leventhal, Pomona

**Board of Directors:**

Klaus Brunnemann, Briarcliff Manor

Raymond Kaplan, Yorktown Heights

David Kraft, Briarcliff Manor

Tom Post, Mt. Kisco

**Who We Are**

Friends of Music Concerts, Inc. is an award-winning, non-profit, volunteer organization that brings to Westchester audiences world-renowned ensembles and distinguished younger musicians chosen from among the finest artists in today's diverse world of chamber music. Through our Partnership in Education program in public schools, and free admission to our six-concert season for those 18 years of age and under, we give young people throughout the county enhanced exposure to and appreciation of classical music, building audiences of the future.

**We need additional helping hands to carry out our mission. Do consider joining the volunteers listed above. Call us at 914-861-5080 or contact us on our website (see below); we can discuss several specific areas in which assistance is needed.**

**Acknowledgments**

Our concerts are made possible, in part, by an ArtsWestchester Program Support grant made with funds received from Westchester County Government, and by a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. Additional support is received from many friends of Friends of Music who include subscribers and other ticket holders listed in this program\* who give over and above the cost of their attendance, and from the matching grants programs of IBM, Citibank, McKinsey & Co., and others. If you can choose this way to help maintain the excellent quality of our concerts, please send your contributions to Friends of Music Concerts, Inc., P.O. Box 675, Millwood, NY 10546.

\* as of October 27, 2015

This concert is dedicated to the memory of  
**David R. Kornreich (1935-2015),**  
member of Friends of Music Concerts' Board of Directors 1974-2015,  
president 1984-2008.

## Program

---

**Piano Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 1**

Sergei Prokofiev  
(1891-1953)

*Allegro*

*Memo mosso*

*Più mosso*

*Memo mosso*

**Piano Sonata No. 4 in C minor, Op. 29**

*Allegro molto sostenuto*

*Andante assai*

*Allegro con brio, ma non leggiere*

**Piano Sonata No. 3 in A minor, Op. 28**

*Allegro tempestoso; Moderato; Allegro tempestoso; Moderato; Più lento;*

*Più animato; Allegro I; Poco più mosso*

**Faschingschwank aus Wien, Op. 26**

Robert Schumann  
(1810-1856)

*Allegro*

*Romanze*

*Scherzino*

*Intermezzo*

*Finale*

### Intermission

---

**Arabesque in C Major, Op. 18**

Robert Schumann  
(1810-1856)

**Piano Sonata No. 2 in D minor, Op. 14**

Sergei Prokofiev  
(1891-1953)

*Allegro ma non troppo*

*Scherzo – Allegro marcato*

*Andante*

*Vivace*

Yefim Bronfman is a Steinway Artist. He has recorded for Sony Classical, Deutsche Grammophon, BMG/Arte Nova, EMI, Canary Classics, RCA, and Dacapo Records. He appears by exclusive arrangement with Opus 3 Artists, 470 Park Avenue South, 9th Floor North, New York, NY 10016

### Next Concert

---

Saturday, April 16, 2016, 8:00 pm at Ossining High School, Ossining, New York

**Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center**

Program: Strauss' Sextet for Strings from Capriccio, Op. 85; Dvorak's Sextet in A Major for two violins, two violas, and two cellos, Op. 48; Brahms' Sextet No. 2 in G Major for two violins, two violas, and two cellos, Op. 36

# Program notes

---

## **Piano Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 1**

Sergei Prokofiev

The Russian composer Prokofiev lived and worked in the West as well as in the former Soviet Union. He was born in a remote Ukrainian village where his agronomist father managed a large estate, with his mother giving him his first music lessons. Later he studied at the Conservatory in St. Petersburg, becoming a brilliant pianist. After the 1917 Revolution, Prokofiev came to the United States and then settled in Paris, where he was an influential figure, until he returned to Russia in 1933 for the remaining 20 years of his life. He was a fruitful composer who wrote almost 150 works during forty-three productive years. Although this reckoning does not take into account the music he wrote in his childhood, it does include several compositions that originated during his student days at the Conservatory and then found an enduring place in the concert repertoire.

Prokofiev's nine piano sonatas are arguably the most significant body of work in this genre in the 20th century. Composed between 1909 and 1947, they have been compared to those of Beethoven because of their combination of Classicism and complexity.

As he progressed with his exploration of the sonata, his harmonic vocabulary and the sonorous treatment of the piano took on a very distinct "Prokofievian" sound. This first sonata, however, is much influenced by the music of Rachmaninoff and Scriabin; its structure, a sonata form with a clear exposition, development, and recapitulation, readily identifies the work as an early one. It was composed in 1907 when the composer was eighteen, and then was revised in 1909 while he still was a student of Glazunov in St. Petersburg. The pianist and teacher Frederick Chiu found this sonata "agreeably musical and pianistically comfortable, but lacking the piquant imagery that peppers his other works." It does have a very pleasing lyrical quality and a strong sense of emotional expressiveness.

The work was premiered in 1910 with the composer performing, and was dedicated to Vasily Morolev, an old friend.

## **Piano Sonata No. 4 in C minor, Op. 29**

Sergei Prokofiev

**Piano Sonata No. 4** is a not very frequently performed sonata, but is one that some have declared is among Prokofiev's finest keyboard music. Its origins can be traced to two compositions he began during his student years at the St. Petersburg Conservatory; in fact, it was subtitled "D'après de vieux cahiers" ("From Old Notebooks"). He completed it in 1917. It is a different kind of work from the sonatas that preceded it, having a much more serious, intimate tone that some commentators have reflected is the result of the sudden death of his close friend Maximilian Schmidthof, to whom the sonata is dedicated. Others have opined that contemporary events may have influenced Prokofiev even more. World War I was ravaging Europe, the German army was advancing on Russia, and the October Revolution was imminent. Whatever the influence, the first two of the three movements examine and explore emotional depths rare for Prokofiev. Each has a gloomy, restrained, and rather brooding quality; both start in the piano's low register.

Here Prokofiev uses a harmonic language that contains dissonance in its expression of tension but is essentially tonal. The first movement, *Allegro molto sostenuto*, is restrained and introspective throughout, with lyrical sounding themes. In the development section, Prokofiev uses a polyphonic texture with complex harmonies. After its opening theme, the

---

second movement, *Andante assai*, yields to a nostalgic lyrical episode; here the exquisite music, with its layers of delicate voicing, allows the pianist to produce many nuanced soft sounds. At the end of the movement, its two themes are combined.

High-spirited, energetic music gives the final movement, *Allegro con brio, ma non leggiero*, a more lively feel. The main theme undergoes much variation, with rhythmic vitality, dissonances, and chromatic harmonies. Boris Asafyev, a composer contemporary with Prokofiev, described this striking movement as “an outburst of pent-up emotion.”

**Sonata No. 4** was first performed by Prokofiev in Petrograd on April 17, 1917, part of a series of three concerts he gave before his departure for the West.

### **Piano Sonata No. 3 in A minor, Op. 28**

Sergei Prokofiev

**Piano Sonata No. 3** is a single, large, unified “symphonic” movement in which the material is subjected to thorough development. At another time in history, it would have been considered a splendid first movement that required two or three additional movements before it could be considered a complete sonata, but by 1917 Prokofiev was an active member of an avant-garde that also included writers and painters. They had new ideas; they worked in a state of artistic ferment, and created new forms to satisfy their new requirements. The old rules had loosened.

This whirling, breathless sonata’s single movement is, in fact, altogether classical in outline, although its materials are very much of their time. There are two main subjects. The first, *Allegro tempestoso*, has two parts: a fanfare-like flourish that is hammered out in the first two measures, and the longer, broader line, with a rhythmic accompaniment, that immediately proceeds from it. The second subject, *Moderato*, follows the richly romantic Russian tradition. The two are developed to a grand climax and then recalled, before the sonata ends with a brilliant coda.

Prokofiev gave the first public performance of **Sonata No. 3** on April 15, 1917, in the first of the three concerts in Petrograd mentioned above.

### **Faschingschwank aus Wien (“Vienna Carnival Prank”), Op. 26**

Robert Schumann

Robert Schumann’s father was a small-town bookseller who encouraged his son’s inclination towards the arts. At the age of six, Schumann began to play the piano and to compose; by the time he was fourteen he was a published poet. At eighteen he entered the University of Leipzig as a law student. However, music proved to be too strong a calling to resist, so in his third year he left the study of law. Intent on becoming a pianist, he became a pupil of Friedrich Wieck, one of that epoch’s great teachers. Then, when Robert’s hand suffered some problems of an unknown sort, he turned to a career as a composer, conductor, and critic.

In 1835, Schumann fell in love with Wieck’s star pupil, his own sixteen-year-old daughter Clara, who had made her public debut when she was nine. She became a published composer at twelve and grew up to be one of the greatest pianists of her time. Although her father did everything he could to break up the developing relationship, the two eventually prevailed and in 1840, on the eve of Clara’s twenty-first birthday, they married.

---

Most of Robert Schumann's piano works were written before 1840. In 1838 to 1839, when he had followed Clara to Vienna while she was on a concert tour, he composed several short works as well as this long one, **Faschingsschwank aus Wien**.

Schumann subjected most of his compositions to much revision. On March 15, 1839, a month after Carnival that year, the composer wrote to a wealthy Belgian admirer of his music (to whom he later dedicated this work) that it was a "big, romantic sonata." The *Intermezzo*, the fourth of the piece's five movements, was a later addition. By 1840, Schumann had given the work its sonata-like form, but with the first and last movements reversed.

The first movement is headed with the word *Allegro* as a title rather than a tempo, which is given in German as *Sehr lebhaft*, or "Very lively." The movement is rondo-like (which classicists generally reserved for finales), its opening theme repeating and alternating with contrasting ideas, one of which is the Marseillaise Waltz. There are altogether five contrasting episodes within this movement. Next come two movements built of short motifs, a brief gentle *Romanze*, *Ziem langsam* ("Rather slow") with a flowery melodic theme, and a little *Scherzino* that is a witty but abbreviated scherzo without a trio. The *Intermezzo, Mit grösster Energie* ("With very great energy") follows. In the *Finale, Höchst lebhaft* ("With the highest level of liveliness"), Schumann turns to the sonata-allegro form with an added coda.

### **Arabesque in C Major, Op. 18**

Robert Schumann

Schumann wrote this fancifully titled, colorful, poetic work in 1838, when he was in the throes of woe over Clara's father's opposition to their relationship. Says the critic Robert Cummings: "The lovely main theme weaves itself in and out of the varied fabric here, coming across in slightly different emotional guises each time. Marked to be played 'lightly and caressingly,' it is first presented in an elegantly and not overly sweet Romantic idiom, its flow hesitant and nervous. Despite its lightness and restraint, it brims with deeper emotions in its subtle sense of yearning and hints of passion.

"The slower contrasting episode that follows feeds on passion and yearning, however, and when the main theme returns it becomes a bit erratic, its emotional sense swelling without quite shedding its light manner. Another more serious episode ensues, bringing more muscular, stormy music, before the main theme returns a final time. The work concludes with an extended coda of utter gentleness and intimacy, presenting a lovely close to this beautiful piece."

### **Piano Sonata No. 2 in D minor, Op. 14**

Sergei Prokofiev

By the time he composed this sonata, Prokofiev was developing his own unique voice. Its first movement originally was conceived as a sonatina, and the second movement was written in 1908 as a composition class assignment. Between March and September 1912, Prokofiev reworked the two and added two more new movements. Sonata No. 2 was published in 1913. On February 5, 1914, Prokofiev gave it its first public concert performance. A few months later he graduated from the Conservatory.

---

The piano writing is not the kind that blackens the page with thousands of notes. Lean and spare-textured, it is extremely difficult to play. Its basic musical ideas are set forth with great clarity and then thoroughly but concisely discussed, quite characteristic of Prokofiev's formally strict and original personal style.

In the lyric first movement, *Allegro ma non troppo*, three distinct themes emerge. The first is the vigorous opening subject, made up, in essence, of a D minor scale straining its way upward through a rhythmic tangle. The second is a slightly faster, bell-like subject and the third, a lyrical tune in octaves. The climactic passages of the development alter and combine the three, and convert the high bell sounds into a grumbling bass.

The brief next movement, *Allegro marcato*, is one of Prokofiev's diabolical scherzos, powerfully propulsive and fiercely accented with a motoric rhythmic drive, with a gentler contrasting center section. This movement, in particular, is the kind of rather untamed and fierce piano music with which Prokofiev became identified. Third comes a profound, dark and Romantic lyrical *Andante*, richer in texture than the other movements. Its relaxed first theme is accompanied by a gently rocking figure, while its second theme is set in an odd, seven-beat meter with displaced accents that gives a contrasting uneasiness or tension. The *Finale, Vivace*, a bright, mischievous, vigorously dancing piece, perhaps a tarantella, pauses briefly in its course to recollect the lyrical theme from the first movement, unifying the work. It has a playful first theme and a more propulsive almost jazzy second theme before its recapitulation and coda.

— notes provided by Susan Halpern

---

## About the Artist

---

**Yefim “Fima” Bronfman** is among the most talented virtuosos performing today. His commanding technique and exceptional lyrical gifts have won consistent critical acclaim and enthusiastic audiences worldwide.

Born in Tashkent, Uzbekistan SSR in 1958, Mr. Bronfman immigrated to Israel with his family in 1973, where he studied with pianist Arie Vardi, head of the Rubin Academy of Music at Tel Aviv University. Two years later he made a prestigious international debut with the Montreal Symphony under Zubin Mehta. In the United States he trained at The Juilliard School, the Marlboro Festival, and the Curtis Institute, studying with Rudolf Serkin and Leon Fleisher, and becoming a protégé of Isaac Stern. In 1978 he made his debut with the New York Philharmonic, and recital debuts at the 92nd Street Y in New York and the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. In 1991, two years after becoming an American citizen, he was awarded the prestigious Avery Fisher Prize.

This season, in addition to his appearance here in Sleepy Hollow, his recitals will include performances of the complete Prokofiev sonatas over three programs in Berlin and at Carnegie Hall and Cal Performances in Berkeley. As a soloist, he will be performing with the London Symphony, and will return to the Vienna, New York, and Los Angeles philharmonics; the Mariinsky, Cleveland, and Philadelphia orchestras; and the symphonies of Boston, Montreal, Toronto, San Francisco, and Seattle.

**Grantor**

ArtsWestchester  
New York State Council  
on the Arts

**Benefactor**

Alice and Stanley Goldstein  
Anita and David Kraft  
Betsy Shaw Weiner

**Patron**

Marc and Rochelle Auslander  
Joan and Keith Austin  
Deborah Donaldson and  
John Wehr  
Ray and Pamela Endreny  
Raymond and Elizabeth Kaplan  
Jeffry von Wald and  
Michael Levy  
Rosella and Kurt Ranno  
Ruth and David Schwab

**Sponsor**

William Altman  
Dr. Eleanor Bromberg  
Miriam and Howard Budin  
Serban and Marilena Fotino  
David and Cynthia Hodes  
Nicholas and Shelley Robinson  
Sid and Shirley Singer  
Eva and Stanley Taben

**Donor**

Bernie and Lois Bacharach  
Jewel Bellush  
Horst and Gay Berger  
Stephen and Susan Butterfass  
Helene and Martin Celnick  
Bridget L. Cooke  
Peter and Gillian Corfield  
Jasmin Cowin  
Lila d'Adolf  
Peter and Phyllis Davies  
Ted and Blanche Dolmatch  
Sheila and George Drapeau

Andrew and Dominique Fitch  
Barbara Gochman  
Muriel Fox Hahn  
Philip and Ellen Heidelberger

Lee Hemphill and  
Elsbeth Linder  
Bob and Betsy Hughes  
Nyla and Gerhard Isele  
Barry Johnson and  
Niamh Fitzgerald

Jacob and Irene Judd  
Marvin Kalisch  
Doris and Clifford Kaplan  
Marcia and Robert Klein  
Jon and Erica Kolbrener

Alan and Gail Koss  
Anita and David Kraft  
in memory of  
David Kornreich

Alice Kurland  
Shirley Leitner  
Edwin and Arlene Leventhal

Missy and Christopher Lipsett  
Maggie and Paul  
Loewenwarter

Valerie Lyle  
James G. McMurtry III, MD  
Susan and Avraham Merav  
Raymond and Maag Mitton

Dr. Susan Harris and  
Thomas Molnar

Mirla and George Morrison  
Norman Nadel and  
Sandra A. Forster

Jean Pardo  
Marianne Phiebig  
Vera Plummer  
Peggy and Tom Post

George Rehl  
Jean Rivlin  
Joelyn Rohman  
David Gildin and Cecile  
Schrader

Jay W. Seligman  
Edward and Marion Shiffer  
Heda Silverstein

Steven and Rita Waldbaum  
Janet and Donald Zagoria

**Contributor**

Paul and Lilyan Abramson  
Doris Appleby  
Barbara and Hal Baron  
William Becker  
Dorothea Bone  
William Bronner and Nancy  
Bloomgarden

Robert and Mona Buzak  
Haya and Zvi Caspi  
Martin and Helene Celnick  
in memory of  
David Kornreich

Rhona and Ed Charkey

Joan Conklin  
Nancy deKoven

Paula and Larry Edlavitch  
Andrea Erstling and  
Philippe Charles

Dora Fisher  
Melvin Fitting and  
Roma Simon-Fitting

Bruce Fleischer and  
Judy Freedman  
Carol and Paul Freedman

Louise Goldenberg  
Helen G. Goodman

Julia Kosow Grosberg  
George and Martha Heller  
George and Olive Hill

Dr. Jean Horkans  
Lilian and Bernard Joffe  
Sally Kellock

Rosemary King  
Doris Kinney  
Sylvain Kleinhaus  
Carolyn and Lawrence Kunin  
Elizabeth Laite

Jerome and Estelle Lebowitz  
John C. LeFever

Judith Levine  
Selma Levy

Mrs. Susan Lichten  
Leila Lituchy  
David Lubell and Jody Israel  
Patricia A. Mackin  
Rosemary and Harry  
MacLaughlin  
Alice Marcus  
Janet G. Myers  
Bernice Myers  
Edna Ortof, PhD  
Mona and Seymour Page  
Estelle and Gerald Palevsky  
Stephanie and Richard Paley  
Mr. Edward S. Plotkin  
Leslie Grey Puner  
George and Renata Rainer  
Mr. Roland Reisley  
Susan Rose  
Nechama and Bill Ross  
Ms Joan Rubenstein  
Marlene and Gerald Ruthen  
Francesco and Jeanette  
Sacchini  
Mrs. Lee Sack  
Elizabeth Sadewhite  
Natalie and Vincent Schifano  
Robert Schloss and Emily Sack  
Esther Schwartz  
Laura S. Seitz  
Tina Spence  
Fern and Jeff Stearney  
Rhoda Stephens  
Mr. Frank Stern  
Lore Strauss  
Beverly and Oliver Swift  
Dr. Henry and Karen Thomas  
Lynne K. Verna and  
Michael Stemerman  
Rita Wexler  
Ruch Wiesenberg  
Sandra Zinman